

NEWS RELEASE – May 6, 2016

VANCOUVER, B.C. – *Romeo and Juliet* opens Bard on the Beach's 2016 season

Contact: Cynnamon Schreinert Tel: 604-802-2733

Email: cynnamon@hartleypr.com



IN SHORT: Bard on the Beach Shakespeare Festival's first production of the 27th season is [Romeo and Juliet](#). The classical, sensuous production is a salute to the timeless power of Shakespeare's beloved romantic tragedy. The play runs **June 3 to September 23** on the BMO Mainstage and is directed by award-winning director **Kim Collier**. Tickets: 604-739-0559 or bardonthebeach.org.

ROMEO AND JULIET LAUNCHES THE 27TH SEASON OF BARD ON THE BEACH

IN FULL: [Bard on the Beach Shakespeare Festival](#) begins its 27th season with [Romeo and Juliet](#). Shakespeare's sweeping story of two star-crossed lovers inspires audiences even as it breaks their hearts. Directed by award-winning director **Kim Collier** (*Hamlet*, 2013), this timeless romantic tragedy runs from **June 3 to September 23** on the BMO Mainstage.

THE STORY: Two powerful families in Verona, the Capulets (**Ashley Wright, Dawn Petten**) and the Montagues (**David Marr, Amber Lewis**), have been feuding for generations. When a fight breaks out between the families, Prince Escalus (**Victor Dolhai**) threatens death to anyone who disrupts the peace again. Meanwhile, Lord Capulet learns that Count Paris (**Shaker Paleja**) is eager to wed his daughter Juliet (**Hailey Gillis**) and hosts a masked ball to launch the courtship. Both Lady Capulet and Juliet's nurse (**Jennifer Lines**) encourage her to consider Paris' proposal. Through a mistake by the illiterate servant Peter (**Andrew Cownden**), Lord Montague's son Romeo (**Andrew Chown**), his friend Benvolio (**Ben Elliott**) and Prince Escalus' kinsman Mercutio (**Andrew McNee**) hear of the party and they decide to attend in disguise. Juliet's hotheaded cousin Tybalt (**Anton Lipovetsky**) recognizes Romeo as a Montague, but Capulet forbids him to fight. Meantime Romeo and Juliet meet and fall in love before each discovers the other's identity and opposing family affiliation. In spite of the divide between them, they profess their love and decide to wed secretly. Friar Laurence (**Scott Bellis**) agrees to marry the pair, hoping their union will end their families' bitter feud. Later, Tybalt encounters Romeo and challenges him to a duel. When Romeo refuses to fight, Mercutio fights Tybalt instead and is fatally wounded. Enraged at his friend's death, Romeo slays Tybalt and is banished from Verona by Prince Escalus. With the Friar's help, Romeo escapes to Mantua after marrying Juliet. Juliet, whose family is still urging her to marry Paris, is offered a potion by Friar Laurence to make her appear dead. Mistaken and lost messages by Balthasar (**Daniel Doheny**) and Friar John (**Tom Pickett**) set in motion the final fateful events for the doomed lovers.

Audiences will be swept away by this passionate production, directed by **Kim Collier**. Lighting Designer **Gerald King's** lighting concept and Scenery Designer **Pam Johnson's** bold stage design and monolithic set pieces combine to create an original vision that blends classic and contemporary elements within a period setting. Sound Designer **Brian Linds'** sweeping sound design creates aural signatures for the play's themes and characters. Costume Designer **Nancy Bryant** mixes contemporary couture influences with period styles to create an array of beautiful garments for all, from servants to the nobility. Fight Director **David McCormick** shapes the physical conflict between the feuding families while Choreographer **Valerie Easton** adds intensity and grace to the actors' movements. Props are designed by **Heidi Wilkinson**; **Matthew Thomas Walker** is Apprentice Director.

Performance details for [Romeo and Juliet](#) are as follows:

- **Previews:** June 3, 4, 5, 7, 9; **OPENS:** Friday, June 10 at 7:30pm
- Runs Tuesday through Sunday, June 3 to September 23, on the BMO Mainstage in Vanier Park
- Plays in repertory with [The Merry Wives of Windsor](#), which begins previews on June 17

Ticket prices for 2016 include all applicable fees and taxes and begin at **\$20** for every regular performance. Early booking is recommended for best seat selection; all seats are reserved and many performances sell out in advance. Play photography, the performance schedule and more site and event details are at bardonthebeach.org. Book tickets through the Bard Box Office at **604-739-0559**, (toll free) **1-877-739-0559** or [order online](#) through the Bard website. Bard on the Beach gratefully acknowledges its 2016 Season Sponsor, Goldcorp, and the production sponsor of *Romeo and Juliet*, RE/MAX.

SUGGESTED TWEET: The heartbreaking romance of *Romeo and Juliet* opens @bardonthebeach June 3 to September 23 <http://bit.ly/1Y3uy05> #Bard2016

[About Bard on the Beach Shakespeare Festival](#)

Bard on the Beach is one of Canada's largest not-for-profit, professional Shakespeare festivals. Established in 1990, Bard is an annual summer festival with a mission to perform, explore and celebrate the genius of William Shakespeare, surrounded by the natural beauty of Vancouver, British Columbia. Play performances run [Tuesday through Sunday](#) with matinees on selected weekends and weekdays; numerous special events on Monday evenings. All evening performances start at 7:30pm.

-30-

2016 advance photography is now available on the [Bard website](#).
Please contact Cynnamon Schreinert for password access or to arrange interviews.
Production video and images will be available June 4, 2016.