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Cal Shakes presents bilingual adaptation of Shakespeare's most iconic tale of young love

Submitted by Kevin Kopjak



Set design Photo Jay Yamada

California Shakespeare Theater Artistic Director Eric Ting and Managing Director Sarah Williams on April 19 announced the full cast and creative team for "Romeo y Juliet," the world premiere bilingual adaptation of William Shakespeare's most iconic tale of young love.

Adapted by acclaimed playwright Karen Zacarías and directed by Cal Shakes favorite KJ Sanchez, "Romeo y Juliet" imagines these starcrossed lovers as two daughters from feuding families before the backdrop of Alta California, as California was known during Spanish Colonial and Mexican rule. "Romeo y Juliet" performs in Orinda at the Bruns Amphitheater May 25 through June 19.

"Following a two-year delay, we are thrilled to present Shakespeare's timeless story of star-crossed lovers to the San Francisco Bay Area," said Sanchez. "By interweaving English and Spanish text, we bring an intensity and depth to the production while staying

accessible. I think Karen's translation will resonate with audiences long after the curtain comes down."

"Romeo and Juliet has been adapted countless times, in countless ways for hundreds of years," adds Zacarías. "It is exciting to present this bilingual adaptation of Shakespeare's rich, colorful language that gives audiences a different way to hear and feel it."

Ting says he's honored to welcome back director KJ Sanchez "who moved so many of us with her production of 'Quixote Nuevo.'"

"We started talking about a bilingual Shakespeare before that production even opened and had hoped to make that dream come true in 2020 before we, like so many of our sister institutions, had to cancel our season," Ting adds. "Together with Karen Zacarías (whose *Destiny of Desire* had me laughing so hard I cried) and an extraordinary ensemble of artists, this team has worked tirelessly to imagine this quintessential story in a way that evokes both the history of this place we call home, and the undeniable ability of love to close the distance that separates so many of us from each other."

Originally scheduled for Cal Shakes' 2020 Season, "Romeo y Juliet" features a cast of Latinx artists led by Sarita Ocón (Romeo) and Vero Maynez (Juliet) in the title roles and the creative team includes Tanya Orellana (Scenic Designer) and Jessie Amoroso (Costume Designer).

Single tickets (ranging from \$30-\$70) are available now online at calshakes.org or by calling 510-548-9666 (Tuesday-Friday from 1 to 5 p.m.). Ticket prices are subject to change without notice. Performances of "Romeo y Juliet" will be held evenings at 7:30 p.m. Matinees (Sunday) at 4 p.m.; select Saturdays at 2 p.m. May 25-June 19 at Bruns Amphitheater 100 California Shakespeare Theater Way, Orinda.

For information on Cal Shakes' COVID safety policies, visit calshakes.org/cal-shakes-2021-covid-19-safetyprecautions/.

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