

ROMEO & JULIET

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

DIRECTOR PETER EVANS



SHAKESPEARE
L73B

My bounty
is as boundless
as the sea

WESFARMERS ARTS & BELL SHAKESPEARE

Bringing the beauty of language and ideas
to the stage for all Australians.

BELL
SHAKESPEARE

WE ARE BELL SHAKESPEARE

We ensure Shakespeare's work lives and breathes in theatres, schools and communities throughout Australia, where his words can be truly appreciated.

We value the beauty of Shakespeare's ideas, language and imagery. His work helps us find modern perspectives on timeless truths.

We believe Shakespeare and other great works are not stuck in the past. They are the lens through which we can explore and question the present and imagine the future.

These plays are not static. They're constantly helping us make sense of who we are, where we've been, and where we're going. And we're not static either. We've been travelling the country for more than 35 years, bringing classic theatre to Australia, looking for new ways to inspire, imagine and ignite.

Shakespeare and the other classic plays we present challenge our beliefs and urge us to see ourselves in a new light. Their ability to discover the things that make us human inspires us to make new work that challenges preconceptions and encourages new interpretations and contemporary parallels – work that speaks to every age.

FIRST NATIONS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Bell Shakespeare acknowledges the First Peoples of the lands and waters on which we rehearse, perform and work across Australia. We recognise their continuous connection to Country, community and culture and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We honour the sharing of traditional stories; stories that have been passed down through generations.

WELCOME



On behalf of the board and staff of Bell Shakespeare, welcome to our 2025 national touring production of *Romeo & Juliet*, directed by Bell Shakespeare's Artistic Director, Peter Evans. In our 35th anniversary year we are thrilled to be bringing Shakespeare's famous story of the star-crossed lovers to 26 venues around the country.

This is a play very close to my heart — it's one of the first Shakespeare plays I saw, and over the years it has accompanied me through the various stages of life — love, loss, conflict, parenting, letting go... The famous balcony scene contains one my favourite lines in all of Shakespeare. Juliet, describing her feelings for Romeo, says:

*My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.*

This image of limitless love was one Shakespeare returned to several times throughout his career. The more you give, the more you have — it doesn't run out. Worth remembering.

I am so proud of this production, and the extraordinary cast and creative team Peter has assembled. Four of the actors in the cast started their careers with The Players, our national education touring ensemble. This is testament to

Bell Shakespeare's commitment to nurturing and developing young artists, backed by our inspiring family of supporters.

Of course, we wouldn't be able to achieve any of our national impact in theatres, schools, communities and youth justice centres, without the ongoing support of our government and corporate partners, individual donors and trusts and foundations. We extend our sincere thanks to you all, and particularly acknowledge the Commonwealth Government through Creative Australia and the Department of Education, the NSW Government through Create NSW, and our *Romeo & Juliet* Production Patron, Katie Page, whose generous support has made this production possible.

And we thank you, our audience, from Burnie to Bunbury and everywhere in between. We hope you enjoy this exhilarating production of *Romeo & Juliet*.

James Evans
Executive Director



SYNOPSIS

The feuding Montagues and Capulets brawl again on the streets of Verona. Prince Escalus intervenes and warns them that if they ever fight again, the punishment is death.

Romeo Montague and his friends gatecrash the Capulets' masquerade party, where Romeo meets Juliet Capulet. They instantly fall in love. Later that night, Romeo returns to meet Juliet and they exchange vows of love. Romeo tells Friar Laurence what has happened, and the Friar consents to marry them.

Juliet's cousin Tybalt challenges Romeo, but Romeo, newly married in secret to Juliet, refuses to fight. Mercutio steps in and is fatally wounded by Tybalt. Romeo then fights Tybalt and Tybalt is killed. Benvolio reports what has happened to the Prince, who banishes Romeo. The Nurse tells Juliet of Romeo's banishment and promises to bring him to her.

Capulet tells the Count Paris he may wed Juliet in three days. Juliet refuses to marry Paris. She goes

to Friar Laurence for help and he devises a plan: he will give her a potion that will make her appear dead and thus avoid the marriage. He will also write to Romeo and tell him the plan.

Juliet tells her father she will now marry Paris. She retires and drinks the potion. When discovered she is taken to the family crypt. In Mantua, Romeo hears that Juliet is dead. Romeo vows to lie dead next to her that night and obtains poison from an apothecary. Friar John tells Friar Laurence that he was unable to deliver the letter to Romeo. Realising the danger, Friar Laurence leaves to tell Juliet what has happened.

Upon visiting Juliet's tomb, Paris encounters Romeo. They fight, and Romeo kills Paris. Romeo then drinks the poison and dies beside Juliet. The Friar arrives to see Romeo dead and Juliet waking. She refuses to leave and kills herself with Romeo's dagger. The Friar explains what has happened, and the Montague and Capulet families are finally reconciled over the bodies of their dead children.





FROM THE DIRECTOR

Romeo & Juliet is about a community. The community of Verona and more specifically those around the Capulet family. The tearing of a society is a central action in both the tragedies and the comedies of Shakespeare. But tragedy tends to end in death, and comedy in marriage. *Romeo & Juliet* is unusual in that it combines both genres. The wedding takes place by half time. Then we prepare for the death. It is unlike most of the other tragedies of Shakespeare in that it doesn't centre on one figure. It arguably isn't even entirely centred on the couple but rather the society around them. Fascinatingly most of the other characters in the play do not know what play they are in. It is one of the many tragedies within this remarkable play that Mercutio, Paris and Tybalt all die not knowing Romeo and Juliet are married. And the parents are clueless until the death of our lovers.

This play is so famous it can be hard to see it clearly. It is, of course, about love. But more specifically it is concerned with desire. Arguably this encroaches on lust. The lovers are full of lust, and this leads to impatience, perhaps an equally important theme in the play. Listen out for how many times characters advise patience, counsel themselves and others to pause only to then race headlong into the next action. All the characters are guilty of careless rushing, and Shakespeare weaves this into all aspects of the play. He frames the narrative inside a strict timeframe. Just four days. This is a vastly shorter period than the source material from which Shakespeare took the story of *Romeo & Juliet*. And like all Shakespeare plays this creates pressure. And from pressure comes actions and behaviours that create drama and, in this case, tragedy.

The root of the tragedy is the ancient feud that plagues this society. A feud taken up by the young people that turns the play from romantic comedy to romantic tragedy. However, Shakespeare treats all the characters with good faith. Much of the actions are taken with a view to the common good. As Romeo says of his intervention in the fight between Mercutio and Tybalt:

I thought all for the best.

But through impatience, lust, revenge, love, passion, violence, and a series of simple accidents, Shakespeare constructs one of the greatest tragedies ever written.

I have cast an ensemble of actors where age and gender are not as important as the spirit of the actors and how they meet the characters. We know we are watching a play. An old play that is not realism but is lyrical, it has rhyming couplets and is so famous it is impossible to separate from our own lives. Like this play would have been presented in Shakespeare's time, our production is contemporary, but we rejoice in the tropes of the play: poison, potions, swords, and masks.

In our 35th year I am proud to take this story across our vast country, to share this remarkable play, this extraordinary poetry, and the saddest of sad tales.

Peter Evans
Director



COMPANY LIST

PRODUCTION PATRON

Katie Page, CEO Harvey Norman

CAST

Juliet Madeline Li
Nurse Merridy Eastman
Paris Jack Halabi
Romeo Ryan Hodson
Friar Khisraw Jones-Shukoor
Tybalt Tom Matthews
Mercutio / Prince Brittany Santariga
Benvolio James Thomasson
Capulet Michael Wahr
Lady Capulet Adinia Wirasti
Understudy Caitlin Burley
Understudy Thomas Royce-Hampton

CREATIVES

Director Peter Evans
Set & Costume Designer Anna Tregloan
Lighting Designer Benjamin Cisterne
Composer & Sound Designer Max Lyandvert
Associate Fight Director Thomas Royce-Hampton
Voice & Understudy Director Jack Starkey-Gill
Choreographer Simone Sault

CREW

Production Manager / Head Mechanist Slade Blanch
Touring Company Manager Chanelle Muirhead
Deputy Stage Manager Brooke Kiss
Assistant Stage Manager Milly Grindrod
Head Electrician Sam Wylie
Head of Audio Charles Kember
Head of Costume Sara Kolijn
Costume Supervisor Nicole Artsetos
Costume Assistant / Cutter Sally-Anne Andrews
Costume Cutter Valerie Adele
Costume Fiona Warmbath
Costume Buyer Katie Fitchett
Secondment Guinevere Fisher
Set built by Sydney Theatre Company
Freight provided by John Kline AAA Touring

PHOTOGRAPHY

Campaign photography Pierre Toussaint
Rehearsal photography Brett Boardman



2025 NATIONAL TOUR MAP

Canberra Theatre Centre 29 Aug – 7 Sep

Wagga Wagga Civic Theatre 9 Sep

Goulburn Performing Arts Centre 11 Sep

Dubbo Regional Theatre and Convention Centre 13 Sep

State Theatre Centre of WA, Perth 16 – 20 Sep

Mandurah Performing Arts Centre 23 Sep

Bunbury Regional Entertainment Centre 25 Sep

Margaret River HEART 27 Sep

The Pavilion Performing Arts Centre, Sutherland 30 Sep

The Art House, Wyong 2 Oct

Glasshouse, Port Macquarie 4 Oct

Gladstone Entertainment Convention Centre 9 Oct

Pilbeam Theatre, Rockhampton 11 Oct

Cairns Performing Arts Centre 15 Oct

Brisbane Powerhouse 17 – 18 Oct

Lighthouse Theatre, Warrnambool 21 Oct

Alexander Theatre, MPAC 23 Oct

Ulumbarra Theatre, Bendigo 25 Oct

Burnie Arts Centre 28 Oct

Theatre Royal Hobart 30 Oct – 1 Nov

Theatre North, Launceston 3 Nov

Her Majesty's Theatre, Ballarat 6 Nov

Geelong Arts Centre 8 – 9 Nov

Orange Civic Theatre 13 Nov

Griffith Regional Theatre 15 Nov

Sydney Opera House 19 Nov – 7 Dec



LESSONS IN LOVE

By Andy McLean

Think you already know the most famous love story in the English language? Think again.

Researchers recently published an article in the journal *Science* that could rewrite the history of kissing. It turns out, humans have been pashing a lot more — and for a lot longer — than historians thought.

Previously overlooked evidence suggests that romantic and sexual kissing was actually practised in some of the earliest Mesopotamian societies, dating back to 2500BC. Moreover, scientists now think that kissing did not originate exclusively in a single region, before spreading elsewhere. Instead, people were probably snogging in multiple ancient cultures over several millennia.

Coincidentally, this research was published in 2023, the very same week that rehearsals began for Bell Shakespeare's first season of this *Romeo & Juliet* — a play that everyone assumes they already know everything about.

We've all heard the story before, right? Boy meets girl. Cue: lovelorn poetry and that balcony scene. Cue: sword fights, mix-ups, and that suicide scene. We've seen it played out again and again in theatres, movies, musicals, operas, ballets, graphic novels... you name it.

This play is so famous that it's become shorthand for adolescent love. Just like kissing, everyone thinks they know all the facts about *Romeo & Juliet*.

But guess what? When Bell Shakespeare's actors and creatives peered closer at the script, they found it full of unexpected surprises, weird plot twists, and misunderstood characters.

WHAT IF?

Contrary to popular belief, this is not a black and white story of love versus hate; or good versus evil.

Take a second look, and you'll see grey areas in every character.

Juliet, for example, is often underestimated. She's assumed to be a saintly, impressionable doll. Whereas in fact, Shakespeare created a fiercely intelligent character who — facing insurmountable odds — makes calculated choices, articulates her feelings, and frequently runs rings around Romeo.

Or how about the other man in Juliet's life, Paris? Common myth would have us believe that he's a self-entitled goody two-shoes just doing his duty by agreeing to take Juliet as his bride. But if that were true, after Juliet dies, why does he tearfully pledge to keep a "nightly" vigil outside her tomb? And with his last breath, why does he plea for his body to be laid beside Juliet's? Perhaps Paris is just as besotted with Juliet as Romeo is.

Then there's Tybalt, who is often assumed to be a one-dimensional, spiteful thug. But if that were true then why — after he dies — is the Capulets' grief so heartfelt? Perhaps, a few short years before, Tybalt was just a child playing with his "dear-lov'd" cousin, Juliet. Now, swept up in the adults' vendettas, his young life has been snuffed out.

There's little doubt that Shakespeare wanted actors and audiences to ask these 'what if?' questions. Although we know the lovers are doomed from the start, the playwright constantly teases us with missed opportunities to save them. What if Friar John was not quarantined due to the plague but, instead, reached Romeo in time to deliver news that Juliet had faked her death? What if Capulet and Lady Capulet (Juliet's parents), and Friar Laurence and the Nurse (Juliet's surrogate parents), paused and sought other ways to turn "rancour to pure love", instead of hastily arranging marriages?

Near the end, Juliet even teases us with 'what if?' questions of her own. Poised to drink the Friar's potion, she asks:

*What if this mixture do not work at all?
...What if it be a poison?
...How if, when I am laid into the tomb,
I wake before the time that Romeo
Come to redeem me? There's a fearful point.
Shall I not then be stifled in the vault...*

JOIN THE EXPERIMENT

As Bell Shakespeare's cast and creatives looked ever deeper, they found a much stranger play than you might expect. This is not an archetypical Shakespeare tragedy at all. The first two Acts are like a knockabout comedy until Shakespeare pulls the rug from under us. It's only when Tybalt and Mercutio die that we're thrown into the darker space of outright tragedy.

By challenging assumptions and stereotypes about *Romeo & Juliet* — and embracing the uncertainties — actors and audiences are free to experience new things together. Our suspension of disbelief can constantly shift and re-adjust. One minute we

are sitting in a theatre; the next we're guests at a masked ball. One minute Mercutio fills the room with laughter; the next we are the only confidantes in the world that an anguished teenager can turn to.

This production was conjured up back in 2023, in Bell Shakespeare's Neilson Nutshell in Sydney, a space tailor-made for experimentation. Director Peter Evans defied convention by casting each actor according to their innate spirit, instead of rigidly casting by age and gender. Designer Anna Tregloan turned Verona into a place where contemporary and classical elements co-exist; where electric lights festoon the ceiling while Friars and Princes hold sway beneath.

These intriguing choices breathe fresh life into this old play. They remind us that, whether we're in ancient Mesopotamia, fair Verona, or modern-day Australia, everyone can still learn something new about love.

Andy McLean is a writer who grew up in Stratford-upon-Avon, before following the Bard to London. Unlike Shakespeare, he now lives in Sydney.



COSTUME DESIGN BY

ANNA TREGLOAN



IN THE REHEARSAL ROOM



CREATIVE TEAM

PETER EVANS DIRECTOR



Peter Evans is Bell Shakespeare's Artistic Director. **For Bell Shakespeare**, Peter has directed *Coriolanus*, *In A Nutshell: The Poetry of Violence*, *King Lear*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*,

Hamlet, *In A Nutshell*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Miser*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Richard 3*, *Othello*, *As You Like it*, *The Dream*, *Tartuffe*, *Phèdre*, *Julius Caesar*, *The Tempest*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Intimate Letters* with the Australian Chamber Orchestra. **As Associate Director** for Melbourne Theatre Company, Peter directed *Clybourne Park*, *A Behanding in Spokane*, *Life Without Me*, *Dead Man's Cell Phone*, *The Ugly One*, *The Grenade*, *God of Carnage*, *Savage River*, *Realism*, *The Hypocrite*, *Blackbird*, *Don Juan In Soho*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *The History Boys*, *Don's Party*, *The Give And Take*, *Dumbshow* and *The Daylight Atheist*. **Other theatre** credits include *Pygmalion*, *The Great*, *Fat Pig* and *The Give And Take* for Sydney Theatre Company; *Hamlet*, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, *King Lear*, *Copenhagen*, *Proof*, *Muldoon* and *The Christian Brothers* for New Zealand's Court Theatre; *The Daylight Atheist* for Queensland Theatre; *The Yellow Wallpaper* and *A Poor Student* for Malthouse Theatre; and *Jesus Hopped The A Train* for Red Stitch Actors Theatre.

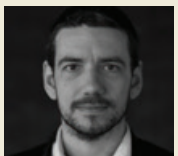
ANNA TREGLOAN SET & COSTUME DESIGNER



Anna Tregloan is a multi-award-winning cross-disciplinary artist and scenographer. **For Bell Shakespeare**, Anna has designed sets and costumes for *Henry 5*, *King Lear*, *In A Nutshell: The Poetry of Violence*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*,

Hamlet, *In A Nutshell*, *The Miser*, *Julius Caesar*, *Venus and Adonis*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Twelfth Night*. **As Stage and Costume Designer**, Anna has worked with Malthouse Theatre, Sydney Theatre Company, Melbourne Theatre Company, *Legs on the Wall*, *Circus Oz*, *Ranters Theatre* and *Back to Back Theatre*. Anna's notable recent credits include *The Planet* for AsiaTOPA & Holland festival; *idk* for Force Majeure; *Oscar and Lucinda* for Sydney Chamber Opera; and *The Three Marys* for Greenroom Music & Sydney Opera House. **As Writer/Director**, Anna created *The Impossible Project*, multiple iterations of *The Ghost Project*, *The Dictionary of Imaginary Places*, *BLACK* and *Belief System*. **As Exhibition Designer**, Anna's credits include *Goddess* and *Wonderland* for ACMI; and *Perfection*, *Blood* and *SWARM* for Science Gallery Melbourne, as well as collaborations with Powerhouse Museum and Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. She was also the curator for the Australian Exhibition for the Prague Quadrennial of Performance, Space and Design 2014–2020.

BENJAMIN CISTERNE LIGHTING DESIGNER



Benjamin Cisterne's reputation is for finesse, excellence and a gutsy approach to design, based in light. **For Bell Shakespeare**, Benjamin's credits include *In A Nutshell: The Poetry of Violence*, *King Lear*, *Romeo and Juliet*,

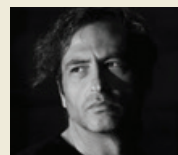
Hamlet, *In A Nutshell*, *One Man In His Time*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Richard 3*. **Other theatre** credits include *Dance Better at Parties* and *Perplex* for Sydney Theatre



CREATIVE TEAM

Company; *M.Rock* for Sydney Theatre Company and Australian Theatre for Young People; *Medea*, *Human Interest Story*, *Hamlet*, *A Christmas Carol* and *Mother Courage* for Belvoir St Theatre; *2 one Another*, *Emergence*, *Louder than Words*, *Project Ramaeu* and *Les Illuminations* for Sydney Dance Company; *Keep Everything*, *Connected*, *Mix Tape* and *It Sounds Silly* for Chunky Move; *Nativity*, *Fiction*, *Origami*, *Brindabella*, *Aviary* and *Miracle* for Balletlab; and *Halcyon*, *Sweeedeedee*, *There's Definitely a Prince Involved* and *Spartacus* for The Australian Ballet. Benjamin's **museum/exhibition** credits include The Australian War Memorial, State Library NSW, Supreme Court of Queensland, Queensland Museum and The Reserve Bank of Australia. **Awards** include Green Room and Sydney Theatre Awards, and the Award of Commendation from the Illuminating Engineers Society.

MAX LYANDVERT COMPOSER AND SOUND DESIGNER

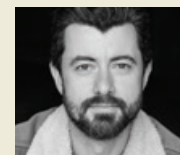


Max Lyandvert (he/him) is a multi-award-winning composer, sound designer and theatre maker. **For Bell Shakespeare**, Max has worked on *Coriolanus*,

In A Nutshell: The Poetry of Violence, *King Lear*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *In A Nutshell*, *Hamlet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Titus Andronicus*, *The Miser*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *Othello*. **Other theatre** credits include *The Dictionary of Lost Words*, *Mary Stuart*, *Saint Joan*, *Top Girls*, *All My Sons*, *The Testament Of Mary*, *The Golden Age*, *Endgame*, *Children Of The Sun*, *Macbeth*, *Dinner*, *Waiting For Godot*, *Lost Echo* and *The War of the Roses* for Sydney Theatre Company; *Nosferatu* and *Trojan Women* for Burgtheater in Vienna, as well as presenting his work in London, Paris, Berlin and New York; *Book Of Exodus Part 1 & 2* for Fraught Outfit; *The Winter's Tale* for Queensland Theatre; *Dead City*, *The Wizard Of Oz*, *Oedipus Rex*, *The Business*, *The Ham Funeral*, *UBU*, *Macbeth*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Opening Night* for Belvoir St Theatre; *Gulls*, *Macbeth*, *The*

Idiot, *Kafta Dances*, *Courtyard Of Miracles*, *Closer*, *The Rose Tattoo* and *Twelfth Night* for State Theatre Company South Australia; and *Art And Soul* and *Design For Living* for Melbourne Theatre Company. Max composed the music for the Australian Pavilion for the Venice Biennale 2019 and has worked extensively for most of Australia's theatre companies, festivals and physical theatre companies such as *Legs on the Wall* and *Force Majeure*. **For television**, Max composed for *The Kettering Incident*, *The Devil's Playground* and the mini-series *Eden*. **For film documentaries**, his credits include *Gayby Baby* and *After The Wave*. **Awards** include two Helpmann Awards (Best Sound Design), Sydney Theatre Award (Best Sound Design) for *Titus Andronicus*, and AACTA Award (Best Music in Television) for *The Kettering Incident*. Max is currently studying a PhD in immersive installation practice.

THOMAS ROYCE-HAMPTON ASSOCIATE FIGHT DIRECTOR / UNDERSTUDY



Tom Royce-Hampton is a director, actor, creative producer and graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts and Actors Centre Australia. **For Bell Shakespeare**, Tom was

Associate Fight Director on *Coriolanus*, Assistant Fight Director on *Hamlet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and acted in *Hamlet* and *Pericles*. **As Director**, Tom's credits include *Hearth* for 29 Scenes; *Chi Udaka Australia* and *India Tour* for Taiko; and *ABYSS* for the Victorian College of the Arts. **As Assistant Director**, he has worked on *Machinal* for the Victorian College of the Arts; and *The View Upstairs* for Sugary Rum Productions. **As Assistant Fight and Movement Director**, Tom has worked on *Bernhardt/Hamlet* and *The Removalists* for Melbourne Theatre Company. **Stage** credits include *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* for Michael Cassel Group; and *Moby Dick* and *Antigone* for Sport for Jove Theatre Company. **Screen** credits include *Good Cop Bad Cop* for Stan; *La Brea* for Universal Pictures; *The Quest* for Productions on Rye; and *Miss Fisher's Modern Murder Mysteries* for

CREATIVE TEAM

Every Cloud Productions. Tom began his career as a member of Taikoz and has performed with Lingalayam Dance Company, Douglas Dunn + Dancers, Synergy, Eitetsu Funn no Kai and Kodo, as well as concerto performances with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Western Australia Symphony Orchestra, Queensland Symphony Orchestra and Dresden Sinfonika.

JACK STARKEY-GILL VOICE & UNDERSTUDY DIRECTOR



Jack Starkey-Gill (he/him) is a voice director, creative consultant and actor. He is a graduate of Victorian College of the Arts (Bachelor of Dramatic Art in Acting) and National Institute of Dramatic Art (Master of Fine Arts in Voice). **For Bell Shakespeare**, Jack's credits include *Coriolanus*, *Henry 5*, *King Lear*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Twelfth Night*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Players*. **As Voice/Dialect Coach**, Jack has worked on *Constellations* for Sydney Theatre Company; *Mary Poppins* for Michael Cassel Group; *An Ambivalent Woman of 37* for Vivid But Not Garish; *Sandaime Richard*, *Kindness*, *Festen* and *Macbeth* for National Institute of Dramatic Art; and *The Libertine* for Actors Centre Australia. **As Director**, Jack's credits include *Dogg's Hamlet* and *The Cagebirds* for Sydney Actors School. **Stage** credits include *Macbeth* for young audiences and *The Players* 2014 for Bell Shakespeare; *ARIA* for Ensemble Theatre; *The 52-Storey Treehouse* for CDP Theatre Producers; *Infinity Taster* for The Old Fitz Theatre; Property of the *Clan* for Don't Look Away Theatre; and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Winterfall Theatre. **Screen** credits include *Neighbours* for Grundy Television Australia; and *Marley*, *Someone* for Ildiko Susany. Jack has lectured for the National Institute of Dramatic Art, Sydney Actors School and Actors Centre Australia, and is the founding director of presence and communication skills training company JSG Voice. Jack is an Associate member of Professional Speakers Australia

SIMONE SAULT CHOREOGRAPHER



Simone Sault is a choreographer, director, performer, dance coach and creative. Simone is a graduate of the National Theatre Ballet School, and begun her professional dance career with Sydney Dance Company. **For Bell Shakespeare**, Simone choreographed *Romeo and Juliet*. **As Choreographer/Associate Director**, her credits include *The Phantom of the Opera* for Handa Opera; *Company* for Marianne Elliot; *Love Never Dies* for Andrew Lloyd Webber; and the staging workshop for *Cinderella* for Andrew Lloyd Webber. **As Choreographer**, she has worked on *Most Incredible Thing* for the Pet Shop Boys; *Strictly Dance Fever* for the BBC; *2012 London Olympic Games* for Danny Boyle; *Giri/Haji* for Netflix; *Baby Ballroom UK* for Ch 4; *Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again* for Universal Pictures; *Beauty and the Beast* and *Alice in Wonderland* for Disney; and *Sweeney Todd* for DreamWorks and Warner Bros. **As Principal Dancer**, Simone has appeared in *Ellipse* for The Joyce Theatre, New York. Other credits include *Phantom of the Opera*, *Chicago*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *Sadlers Wells*, *On The Town*, *Paris/London* and *Sinatra At The London Palladium*.



CAST

MADELINE LI JULIET



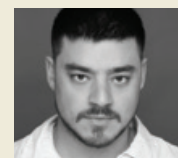
Madeline Li is a graduate of the National Institute of Dramatic Art. **For Bell Shakespeare**, Madeline has appeared in *In A Nutshell: The Poetry of Violence*. **Stage** credits include *Frame Narrative* and *Dear Elena Sergeevna* for The Old Fitz Theatre.

MERRIDY EASTMAN NURSE



Merridy Eastman is a graduate of the National Institute of Dramatic Art. **For Bell Shakespeare**, this is Merridy's debut. **Stage** credits include various productions for Melbourne Theatre Company, Sydney Theatre Company, State Theatre Company of South Australia, Playbox/Malthouse, Ensemble Theatre, Australian Shakespeare Company and The Old Fitz Theatre. Merridy most recently performed in *The Appleton Ladies' Potato Race* for Ensemble Theatre. **Screen** credits include *Playschool* for Australian Broadcasting Corporation; *Always Greener* and *Packed to the Rafters* for Seven network. **Awards** include a Sydney Theatre Award (Best Performer in a Supporting Role) for *Hand to Gold*. Merridy is also a published **author**, her titles include *There's A Bear In There (And He Wants Swedish)*, *Ridiculous Expectations*, *How Now Brown Frau* and upcoming novel *I Knew We Weren't Spanish!*.

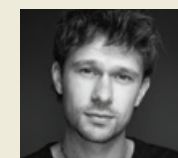
JACK HALABI PARIS



Jack Halabi was born and raised in Geneva, Switzerland and is a graduate of the Actors Centre Australia. **For Bell Shakespeare**, Jack has appeared in *Henry 5*. **Stage** credits include *Julius Caesar* for Pinchgut Opera. **Screen** credits include *Critical Incident* for Stan; *The Things We Do* for

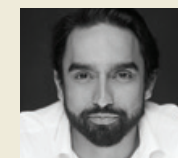
Handsome Champion Films; *For the Love of Peacocks* for Estelle Halabi; and *Tales of 88* for Mustard Lover Films.

RYAN HODSON ROMEO



Ryan Hodson (he/him) is a South African-born actor and graduate of Queensland University of Technology. **For Bell Shakespeare**, Ryan was a member of The Players. **Stage** credits include *Yen* for New Ghosts Theatre; *Coram Boy* for bAKEHOUSE Theatre; *Intersection: Arrival* for ATYP; *Past the Shallows* for ATYP & Archipelago Productions; *The Great Gatsby* for Viral Ventures; *Dumb Kids* for KXT on Broadway; *The Tempest*, *Fourteen* and *The Twits* for Shake & Stir Theatre Co; *Posh* for Queen Hades; *Little Revolutions*, *Children of the Sun*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Anna Karenina*, *Detroit* and *Eurydice* for Queensland University of Technology; and *Blackrock* for La Boite Theatre Company.

KHISRAW JONES-SHUKOOR FRIAR



Khisraw Jones-Shukoor is an Australian-Afghan actor and graduate of 16th Street Actors' Studio. **For Bell Shakespeare**, this is Khisraw's debut. **Stage** credits include *Macbeth* (An Undoing) and *Because the Night* for Malthouse Theatre; *Macbeth* for Melbourne Theatre Company; *Selling Kabul*, *A Simple Act of Kindness*, *The Amateurs*, *OIL*, *The Way Out* and *The Comeuppance* for Red Stitch Actors' Theatre; and *Twelfth Night* and *Romeo and Juliet* for the Australian Shakespeare Company. **Screen** credits include *Dear Life* for Stan; *FAKE* for Paramount+; *Swift St* for Special Broadcasting Service; and *Why Are You Like This* for Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

CAST

TOM MATTHEWS TYBALT



Tom Matthews originally trained in physical theatre and circus in Bathurst and is a graduate of Charles Sturt University. **For Bell Shakespeare**, Tom has

appeared in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and was a member of The Players. **Stage** credits include *People Will Think You Don't Love Me* for KXT on Broadway; *The Smeds and The Smoos* for CDP Theatre Producers; and *From Morning to Midnight* for The Other Theatre Co. **Screen** credits include *Home and Away* for Seven Network. Tom also works as a drama tutor with Bell Shakespeare, ATYP and the NSW Government Arts Unit.

BRITTANY SANTARIGA MERCUTIO / PRINCE



Brittany Santariga is a graduate of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts. **For Bell Shakespeare**, Brittany has appeared in *King Lear*.

Stage credits include *Scenes from the Climate Era* for Belvoir St Theatre; *How to Defend Yourself* for Outhouse Theatre; and *Orphans*, *Othello*, *The Shape of Things*, *Macbeth*, *The Importance of Being Ernest*, *King Lear* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* for TheatreIQ. **Screen** credits include *Critical Incident* for Stan; *Latecomers* for Special Broadcasting Service; *Fighting Season* for Goalpost Pictures; and *Home and Away* for Seven Network. **Awards** include an AACTA Award (Best Online Drama or Comedy) for *Latecomers*, Chris Edmund Scholarship and John Bell Scholarship.

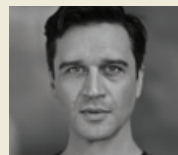
JAMES THOMASSON BENVOLIO



James Thomasson is an actor from North Queensland and graduate of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts. **For Bell Shakespeare**, James has

appeared in *King Lear*, *Macbeth: 360* and was a member of The Players. **Stage** credits include *The Lotto Line* for Studio 5 Productions; *A Pinter Revue*, *Purgatorio* and *Orphans* for Stacks On Theatre; and *The Bridge Project*, *Cripple of Inishmaan*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *Ginger Mick At Gallipoli*, *The Shape of Things*, *X-Stacy*, *Twelfth Night*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* for TheatreIQ. **Voice** credits include *In Their Own Words* for the National Portrait Gallery. **Screen** credits include *When Harri Met Salma* for WA Screen Academy.

MICHAEL WAHR CAPULET



Michael Wahr is a graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts School of Drama. **For Bell Shakespeare**, Michael has appeared in *King Lear*, *Othello* and *Hamlet*. **Stage** credits include

Berlin and *Shakespeare in Love* for Melbourne Theatre Company; *War Horse* for National Theatre of Great Britain & Global Productions; *Our Country's Good* for The Preferred Play Company; *Laika & Wills* and *Breaking* for She Said Productions; *The Bridge* for Random ACTS & Rural Arts Victoria; *The Hat Box* for Family of Strangers; *Così* for Hit Productions; *Under Milkwood* for Whistling Vicar Theatre; and *Hamlet* and *Wuthering Heights* for the Australian Shakespeare Company. **Screen** credits include *Grisse* for HBO Asia; *Bed of Roses* for Australian Broadcasting Corporation; *City Homicide* for Seven Network; and *Neighbours* for Network 10. **Awards** include the Royal Overseas League Performing Arts Scholarship. Michael is also a successful voiceover artist.

CAST

ADINIA WIRASTI LADY CAPULET



Adinia Wirasti is an Indonesian actor and graduate of the New York Film Academy. **For Bell Shakespeare**, this is Adinia's debut. **Screen** credits include *Mendua* for Disney; *Grisse* for

HBO Asia; and *Mr. Midnight* for Netflix. **Awards** include a Citra Award (Best Actress), Asian Academy Creative Award (Best Actress in a Leading Role) and has won multiple Indonesian Movie Awards (Most Popular Actress). High End Magazine included Adinia in their Alpha Under 40 Awards in 2022.

CAITLIN BURLEY UNDERSTUDY



Caitlin Burley is a graduate of the Australian College of Theatre & Television and has trained with the Royal Shakespeare Company. **For Bell Shakespeare**, Caitlin has

appeared in *Romeo and Juliet* and was a member of The Players. **Stage** credits include *The Great Divide* for Ensemble Theatre; and *Opening Night* for Belvoir St Theatre. **Stage** credits include *Candy Bar* for Blue-Tongue Films.



CREW

SLADE BLANCH PRODUCTION MANAGER / HEAD MECHANIST



Slade Blanch (he/him) is Bell Shakespeare's resident Production Manager. **For Bell Shakespeare**, Slade has worked on *The Lovers*, *Hamlet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *One*

Man In His Time, *The Comedy of Errors*, *In A Nutshell* and *In A Nutshell: The Poetry of Violence*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Twelfth Night*, *King Lear*, *Henry 5* and *Coriolanus*. Slade has worked on over 40 productions with Ensemble Theatre, from Assistant Stage Management to Production Management and has worked casually with many companies, including Capitol Theatre and Sydney Lyric Theatre. Slade came first in drama and art in his HSC and was selected for both OnSTAGE and ARTEXPRESS.

CHANELLE MUIRHEAD TOURING COMPANY MANAGER



Chanelle Muirhead is a director, stage manager and choreographer from Auckland, New Zealand. **For Bell Shakespeare**, this is Chanelle's first production. **Stage** credits

include *La bohème*, *Mansfield Park*, *Rigoletto*, *Le comte Ory*, *Così fan tutte*, *Unruly Tourists* and *Macbeth* for New Zealand Opera; *Candide* and *La Traviata* for Opera Australia; *Siegfried & Roy: An Unauthorised Opera* for Sydney Festival; *O le Pepelo*, *le Gaoi*, *ma le Pala'ai* for Auckland Theatre Company; *Madagascar the Musical* for GMG Productions; *The Worm* and *A Stab in the Dark* for Nightsong; and *Emilia*, *Measure for Measure*, *Hamlet*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Twelfth Night*, *Macbeth*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Julius Caesar* and *The Cherry Orchard* for Pop-up Globe. Chanelle is also a graduate of the University of Auckland (Bachelor of Nursing).



CREW

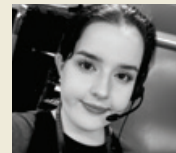
BROOKE KISS DEPUTY STAGE MANAGER



Brooke Kiss (she/her) is a graduate of the National Institute of Dramatic Art (Bachelor of Fine Arts in Technical Theatre and Stage Management). **For Bell**

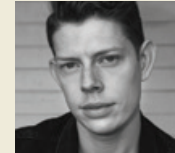
Shakespeare, this is Brooke's first production. **Stage** credits include *RBG: Of Many, One, Sweat, Cost of Living*, *The Seagull*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Do Not Go Gentle*, *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, *Blithe Spirit*, *Death of a Salesman*, *Playing Beatie Bow*, *Rules for Living*, *Banging Denmark*, *Accidental Death of An Anarchist* and *Testament of Mary* for Sydney Theatre Company; *Crunch Time* and *Fully Committed* for Ensemble Theatre; *At What Cost?*, *Barbarra* and *The Camp Dogs*, *Bliss* and *Sami In Paradise* for Belvoir St Theatre; and *The Last Season*, *You Animal You* and *Off the Record* for Force Majeure.

MILLY GRINDROD ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER



Milly Grindrod (she/her) is a stage manager based in Sydney. **For Bell Shakespeare**, Milly has worked on *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *King Lear* and *Henry 5*. **Stage** credits include *Being Alive — The Music of Steven Sondheim* for Hayes Theatre Company; *FANGIRLS* for Belvoir St Theatre; *Billy Elliot* for LWAA; *Paper Planet* Sydney, PHIVE and national tour for Polyglot Theatre; *Converted!*, *Saplings* and *Past the Shallows* for ATYP; and *Magic Mike Live*.

SAM WYLIE HEAD ELECTRICIAN



Sam Wylie (he/him) is a graduate of the Queensland University of Technology (Bachelor of Fine Arts in Technical Production). **For Bell Shakespeare**, Sam has worked

on *The Lovers*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Henry 5*, *Coriolanus* and *Macbeth: 360*. **Stage** credits include *Sunset Boulevard* for Opera Australia/GWB Entertainment; *Amadeus* for Red Line Productions; and *Girl from the North Country* for GWB Entertainment. **Design** credits include *Saints of Damour* for James Elazzi/Qtopia; *Moulin Scrooge* for Trevor Ashley Enterprises; *People Will Think You Don't Love Me* for Little Trojan Theatre Co.; *Passing Strange* for Antipodes Theatre Company; and *Ngaiire* for City Recital Hall and Takeover 2.0 Tour.



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Thank you to our 2025 Stranger Companies members. The circle directly supports our Hearts In A Row program which provides disadvantaged schools and communities access to one of our productions at no cost.

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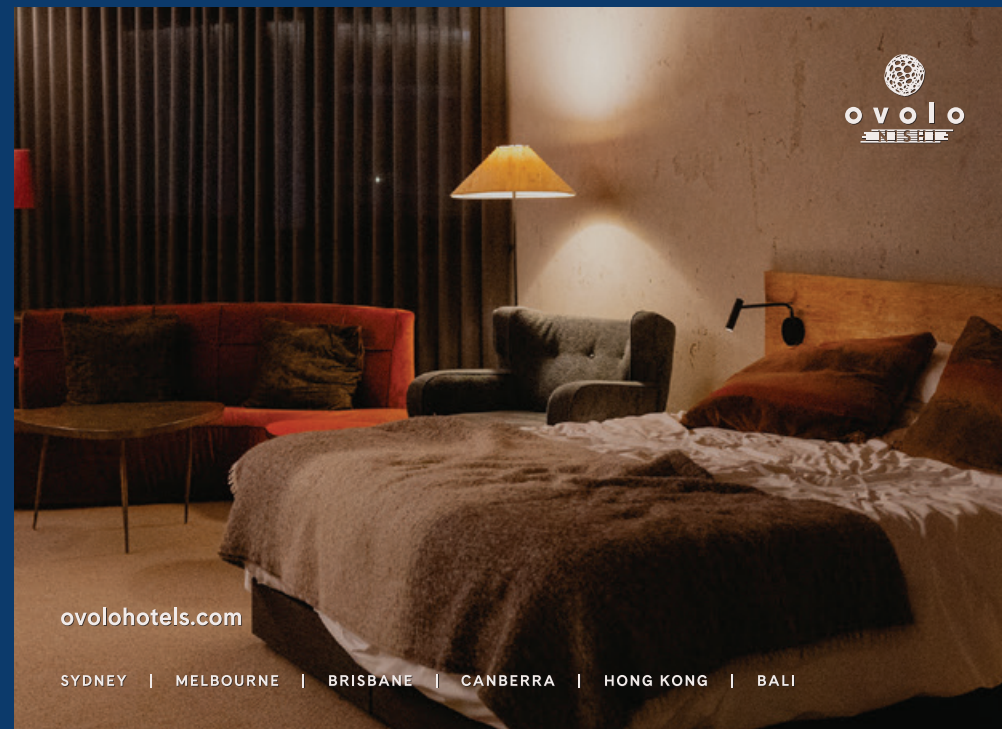


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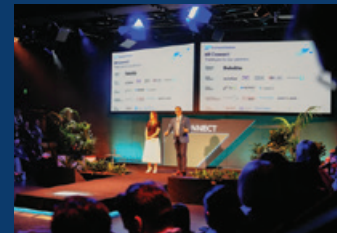
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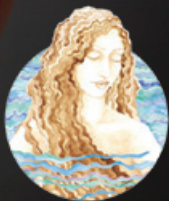
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Jesse Lizotte *Jimmy and Jane Barnes* 2020 (detail)
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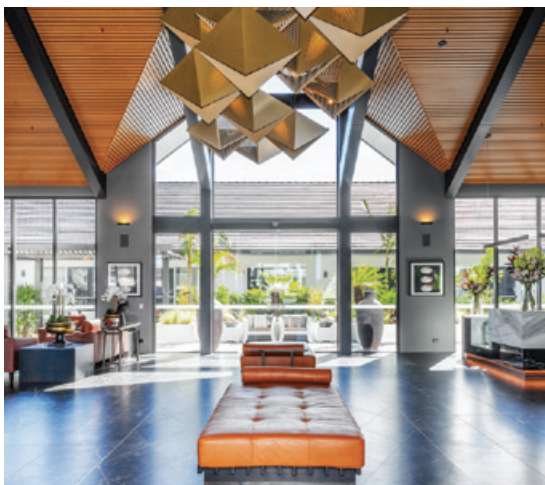
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