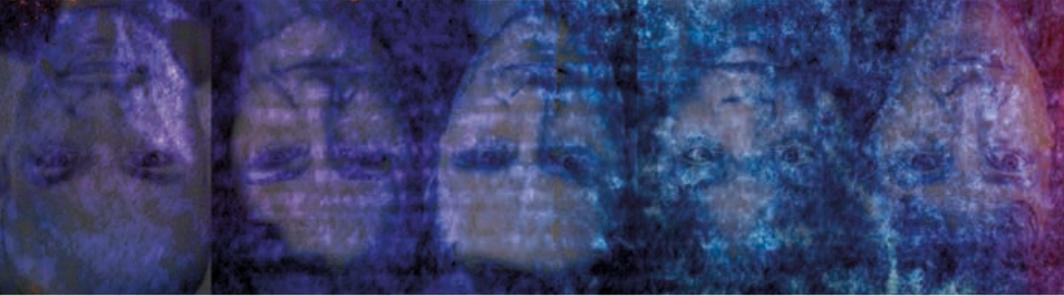


ACTORS FROM THE LONDON STAGE SPRING TOUR 2017



# Romeo & Juliet

by William Shakespeare

Venue Name

Performance Dates

Performance Times



ACTORS FROM THE  
LONDON STAGE

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Actors From The London Stage is generously supported by the McMeel Family Endowment for Excellence for Actors From The London Stage, the Paul Eulau Endowment for Excellence for Actors From The London Stage, the Deborah J. Loughrey Endowment for Excellence in Shakespeare Studies, the D & J Smith Endowment for Shakespeare and Performance, as well as the University of Notre Dame's Office of the Provost, and College of Arts and Letters.

Design and artwork: [www.imaginedesignassociates.com](http://www.imaginedesignassociates.com)

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## THE AFTLS APPROACH

For most of his working life, William Shakespeare was a sharer in the King's Men, London's leading theatre company. He knew the actors he was writing for and collaborated with them on seeing the plays into performance.

All theatre is a collaboration, of course, and while actors can no longer collaborate directly with Shakespeare, the Actors From The London Stage (AFTLS) company always aims to work with him, respectfully and creatively, throughout the rehearsal process. Our company's aim is to make his words exert their magic and their power in performance, but we do this in a vital, and perhaps unconventional, way. We have no massive sets to tower over the performers and no directorial concept to tower over the text of Shakespeare's play. In fact, AFTLS does not have a director at all; instead, the play has been rehearsed by the actors, working together to create theatre, cooperating with each other in their imaginative engagement with the play's words.

Now the actors ask you, the audience, to perform that same kind of imaginative engagement that Shakespeare was thinking about when, in the Prologue to *Henry V*, he instructed his spectators: "Think, when we talk of horses, that you see them, / Printing their proud hoofs i' the receiving earth / For 'tis your thoughts that now must deck our kings."

Now the actors seek a new collaboration, working with you, the audience, in the way that only live theatre can. It is not a hard job for people to do, even though we are now used to having everything shown us on screen, and even though we usually no longer rely on the powers of the imagination and collaboration to bring a play's world into being. If you share the fun of collaborating with us, then the excitement of the performance will be richly rewarding for you and for the actors, for this special act of working together, actors and audience combined, marks the latest stage of that long journey *Romeo & Juliet* has made from Shakespeare's writing the play with and for the actors he knew so well. So, tonight, watch and listen and "let us... / On your imaginary forces work."



**Peter Holland**

McMeel Family Chair in Shakespeare Studies  
Associate Dean for the Arts, College of Arts and Letters  
University of Notre Dame

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## ABOUT ACTORS FROM THE LONDON STAGE

Actors From The London Stage (consisting of five British Shakespearean artists from such companies as the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Royal National Theatre of Great Britain, and Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, among others) is an educational program developed in 1975 by Homer Swander at the University of California, Santa Barbara. The theatre company is now based in London and at the University of Notre Dame. The artists devote a large part of their time to lectures, workshops, seminars, and informal meetings with students. Their stay provides students and faculty with a unique opportunity both to observe extraordinary performances and to discuss literature and the art of theatre in depth with some of the most talented artists from some of the most important theatre companies in the world. Contact us at [www.aftls.nd.edu](http://www.aftls.nd.edu).

### Founder

Homer Swander

### Academic Director

Peter Holland

### Founding Directors

Tony Church

Lisa Harrow

Bernard Lloyd

Sir Patrick Stewart

### Associate Directors

David Acton

Bruce Alexander

Gareth Armstrong

Matthew Davies

Caroline Devlin

Tim Hardy

Vivien Heilbron

Richard Neale

Michael Palmer

Martin Parr

David Rintoul

Eunice Roberts

Alison Skilbeck

Chris Staines

Lucy Tregear

Jennifer Winter

Alinka Wright

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## ABOUT SHAKESPEARE AT NOTRE DAME

Actors From The London Stage is a national outreach program of Shakespeare at Notre Dame. Shakespeare at Notre Dame consists of the McMeel Family Chair in Shakespeare Studies, the Ryan Producing Artistic Director, the Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival, Actors From The London Stage, ancillary lectures and events, and library collections. Shakespeare at Notre Dame's mission is to become a pre-eminent venue for the study and performance of the works of Shakespeare, providing Notre Dame and the wider community with an on-campus culture steeped in the works of William Shakespeare — both on the page and on the stage.

### Executive Director:

Scott Jackson

### General Manager:

Debra Gasper

### Audience Development Manager:

Aaron Nichols

### Ryan Producing Artistic Director for the Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival:

Grant Mudge

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## THE PLAYERS

**William Donaldson** Friar Lawrence/Lady Capulet/Tybalt/Peter/Montague

**Sarah Finigan** Nurse/Prince/Paris/Friar John/Old Capulet/Sampson

**Jasmeen James** Juliet/Benvolio/Apothecary

**Roger May** Mercutio/Capulet/Balthasar/Abraham

**Jack Whitam** Romeo/Lady Montague/Gregory

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## ABOUT THE PLAYERS



**WILLIAM DONALDSON** (Friar Lawrence/Lady Capulet/Tybalt/Peter/Montague) trained at LAMDA. As a theatre practitioner and director he has worked with The Royal National Theatre, The Young Shakespeare Company, The Shakespeare Schools Festival, and The Arcola Theatre, among others. He is an artistic associate of Tucked In Productions (specialists in theatre and puppetry) and Beautiful Creatures Theatre Co. (a site specific theatre company). Career credits include: Prospero in *The Tempest* (Young Shakespeare Company), Mercutio in *Romeo & Juliet* (Young Shakespeare Company), Trofimov in *The Cherry Orchard* (Brockley Jack), The Wicked Queen in *Snow White* (Old Vic), *The Experiment* by Mark Ravenhill (Soho Theatre), Valentin in *The Last of the Lake* (Newbury Corn Exchange / Brighton Dome co-commission). Film credits include *Captain Webb* (Marathon Films). William will be starring in new comedy web-series *Tie Me Down* in early 2017.



**SARAH FINIGAN** (Nurse/Prince/Paris/Friar John/Old Capulet/Sampson) trained as an actor at Drama Studio, London and as a teacher at Goldsmiths University, London. She has taught Shakespeare and Drama in London high schools, run performing arts weeks in schools and delivered drama workshops to adults with disabilities. As an actor, her previous Shakespeare experience includes many roles for Changeling, an open air theatre company touring London and the South of England: *Twelfth Night*, *Macbeth*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *All's Well That Ends Well*. Other theatre includes *Deny, Deny, Deny* (Park Theatre, London); *The BFG* (Bolton Octagon); *The Hunters Grimm* (Watermill Theatre); *Cabbage Heart* (Lyric Hammersmith, London); *The Last Women* (Belgrade Theatre); *The Portable Virgin* (Bridewell Theatre London and Segal Theater New York); *Stepping Out* (Artsdepot London); and *Fahrenheit 451*, *Death of a Salesman*, and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (TNT theatre). Film includes *Su ragate*, *Cesar Chavez*, *28 Weeks Later*, and *Cass*. Television includes

*Marvellous*, *Call The Midwife*, *Count Arthur Strong*, *Cuckoo*, *Holby City*, *Doctors*, and *Upstart Crow* (BBC); *Edge of Heaven*, *The Great Fire*, and *The Bletchley Circle* (ITV); *The Borgias* (Sky); as well as *New Worlds* and *Thinspiration* (Channel 4). Radio includes *Publish and be Damn'd* (BBC Radio 4).



**JASMEEN JAMES** (Juliet/Benvolio/Apothecary) graduated from The Court Theatre Training Company in 2015 where she did a two-year intensive in Acting. Credits include *Othello* (Iago), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Puck), and *Women of Troy* (Andromache). Jasmeen has also just finished working at The Orange Tree Theatre in the primary Shakespeare season where she played Antipholus of Syracuse in *The Comedy of Errors*. The project involved school workshops to help students understand the plot and unlock the text.



**ROGER MAY** (Mercutio/Capulet/Balthasar/Abraham) has been a professional actor for 25 years. His theatre credits include: William Shakespeare in *For All Time* (Rye Festival, national tour planned for 2017); Desmond in *The Winslow Boy* (Rose Theatre, Kingston and national tour); The Father in *The Railway Children* (Waterloo Station); Monsignor Magee in *The Last Confession* (Chichester and Theatre Royal Haymarket); Margarelon in *Troilus and Cressida* (Edinburgh International Festival and RSC Stratford-upon-Avon); Elyot in *Private Lives* (Basingstoke); Hamlet in *Hamlet* (Wimbledon); Sir Andrew Aguecheek in *Twelfth Night*, Verges/Friar in *Much Ado about Nothing* (Nuffield Theatre, Southampton); Catesby in *Richard III*, Decius Brutus in *Julius Caesar* (Royal Shakespeare Company); Albie in *The Jail Diary of Albie Sachs* (Canadian Tour); Bertram in *All's Well That Ends Well* (Actors From The London Stage). Television includes: *Hornblower*, *Mosley*, *Jeremiah*, *The Cazalet Chronicles*, *Peak Practice*, *The Hour*, *Father Brown*. Films: *The Scarlet Tunic*, *The Titchborne Claimant*, and *An Ideal Husband*. Roger has recorded over 100 plays for radio, as well as numerous audiobooks. As well as acting and teaching on a previous AFTLS tour, Roger has directed a number of plays including, in 2015, a five-person production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the University of Wyoming – during which he also gave classes and workshops.



**JACK WHITAM** (Romeo/Lady Montague/Gregory) graduated from the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. Jack has performed in theatre, television, radio and film. Highlights include: *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, *Richard III*, and *Anthony and Cleopatra* (Royal Shakespeare Company); *Emperor and Galilean* (National Theatre); *Hamlet* (Shakespeare's Globe); *The Wind in the Willows* (West Yorkshire Playhouse); *Citizen Kahn* (BBC); *Powder* (Red Films); and *Man Up* (BigTalk). He has led workshops in Shakespeare at leading drama schools in the UK and has recently adapted the epic Norse saga of Beowulf for the stage which is due to premier Summer 2017. This is his third production for AFTLS following *Much Ado About Nothing* in the fall of 2014, and *Othello* in the fall of 2013.

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## THE STORY

Set in the city of Verona, the play opens with an argument and a brawl between the servants of the feuding noble families of Capulet and Montague. The Prince, ruler of Verona, stops the fight and decrees that whoever disturbs the peace again shall be sentenced to death. Montague's son, Romeo, and his cousin, Benvolio, talk about Romeo's love for Rosaline.

Meanwhile, at the Capulet home, Paris, a kinsman of the prince, seeks Juliet's hand in marriage. Capulet dispatches a servant with a list of people to invite to a masquerade and feast that he holds every year. He invites Paris to the feast, hoping that Paris will begin to win Juliet's heart. Juliet talks with her mother, Lady Capulet, and with her Nurse about the possibility of marrying Paris. Juliet has not yet considered marriage, but agrees to talk with Paris during the feast to see if she will accept him as her husband.

Romeo and Benvolio encounter the Capulet servant bearing the list of invitations to the masquerade ball and, since Rosaline will be there, they decide to attend the feast with their friend Mercutio. Once inside the Capulet residence, Romeo sees Juliet from a distance and instantly falls in love with her. Soon, Romeo speaks to Juliet, and she, too, falls in love with him. They kiss, not even knowing each other's names. When the two find out that they are from opposite sides of the city's largest feud, they are both distraught. Romeo and Juliet are married the next day by Friar Lawrence, who agreed to marry the young lovers in secret hoping that their marriage will end the feud between Capulet and Montague.

The next day, Romeo kills Juliet's cousin, Tybalt, in fury after Tybalt has killed Mercutio. The Prince declares that Romeo will be banished to the city of Mantua for his crime. Friar Lawrence arranges for Romeo to spend his wedding night with Juliet before he has to leave for Mantua the following morning. Lord Capulet pushes ahead with the plan to marry Juliet to Paris. The Friar concocts a plan to reunite Juliet with Romeo in Mantua. The night before her wedding, Juliet must drink a potion that will make her appear to be dead. After she is laid to rest in the family's tomb, the Friar and Romeo will secretly retrieve her, and she will be free to live with Romeo, away from their parents' feuding.

That night, Juliet drinks the potion. The Nurse discovers her, apparently dead, the next morning. Juliet is entombed in the Capulets' family tomb according to plan; however, the message to Romeo explaining the plan never reaches him, and Romeo hears only that Juliet is dead. Rather than live without his true love, Romeo buys a vial of poison and returns to Verona to kill himself at Juliet's tomb. He finds Paris mourning at the tomb and kills him in a fight. Standing by Juliet's body, Romeo drinks the poison, and when Juliet awakens moments later, she sees the body of her beloved Romeo and stabs herself with his dagger. After seeing their children's bodies, Lord Capulet and Lord Montague agree to end their long-standing feud and to raise gold statues in honor of their children in the town square.

### **Peter Holland**

McMeel Family Chair in Shakespeare Studies, University of Notre Dame.

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