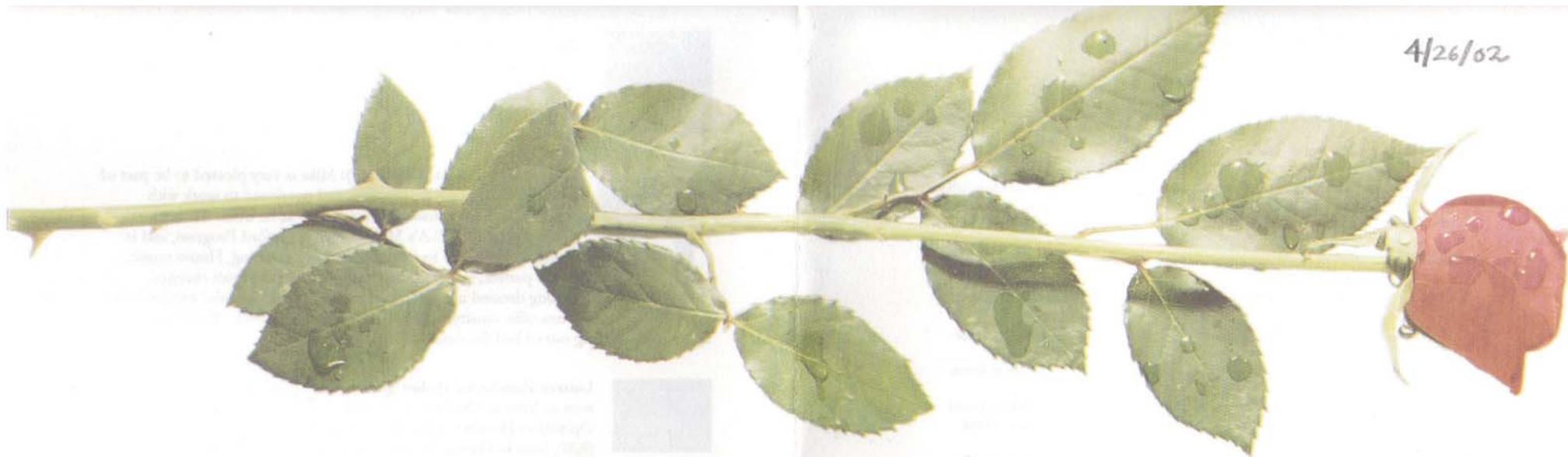


4/26/02



Special thanks to our benefactors:

Platinum: Doug Humphrey

Silver: Stephanie Zirkin

The Rude Mechanicals Proudly Present

Romeo & Juliet

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Jaki Demarest & Brett Estey

Cast In Order of Appearance:

ENSEMBLE:	Homeless man, bodyguard.....	Alex Bradley
BENVOLIO:	Cousin and friend to Romeo.....	Brett Estey
SAMPSON:	Servant to the Capulets.....	Matthew Sullivan
GREGORY:	Servant to the Capulets.....	Robert Perkins
ABRAHAM:	Servant to Montague.....	Jeffrey Hersh
TYBALT:	Nephew to Capulet.....	Peter Eichman
CAPULET:	Rival to Montague.....	Kelley Slagle
MONTAGUE:	Rival to Capulet.....	Calvin Smith
ESCALUS:	Prince of Verona..... Understudy:	Joshua Engel Alan Duda
ROMEO:	Son to Montague..... Understudy:	Kevin Elder Joshua Engel
PARIS:	Kinsman to the prince.....	Matthew Sullivan
NURSE:	To Juliet.....	Rachel Zirkin
JULIET:	Daughter to Capulet..... Understudy:	Elise Berg Lauren Zambreny
MERCUTIO:	Cousin to the Prince.....	Jaki Demarest
LAURENCE:	A Franciscan friar.....	Michael Way

Crew:

DIRECTORS	.....	Brett Estey Jaki Demarest
PRODUCER:	.....	Joshua Engel
ASST. PRODUCER:	.....	Jay Henry
SET DESIGN:	.....	Jaki Demarest
LIGHTING:	.....	Jay Henry
SOUND:	.....	Jay Henry
FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHY:	.....	Jeff Hersh
DANCE CHOREOGRAPHY:	.....	Renee Carnus
ART & PUBLICITY	.....	Peter Eichman Lee Moyer



Matthew Sullivan (Paris, Sampson): This is Matthew's first time out with the Rude Mechanicals. We just hope we haven't scared him away...



Michael Way (Friar Laurence): Mike is very pleased to be part of his first professional production, and overjoyed to work with people who enjoy Shakespeare as much as he does. He is a participant in B.A.D.A's Midsummer in Oxford Program, and is currently saving up to return. Turn-ons: climbing, House music, house parties, Ian McKellan, cats, PinaColodas with cherries, getting dressed up, getting undressed, Grand Marnier and hot tubs. Turn-offs: cruelty, idleness, Julia Roberts, Scotch, closed minds, fights, and crawling out of bed for work.



Lauren Zambreny (Juliet understudy, Rosaline): Lauren was last seen as John in *The Lion in Winter*. Other favorites roles include: Ophelia in *Hamlet* (RM), Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (RM), Joan in *Henry VI* (RM), Margaret in *Richard III* (Annapolis) & Anne in *Anne of Green Gables* (Burtonsville). This will be her last show with the RMs for a while as she and her husband Jack are preparing to move to England this summer.



Rachel Zirkin (Nurse): who has managed to survive (literally) through five consecutive RM productions, is pleased to come back for number six. Previous incarnations include Horatio (*Hamlet*), Maria (*Twelfth Night*) and Alais (*Lion in Winter*). During the "off season", she has performed such roles as Janie in *Not, Now Darling* and Sophia in *Fools* (both at the Greenbelt Arts Center). Humble thanks to Jaki, Brett and Josh for dragging her out of "retirement" and having the faith to cast her (without an audition!). And special thanks to AD – for being a drag – uh, I mean – for always having faith in her (yeah, that's it!) I love you all!



Joshua Engel (Romeo understudy, Escalus): Joshua is playing his 8th role with the Rude Mechanicals, and his 6th king (future king in this case). Thanks to Jaki and Brett for giving me this opportunity.



Brett Estey (Director, Benvolio): Brett is excited to have the opportunity to co-direct *Romeo and Juliet* with such a great cast. He was last seen in the Cavegirl production of *Ellipsis*, playing the role of Dr. Joseph Garcin. With the Rude Mechanicals, he played King Philip and understudied King Henry in *The Lion in Winter*, Valentine in *Twelfth Night* and Peter Thump in *Henry VI*. He is

excited to be acting and never wants to stop. Now if he could only get paid... Thanks to Dunkin Donuts for the coffee to keep him awake for 2 hours in traffic and Bennigans to ply him with alcohol when the nights are over. "Skeeball"



Jay Henry (Lighting Designer, Assistant Producer): Although this is Jay's fourth show with the Rude Mechanicals, he still doesn't want to write a bio. Jay looks forward to having more opportunities to not write bios.



Jeffrey Hersh (Fight Choreographer, Abraham): Jeff first joined the RMs last year playing the surly, camo-dressed Gloucester in *Henry VI*. Since then he played the Constable in *Twelfth Night* and understudied Geoffrey in *Lion in Winter*. This is the first play where Jeff has officially been the fight director and would like to state for the record that swords don't kill people, they just generate gouts of

stage blood. Jeff would like to thank the entire cast for their hard work and for putting up with his crazy ideas for fights (right, Peter?).



Robert Perkins (Gregory): Nineteen years ago, heaven was a halfpipe. Now, heaven is not kissing asphalt.



Kelley Slagle (Capulet): Kelley's previous roles with the Rude Mechanicals have included Feste in *Twelfth Night*, Clifford in *Henry VI*, and practically all of the minor roles at once in *Hamlet*. She won the Judges Award for Outstanding Cameo Appearance for the Greenbelt Arts Center production of *Inspired* at the 2002 Maryland Community Theater Festival. In February/March of this year, Kelley

made her directorial and playwrighting debut with *Ellipsis* - a modern adaptation of Sartre's *No Exit*, with her newly founded theater company, Cavegirl Productions.



Calvin Smith (Montague): is happy to be returning for his third production with the Rude Mechanicals, after having taken a few months off. He would like, as always, to say Hi to his beautiful wife Kimberly and his wonderful daughter Susan.

About the Play:

From their first awkward encounter in Capulet's garden to their anguished suicides, Romeo and Juliet share a purity, a sanctity of love incomprehensible to the earthy, worldly, cynical figures around them. The intensity of that love invests them both with a radiant inner life, a life and language of poets, inviolable by the accidents, missed chances and twists of malign fate that lead to their mutual destruction.

Juliet is willing to abandon her fears and embrace a horrifying simulacrum of death in order to keep her love for her husband inviolate. Both of them are willing to dare damnation for their love, joining each other in a suicide which loses them any hope of salvation according to their Catholic faith. And in that death, the final, unquestioned choice, their love remains constant and unstained.

The deaths of the lovers are made infinitely more wrenching by the fact that it could so easily have ended happily for them and their families. *Romeo and Juliet* begins as a comedy, with many of a comedy's classic elements: two divided lovers, aided in their schemes by friends and comic figures, with an older authority figure, a *senex iratus*, opposing the lovers. But fate and the passions of youth interpose themselves in the sudden, violent killings of Mercutio and Tybalt; the laughter and lightness sours in the mouth, the comedy turns to tragedy.

The conflict between the Montagues and Capulets is secondary to the deeper and more destructive division between the generations, a theme Shakespeare takes up again in *Lear*. Communication between the parents and their children is ineffective or nonexistent, and in the parental substitutes of Friar Laurence and the Nurse, Romeo and Juliet receive guidance that is occasionally careless, frequently manipulative and never entirely without self-interest. Laurence and the Nurse are among the more sympathetic and well-intentioned characters in the play, but they lead their charges badly and with disastrous results.

The fundamental powerlessness of the younger generation fuels the tragedy. The younger generation is brilliant, violent, reckless and cursed, dueling and dying on the turn of a word. The older generation has all the power, and every member of it has an agenda to pursue. Romeo and Juliet are alternately compelled and manipulated by parents and authority figures into a shrinking and increasingly destructive series of choices. In the end, their only choice, their only freedom, is death.

In our version, two other couples act as a foil for the central bond of Romeo and Juliet. Capulet has a relationship with her young nephew, Tybalt, that's largely steeped in her search for power and control and his tendency towards self-immolation. And the affectionate, teasing, blatantly carnal relationship of Benvolio and Mercutio provides an earthy, realist's counterpoint to the unearthly beautiful poetic fancies of Romeo and Juliet. All three romances

end in **crossed stars and untimely death**, the Foils foreshadowing the **culmination of** the tragedy.

Benvolio, the only surviving member of the younger generation, frames the play; these shadows are his reminiscences as he lives day to day in the aftermath, trying to **resurrect** the pieces of a broken world. He makes enormous sacrifices in the name of his love for Romeo, allowing Romeo to **reclaim his honor** by avenging Mercutio's death, and **accepting and condoning** Romeo's final choice of suicide. In a sense, if Benvolio had been more selfish, Romeo and Juliet might have had a chance to end happily. As it is, their tragedy brings with it a **glooming peace**, and their stainless love writes a final, glorious lesson on Verona's dark walls.

Special Thanks:

To Rob Perkins, for the thousand ways he always found to help out. To Peter Eichman, for his Photoshop godhood and the depth of his ideas. To Kelley Slagle, for her URLs, her humor and her creativity. To Joshua Engel, Jeff Hersh, Jay Henry, Elise Berg, Rob Perkins again, Peter Eichman again, Kelley Slagle again, Brett Estey and everyone else who helped build or otherwise contribute to that monster set. To Mike Way, for backrubs, interesting mixed drinks and an occasional voice of sanity. To Matt Sullivan, for fun with liquid nitrogen, and for putting up with Paris. To the entire cast, for always being willing to take risks and try new things. To Jeff Hersh, who let us do some awfully crazy things in those fights, and choreographed the most outstanding fights the Rude Mechanicals have managed to date. To the Greenbelt Arts Center in general and Hopi Auerbach in particular, for loaning us so many costumes and set pieces. To Renee Camus, for trying to teach us hopelessly rhythmically challenged people how to dance. (Sorry, we tried.) To Alex Bradley, for being willing to come in and play a bunch of crazy parts with no lines, just so we could start the play off the way we really wanted to. To Alan Duda, for taking on the Prince so Josh could have his crack at Romeo. To Josh Engel, for being the best friend anyone could ask for, and for the million things he does for the troupe on a daily basis. To Rachel Zirkin, for bringing wonderful sensitivity and realism to a character who doesn't often get that. To Chris Cherry, for being a great teacher to several of us. To Lauren Zambreny, whose hard work and sacrifices have always astonished us. To Jack Wibbe, without whom the Rude Mechanicals would not have existed. To Sean Eustis and Kevin Elder, for their good eyes and invaluable observations. To Kris Andersen and Evan Haag for their friendship and support. To Keith Brown, for being so willing to help. To Calvin Smith, for taking an oft-underestimated role and giving it subtlety, depth and complexity. And to Lee and Annaliese Moyer, for the gifts of time and talent they've given us over the years. Thank you all.

Cast and Crew (in Alphabetical Order):



Elise Berg (Juliet): Elise Berg has been with the RM's for four whole plays now, Shakespeare freak that she is, and shows no sign of letting go anytime soon. She thanks Brett and Jaki for giving her the chance to play a role that looks great on a resume; she thanks newbies Kevin, Mike and Matt for not quitting, even when they got to know us; she thanks Rob for making her feel like less of a freak; and she thanks everyone else for everything else. Merci, mon petit bebe chien!



Alex Bradley (Ensemble): Alex Bradley hasn't had a theatrical credit since high school (where he was voted Best Actor). So what happened? Well, in college, Alex didn't think it was worth taking up smoking and becoming gay to remain an actor. In fact, he was blacklisted for not accepting a non-speaking role! He makes up for it now by playing two non-speaking roles in *Romeo & Juliet*. [Director's note: we still haven't convinced him to become a gay smoker, but we're trying.]



Jaki Demarest (Director, Mercutio): Jaki has studied acting at the Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, at Mason Gross School of the Arts, and at the HB Studios in New York, and stage combat with TJ Glenn and Brad Waller. New York credits include Hamlet, Mephistopheles in *Faust*, Lucy Westenra in *Dracula*, Laura in *Creatures of Great Personal Valor*, and Lady Capulet in *Romeo & Juliet*, with a national tour as Roxane in *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Locally, she's played Inez Serrano in *Ellipsis* at the GAC, and numerous roles with the Rude Mechanicals. As always, she thanks the RMs for giving her a wonderful place to play and call home, Josh Engel and Rob Perkins, for everything, and Brett Estey, for being an outstanding co-director, keeping her sane, and making her laugh, hard and often. Call me butt love, and I'll be new baptized...



Alan Duda (Escalus understudy): As *Prince for a Day*, Alan Duda was only too happy to banish Josh until it was explained to him that the original commands higher than a duplicate prince order.



Peter Eichman (Tybalt): *Romeo and Juliet* marks Peter's third show with the Rude Mechanicals, and his second time playing Tybalt. He was last seen as John in the RM's *Lion in Winter* and as a Drone in Cavegirl Productions' *Ellipsis*. When not onstage, Peter is a student at the University of Maryland, College Park; he can also often be found tinkering with his computer or down-tuning his bass guitar.



Kevin Elder (Romeo): is the founder and creator of Dirt Floor New Works Theater, currently located in the D.C. area. He has had a great experience working with the Rude Mechanicals and wishes to thank all of the cast and crew. He would also like to send a special thanks to Tara Derris. His performance is dedicated to his Father, Kerry Elder, who played Romeo 25 years ago and has challenged Kevin to work harder every step of the way.