



19th Season In Review

Our adaptation of *Romeo & Juliet* starred
6 actors playing **19** characters in **5** parks.

Our digital playbills
saved 50,000 sheets
of paper.

14 students
participated in
our internship
program.

Fight director
Sean Michael Chin
became our newest
Associate Artist.

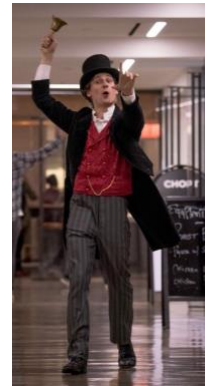


Since 2000, we've staged over **700** performances of **41** productions with
nearly **1,000** artists for more than **250,000** audience members!



Associate Artist **Julia Sverchuk**, and her
visual artist friends, created magnificent
reportage drawings, capturing moments
inspired by our audiences' experience.

This past winter, we delighted
1,400 office workers, holiday
shoppers, and retail clerks with
A {15-Min!} Christmas Carol at
Brookfield Place and One New York
Plaza, sponsored by Arts Brookfield.



And, in the Spring, we launched our
Diversifying the Classics program.

We hired **10** Latinx actors to perform a new
translation of Lope de Vega's *The Widow of
Valencia*, sponsored by NYC Councilmember
Ben Kallos and the Cultural Immigrant Initiative.

DC METRO

THEATER ARTS

Review: 'Romeo & Juliet' at New York Classical Theatre

By Deb Miller - June 14, 2018

For nineteen seasons, New York Classical Theatre has delivered free performances of more than 40 revered masterworks to sites throughout the city, enjoyed to date by nearly a quarter-million people. This summer's captivating offering is the company premiere of *Romeo & Juliet*, a smartly streamlined adaptation of Shakespeare's beloved tragedy of feuding families and star-crossed lovers, featuring a dynamic cast of six playing over a dozen of the Bard's well-known roles.

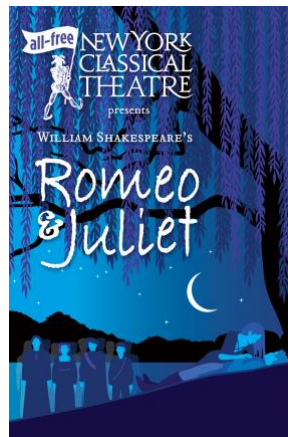


Presented in New York Classical's signature style of "Panoramic Theatre," the audience follows the characters' emotional journey through an immersive site-specific participatory production, moving from place to place and scene to scene with the actors. In so doing, we are fully encompassed by the sublime landscape setting and the show's intimate blocking, and thrust into the midst of the story and the world of old-time Verona, with the aid of historicizing costumes and a few integral props.

Under the skillful direction and keen imagination of company Artistic Director Stephen Burdman, the entire

cast fluently delivers first the wit, then the drama, of Shakespeare's tale, capturing his full range of emotions, the meaning and beauty of his language, the admonitory significance of his message, and the momentous import of time, while maintaining a rapid-fire pace that **keeps the audience enthralled and engaged.**

Beginning with an emphasis on rollicking song and sword play (fight direction by Sean Michael Chin), piquant taunting and bawdy humor, the mood abruptly shifts to the overwhelming gravity of hatred, anger, and vengeance, their deadly consequences of loss, grief, and regret, and the poignancy of a lesson learned too late, successfully increasing the tension and impact of the didactic narrative, **just as the playwright intended.**



Ian Antal and Connie Castanzo star as the ill-fated young couple, bringing a youthful spirit of giddy flirtation, magnetic attraction, ardent devotion, and reckless passion to their juvenile characters, and evincing the all-consuming intensity of adolescence. Their iconic scenes are heartfelt and empathetic, embodying the life and

depth of Shakespeare's familiar words, effortlessly incorporating Burdman's edits to fit the outdoor locale (in a clever re-envisioning of the famous balcony scene, Romeo questions here "What light through yonder meadow breaks?"), all the while making us feel what the doomed lovers are feeling.

Performing multiple roles and giving fine support to the leads are the expressive Vivia Font as Juliet's mother Lady Capulet and Romeo's good-natured male cousin Benvolio; Nick Salamone as the loquacious Mercutio and the controlling Lord Capulet (the rage he directs at his daughter Juliet is palpable); Clay Storseth as Lord Montague, Paris, and the Apothecary, a morbid figure who uses his poverty as an excuse to sell Romeo the fateful vial of poison; and the outstanding Ian Gould as Tybalt, Friar Laurence, and Juliet's ribald Nurse, who makes scene-stealing appearances with his uproariously camp cross-gender characterization. All clearly distinguish between the characters they play, and effect split-second transitions, with the efficient help of the stage crew's costumers.

New York Classical Theatre's production of *Romeo & Juliet* isn't just free, it's priceless

– a thoroughly accessible, comprehensible, and inclusive opportunity to experience the genius and universality of Shakespeare in an excitingly transportive and personal way. Be sure to catch it at a park near you.