

“Romeo & Juliet” at Shakespeare in the Park A Visual Guide



This guide is designed to outline what to expect about “Romeo & Juliet” in terms of plot, characters, and performance.

Please note, this guide does include spoilers.

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About Sensory Adapted Performances

Sensory Adapted Performances are designed to welcome neurodivergent audience members, including patrons with autism or sensory sensitivities. While the experience is created with this community in mind, many benefit from the adjustments at this performance. Sensory Adapted Performances feature:

- **Technical Adjustments** - Lighting, sound, and high sensory technical elements are adjusted. The house lights remain on and dim throughout the performance.
- **Pre-Show Materials** - The Public Theater provides a [Know Before You Go](#) visual guide about what to expect at the theater.
- **Sensory Supports** - A variety of fidgets are available for audience members as well as noise canceling headphones and sunglasses. There is a break area outside of the theater where audience members can take time away from the performance and continue to watch a video stream of the show.
- **Flexible Expectations** - Expectations around audience etiquette are relaxed at this performance. Audience members are invited to react as they need, make sounds, and move around in ways that feel comfortable.

About Romeo & Juliet at The Delacorte Theater

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Saheem Ali

Runtime: Approximately 2 Hours and 40 minutes, including a 20-25 minute intermission

The Delacorte is a busy outdoor theater in Central Park.

Audiences should expect:

- Crowds & extended wait times
 - Especially entering & exiting the theater before, after and during intermission.
- Various weather conditions
 - Rain, wind, or sun
- Potential raccoon spotting
- Unexpected city sounds
 - Helicopters
 - Sirens
 - Other loud sounds from park guests



Photo by Joan Marcus

Content and Sensory Advisories

Romeo and Juliet is a tragedy with mature themes and some high sensory elements.

This production...

- Takes place in contemporary times at the [US/Mexico border wall](#) with depictions of border patrol.
- Contains staged violence including [murder](#) and [suicide](#), [the use of modern guns](#) and fake blood. Actors sometimes raise their voices or scream.
 - This is choreographed and rehearsed. **All actors and audiences are safe.**
 - The show typically contains loud gunshots. **The gunshot sounds will be removed for the sensory adapted performance.**
- Includes depictions of [alcohol and drug use](#).
- Features several scenes with bright lighting and [reflective costumes](#), you may bring or borrow sunglasses.
 - **The bright lights will be reduced at the sensory adapted performance.**
- Contains several scenes with harsh sound effects (i.e. [whispers](#) and [overlapping sounds](#))
 - **The volume will be reduced at the sensory adapted performance.**
- Includes actors entering or moving through the audience. They do not interact with the audience.

Shakespearean Language

“Romeo & Juliet” is a language heavy Shakespeare play.

It was written around 1591-1596, the characters often speak a style of poetic language.

Some famous quotes from the play include:

- “What’s in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.” (Juliet)
- “A plague o’ both your houses!” (Mercutio)
- “For never was a story of more woe,
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo” (Paris)

In this production, Romeo and Juliet speak in Spanish symbolizing their love, while also helping keep their relationship secret.

There are no English translation for these scenes.

There are also a few moments of live music and singing.



Photo by Joan Marcus

The World of the Play

This production is set in an unspecified bordertown at the US and Mexico border.

There is sand and dirt and dry shrubs on the ground and the set is littered with gravestones. The back of the set is a giant wall, which represents the border wall. Throughout the play, people protest and fight over the wall.

Two giant statues and skeletons tower over the wall (top picture). Masked cloaked figures appear throughout the show to represent death (background in bottom picture).

The play opens with many overlapping sounds and voices, which reflects the overwhelming chaos and build up of the border dispute.



Photos by Joan Marcus



Cast & Characters - The Capulets & their allies



Juliet

Played by Ra'Mya Latiah Aikens



Lord Capulet

Played by Glenn Fleshler



Lady Capulet

Played by LaChanze



The Nurse

Played by Deirdre O'Connell



Tybalt

Played by Ariyan Kassam



Paris

Played by Martin K. Lewis



Pedro

Played by Marlon Xavier

Cast & Characters - The Montagues & their allies



Romeo Montague
Played by Daniel Bravo Hernández



Lord Montague
Played by Jason Manuel Olazabal



Lady Montague
Played by Mariand Torres



Mercutio
Played by Caleb Joshua Eberhardt



Benvolio
Played by Zack Lopez Roa



Balthasar
Played by Reece dos Santos

Cast & Characters - Neutral Figures



Friar John
Played by Sergio Mauritz Ang



Escalus
Played by Jessica Pimentel



Apothecary
Played by Rachel Crowl



Friar Lawrence
Played by Francis Jue

Additional Cast & Characters



Ensemble
Andrés Nicolás Chaves



Ensemble
Jacquernst F. Filias



Ensemble
Gilda Mercado



Ensemble
Tina Muñoz Pandya



Ensemble
Fedra Ramírez Olivares



Ensemble
Piper Runge



Ensemble
Miles Segura

Romeo & Juliet Plot Summary (Contains spoilers)

Romeo & Juliet is a tragedy of two young people from two families who are in a bitter feud. The families are the Montagues and the Capulets. Each family is on one side of the border wall.



Juliet Capulet

Romeo Montague



Photos by Joan Marcus

Mercutio and Benvolio, Romeo's good friends tease him about being in love with a woman named Rosalind. We never actually meet Rosalind in the play.

Tybalt, Juliet's cousin and a Capulet, enters. He is short-tempered, and deeply against the Montagues and any of Romeo's friends. In this production, he is part of the border patrol.

He pulls down a protestor's banner that says "DEFUND THE WALL." A fight breaks out between them. Escalus, the governing woman of Verona, enters and breaks up the fight.

She pulls out her gun, points it in the air and fires. **For the sensory adapted performance, she does not fire the gun.**



Benvolio, Mercutio, and Romeo decide to disguise themselves and attend the Capulet's ball. Before the ball, they drink and take drugs. Guests at the ball are wearing bright and reflective costumes with headpieces.

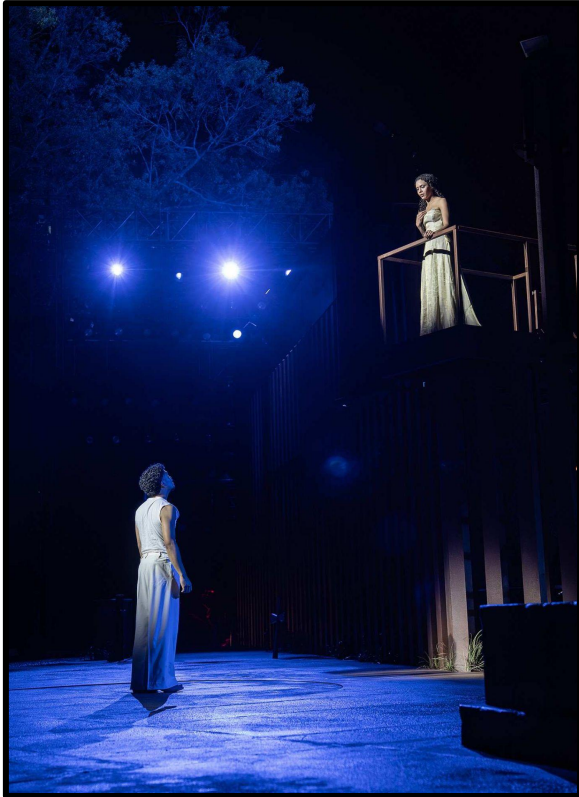


Lord & Lady Capulet, and Juliet with Paris, who she is arranged to marry.



Romeo & Juliet meet. It's love at first sight. Since they are disguised, they don't know that they are Montagues & Capulets yet. They whisper to each other.

After the ball, Romeo sneaks to Juliet's garden, and they speak while she is on the balcony. This is one Shakespeare's most famous scenes, with many of the show's most recognizable lines. In this production, they are spoken in Spanish.



The next day, Juliet asks her nurse to talk to Romeo to find out if he intends to marry her.

Photos by Joan Marcus

Mercutio has a target practice. He pulls out a gun and shoots three soda cans.

Romeo and Juliet's family and friends continue their violent outbursts and misunderstandings, leading to a staged fight between Mercutio and Tybalt.

Mercutio taunts Tybalt and says "Good King of Cats, nothing but one of your nine lives."

Tybalt pushes Mercutio down and shoots him. Romeo grabs Mercutio's holstered gun and fires back at Tybalt.

Both men die. Romeo is banished from Verona for killing Tybalt.

For the sensory adapted performance, they do not fire the gun.



Photo by Joan Marcus

Friar Lawrence marries Romeo and Juliet in secret. Lord Capulet continues to force Juliet to marry Paris, per their arrangement. This angers Juliet, and she threatens to kill herself with a knife to her wrist.



Photos by Joan Marcus



Friar Lawrence creates a plan for Juliet to fake her own death, and for Romeo to meet her in the family monument with the tombs.

Romeo never gets the message about Friar Lawrence's plan for Juliet to fake her own death. He believes her to be dead.

He buys poison from an apothecary to take his own life and be with Juliet

When he enters the tomb, he sees Juliet's body. Romeo drinks the poison and dies on top of Juliet.



Sadly, Juliet wakes just after Romeo's death. She, too, decides to take her own life by drinking Romeo's poison. Their tragic deaths finally end the feud between the two families.



Photo by Joan Marcus

The play ends.

Then, Francis Jue, the actor who plays Friar Lawrence, reveals that while Romeo & Juliet didn't have a happy ending, a real-life couple will. This is pre-arranged with the couple and the theater.

He welcomes the couple onto the stage to officiate a live wedding ceremony or vow renewal. The ceremony is about 3 minutes long. After the "I do's" the cast will take a bow. Then the evening is officially over.



Photo by Carla Perez



GUNSHOT GUIDE

This provides specific details about when guns will be fired during the performance. The gunshots effects are created with live firing from theatrical firearms. Gun shot sounds will not take place during the sensory adapted performance.

ACT 1 SCENE 1: Approximately 5 minutes into play

A protestor holds a banner that says 'DEFUND THE WALL'. Tybalt who is in border patrol uniform approaches the protestor. A fight breaks out. Escalus, the governing woman of Verona, breaks up the fight by firing a gun in the air. 1 shot total.

ACT 2 SCENE 4: Approximately 30 minutes into play

Mercutio and his buddies are conducting “target practice” at soda cans. Three cans are laid out on a pedestal, and Mercutio aims and fires at each can. 3 shots total

INTERMISSION

ACT 3, SCENE 1: Approximately 5 minutes into second half

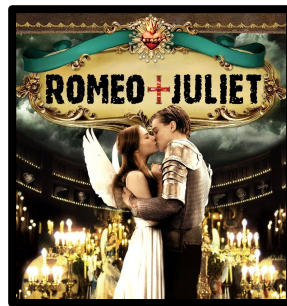
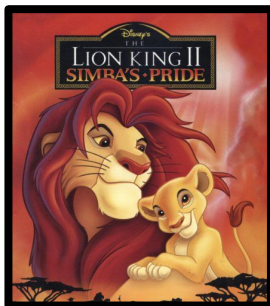
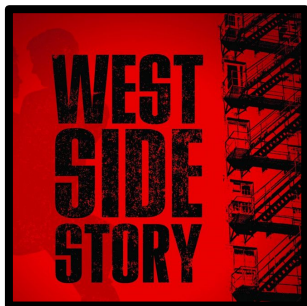
Tybalt and Mercutio are in a staged fight. Mercutio taunts Tybalt and says “Good King of Cats, nothing but one of your nine lives.” Tybalt pushes Mercutio down and shoots him. Romeo grabs Mercutio’s holstered gun and fires back at Tybalt. Both men die. 2 shots total.

More Romeo & Juliet

Romeo and Juliet is one of Shakespeare's most famous tragedies. You may be familiar with the story of two young people from rival families who fall in love...

Modern Day Examples inspired by the famous “star-crossed lovers”

- **West Side Story** - 1960's musical (with 2 movie adaptations) about rival gangs The Sharks & The Jets
- **The Lion King 2: Simba's Pride** - The sequel to The Lion King about two young lions from rival prides.
- **Gnomeo & Juliet** - Fun animated children's movie with gnomes from rival gardens.
- **Romeo + Juliet (1996)** – Set in modern times, but uses Shakespeare's original language, starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes.
- **Warm Bodies** - A comedy horror movie about R, a zombie, who falls in love with Julie, a human





No matter your journey to The Public Theater—whether you're a first-time attendee, new to our theaters, or a frequent patron—you are warmly welcome.

Feel free to engage with the show genuinely: react, vocalize, laugh, or cry. If you need to make some noise, take breaths, stim, or move, that is OK.

We hope to see you again at Free Shakespeare in the Park or at [The Public Theater](#).