



Nothing compares to
the #1 Brokerage in
Litchfield County*

We can't wait to see the 2024
production of Romeo & Juliet

WILLIAMPITT.COM

Washington Depot Brokerage | 860.868.6600

Each office is independently owned & operated. 🏠
*Source: SmartMLS, Sold Dollar Volume, All Property Types
01/01/00-12/31/23.



"Connecticut Distillery of the Year!"

- NY International Spirits Competition, 2024

We take the finest grains our Connecticut farmers have to offer and transform them into award-winning spirits. We invite you to visit us for a complementary tour & tasting to experience our farm-to-bottle-to-farm philosophy. We offer tastings of our bourbons, rye, vodkas, gin and ready-to-drink craft cocktails.

©2024 Litchfield Distillery, Litchfield, CT. Sip Responsibly.

Open 7 Days a week!

Book tours at LitchfieldDistillery.com.

**LITCHFIELD
DISTILLERY**
THE SPIRIT OF HARD WORK®

Shakespeare
in the Litchfield Hills



Romeo & Juliet

August 7 - 11, 2024

Sponsored, in part, by



Shakesperience®
PRODUCTIONS, INC.




County
WINE AND SPIRITS

Extensive selection of American
and imported wines, spirits,
beers, cheeses & cigars.

Visit Us at
178 New Milford Turnpike
New Preston, CT
860-868-2181

— Open —
Mon - Sat 10-8
Sun 10-4



 **FIVE JANES**

Clothing & Gift

3 Bryan Hall Plaza
Washington Depot CT

Our Generous Donors

Rose Garden (continued)

Ginny & Robert Reynolds
Winston Samuel
Marilyn Santiago
Deirdre Segerson
Kevin Walsh
Gizelle Alexander
Phyllis Allen
Camille & David Gillespie
Joe Mustich
Melissa Parisi
Jean Taddonio & Jack Leahy
Sally & Robert Woodrooffe
Theresa Auletta
Robert E. Burns & Gary T. Schiro
Mr. & Mrs. Carlos Canal

Adele DeFrancesco
Emily Fitzhugh
Judie Gorra & Richard Hefferon
Mary Guilfoile
Stacy Holmen
Christine Jackson
Deborah & David Schultz
Mark Yuabov
Rebecca Hoyt
Martha & Doug Winkel
Mr. & Mrs. M. Donovan
Joann King
Maxime & Evan Harnik
Ilene Leff & Howard Silverman
Michael Petruzzini
Margaret Field



Dine in Comfort
with our
Updated Winterized
Porch & Patio!

THE
OWL
WINE & FOOD BAR

Expanded New Menu
Crafted Pizzas | Sandwiches
Shares | Cocktails | Wine | Beer

18 EAST SHORE ROAD
NEW PRESTON, CT
860.619.0585
@OWLNEWPRESTON
WWW.OWLNEWPRESTON.COM



ORDER ONLINE

Our Generous Donors

Shakesperience and its Friends in the Litchfield Hills, heartily appreciate all of the following for their generous contributions to this year's production.

Eternal Love Level (\$5000 & above)

Anonymous Donor
K & Dr. John Kehoe
William J. Liese & Mark R. Mobley

Constellation Level (\$2500-4999)

Molly Butler Hart & Michael Griffin
Sande Breakstone & Ron Garfunkel
Barbara P. & Charles R. Robinson
Evelyn Rodstein & Glenn Kaplan
Shellie Reade

Solar Level (\$1000 - \$2499)

Dawn Pasquin & Michael Cordelli
Jennifer Judge & Ethelind Coblin
Mrs. Murray Haber
Mr. & Mrs. T. Ingrassia
Millie Perry
Susan & Craig Schoon
Monica Richman & Steven Lerangis
Pamela & Adam Riess
Wendy Bernard & Matthew Atkinson
Sharon Emek & Denny Gilmore
Rebecca & Jim Neary
Francie Campbell & Roger Netzer
Sharon & Mark Ruchman

Lunar Level (\$500 - \$999)

Ann McDonough & Jack Gilpin
Susan & John Magee
Ellen Fox
Chrissy Armstrong & Ben Nicholl
Kathleen Spear
Denise Pasch
Rene Bloch Foundation

Balcony Level (\$250 - \$499)

Elizabeth Fitzgerald
Michelle & Michael Gorra
Karen Silk
Philip Andryc
Roberta Freedman
Ann & Jack Pascal
Frank Acaro & James Booth
Kelly Kurz & Jim Worth

Susan Payne
Mr. & Mrs. B. Bardel
Lori & Steve Fineman
Elise Jaffe & Jeffrey Brown
Anais Perkins Kjep
Susan Merrill
Howard Rosenfeld & Sheryl Leach
Daniel C. & Sandra D. Vollaro

Rose Garden (\$1 - \$249)

Colleen Calhoun
Linda & Bernie Dishy
Elaine Henry & Robert Chiodo
Pamela Moffett & Dwight Keeney
Guy Moszkowski & Sandra Pinnavaia
Nancy Novogrod
David Sfara
Karen Streeter
Beth & Tom Rickart
Andrew Wichmann
Kay & Lou Abella
Martha & Robert Bernstein
Wanda & Stephen Brighenti
Elizabeth Brown
Nancy Conant & Ferris Gorra
Caroyln Cicchetti
Adele Conner
Karyn Detje & Sal Sorce
Carol DiStaulo
Jean Dugan
Margaret & Lester Edelman
Sue & Jim Farley
Phil Farmer
Mr. & Mrs. T. Fenton
Don Fiftal
Ellen Flynn
Rosemary Giuliano
Joseph Godfrey
Stacey Goodwin
Victoria Hamilton & John Slowik
Hickory Stick LLC DBA
Timothy Howell
Marianne Manzolillo
Leslie Middlebrook
Susan Jeanne Rea

ROMEO & JULIET

By: William Shakespeare
Directed By: Emily Mattina
Produced By: Shakesperience Productions, Inc.

This Theatre operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States. Please turn off all electronic devices such as beepers, cellular phones, and watches for the duration of the performance. Recording of any kind is strictly prohibited.



WASHINGTON DEPOT, CT

860-868-7923

*Family Owned & Operated
for Three Generations*

Residential • Commercial • Repairs
Generator Installation & Service
Home Automation Systems

WASHINGTON LIQUOR STORE

3 River Road
Washington Depot, CT 06794
(860) 868 7471

Hours:
Mon. — Thurs. 10am - 8pm
Fri. — Sat. 9am - 8pm
Sun. 10am - 3pm



The Company

Vania Slight (Lady Montague) is very excited to be part of this production. She has participated in various productions during her elementary and high school years. In her spare time, she enjoys singing and listening to music. Being involved in theater is a passion of hers, and she is thrilled to bring Lady Montague to life on stage.

** Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors
and Stage Managers in the United States.*

All of us at Shakespeare in the Litchfield Hills appreciate
the help and support of the Town of Washington.

Thank you for joining us at River Walk Pavilion.
Please help us keep the park clean.



The Company

Humphry Rolleston (Lord Capulet) is delighted to be returning to Shakesperience Productions after appearing as Theseus in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 2022. Other credits include *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Lane, Merriman) with the Goshen Players, *Spamalot* (God, Narrator), Landmark Community Theatre in Thomaston, and *Barnaby Rudge* (Title Role), a Nutmeg Junction Community Radio Series currently heard in more than 20 states, Canada, Ireland and New Zealand. He is also a regular reader at KidsPlay Children's Museum in Torrington and a narrator and voiceover performer with the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra.

Winston Samuel (Prince Escalus) I am a native New Yorker-born and raised in the Bronx. My love for acting started in middle school on an invite to Chappaqua Summer Theatre, where I appeared in several musicals. I continued my acting studies at Cornell University. Due to the demands of my employment, I had to put acting on a back burner. 40 plus years later, I am thrilled to be part of this production as Prince Escalus. My other passions are singing, reading, and traveling.

Landon Shaw (Production Stage Manager)* is honored to be making her debut with Shakesperience Productions. Landon is a Chicago native, now based in St. Louis. In a career that has spanned over 35 years now, Landon has worked all over the country in a variety of roles and positions. From equity actress, to company manager, artistic director, producer, and educator she has dedicated most of her life to the performing arts and sharing her passion for this amazing craft with all. When not working on theatrical productions, Landon can be found completing her memoir and spending as much time as possible with her phenomenal wife, step-daughter, and prince of a cat. Thespis. Landon wishes to thank Emily, Jeff, Jessica, Isaiah and this phenomenal cast and crew for all of their dedication and work. Thank you all for supporting live theatre...we truly couldn't do this without all of you. Please support the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's research. Instagram: @landonshaw

Michael Slight (Abraham) is 9 years old, currently heading into 4th grade. This is his fourth theater production. Previously, he played the Policeman in *Annie Jr.* Benito in *Dia de Los Reyes*, and Chef Louis in *The Little Mermaid Jr.* He enjoys playing Minecraft and reading "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" books, among others. He is very good at math and schoolwork and loves learning as much as he can. At home, he takes care of four guinea pigs, five quails, and two dogs. He is excited to be part of this production and look forward to many more theater adventures in the future.

Shaun Slight (Balthazar) has been involved in theater since childhood and this is his first show back after a long hiatus. He is thrilled that his son is following in the footsteps of both his wife and himself in the world of theater. It's a joy to share this passion as a family and to be part of this production.

Shakespeare in the Litchfield Hills

Thank you to our sponsors

PERFORMER LEVEL

Spring Hill Winery
Dana Schulman Design
County Wine
Washington Liquor
Litchfield Distillery
Wright Electrical
William Pitt Southeby's

The Owl

PARTNER LEVEL

Five Janes

SUPPORTER LEVEL

Devine Hair Co.
Hickory Stick Bookshop

SPECIAL THANKS

Jennifer Grace
Spirit Café
Mattatuck Museum
Donna & Bob Civitello
Rafael Feliciano
Susan Merrill
Dave Zebney and Don Cassidy
Michelle & Michael Gorra
Jay Liese & Mark Mobley

Susan Rush
Kay and Luis Abella
Monica Richman & Steven Lerangis
Varner Creative
Brendon Kendall
Job Rosario
Ray Work





Books - Gifts - Stationery - Toys

*Serving readers
of all ages for over 70 years*

Open 7 Days a Week!
Mon - Sat 9:30-5 and Sun 11-4

T 860-868-0525

www.hickorystickbookshop.com

2 Green Hill Road • Washington Depot, CT

The Company

Jessie Lizotte (Scenery Designer) is delighted to be back with Shakesperience after designing *Twelfth Night* in 2021. *Select design credits include Ragtime, Steel Magnolias, Sylvia, It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play* (Music Theatre of Connecticut), *Little Shop of Horrors, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Something Rotten, Alice by Heart* (Fairfield Prep Players), and *The Thanksgiving Play* (Fairfield University). Jessie graduated from Fairfield University with a BA in Theatre, and studied at Fordham's London Dramatic Academy. She is excited to help bring the world of Romeo and Juliet to the Litchfield Hills!

K. Ann McDonald (Dramaturg) is a freelance dramaturg and Shakespeare educator who consults on Shakespeare's text and other aspects of the plays, such as: historical context, critical interpretations, themes, and character interpretation. Ann was also the dramaturg for Shakespeare in the Litchfield Hills' productions of *Twelfth Night* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. She is a dramaturg for Apocalyptic Artists Ensemble in NYC (*A Midsummer Night's Dream; Julius Caesar, As You Like It*), and is a co-founder and dramaturg for the Hunts Point Children's Shakespeare Ensemble (17 productions from 2007 to date — *A Midsummer Night's Dream; The Tempest; As You Like It; Twelfth Night; Romeo & Juliet; Hamlet; Much Ado About Nothing*), currently a program of The Public Theater in partnership with the Hunts Point Alliance for Children. President of the Board of the Shakespeare Society in New York, 2007-2017 (board member from 1997); Board member of the Hunts Point Alliance for Children, 2007 to date.

Susan Merrill (Lady Capulet) About 45 years ago, Susan was a theater major at the University of Maryland, where she played Celia in *As You Like It*, Emily in *Our Town*, and Wendy in *Peter Pan*. After college, she appeared as Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Theater Hopkins in Baltimore and as Bianca in *Taming of the Shrew* at the Shakespeare Summer Festival on the grounds of the Washington Monument. She then moved to NYC to pursue her dream of becoming a professional actress. After a few years of mostly waiting on tables, she quit acting, married the chef, and went to law school. Susan is thrilled (and a little nervous) to be returning to the stage these many years later. She lives in Warren, CT with her husband Tom and their pug Hunny Bee.

Pamela Prior (Costume Designer) is a Connecticut based Costume Designer and is excited to design her first production with Shakesperience! Favorite Costume Design credits include: *Twelfth Night* (American Shakespeare Center), *The Mountaintop* (Virginia Stage Company), *Nanjing Race* (Abingdon Theatre- NYC), *Timon of Athens* (The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey) & *Anna Christie* (Monomoy Theatre). She has also been the costume shop manager at The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, Virginia Stage Company, Vassar College, Theatre at Monmouth and Goodspeed Musicals. She holds an MFA in Costume Design from The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a BFA in Design/ Technical Theatre from the University of Connecticut. Much love to my dog Murphy and many thanks to my family for many years of love and support!

The Company

Lyra Harada (Music Designer/Director) currently based in Waterbury, CT and an active chamber musician and violinist, having experience playing at venues including Carnegie Hall and the Vianden Castle in Vianden, Luxembourg. She received her Bachelor of Music degree in Musical Studies in 2017 with a concentration on Music History and Violin at the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam. Her teachers include Eriko Sato, John Lindsey, Liesl Schoenberger Doty, Gary Kosloski, David Oei, and Edmund Niemann. Along with serving as the Secretary of the Board of Directors at the Violoncello Society of New York, Lyra is on the faculty at Judah's Camp School of Music and at Fairfield School of Music and is a current Teaching Artist at Bravo Waterbury!, an El-Sistema-inspired program created by the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra. She was previously the Children's Music Director and Educator at the Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation in White Plains, NY, and the Music Director for Shakesperience's production of *Dia de Los Reyes* in December 2023.

Emily Haynes Curtis (Juliet) is an NYC based actor thrilled to be making her Shakesperience debut in the beautiful Litchfield Hills. Previous credits include Dromio of Ephesus (*Comedy of Errors*); Tillie Evans (*She Kills Monsters*); Enid Hoops (*Legally Blonde*); Marianne (*Sense and Sensibility*); and Little Red (*Into the Woods*). Emily can be found performing weekly as a Representative in Candlehouse Collective's groundbreaking remote epic *Lennox Mutual*. Special thanks to Emily Mattina, Richard Lefleur, Nathanael Curtis, and whoever invented the microwavable corn dog: heroes one and all.

Richard Lafleur (Mercutio/Friar John)* is thrilled to be returning to Shakespeare in the Litchfield Hills for the second time, and to work amongst such an amazing cast of both old and new friends. Mercutio is a dream role. He is also thrilled to share the stage for the first time, professionally, with his dear friend from grad school, the incredible Jamie Hansen! Training: The New School NYC (BFA in Musical Theatre), The Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, UK (MA in Acting). National Tours: *The Producers* (Leo Bloom), *Cabaret* (Ernst Ludwig), *Monty Python's Spamalot* (The Character Man). Regional: *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Valentine), *Comedy of Errors* (Antipholus of Syracuse), *Twelfth Night* (Sebastian), *Legally Blonde* (Emmett Forest), *Guys and Dolls* (Nicely Nicely Johnson), *Sweet Charity* (Oscar Lindquist). Lots of love to his incredible parents, and his Anne Marie. Enjoy the show! www.RichardLafleur.com

Viola Lapham (Gregory) is an incoming sophomore at Taft High School and has been acting since the age of three. Her latest production includes Curio in *Twelfth Night* and Mustardseed in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. She would like to thank her mom for this incredible play, and her dad and brother for always supporting her.

Shakesperience Productions, Inc.

Shakesperience is a nonprofit professional theater company located in Connecticut that reaches a Northeast audience of adults and students alike with outdoor and in-studio performances, Saturday and private acting classes, school & camp tours, and residency programs. The company was founded in 1996 by Emily Mattina and Jeffrey Lapham, with a mission to educate and inspire students, families, and theater professionals through the arts.

Shakespeare in the Litchfield Hills Committee

Kathryn & John Kehoe	Karen Silk
Susan & John Magee	K. Ann McDonald
Dawn Pasquin	Carolyn Ciccetti
Susan Payne	

Board of Directors & Staff

Gizelle Alexander	Daniel C. Vollaro, C.P.A.
Frances Batista	Raymond Work
Carolyn Ciccetti	Emily Mattina, Artistic Director
Doug Donato	Jeffrey Lapham, Executive Producer
Alisa Hunt	Isaiah Santiago, Managing Director
Kathryn Kehoe	Jessica Gaddis, Program Manager of Arts & Education
Rep. Ron Napoli, Jr.	Lisa VanGeersdaele, Marketing Associate & Outreach Coordinator
Jim O'Rourke	
Shaun Slight	

Friends of Shakesperience in the Litchfield Hills

Pam & Jack Baker	K. Ann McDonald
Jennifer Judge & Ethelind Coblin	Roger Netzer
Margaret & Lester Edelman	Paula & Humphry Rolleston
Kim Gallo	Sharon & Mark Ruchman
Kristin Kunhardt	Katie Ré & Eric Scheidt
Mark Mobley & Jay Liese	Margaret Ferguson & Dan Sherr



117 Bank Street • Waterbury, CT 06702
shakesperience.org

From the Artistic Director

Dear Audience:

Tonight's performance is not just about *Romeo & Juliet*, but about the connections we create with each other—across the stage, through the audience, and within our communities and beyond. I will quote our dramaturg, Ann McDonald, when we first discussed my idea to create a set based on the Alhambra: "Some say that the Iberian peninsula, when ruled by the Moors who built the Alhambra, was a cultural utopia in which Jews, Muslims, and Christians lived together in harmony – "convivencia"; others say such peaceful co-existence was largely a myth. In our play, 'convivencia' seems more a peace towards which the Prince of Verona strives than one that has been achieved. Just before the play begins, the age-old feud between the families has newly erupted into fighting in the streets. The idea, that might be true, that there was one brief shining moment of "convivencia" in what is now Spain that Verona could emulate can be suggested by the Alhambra-esque set and motifs (intricate patterns of shapes); but the reality of keeping a hold on that aspirational harmony is easier said than done, given human nature's tendency to hang on to 'ancient grudge[s],' codes of 'honor,' and cycles of revenge. And yet the love between Romeo and Juliet—which is surely true-- is itself a brief shining moment of hope."

The heartbeat of our work, this connection, reminds us of the importance of family, friends, mentors, and community. As you watch the story unfold under the open sky, you are part of a living, breathing piece of art that blends past, present, and future in a single, magical moment. This evening, you are not just spectators, but co-creators in an ephemeral, unforgettable event.

Instant gratification defines much of our world today, but tonight is a labor of love taking over two years:

To the Production and Design Team, and Ensemble: My friends and colleagues past and present...what a joy to work with such talented and innovative and positive people. Thank you.

To our Board of Directors: Your guidance and support brings us to where we are today...25 years after inception. Thank you.

To the Friends of Shakespeare In The Litchfield Hills: you spent countless hours bringing this gift to our community. You inspire us all and your tireless efforts result in this beautiful moment of connection. There are no words to express our gratitude. Specifically from me, thank you.

With Love,

Emily



The Company

Ted Bushman* (Paris, Cantor, Fight Choreographer) is a NYC-based composer, actor, and writer whose favorite roles include Antipholus of Syracuse in *Comedy of Errors*, Audrey II in *Little Shop of Horrors*, and Mr. Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*. He is a proud graduate of the BMI Lehman Engel Musical Theater Writer's Workshop and is working on both his next novel and his next musical. Insta: @importanceofbeingted

Amber Gebert-Goldsmith (Assistant Stage Manager) Shakesperience Productions debut! Stage Manager-Playhouse On Park POLKADOTS (TOUR), NorthernStage BRIDGEUP, The Tank PIM'S METAMORPHOSES. ASM-Jack Cole Dancers, Yale Opera, Phoenix Theatre Company, Opera San José, City Lights Theatre Company. PA-Goodspeed Musicals, A.C.T. of Connecticut, Santa Cruz Shakespeare. Thanks to Jo for being my inspiration and my family.

Kathleen Green (Sampson, Juliet u/s) is honored to return for her 6th season with Shakesperience Productions. Kathleen recently played Flora Payne Whitney in the premiere of *Quentin: A Roosevelt Musical*. Other roles include Kathryn (*Radium Girls*), Ariel (*The Tempest*), Louise (*Gypsy*), and Babysitter (*New York* by David Rimmer). Kathleen holds a B.A. in Theatre from Smith College. A classically trained soprano, Kathleen also enjoys singing folk music and musical theatre.

Abra Gould (Benvolio)* is delighted to be joining Shakesperience Productions for a 4th summer bringing magic, laughter and wonder to Litchfield Hills. Past Company Credits: Viola in *Twelfth Night*, Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Adriana in *The Comedy of Errors*. Other Shakespeare credits include Lady M in *Macbeth* and Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* with The Oxford Shakespeare Company. Additionally, she has worked on multiple films and is a classically trained singer. www.abragould.com, IG@abrasegerson

Jamie Hansen (Tybalt/Apothecary) is an LA based actor thrilled to be returning for this production of *Romeo and Juliet*, after previously appearing in *The Comedy of Errors* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Shakesperience. Outside of Shakesperience he specializes in physical performances, doing full suit puppetry, motion capture and creature work. He has also appeared in guest roles in shows on Nickelodeon and Comedy Central, as well as doing voice acting work for Funimation and Apple TV+. He was born and raised in Hong Kong before moving to the UK at age 18 to study at Cambridge University. After which he received an MA in Acting from the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. Jamesthehansen.com @jamesthehansen

The Company

Melissa Bayern (Nurse) is beyond thrilled to be making her Shakesperience debut with such a glorious cast and team. She recently moved back to the US from the UK, where she studied at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and then worked and lived in London for many years. She has worked extensively in theatre, film, and voiceover on both sides of the pond. Favorite select credits include: The UK premier of *The Donkey Show* (Tytania/Sander), *Out There* (Union Theatre, London), *Murder Ballad* (The Narrator), *The Wild Party* (Kate), and she made international headlines in the theatre world for stepping in last minute to play “The Witch” at The Royal Exchange’s production of *Into the Woods*. She is also a singer/songwriter signed with Mother West Records—check out her album called “Cedarwood Road”! Love to my wonderful mom and husband for making this happen! For my little love, Tennyson.

Michael R. Briney (Lord Montague) Huge thanks to Emily for recalling me to theatre, and to Michelle and Chris for making me a nepodaddy. Favorite long-ago roles include Leontes, Oliver, Carleton Fitzgerald, Gunner, Boanerges, King Arthur, Lancelot, Peer Gynt, Dr. Carasco, Don Alfonso, Gina Walters, and Teyve.

Will Nash Broyles (Romeo) is thrilled to be working with Shakesperience Productions for the first time! His favorite acting credits include Pippin in *Pippin* (Greenbrier Valley Theatre), Joe Pitt in *Angels in America* (Madison Lyric Stage), Detective Sergeant Trotter in *The Mousetrap* (Winnepesaukee Playhouse), and *Shear Madness*, *Our Town*, and *The Lifespan of a Fact* (all at the Sharon Playhouse). Earlier this year, he directed and choreographed *Some Enchanted Evening* at Greenbrier Valley Theatre in West Virginia. Later this summer, he will be the Lighting Designer for Steel Magnolias at the Sharon Playhouse. Will is originally from South Carolina, and is a proud graduate of Clemson University. Love and thanks to Michael and Daphne!

Robert Edward Burns (Friar Lawrence)* is thrilled to return to the Shakesperience stage. As the Director of the Mattatuck Museum, he brings a unique perspective to the production. With a rich history in theater, including a Master of Fine Arts from the University of South Carolina and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from West Virginia University, Bob’s passion for the stage is evident. Following a year-long Fellowship at the Shakespeare Theater in Washington, DC, Bob moved to New York City to pursue acting and worked extensively in television, film, and theater. Simultaneously, he launched his career as a nonprofit professional working in education, social services, and the arts. A seasoned performer, Bob is a proud member of Actors’ Equity and SAG-AFTRA. He previously delighted audiences as Bottom in the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra/Shakesperience Production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. He resides in Goshen with his husband, writer Gary Schiro.

Friends of Shakesperience

For the forth time since 2019, Shakesperience Productions, Inc. (a 501c3 organization) is offering Western Connecticut another beloved Shakespeare production set amidst the beautiful surrounding Litchfield Hills. *Romeo and Juliet* is probably the Bard’s best known tragedy as well as the inspiration for so many cinematic and theatrical versions including Leonard Bernstein’s world renowned musical *West Side Story*.

The Friends of Shakesperience in the Litchfield Hills are privileged to welcome back Emily Mattina, Shakesperience Artistic Director and Co-founder with her husband Jeffrey Lapham. Together, Emily and Jeff have orchestrated the productions of *Comedy of Errors* in 2019, *Twelfth Night* in 2021, *Midsummer Night’s Dream* in 2022 and now *Romeo and Juliet* in 2024. As with past productions, this summer’s effort is collaborative with so many contributing their talents—set and costumer design, set construction, dramaturgy, original music, marketing—to make each night’s performance of *Romeo and Juliet* special and memorable.

However, none of these professional productions would have been possible without the financial support and enthusiasm of the community. For 2024, it has been a long two year journey raising the funds needed to bring a production of such extraordinary quality to the Litchfield Hills. Hundreds of donors have embraced the idea of *free* outdoor performances offered to local families as well as to visitors from neighboring states. As a result, friends have not only opened their wallets to make *Romeo and Juliet* a reality, but have also opened their homes for fundraising receptions, house tours, and, recently, the hosting of actors in the production. In addition, we are extremely thankful to local businesses—Spring Hill Vineyard, County Wine, Washington Liquors, Litchfield Distillery—for their meaningful and constant support.

The Friends of Shakesperience in the Litchfield Hills would like to extend a special thank you to First Selectman Jim Brinton and to the residents of Washington who approved a generous ARPA grant for the production of *Romeo and Juliet*. With so many other important local causes competing for the ARPA funds, we were privileged to have the Town recognize the consistency with Washington’s longstanding arts legacy that five *free* Shakespeare performances could represent in the community. We appreciate the credibility that the awarding of ARPA funds has given to Shakesperience Productions and Shakespeare in the Litchfield hills.

We hope you will enjoy tonight’s performance and will
you exit the pavilion.

Kathryn S. Kehoe

and

The Friends of Shakesperience
in the Litchfield Hills



Romeo & Juliet Synopsis

Our story takes place in Verona, where the Montagues and Capulets are feuding. Romeo Montague, is love-sick over Rosaline. His friends tell him to forget Rosaline and find another love. Meanwhile, the Capulet household is preparing a party. Lord Capulet and Paris make a plan for Paris to marry Capulet's daughter, Juliet. However, Capulet says that Juliet must agree. He advises Paris to win her love at the party. Romeo and his friends learn of and decide to attend the Capulets' masquerade party, in secret. While at the party, Tybalt, Juliet's cousin sees Romeo and attempts to confront him but Lord Capulet stops him.

During the party, Romeo sees Juliet and they instantly fall in love before knowing the other's true identity. Shortly after Romeo leaves, Nurse informs Juliet that Romeo is in fact a Montague. This information does not seem to sway Juliet's feelings for him.

Even though the two lovers' families are mortal enemies, Romeo and Juliet can not seem to stay away from one another. That night, Romeo sneaks into the Capulet residence and climbs Juliet's balcony where they end up exchanging vows of their love. Early the next morning, Romeo finds Friar Laurence and tells him of the events that just unfolded, in which he agrees to marry the lovers within that day.

Tybalt challenges Romeo to a duel, which he refuses because of his new love and Tybalt's relation to Juliet. Romeo's friend Mercutio steps in and is killed during the duel. In a fit of rage, Romeo murders Tybalt and is banished from Verona by Prince Escalus.

Wanting to relieve Juliet's grief over her cousin's death, Lord Capulet tells Juliet to marry Paris. She refuses and goes to Friar Laurence to seek help. He gives her a potion that will make her appear dead for forty-two hours after she drinks it. Friar Laurence will then write a letter to Romeo, informing him of the plan, for once she wakes from her slumber, they can start their life together. Later that night, when she returns home, she drinks the contents of the vial. The following morning, her body is found and is taken to the family crypt for her 'death' to be mourned.

Romeo hears of Juliet's 'death' from Balthasar before Friar Laurence's letter could reach him. Romeo obtains a poison and rushes back to Verona, vowing to die with her that night. When Friar Laurence hears that his letter was never able to reach Romeo, he also rushes to the tomb in order to be there when Juliet wakes.

Paris goes to Juliet's tomb to mourn her and runs into Romeo. They fight and it ends with Romeo killing Paris. Exhausted, Romeo lays down next to Juliet and drinks the poison, dying next to her. Juliet wakes just as Friar Laurence rushes in, too late to stop Paris or Romeo. The Friar tries to get Juliet to leave, but she refuses, taking Romeo's dagger, ending her own life. Friar Laurence explains everything to the officers and both of the families once they arrive. Both the Montagues and the Capulets agree to end their feud, for so many lives have been lost unnecessarily.

Romeo & Juliet

By William Shakespeare

Produced by Shakesperience Productions, Inc.

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director Emily Mattina
Production Stage Manager..... Landon Shaw*
Assistant Stage Manager Amber Gebert-Goldsmith
Production Assistant..... Jessica Gaddis
Scenery Designer Jessie Lizotte
Music Designer/Director Lyra Harada
Costume Designer Pamela Prior
Technical Director..... Steve Gambini
Costume Crew Opal Carter
Set Crew Tommy Lapham
..... Isaiah Santiago
Dramaturgy Ann McDonald
Fight Captain Jamie Hansen
Fight Choreographer Ted Bushman*
Sound Designer/Light Design Glen Aliczi
Photographers Phil Dutton and Varner Creative
Board Operator Tommy Lapham
House Managers Friends of Shakespeare in the Litchfield Hills
Lighting & Audio by Advanced Lighting and Sound Solutions

CAST

Romeo Will Nash Broyles
Juliet Emily Haynes Curtis
Lord Montague..... Michael Briney
Lady Montague..... Vania Slight
Benvolio Abra Gould*
Lady Capulet..... Susan Merrill
Lord Capulet Humphry Rolleston
Prince Escalus Winston Samuel
Paris Ted Bushman*
Nurse Melissa Bayern
Mercutio/Friar John Richard Lafleur*
Tybalt/Apothecary..... Jamie Hansen
Friar Lawrence Robert Edward Burns*
Balthasar Shaun Slight
Sampson Kathleen Green
Abraham Michael Slight
Gregory Viola Lapham

THERE WILL BE ONE INTERMISSION

*Member of Actors' Equity Association,
the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.