



SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL ST. LOUIS

Shakespeare Festival St. Louis Announces Romeo and Juliet as the 2018 Main Stage Production

Rick Dildine to direct the production set for June 1-24 in Forest Park

ST. LOUIS (June 2, 2017) -- Shakespeare Festival St. Louis announced today that *Romeo and Juliet* will be the 2018 season main stage production at Shakespeare Glen in Forest Park. A romantic tragedy, the production is scheduled June 1-24; preview nights are set for May 30-31.

Written in approximately 1594, the play showcases the long feud between the Montague and Capulet families in the city of Verona and the tragic fallout between Romeo and Juliet's brief romance. One of the Bard's most popular plays, the first half features a bit of comedy, romantic poetry, a masked ball and the long-remembered line, "Wherefore art thou Romeo?" Things take a tragic turn with the murder of Mercutio, a secret marriage and the eventual suicide of the star-crossed lovers.

Rick Dildine, artistic and executive director of the Festival, will direct the production, his third in Shakespeare Glen. He previously directed *Twelfth Night* in 2013 and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* during the 2016 season. Dildine won the St. Louis Theatre Circle Award for Best Director for his work on *Midsummer*.

"Romeo and Juliet is a tragedy of community. The failure of the parents to intervene and settle long-held disputes pushes the teens to an act that will forever change this community," Dildine said. "This was the first play we produced in Shakespeare Glen in 2001, and it feels timely to revisit a story about the responsibility of citizenry."

The cast and creative team will be announced at a later date.

Since its inception in 2001, Shakespeare Festival St. Louis has surpassed the one million mark in attendance through its work In the Schools, In the Streets and In the Park with more than 710,000 people attending the free main stage productions at Shakespeare Glen in Forest Park. The organization has reached an additional 300,000 students In the Schools through its educational programming. In 2010, the Festival launched SHAKE 38, a marathon participatory presentation of Shakespeare's entire 38-play canon community wide. In 2012, the Festival shut down its first street, Cherokee, to present a community-based play In the Streets. Shakespeare Festival St. Louis receives generous support from

the National Endowment for the Arts, the Missouri Arts Council, the Regional Arts Commission, and the Arts & Education Council of Greater St. Louis For more information, please visit www.sfstl.com or call 314-531-9800..

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