



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
October 22, 2009



University
of Victoria

2009/2010 Season

2 ROMEO AND JULIET

November 5 – 21, 2009

By William Shakespeare

Director: Brian Richmond

Costume Design: Mary Kerr

Set Design: Kerem Çetinel

Lighting Design: Amanda Gougeon

Sound Design & Composer: John Mills-Cockell

Fight Director: Peter Abrahams

Choreographer: Anne Wootten

Stage Manager: Lydia Comer

The beloved and tragic love story about two "star-crossed lovers" who struggle against the prejudices of their feuding families.

3 PROBLEM CHILD

February 18 – 27, 2010

By George F. Walker

Guest Director, Michael Shamata
(Belfry Theatre)

A fast-paced black comedy about a desperate and dysfunctional couple's attempts to put their troubled past behind them.

4 WRECKAGE

March 18 – 27, 2010

By Sally Stubbs

Directed by Fran Gebhard (Sessional Instructor)

Violet discovers her long lost mother's diary and through it, the truth about her family's past – including a 1920s drug cartel and a train wreck that changed the course of Violet's life.

SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGIC LOVE STORY BROUGHT TO THE HOLY LAND

Romeo & Juliet's themes made universal through lens of different cultures

Shakespeare's enduring and tragic love story undergoes a provocative change of scenery in the Phoenix Theatre production of ***Romeo and Juliet***, running November 5 through 21, 2009 at the University of Victoria.

Director Brian Richmond places his production of ***Romeo and Juliet*** in the Holy Land, and, through the lens of the many cultures that inhabit this region, brings a politically-charged and universal reading to the themes in Shakespeare's classic play.

*"In my view, the allegory of **Romeo and Juliet** paints – first a comic, then a tragic – portrait of a society that suffers from its inability to solve its ancient enmities between man and man, and man and women," says Richmond. "Perhaps now, more than ever, we need the great plays of Shakespeare to remind us of just how sad and tragic the consequences of this failure to resolve our differences is to us, and the youth that will inherit the world we have created."*

Through the unique desert-inspired set design by department sessional instructor Kerem Çetinel and theatricalized traditional costumes by professor Mary Kerr, Richmond repositions this allegory into a land that has a tumultuous history of political divisions and cultural differences. Çetinel, born and raised in Turkey, brings his experience and innate understanding of Eastern cultures to his designs. With a stage floor of desert sand and a backdrop featuring a weathered and war-torn wall, his scenery creates an atmosphere that symbolizes the divided territory.

"My creative team and I became fascinated with a play that switches from comedy to tragedy through the subtle variations of time and where a simple shift in the timing of any event would have resulted in such different outcomes," says Richmond.

Kerr's costumes also represent a personal and physical manifestation of the cultural barriers between the families, where the Montagues are portrayed as Jewish, the Capulets as Muslims, and the Prince and Friars as Christian representatives of a UN Peacekeeping troupe. Researched and drawn from traditional sources, Kerr abstracts her designs to bring a heightened level of theatricality to the characters.

Guest artist and nationally acclaimed composer John Mills-Cockell offers a rich sound design while Theatre Design MFA candidate Amanda Gougeon, brings the heat of the desert to bear on her lighting design. Peter Abrahams is fight director, Anne Wootten the choreographer and Lydia Comer the stage manager. The production features a cast of 27 theatre students and one alumnus with an alternate cast of some roles performing on different days. (See alternate performance schedule below denoted with asterisk* and listed on www.phoenixtheatres.ca.)

Everyone is welcome to join us for our **FREE Pre-Show Lecture**, Friday November 6 at 7:00pm with Dr. Janelle Jenstad from UVic's Department of English for her talk ***Shakespeare's Experiment in Comi-Tragedy***.

The performance schedule for ***Romeo and Juliet*** at the Phoenix Theatre @ UVic is as follows below:

Public Preview Performances 8pm: November 3 & 4

Evening Performances 8pm: November 5 (Opening Night), 6, 7, 10*, 11, 12*, 13, 14, 17, 18*, 19, 20, 21

Matinee Performances 2pm: Saturday, November 14* & 21* (* denotes alternate cast)

Single Tickets: \$15 Student / \$17 Senior / \$22 Adult or Weekend 8pm (Previews \$6.00, available after 5pm)

Season Subscriptions: \$33 for 3 plays

Phoenix Box Office opens October 7 in person or by calling: **(250) 721-8000**.

Phoenix Theatre

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www.phoenixtheatres.ca

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