

Matthew Bourne's
ROMEO+
JULIET
 Music by PROKOFIEV

COMPARISONS

	Matthew Bourne's <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> by William Shakespeare (the original)	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> performed by the Royal Ballet, choreographed by Kenneth MacMillan	<i>Romeo + Juliet</i> directed by Baz Luhrmann	<i>Juliet & Romeo</i> by Lost Dog
YEAR PRODUCED	2019	Circa 1594-1597	1965	1996	2018
GENRE	Dance Theatre	Play (Original Text)	Classical Ballet	Film	Dance Theatre
OVERVIEW	<p>In the stark, antiseptic and unfeeling interior of the Verona Institute young men and women are stifled by a repressive regime that dampens all spirits and emotions. The inmates' lives are marked out by the mind-numbing rigours of daily exercise, therapy and sleep. The male and female inmates are for the most part segregated. When Romeo arrives he falls in love with the strong, selfless and beautiful Juliet straightaway. A brutal institute guard, Tybalt is also captivated by her and she is the object of his regular abuse. As tensions within the institute rise, a scuffle breaks out and Mercutio is fatally wounded by a single shot from Tybalt's gun. With Juliet leading the charge, and with the full support of</p>	<p><i>Romeo and Juliet</i> is a tragic love story. Romeo Montague and Juliet Capulet belong to powerful feuding families and are therefore destined to never be together. They meet by chance at a party thrown by the Capulets, at which Romeo had gate-crashed with the hope of seeing Rosaline – the young woman he intends to marry. It is love at first sight for the star-crossed lovers and Romeo and Juliet can think of no-one else except each other from that point onwards. Juliet's hand in marriage has been promised to Paris, a suitor of her father's choosing however, which does not bode well for Romeo. Juliet defies her father's wishes and turns to Friar Laurence for help knowing that Romeo is her one true love. Friar Laurence concocts a</p>	<p>As per the original</p>	<p>An American romantic crime tragedy. This film is an adaptation and modernisation of Shakespeare's original and appears as the second instalment in Luhrmann's Red Curtain Trilogy concept following <i>Strictly Ballroom</i> and preceding <i>Moulin Rouge</i>. Situated in a modern beach setting that is part decaying Miami and part Mexico City, in a 'world' of Luhrmann's he borrows aspects of its unique visual style from such decades such as the 1940s, 1970s, and 1990s It's fast-paced and full of cars and firearms. Here the Montague and the Capulet families are warring mafia empires. This is an era of dystopian dysfunctionality where drugs, guns and the breakdown of civil society is the new normal.</p>	<p>This show sets out to put the record straight and tell the 'real' story of Romeo and Juliet. It turns out they didn't die in a tragic misunderstanding in a tomb in Verona after all. In fact, they eloped, set up home together and produced a baby daughter, called Sophie. Now they find themselves all grown-up and in the grip of a marriage crisis.</p> <p>Feeling constantly mocked by their teenage selves and haunted by the pressures of being the poster couple for romantic love they decide to confront their current struggles by putting on a performance – about themselves. As it turns out however, there memory of their past doesn't always match.</p>

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	<p>Romeo and the other residents, they set upon Tybalt and Juliet strangles him with his own belt. Life at the Verona Institute takes a turn for the worse and Romeo is put into solitary confinement. Desperate, Juliet seeks the help of Rev. Bernadette Laurence so she can be reunited with him.</p> <p>Whilst alone in his cell, Juliet becomes disorientated and disturbed and believes Tybalt is alive after all and is looking for them. In the confusion that follows Juliet accidentally stabs Romeo. In grief at the loss of her soulmate, Juliet takes her own life too.</p>	<p>plan for Juliet to fake her own death to get out of her marriage to Paris. Then, after the potion she has taken has worn off she will awaken and will be free to escape with Romeo. A message detailing the arrangements fails to reach Romeo though and he believes Juliet death is real. Heartbroken he drinks poison and takes his own life. When Juliet wakes from her slumber she finds Romeo's lifeless body and realises what has happened. In total grief she also takes her own life, using Romeo's dagger, and the lifeless bodies of the young lovers lay side by side.</p>			
SETTING	The Verona Institute, exact location not determined (fictional)	Verona, Italy	As per the original	Verona Beach, USA (fictional)	An apartment in Paris
ERA	The not too distant future	16 th century	As per the original	Post-modern day	Modern day
PRINCIPLE CHARACTERS	<p>Romeo (son of Senator and Mrs Brie Montague) and Juliet – both inmates at The Verona Institute.</p> <p>They are segregated by the guards, with love and feeling discouraged. This production also features Tybalt (the Guard), Benvolio, Mercutio and Balthasar</p>	<p>Romeo, son and heir of Lord & Lady Montague.</p> <p>Approximately 16 years of age he finds himself in the midst of two warring families, though he is preoccupied with love rather than violence and is an intensely passionate and idealistic character.</p>	As per the original	<p>High on ecstasy Romeo falls instantly in love with Juliet, whom he has met by chance at a party he's gate-crashed with his cousin, Benvolio. It is not until later that they realise they belong to feuding families.</p>	<p>Juliet and Romeo - husband and wife pair both in their mid-40's and with a marriage in crisis.</p>

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	(whom are in a relationship). The role of Paris, as per the original, is switched to Frenchie and she is Juliet's best friend.	Juliet is just 13 years of age, and the daughter of Lord & Lady Capulet. She is from an incredibly aristocratic family and up until the point she meets Romeo, has led a very protected existence and is rather naïve – though later shows great strength and maturity.			
PLOT TWISTS	<p>Neither Friar Laurence, nor Lord & Lady Capulet appear in this production.</p> <p>The character of Rev. Bernadette Lawrence is a new character created for the New Adventure's adaptation and is closely based on the part of the Nurse – Juliet's confidante and supporter.</p> <p>In Matthew's production it is Juliet who takes her own life, in total devastation at Romeo's death, rather than the other way around.</p>	N/A	<p>At the start of the ballet Romeo is discovered in semi-darkness at the start of the ballet as Rosaline's anonymous suitor. Rosaline is the niece of Lord Capulet and though she is an unseen character within Shakespeare's <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>, she is an important one nonetheless. Romeo is deeply in love with Rosaline at the start of the play and dismayed his love for her in unrequited. He first spots Juliet whilst trying to catch a glimpse of Rosaline at a gathering hosted by the Capulet family.</p>	<p>Prince Escalus is rewritten as the police chief of Verona Beach and called Captain Prince. The character Friar John does not appear in Luhrmann's adaptation and some characters change families such as Gregory and Sampson who are Montagues in <i>Romeo + Juliet</i> but were Capulets in the original.</p>	<p>It is Juliet & Romeo's therapist that has suggested they journey back in time to key moments in their relationship to help repair it. The audience (whom the performers address at times during the show) have been invited to observe this latest attempt at repairing their relationship, as laid-down by their therapist.</p>
INCLUDES ORIGINAL DIALOGUE?	No dialogue used	N/A	No dialogue used	Yes	In parts
MUSIC	New Adventures were given permission to create a more intimate orchestration of Sergei Prokofiev's timeless masterpiece, for Matthew Bourne's <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> .	In Shakespeare's time music would have been more directly with the performance on stage in the sense that characters would react to the sounds being	Composed in September 1935 by Sergei Prokofiev for orchestra. The first recording of music from the ballet was made with the Moscow	Includes 'Everybody's Free (To Feel Good)' by Quindon Tarver, 'Talk Show Host' by Radiohead and 'Lovefool' by The Cardigans	Includes 'Kissing You' (Love Theme from <i>Romeo + Juliet</i>) by Des'ree (taken from Baz Luhrmann's 1996 film), 'The Sound of Silence' by Simon and

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	<p>Terry Davies, Matthew's long-time collaborator and Associate Artist of New Adventures, created a score for a small chamber orchestra of 15 musicians. A re-imagination of Prokofiev's work from the ground up, Terry created an acoustic sound-world that is simple and at times fragile and necessitates for each player to use two or three different instruments each.</p> <p>CLICK HERE to watch Matthew Bourne and Conductor, Dan Jackson, talk about the music of <i>Romeo and Juliet</i></p>	<p>played, as opposed to having a full musical score as is commonplace now. The choice of instruments would have been somewhat limited, but it is thought that Shakespeare's tragedies and history plays would often use trumpets and drums for ceremonial sounds and certain wind instruments being used to suggest danger or foreboding.</p> <p><i>Romeo and Juliet</i> also includes a song as text within the play: "When Griping Griefs".</p>	<p>Philharmonic Orchestra in 1938.</p>		<p>Garfunkel and 'Dance of the Knights' by Prokofiev.</p>
<p>SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST</p>	<p>Inspired by the legacy of New Adventures' production <i>Lord of the Flies</i> that engaged over 8,000 young men and boys in 2014, <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> also incorporates non-professional young dancers within its cast. From 1,000 applications, 80 individuals – males and females, aged 16-19 years - were selected to take part, across 13 different venues. Additionally, 16 young artists made their professional debut, joining</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>In 1965, MacMillan's <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> was given its premiere at Covent Garden by The Royal Ballet and was an immediate success.</p> <p>It has been performed by The Royal Ballet more than four hundred times since, as well as touring the world, and has become a true classic of the 20th-century ballet repertory.</p>	<p>During the ball scene, which is a huge party thrown by the Capulets each character is dressed in a fancy-dress costume that represents their personality. For example, Juliet as an angel, Tybalt as a devil, and Romeo as a brave knight.</p> <p>There have also been many interesting analyses of Lohmann's decision to insert racial and sexual differences from Shakespeare's original (for example, Lohmann reimagined Mercutio as an</p>	<p>Whilst the choreography is a set-piece, the dialogue between the two performers (whilst largely pre-determined) deviates from performance to performance, partly depending on the interactions they have with the audience.</p> <p>Unlike many theatre productions there is no false-wall between the performance and the viewers. The audience are a 'living entity' within the show enabling an element of improvisation in response to</p>

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	<p>the 19 members of the current New Adventures company within the cast. Six Young Associate Artists also worked alongside the creative team.</p>			<p>openly gay African-American) to emphasise particular aspects of the storyline, including on the Baz Luhrmann is God WordPress site.</p>	<p>their contributions to questions posed by Juliet & Romeo.</p>
<p>INSPIRATIONS & INFLUENCES</p>	<p>In conversation with Matthew Bourne he says: <i>“The thing that really made me want to do it was the opportunity to work with young people. It is a story about them and young love. I got even more excited when it was suggested we cast it with young people and work with young creative associates in all the different departments of the show alongside my usual world-class team. It is all about nurturing them and telling the story.</i></p> <p><i>One thing I have tried to bring out is that when young people first fall in love and feel that passion, they really go overboard in many ways. I often think about how classical ballet handles this and how the young girl gets very excited by a kiss on the cheek. Young people today, if they are into each other, are kissing until their mouths are sore. I have tried to capture that intensity.</i></p>	<p>Shakespeare may have known the story of Romeo and Juliet in several versions for some years before he wrote his play. Two sources were particularly important for its creation: Arthur Brooke, <i>The Tragicall Historie of Romeus and Iuliet</i>, written first in Italian by Bandell (1562) and Geoffrey Chaucer, <i>Troilus and Criseyde</i>, in <i>The Workes of Geffrey Chaucer</i> (1561)</p> <p>Some sources a tale based on the real-life events of two lovers who tragically died for each other in Verona, Italy at the start of the 14th century, as having influenced Shakespeare. However, there is no official record of such an event occurring.</p>	<p>MacMillan had been longing to create his own <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> after seeing John Cranko’s version for the Stuttgart Ballet.</p> <p>When the work was still in gestation, and before Covent Garden had given it the go-ahead, Lynn Seymour was invited to appear on CBC television in her native Canada. She asked Christopher Gable to join her on the programme and MacMillan offered to create a pas de deux from his envisaged production.</p> <p>In her biography, Lynn Seymour recalls: <i>“In rehearsal Kenneth created a pas de deux which serves as the fulcrum for his work. Christopher and I – both in fine fettle – responded to what Kenneth wanted as if we three were under a potent spell. Like a man possessed, Kenneth completed the</i></p>	<p><i>“With Romeo and Juliet what I wanted to do was to look at the way in which Shakespeare might make a movie of one of his plays if he was a director. How would he make it? We don't know a lot about Shakespeare, but we do know he would make a 'movie' movie. He was a player. We know about the Elizabethan stage and that he was playing for 3000 drunken punters, from the street sweeper to the Queen of England - and his competition was bear-baiting and prostitution. So, he was a relentless entertainer and a user of incredible devices and theatrical tricks to ultimately create something of meaning and convey a story. That was what we wanted to do.”</i> Interview with Baz Luhrmann in Signet, 19 December 1996</p>	<p><i>“...this piece came from a long-standing dislike of death and a dawning realisation that in my job I was perfectly placed to re-write this moment that had frustrated me for so long. I wanted Romeo and Juliet to live, and that was our starting point. Initially it was exhilarating, anything was possible, where would they go, how would they live? We were overwhelmed with the possibilities.</i></p> <p><i>And then gradually things got harder. The problem with cheating death is that then you have to carry on living. According to the experts the chemical cocktail that we experience as romantic love only lasts for 3 years. During those three years there is a gradual fall from the ideal to the real. And Romeo and Juliet had a particularly long way to fall. I was interested in this second part of their relationship, the bit after romantic love that was intrinsically less dramatic,</i></p>

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	<p><i>It is also set a little way into the future, but it is not futuristic. It is a time when society is frowning on young people having an excess of feeling and emotion which sends them off on the wrong tracks as far as society is concerned. I got the idea from Arthur Laurents, the co-creator of West Side Story, who was asked why the young people in it are violent and act the way they do? He said they have too much feeling and they need to find a way to release it. I thought that was an interesting way into the story and very true. It made me go in the direction I went in."</i></p>		<p><i>balcony pas-de-deux in three rehearsals".</i></p> <p>The commission for CBC meant that a key part of the eventual ballet's architecture was already in place.</p> <p>Quoted in an article in The Guardian by Sanjoy Roy, on 15 January 2010, MacMillan is credited as having spoken generally about his works by saying: "What I wanted to put on stage had to have more reality than much of what I was seeing in the 1940s and 50s ... Little of what I was seeing then had any contact with a real world of feeling and human behaviour. Ballet looked like window-dressing. I wanted to make ballets in which an audience would become caught up with the fate of the characters I showed them."</p>		<p><i>more mundane and more repetitive."</i></p> <p>Extract from a Lost Dog blog post - originally written as programme notes for <i>Juliet & Romeo</i> at the Royal Opera House Linbury Theatre, 2019.</p>
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