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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Shakespeare Festival St. Louis Extends its Programming with
In the Works at the Grandel Theatre this Fall**
Cast for the main stage production of "Romeo & Juliet" is finalized.

ST. LOUIS (Feb. 12, 2018) -- Shakespeare Festival St. Louis will be adding a fourth pillar – In the Works – to its In the Schools, In the Streets, In the Park programming, enhancing its appeal as a year-round festival, it was announced today. In the Works, a month-long ticketed event, scheduled for late fall at the Grandel Theatre, will culminate the 2018 season that includes the Education Tour (Feb. 5-April 15), SHAKE 38 (April 18-22), the main stage production of "Romeo & Juliet" (June 1-24) and Shakespeare in the Streets' production of "Blow, Winds," (June 15-16).

The Festival also announced that casting for "Romeo & Juliet" is complete – Sigrid Wise and Reynaldo Piniella will play the star-crossed lovers in "Romeo & Juliet." Wise, a graduate of the Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University, was recently seen on Festival stages in "The Winter's Tale" and, in the "The Tempest" in partnership with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. Piniella is a New York-based actor with theater, film and TV credits, including The Signature Theatre and Theatre for a New Audience, the 2018 Sundance Film Festival, "Sneaky Pete," "Flesh & Bone," "Greenleaf," and "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart."

In the Works is a festival of new plays that will include a local premiere production; staged readings of a newly commissioned work, and a family show for young audiences. Deep-dive talkbacks and art-making workshops for kids will round out the events. Additional information on In the Works, including show logistics, cast and ticketing will be announced later this summer.

"With In the Works we are taking the next step in deepening our commitment to our mission to produce not only the work of the Bard, but the work of artists inspired by his canon, and to build on the success of our commissions for our Schools and Streets programs," said Jennifer Wintzer, interim producing director of the Festival. "Producing work by local, contemporary artists has paved the way for us to broaden our offerings with new works from artists across the country. We are excited to give our patrons even more opportunities to experience the Festival year-round with the added bonus of being indoors."

In addition to In the Works, season highlights include:

In the Schools

Education Tour & Programming: Feb. 5 - April 15

Missouri students will learn a bit more of the Bard's take on identity and difference, issues people have grappled with no matter the genre, culture or century, and all part of the 2018 Shakespeare Festival St. Louis award-winning Education Tour, Feb. 5 through April 15. The tour includes more than 150 performances and workshops conducted at more than 50 schools throughout the metro area and rural Missouri.

In the Streets

SHAKE 38: April 18-22

The Festival's community organized marathon of the Bard's 38-play canon, heads into its ninth season. Since its inaugural year, SHAKE 38 has grown from a 38-hour performance by 200 artists to a free, five-day event attracting more than 1,500 artists throughout the region and dozens of diverse community partners. Participants interpret one of the Bard's plays any way they see fit – in any location. Kicking off this year's marathon is the SHAKE 38 Fashion Fund Showcase set for 5 to 7 p.m., on Wed., April 18. Hosted in partnership with the St. Louis Fashion Fund, the event will be held at the St. Louis Fashion Incubator (1533 Washington Ave.) and will feature ensembles inspired by Shakespeare's canon, curated by local stylist Sarah Stallman. Prepare for the unexpected.

“Blow, Winds”: June 15-16

This free, theatrical experience invites St. Louis neighborhoods to tell their stories. The production, set for 8:30 p.m. each night, will take place on the steps of the St. Louis Public Library, Central Branch (1301 Olive St.). Pre-show activities will kick off at 7 p.m. and will include a half dozen food trucks, live music and a family craft area. Playwright Nancy Bell authors the production. The event is presented in partnership with The St. Louis Public Library, and community partners including The Urban League and Gentlemen of Vision.

In the Park

“Romeo & Juliet”: June 1-24; Preview performances: May 30-31

Elena Araoz will direct the main stage production, which runs nightly, excluding Tuesdays in Forest Park. The nightly Green Show will feature pre-show entertainment including music, synopsis, roaming performers, and family arts and crafts. The traditional “mini-play” version of the main stage show will be performed Friday through Sunday, each weekend of the production.

“Romeo & Juliet” Cast

Joining Wise and Piniella in the cast of “Romeo & Juliet” are Festival veterans Gary Glasgow (Friar), Michael James Reed (Lord Capulet), Cherie Corinne Rice (Lady Capulet), Antonio Rodriguez (Benvolio), and Pete Winfrey (Paris/Prince). Newcomers include Patrick Blindauer (Apothecary); Patrice Foster (Lady Montague); Dakota Granados (Tybalt); Karl Hawkins (Balthazar); David Heron (Lord Montague); Jane Paradise (Nurse); Chris Ware (Friar John); and Terrell Wheeler (Mercutio); along with Webster Conservatory students Harrison Farmer and Esmeralda Garza.

“I think Shakespeare's voice rings loudly throughout this play, and at the end of this well-loved tragedy, he reminds us of tolerance and the power community,” said Araoz, director of *Romeo & Juliet*. “We invite our audiences to come, be entertained, and maybe more importantly, to interact with a centuries-old play that continues to hold up a mirror to our modern cities.”

Support

Support for *In the Works* is provided by Mont and Karen Levy. Shakespeare Festival St. Louis' Education Tour visits to rural communities are sponsored by the Monsanto Fund. The Tour also receives generous support from the Gateway Foundation, Saigh Foundation, UMB Bank, the Dana Brown Charitable Trust, and First Bank. SHAKE 38 is sponsored by Nancy and Ken Kranzberg. “Shakespeare in the Streets: Blow, Winds” is underwritten by PNC Arts Alive with additional support from the Whitaker Foundation, the William E. Weiss Foundation, the Strive Fund, Spire, and Spencer Fane.

About Shakespeare Festival St. Louis

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. Leadership support for Shakespeare Festival St. Louis' 2018 season is provided by the Whitaker Foundation. The Festival is also funded in part by 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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Shakespeare Festival St. Louis' 2018 Season Overview

Shakespeare Festival St. Louis will continue to produce programming In the Schools, In the Streets and In the Park. The fourth pillar – In the Works – will be introduced in late fall. Events are as follows:

In the Schools

Education Tour & Programming: Feb. 5 - April 15

A timely retelling of "Romeo & Juliet" and an original play for young audiences by playwright Nancy Bell, "A Most Outrageous Fit of Madness," will highlight Shakespeare Festival St. Louis' award-winning Education Tour, Feb. 5 through April 15, at up to 50 schools throughout the metro area and rural Missouri. Pairing the 50-minute performances with student workshops, the touring program showcases the words and deeds of William Shakespeare's timeless characters and themes written more than 400 years ago that still resonate today.

The Festival will also be expanding an artist's residency program to a St. Louis metro school and two schools in rural Missouri. Introduced as a pilot program in rural Scott County in 2016, professional teaching actors spent a week in the school community performing and teaching a residency on the literary arts.

Shakespeare Festival St. Louis' Education Tour visits to rural communities are sponsored by The Monsanto Fund. The Education Tour also receives generous support from the Gateway Foundation, Saigh Foundation, UMB Bank, the Dana Brown Charitable Trust, and First Bank.

In the Streets

SHAKE 38: April 18-22

SHAKE 38, the Festival's community organized marathon of the Bard's 38-play canon, heads into its ninth season. Since its inaugural year, SHAKE 38 has grown from a 38-hour performance by 200 artists to a free, five-day event attracting more than 1,500 artists throughout the region and dozens of diverse community partners. Participants interpret one of the Bard's plays any way they see fit – in any location. The result has been a mash-up of

performances in boats, on rooftops and even on top of a cupcake truck – one group of high school students performed “Romeo & Juliet” in 38 seconds at Art Hill in Forest Park.

Kicking off this year’s marathon is the SHAKE 38 Fashion Fund Showcase set for 5 to 7 p.m., on Wed., April 18. Hosted in partnership with the St. Louis Fashion Fund, the event will be held at the St. Louis Fashion Incubator (1533 Washington Ave.) and will feature ensembles inspired by Shakespeare’s canon, curated by local stylist Sarah Stallman. Prepare for the unexpected.

SHAKE 38 is sponsored by Nancy and Ken Kranzberg.

“Blow, Winds”: June 15-16

This free, theatrical experience invites St. Louis neighborhoods to tell their stories. The production, set for 8:30 p.m. each night, will take place on the steps of the St. Louis Public Library, Central Branch (1301 Olive St.). Pre-show activities will kick off at 7 p.m. and will include a half dozen food trucks, live music and a family craft area. Playwright Nancy Bell authors the production. The event is presented in partnership with The St. Louis Public Library, and community partners including The Urban League and Gentlemen of Vision. A rain out date has been scheduled for June 17.

“Shakespeare in the Streets: Blow, Winds” is underwritten by PNC Arts Alive with additional support from the Whitaker Foundation, the William E. Weiss Foundation, the Strive Fund, Spire, and Spencer Fane.

In the Park

“Romeo & Juliet”: June 1-24

Preview performances: May 30-31

Welcome to the fair city of Verona...join the infamous star-crossed lovers and their families – the Montague’s and the Capulet’s – under our own starry nights in Shakespeare Glen at Forest Park. 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 Romeo and Juliet.

Elena Araoz will direct the production. The nightly Green Show will feature pre-show entertainment including music, synopsis, roaming performers, and family arts and crafts. The traditional “mini-play” version of the main stage show will be performed Friday through Sunday.

Leadership support for Shakespeare Festival St. Louis’ 2018 season is provided by the Whitaker Foundation. The Festival is also funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Missouri Arts Council, the Regional Arts Commission, and the Arts & Education Council of Greater St. Louis.

In The Works (debuts late fall)

In the Works is a festival of new plays that will include a local premiere production; staged readings of a newly commissioned work, and a family show for young audiences. Deep-dive talkbacks and art-making workshops for kids will round out the events. Additional

information on In the Works, including show logistics, cast and ticketing will be announced later this summer.

| Generous support for In the Works is provided by Mont & Karen Levy.

**Shakespeare Festival St. Louis' 2018 Production:
"Romeo & Juliet"**

In Shakespeare Glen, Forest Park, June 1-24

Preview performances May 30-31

8 p.m. nightly (except Tuesdays)

6:30 p.m. Green Show

Performance Logistics

Admission: Admission is free; donations are gratefully accepted, and membership is encouraged. Ticketed, reserved seating is also available online and in the park.

Connect: Website: www.sfstl.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/shakesfestSTL>
Twitter: @shakesfestSTL
Instagram: ShakesfestSTL
Snapchat: shakesfestSTL

Forest Park is wheelchair accessible; designated parking is available in the free lots. Accessible performance seating is also available. Please call us if you need specific assistance: 314-531-9800

Pre-show Activities:

The nightly 6:30 p.m. Green Show features:

- Music by area bands;
- Roaming Musicians, Dancers, Singers, Jugglers, and other Performers;
- Family Art Activities Area provided by the National Charity League and Friends of Shakespeare Festival St. Louis;
- Free backstage tours at 6:30 p.m.
- The Bard's Buzz, a summary and character outline of the play, presented by the Shakespeare Squadron.
- A mini-play of "Romeo & Juliet," will be performed Friday through Sunday. The play is designed to introduce the characters and plot to children of all ages, performed by members of the Shakespeare Squadron, the Festival's teen ensemble.

Food/Drink

Picnic fare, including sandwiches, snacks, beer, wine, soda, and water are available for purchase, provided by the Saint Louis Zoo. Cash, debit, and credit cards are accepted.

Schlafly is the official beer of Shakespeare Festival St. Louis.

Butler's Pantry and the Festival will offer picnic boxes that will include a full dinner and dessert, plus optional reserved blanket or chair seating for the show. Picnics must be ordered in advance online or by phone and will be available for purchase in early May.

Festival Gift Shop

A selection of Shakespeare-themed items, as well as posters and t-shirts designed for this year's show, are available for sale at the Festival Gift Shop.

Getting to the Park

The Festival is located in Shakespeare Glen on Fine Arts Drive in Forest Park, east of the Saint Louis Art Museum.

Parking

Festival audiences can find street parking along Government, Lagoon, and Fine Arts drives, and also use the upper West parking lot near the Saint Louis Art Museum.

Shakespeare Festival St. Louis Bard's Society members can reserve complimentary parking in the Upper East lot. For information on parking locations, visit

<https://www.sfst.com/in-the-park/plan-your-visit/>

Public transportation

The Festival is a 20-minute walk from the Forest Park Metro Station at DeBaliviere, and the Skinker Metro Station at Skinker and Forest Park Parkway. Forest Park is also served by the #90 Bus. The Forest Park Trolley provides service to additional parking in the park, but has limited service hours. For transit information, visit

<http://www.metrostlouis.org/PLanYourTrip/Overview.aspx>

Cycling

Forest Park is known for its bike paths. Bicycle rental is offered at the Forest Park Information Center and bicycle racks are available at the Festival (please bring your own lock). Visit <http://www.forestparkforever.org/>

Seating

Open lawn seating is available on a first-come, first-serve basis; bring your blankets or chairs. Premium seating, priced at \$10 and \$20, can be reserved online starting in early May at www.sfstl.com until noon the day of the show, or purchased after 5:30 p.m. in the Glen. Visit <https://www.sfstl.com/in-the-park/plan-your-visit/> for more information on seating.

Weather Policy

In the event of inclement weather, performances may be delayed up to one hour. Should conditions persist, that evening's performance may be cancelled as a last resort.

Call the Weather Hotline (updated hourly between 6 - 8 p.m. on performance nights) at 314-531-9800, ext. 7, or follow the Festival on Twitter (@shakesfeststl for up-to-the-minute information.

Contact Information: Please visit www.sfstl.com or call 314-531-9800.

Shakespeare Festival St. Louis Productions:

- 2001 "Romeo & Juliet"
- 2002 "A Midsummer Night's Dream"
- 2003 "Macbeth"
- 2004 "As You Like It"
- 2005 "The Tempest"
- 2006 "Julius Caesar"
- 2007 "Much Ado About Nothing"
- 2008 "The Tragedy of King Richard the Third"
- 2009 "The Merry Wives of Windsor"
- 2010 "Hamlet"
- 2011 "The Taming of the Shrew"
- 2012 "Othello"
- 2013 "Twelfth Night"
- 2014 "Henry IV & Henry V"
- 2015 "Antony and Cleopatra"
- 2016 "A Midsummer Night's Dream"
- 2017 "The Winter's Tale"
- 2018 "Romeo & Juliet"

A Synopsis of Romeo & Juliet

Written in approximately 1594, *Romeo & Juliet* showcases the long, bloody feud between the Montague and Capulet families in the city of Verona and the tragic fallout of Romeo and Juliet's brief romance. One of the Bard's most popular plays, the first half features flirtation, romance, a masked ball, and the long-remembered line, "O Romeo, Romeo! 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.

The play opens with a street brawl between the two enemy houses, the Montagues and the Capulets. Prince Escalus of Verona stops the fight and declares that further breach of the peace will be punishable by death.

Later, Count Paris talks to Lord Capulet about marrying his daughter Juliet, but Capulet asks Paris to wait another two years and invites him to attend an extravagant Capulet party. Lady Capulet and Juliet's nurse try to persuade Juliet to accept the wealthy Paris' courtship.

On the Montague side, Benvolio talks with his cousin Romeo, Lord Montague's son, about his recent depression. Romeo tells him about his unrequited infatuation for a girl named Rosaline, one of Capulet's nieces. Persuaded by Benvolio and Mercutio, Romeo sneaks into the party at the Capulet house in hopes of meeting Rosaline. Romeo instead meets Juliet and falls in love.

Juliet's cousin, Tybalt, is enraged that Romeo has trespassed into the festivities and is only stopped from killing Romeo by Juliet's father.

After the party, Romeo sneaks into the Capulet orchard and overhears Juliet at her balcony window vowing her love to him. Romeo comes out of the darkness, surprising her. They profess their love and agree to be married. The visit Friar Laurence the next day, who, with hopes to reconcile the two warring families through their children's union, secretly marries them.

Tybalt, still enraged, tracks Romeo down and challenges him to a duel. Romeo, now considering Tybalt family through marriage, refuses to fight. Mercutio is offended by Tybalt's rudeness, as well as Romeo's submissiveness and accepts the duel on Romeo's behalf. Mercutio is fatally wounded when Romeo attempts to break up the fight. Grief-stricken and wracked with guilt, Romeo confronts and slays Tybalt.

The Prince exiles Romeo for the murder, threatening death if he ever returns. Romeo secretly spends the night in Juliet's bedroom, where they consummate their marriage. Capulet, misinterpreting Juliet's grief, agrees to marry her to Count Paris right away and threatens to disown her when she refuses.

Juliet visits Friar Laurence for help in escaping her impending marriage, and he offers her a potion that will put her into a temporary deathlike coma, with the hopes that her family will think she is dead and put her in the family tomb. The Friar promises to send a messenger to inform Romeo of the plan so that he can join her in the tomb when she wakes and so they can run away together. On the night before her wedding to Paris, she takes the drug and, when discovered by her family, is presumed dead and laid in the crypt.

The Friar's messenger, however, does not reach Romeo and, instead, Romeo learns the news of Juliet's "death" from his servant, Balthasar. Heartbroken, Romeo buys poison from an apothecary and goes to the Capulet crypt, hoping to lie next to her once he drinks the deadly

poison. Unexpectedly, he encounters Paris, who has come to mourn Juliet privately. Believing Romeo to be a vandal, Paris confronts him, and they fight, Romeo killing Paris.

Romeo fulfills his quest, drinking the poison and lying next to Juliet. As her poison wears off, Juliet awakens and, finding Romeo dead, stabs herself with his dagger.

Moments later, the feuding families and the Prince arrive at the tomb to find all three dead. Friar Laurence recounts the story of the two "star-cross'd lovers". The families, grieving over their children's deaths, agree to end their violent feud – "A glooming peace this morning with it brings."

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Jennifer Wintzer

Interim Producing Director

Jennifer Wintzer has served as interim producing director since August 2018. Prior to that she was the Director of Community Engagement and Education for the Festival and was responsible for coordinating community and education programming for Shakespeare in the Streets, SHAKE 38, and the educational touring season. Wintzer previously served as Education Projects Manager for the highly successful Learning English and Drama (LEAD) Project at Lincoln Center Theater. While there, she was part of a curriculum development and teaching artist team responsible for hosting more than 3,500 student audiences annually for shows including *War Horse*, *Blood and Gifts*, *Golden Boy*, *Ann*, *Macbeth* and *Act One*.

Selected educational theater credits include Education Coordinator at Second Stage Theatre Company; three seasons as Assistant Director for the MCC Theater Youth Company's Off-Broadway production of *UnCensored* at Theatre Row; Producing Artistic Director of the Chekhov Theatre Ensemble's *The Poe Project* in partnership with Theater for the New City; and both a director and performer for the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis' Imaginary Theatre Company. Wintzer was awarded the Stages of Learning Master Teaching Artist Award (2006) and Young Audiences New York's Teaching Artist of the Year award in 2013.

Wintzer served on the New York City Arts in Education Roundtable's Development Committee and is a graduate of the Regional Arts Commission of St. Louis' Community Arts Training (CAT). Wintzer has contributed to Floyd Rumohr's *StageIt! Shakespeare*; Theatre Communications Group's TCG Circle: Diversity and Inclusion Series; NYC DOE Partnership Institute; and the Shakespeare Theatre Association on the topics of Shakespeare with English Language Learners, Working with First-time Actors, Community Engagement in the Arts and Drama in the Elementary Classroom. She holds a BFA in Musical Theatre from The Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University and an Advanced Training Certificate in Arts Education from Marymount Manhattan.

Bruce Longworth

Associate Artistic Director

Bruce Longworth, who directed *Henry V* (2014), *Othello* (2012), and *Hamlet* (2010) for Shakespeare Festival St. Louis, is the Associate Artistic Director of the Festival. He has been a faculty member in the Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University since 1985, and is the Head of the Performance programs. Local and regional directing credits include The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Arrowrock Lyceum Theatre, Mustard Seed Theatre, New Jewish Theatre, Illinois Shakespeare Festival, Missouri Thespians, International Thespians and many shows for the Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster. This past year he has adapted and directed projects for the Pulitzer Museum and the St. Louis Symphony. Longworth is a member of the Society of Stage Directors and Actors Equity Association.

Organization History and Mission

“To produce professional Shakespeare, culminating with a free production in Forest Park, and to celebrate both Shakespeare’s language and the artists he has inspired.”

Mission Statement, Shakespeare Festival St. Louis

Shakespeare Festival St. Louis presents Shakespeare and works inspired by Shakespeare in the Schools, in the Streets, and in the Park. Its work seeks to better the community, facilitate a diverse conversation, and encourage collaboration across disciplines. In 2018, the organization adds a fourth pillar – In the Works – a festival of new plays that include a world premiere production, staged readings of a newly commissioned work, and a family show for young audiences. Shakespeare Festival St. Louis is the only professional, free theater in the St. Louis region, and remains one of only a dozen free, professional Shakespeare festivals in the country.

Inspired by R. Crosby Kemper, III, the idea of a free, outdoor Shakespeare festival began in 1997. In 2001, Chairman of the Board Marvin Moskowitz, first Managing Director Lana Pepper and a visionary board of civic leaders, produced the first annual free Shakespeare Festival in Forest Park. Now heading into its 18th season, the Festival 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 production at Shakespeare Glen in Forest Park. The organization has reached an additional 300,000 students in the schools through its educational programming. Both Shakespeare in the Streets and SHAKE 38 have received rave receptions in the city’s neighborhoods. Recognized as the 2016 Arts Organization of the Year by the Missouri Arts Council and the 2015 Arts & Education Council’s Excellence in the Arts Award, Shakespeare Festival St. Louis has become one of the city’s finest cultural organizations.

The Festival’s legacy is seen in the tens of thousands of patrons and students who have participated in the organization’s programs and attended performances throughout the community. Year-round programming allows St. Louisans to participate in events across the region, and with a commitment to community, conversation and collaboration, the Festival’s theme of unexpected theater in unexpected places drives the organization’s creative and production choices. Each season, hundreds of supporters come together to produce Shakespeare Festival St. Louis. Unlike other theaters in the region, the Festival depends almost entirely on the contributions of individuals, foundations, corporations and public institutions for support.

In 2010, the Festival launched SHAKE 38, a marathon participatory presentation of Shakespeare’s entire 38-play canon community wide, and in 2012, shut down its first street as part of Shakespeare in the Streets, to present a community-based play in a St. Louis

neighborhood. This year, Shakespeare in the Streets will present a program located in and inspired by downtown St. Louis. “Blow, Winds” will be performed on the steps of the St. Louis Public Library, Central Branch. SHAKE 38 will feature another popular kick-off event in partnership with the St. Louis Fashion Fund, as it enters its ninth year of giving Shakespeare back to the St. Louis community. For more information, please visit www.sfstl.com or call 314/531-9800.

Shakespeare Festival St. Louis Productions:

2001	“Romeo & Juliet”
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2003	“Macbeth”
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2008	“The Tragedy of King Richard the Third”
2009	“The Merry Wives of Windsor”
2010	“Hamlet”
2011	“The Taming of the Shrew”
2012	“Othello”
2013	“Twelfth Night”
2014	“Henry IV & Henry V”
2015	“Antony and Cleopatra”
2016	“A Midsummer Night’s Dream”
2017	“The Winter’s Tale”
2018	“Romeo & Juliet”

“Romeo & Juliet” Cast & Creative Team

CREATIVE TEAM

Elena Araoz (Director)

Araoz comes to the Festival with international and Off-Broadway experience in directing new plays, classics and opera. As a director, she works internationally, Off-Broadway and throughout the country. She most recently director Maria Irene Fornes’ *Mud* (Boundless Theatre Company), *Bystanders*, a series on the subject of witnessing, resisting and persisting, for Anna Deavere Smith and the Institute on the Arts and Civic Dialogue, Briandaniel’s Oglesby’s *Small Steps* (Portland Center Stage’s JAW Festival), and Monet Hurst-Mendoza’s *Torera* (The Public Theatre’s Emerging Writers Group Spotlight Series).

New York City productions this past year include Catherine Filloux’s *Kidnap Road* (La Mama),

Octavio Solis's *Prospect* (Boundless Theatre Company, Dipika Guha's *Mechanics of Love* (To-by-For Productions), and Warren Leight's new play *Union Square Incident* for The 25 Hour Plays on Broadway (American Airlines Theatre), to name a few. *Two Arms and a Noise*, which Araoz wrote and directed as a New York Theatre Workshop fellow was recognized by the Latino Theatre Commons as one of "thirty-six plays and writers that everyone should know." The show was performed for the Bucharest International Theatre Platform in Romania.

Araoz is a member of the The Sol Project, a new theater initiative dedicated to producing the work by Latinx playwrights in New York City and beyond. The Drama League recently named her the inaugural Beatrice Terry Artist-In-Resident where she completed her play *Plastic Drastic* (an environmentally-aware music-theatre commedia adaptation of *The Odyssey*, *Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner*, and *Hansel and Gretel*), which she also directed. The show is currently being produced at numerous colleges and universities throughout the country.

The New York Times has praised Araoz's productions as "striking," "primal," "wild," "stirring," and "refreshingly natural"; The Boston Globe as "riveting," "dreamy," and "vivid." As her productions are renowned for superb acting, she regularly teaches acting at universities and young artist programs. She is a faculty member at Princeton University.

Joanna Battles (Text Coach)

Battles currently serves as Associate Professor of Voice & Speech at The Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University. This season, she was dialect coach for *Born Yesterday*, *Miss Bennett*, and *Heisenberg* (The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis). As a voice, dialect & text coach, Battles' favorite credits include *Bonnie & Clyde: Night and Day* (A&E productions); *The Haunting in Connecticut II* (Lionsgate Films); *August: Osage County*, *A Doll House* (Swine Palace Productions); *King Lear* (Shakespeare Festival at Tulane); and *Billy Elliot*, *Oklahoma*, and *My Fair Lady* (the MUNY). She received an MFA in Acting from Brown University, Trinity Rep.

Paul Dennhardt (Fight Choreographer)

Dennhardt's fight direction was most recently seen in The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis's production of *Hamlet*. Past credits at Shakespeare Festival St. Louis include: *Richard III*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Hamlet*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Othello*, *Twelfth Night*, *Henry IV*, *Henry V*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Favorite credits include: *The Critic*, *The Real Inspector Hound*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Beaux Stratagem*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, *Volpon* (The Shakespeare Theatre Company, Washington, DC); *The Three Musketeers* (Indiana Repertory Theatre); *Macbeth* (The Arden Theatre Company). Dennhardt is a proud member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society.

Dottie Marshall Englis (Costume Designer)

Dorothy Marshall Englis designed costumes for previous Festival productions including the inaugural performance of *Romeo & Juliet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Henry Project*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Winter's Tale*. Other recent designs include *A Christmas Carol*, *The Winslow Boy*, and *All the Way*, (Repertory Theatre of St. Louis); *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Indiana Repertory Theatre); *Othello*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Titus Andronicus* (Illinois Shakespeare Festival). A member of United Scenic Artists, Englis is a Full Professor of Design and Chair of the Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University.

Kristin Rion (Assistant Director)

Laura Skroska (Props Master)

Margery & Peter Spack/Studio Spack (Scenic Design)

Rusty Wandall (Sound Design)

Rusty Wandall is excited to be returning to the festival for his seventh year. Wandall was honored with the 2016 St. Louis Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Sound Design for his work on the Festival's production of *Antony and Cleopatra*. He is currently the head of sound design at Webster University and the resident sound designer at the Repertory Theater of St. Louis. He has also worked with Variety Children's Theatre, Metro Theater Company, Opera Theatre St. Louis, Hot City Theatre, and Mustard Seed Theatre here in St. Louis. Wandall has also worked with regional theaters including Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Geva Theatre Center, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Westport Country Playhouse, and the Kitchen Theater Company. He also serves as the sound designer and engineer for the Heart of America Shakespeare Festival in Kansas City. He holds a Master of Fine Arts Degree in Sound Design from the University of Missouri-Kansas City, and is a member of the Theatrical Sound Designers and Composers Association (TSDCA).

John Wylie (Lighting Designer)

John Wylie is the Head of Production Programs at Webster University where he teaches Technical Direction and Lighting. He is a graduate of Augustana College and the University of Missouri at Kansas City. Wylie has designed for The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, the Missouri Rep, the St. Louis Black Rep, Metro Theatre Company, Variety Children's Theatre and Geva Theatre in New York, among others. This is his 12th season with Shakespeare Festival St. Louis. In past seasons, Wylie has designed the lighting for *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Richard III*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Hamlet*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Othello*, *Twelfth Night*, *Henry V*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Winter's Tale*.

CAST

Cast	Role
Patrick Blindauer	Prologue/Peter/Sampson/Apothecary
Harrison Farmer	Abram/Servant/Ensemble
Patrice Foster	Lady Montague
Esmerelda Garza	Female Ensemble
Gary Glasgow	Friar
Dakota Granados	Tybalt
Karl Hawkins	Balthazar
David Heron	Lord Montague
Jane Paradise	Nurse
Reynaldo Piniella	Romeo
Michale James Reed	Lord Capulet
Cherie Corinne Rice	Lady Capulet
Antonio Rodriguez	Benvolio
Chris Ware	Friar John
Terrell Wheeler	Mercutio
Pete Winfrey	Paris/Prince
Sigrid Wise	Juliet

Patrick Blindauer (Prologue/Peter/Sampson/Apothecary)

Blindauer makes his main stage debut with *Romeo & Juliet*, having previously appeared in the Old North production of Shakespeare in the Streets. He also produced *Treasure for Treasure*, a SHAKE38 play which added puzzles to *Measure for Measure*. Local projects include *The Wizard of Oz* (Lion) at Variety Theatre, *42nd Street* at The Muny, and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* at Upstream Theater. On-screen, he was featured in seven episodes of “Strangers with Candy” and had a speaking role in “A Beautiful Mind.” Patrick also constructs crosswords for The New York Times and his own website: www.patrickspuzzles.com.

Harrison Farmer (Abram/Servant/Ensemble)

Farmer was most recently seen in *Hamlet* (Marcellus) at The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis. He has also appeared in *She Kills Monsters* (Orcus), *The Philadelphia Story* (Sandy Lord), and *Macbeth* (Young Siward) at The Webster Conservatory of Theatre Arts. Harrison will earn his BFA in Acting from The Webster Conservatory of Theatre Arts in 2019.

Patrice Foster (Lady Montague)

Foster is thrilled to be making her Shakespeare Festival St. Louis debut in *Romeo & Juliet*. She was most recently seen in Kirkwood Theatre Guild’s production of *Good People* (Kate). Regional credits include *Sin Titulo* (St. Louis Actors Studio), *For her as a Piano* (Pegasus Theatre Chicago), *Hanging Mary*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *A Thousand Cranes* (Barter Theatre), and *Cinderella* (The Berkshire Theatre Group). Foster received her MFA in acting from the University of Arkansas. She currently teaches at Lindenwood University and is on the faculty at Stages St. Louis.

Esmeralda Garza (Ensemble)

Garza is beyond excited to be working with Shakespeare Festival St. Louis. Originally from Alamo, Texas, Garza just finished her second year as a musical theatre major at Webster University’s Conservatory of Theatre Arts. She was last seen in the ensemble of *Hamlet* at the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis. She would like to thank all of the friends, family, and mentors that continue to support her journey and especially Shakespeare Festival St. Louis for this amazing opportunity.

Gary Glasgow* (Friar)

Glasgow is returning for his 14th season at Shakespeare Festival St. Louis. Favorite productions include: *A Winter’s Tale* (Autolycus), *Henry IV* (Lord Chamberlain)/ *Henry V* (Archbishop), *Richard III* (Hastings), and *The Taming of the Shrew* (Gremio). Recently, he appeared in the critically-acclaimed production of *Dancing at Lughnasa* at Mustard Seed Theatre. Other local appearances include The MUNY (21 seasons), The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, the New Jewish Theatre and the Variety Children’s Theatre. Gary is a faculty member of the Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University, and thanks his wife and children for their love and support.

Dakota Granados* (Tybalt)

Professional credits include *Hidden Hate/Hidden Love* for Anna Deavere Smith and the Institute on the Arts and Civic Dialogue, and *Alligator* (The Sol Project and New Georges). Granados is a founding member of the production company Trend Productions (instagram:@trendmotion). He is a graduate of the SUNY Purchase Conservatory of Theatre Arts.

Karl Hawkins (Balthazar)

Hawkins is thrilled to be returning to Shakespeare Festival St. Louis after just concluding the Education Tour. Hawkins is a St. Louis native and a graduate of the Conservatory of Theatre & Dance at Southeast Missouri State University. Credits include *Cardenio: Shakespeare’s Lost Play*

(St. Louis Shakespeare); *In The Heights* (R-S Theatrics); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Puck); *Marcus, or The Secret of Sweet* (Marcus); and *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Chip).

David Heron* (Lord Montague)

Award winning Playwright, Producer, Actor. This is Heron's Shakespeare Festival St. Louis debut. Off Broadway/New York credits: *The Emperor Jones* (Irish Repertory Theater), *The Winter's Tale* (New York Classical Theater) *Moon on a Rainbow Shawl* (New Federal Theater), *Pecong*, *Medea* (National Black Theater), *Coriolanus*, *Antony and Cleopatra* (Harlem Shakespeare Festival), and his own play *Love and Marriage and New York City* (Billie Holiday Theatre). Regional/International: *Marley-The Musical* (Baltimore Centerstage), *Henry V* (Colonial Theatre), *The Tempest* (North Carolina Shakespeare), *Othello*, *Taming of The Shrew* (Virginia Shakespeare), *Robinson Crusoe* (Orlando Shakespeare), *Love and Marriage and New York City* (Britain, Canada). Recipient: New York City Council Award for Excellence in the Arts.

Jane Paradise* (Nurse)

Paradise is delighted to join the amazing family of artists at Shakespeare Festival St. Louis. Shakespeare credits include *Henry IV Part 1&2* (Williamstown Theater Festival, Williamstown, Mass.); *Measure for Measure* and *Romeo and Juliet* (Alley Theater, Houston); *Much Ado About Nothing* (Shakespeare's Globe TSTP, London, England). Other regional credits include *Marat/Sade*, *Picnic*, *Inherit The Wind*, *The Rose Tattoo*, and *John Brown's Body* (Williamstown Theater Festival); and *A Christmas Carol* and *Captive Heart* (Indiana Repertory Theater, Indianapolis, Ind.). Most recent local work includes *Sweet Revenge* (Upstream Theater) and *The Imaginary Boyfriend* (STL Fringe Festival).

Reynaldo Piniella* (Romeo)

Piniella was previously seen in *The Death of the Last Black Man...* (Signature Theatre Company); *Venus* (Signature Theatre Company); *The Skin of Our Teeth* (Theatre for A New Audience); *Romeo & Juliet* (Balthasar, Actors Theatre of Louisville); and *I & You* (Repertory Theatre of St. Louis). TV credits include "Sneaky Pete", "Greenleaf", "Law & Order: SVU", "NYC 22", "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart", "Us & Them", "Louie", "Flesh & Bone", "The Carrie Diaries" and "The Plug" (pilot). Film credits include "Broken City", "Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close" and "Madeline's Madeline" (Sundance Film Festival 2018).

Michael James Reed* (Lord Capulet)

Reed is a Shakespeare Festival St. Louis veteran, having appeared in *The Winter's Tale*, *Antony & Cleopatra*, *Henry IV & V*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Taming of the Shrew* (In the Park); *Good in Everything* (In the Streets); and *Loves Labor* (Pulitzer Arts Foundation); as well as two seasons as a teaching artist with the Education Tour (In the Schools). He's performed locally at the MUNY, New Jewish Theatre, Hot City, Upstream, St. Louis Actors Studio, and numerous times at The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis (most recently as Claudius in *Hamlet*, and in the Studio production of *Faceless*). New York theatre credits include *La Bete* (original Broadway cast) and *King Lear* (The Roundabout, starring Hal Holbrook), and regional highlights include Old Globe (San Diego), Alley Theatre (Houston), ACT (San Francisco), South Coast Rep (Costa Mesa), Pasadena Playhouse, and Shakespeare Santa Cruz. Michael trained at London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Cherie Corinne Rice* (Lady Capulet)

Rice is thrilled to be returning to Shakespeare Festival St. Louis for a third time. Her past roles include Hermione in *The Winter's Tale* (2017) and Bianca in *Othello* (2012). She is most known for her work on the cable TV comedy series, "Nightcap" (PopTv, Hulu). Rice's favorite past roles

include Amanda in *The Glass Menagerie* (Light Fantastic Theater) and Viola/Sebastian in *Twelfth Night* (Trinity Repertory Company). Rice is Head of Voice and Speech at Professional Performing Arts School in New York City and served as dialect coach for Huntington Theater Company's Skeleton Crew (2018).

Antonio Rodriguez* (Benvolio)

Rodriguez is jazzed to be back with the Festival, having previously appeared in Shakespeare Festival St. Louis' Education Tour, Shakespeare in the Streets and on the main stage in Shakespeare Glen. His favorite St. Louis credits include *The Winter's Tale* (Shakespeare Festival St. Louis), *The Violet Hour* (Max & Louie Productions), *Cafe Chanson* (Upstream Theatre), *All is Calm* (Mustard Seed Theatre), *The Who's Tommy* (Stray Dog Theatre), *Bad Jews* (New Jewish Theatre), and in Chicago, *Altar Boyz* (Mayne Stage). Antonio is a winner of two St. Louis Theatre Circle Awards. He currently lives in Chicago and is a proud member of Actor's Equity.

Chris Ware (Friar John)

Ware, a poet who works out of St. Louis, is a local and regional spoken word champion who has contributed writings to "Crossing the Divide," an anthology of works from St. Louis poets assembled by Michael Castro. Ware's recent credits include *Bud, Not Buddy* (Metro Theatre Company, St. Louis), *Of Mice and Men* (Slightly Askew Theatre Ensemble, St. Louis), and *Games Dad Didn't Play* (Metro Theatre Company, St. Louis).

Terrell Wheeler* (Mercutio)

Wheeler is a New York-based actor and a Rutgers University graduate with classical training from the Globe Theatre in London. Regional theatre credits include: *Fly* (Pasadena Playhouse), *Lombardi* (Riverside Theatre), *Carnaval* (Luna Stage). Off Broadway: *Fly* (New Victory Theatre). Off-Off Broadway: *O'Neill Unexpected* (Metropolitan Playhouse); *The Last Saint on Sugar Hill* (National Black Theatre). TV credits: *Blue Bloods* (CBS).

Pete Winfrey* (Paris/Prince)

Winfrey makes his sixth appearance in a Shakespeare Festival St. Louis mainstage production and is thrilled to be back in Forest Park. Previously, he performed in *The Winter's Tale*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the 2015 Education Tour, *Twelfth Night*, *Othello*, and *The Taming of the Shrew*. Favorite credits include *Sweet Revenge* (Upstream Theater), *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* (Metro Theater Company), *Bad Jews* (New Jewish Theatre, St. Louis Theater Circle Award Nomination), *The 39 Steps* (Slightly Askew Theatre Ensemble), and *Parade* (R-S Theatrics, St. Louis Theater Circle Award Nomination). Winfrey is a St. Louis native and graduate of Washington University.

Sigrid Wise (Juliet)

Wise is thrilled to be back with Shakespeare Festival St. Louis, having played Emilia/Dorcas in last summer's production of *The Winter's Tale*. Other favorite credits include *Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates* (Gretel Brinker) at Metro Theatre Company in St. Louis, *The Sonnets* (Ensemble) at Bridge Production Group in New York, *The Tempest* (Miranda) at St. Louis Opera, and *Macbeth* (Lady Macbeth) and *Big Love* (Olympia) at Webster Conservatory of Theatre Arts in St. Louis. Wise is a graduate of Webster Conservatory of Theatre Arts and Interlochen Arts Academy.

* Denotes member, Actors' Equity Association

