



Monday, April 28, 2003

## MBT introduces students to Shakespeare

Timeless portrayals of true love and cruel fate are brought to life when **Meadow Brook Theatre** (MBT) presents a special production of William Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet." The play, which runs from Wednesday, April 30, through Friday, May 16, is produced exclusively for student audiences and open only to school groups.

Continuing the tradition of providing professional theatre for Metro Detroit students, "Romeo and Juliet" serves as an excellent introduction to the powerful language and extraordinary drama of Shakespeare. Relevant for students of all ages, the timeless story of "two star-crossed lovers" from rival families echoes throughout today's world as their tragic fate details the often too-precious cost of mortal conflict.

"We at Meadow Brook Theatre are proud to be able to serve a variety of dramas, musicals and comedies to the students in our area," said Gregg Bloomfield, MBT managing director. "Teachers have told us how much they appreciate our programming and how much they use our study guides to take the theater experience back to the classroom."

More than 25,000 students from throughout SE Michigan will attend MBT's 47 school-time matinee performances this season.

"Romeo and Juliet" is running concurrently with "Meshuggah-Nuns!" This marks the first time MBT has presented two productions running simultaneously.

The **Meadow Brook Theatre** production of "Romeo and Juliet" is directed by David Mowers, who is a prolific director who recently directed "Romeo and Juliet" in Norway. A graduate of the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art, he has performed and directed on a variety of New York stages and taught at both New York University and the Second City Training Center.

The cast features many talented students from Oakland University's theatre program. These thespians are joined by Detroit area actors, many of whom are familiar to MBT audiences.

Juliet is played by Cat Shoemaker, who holds an MFA degree from Wayne State University and has performed in MBT's "A Christmas Carol," "Murder on the Nile" and "Godspell." Jason Smith plays Juliet's beloved Romeo. Smith will graduate this spring from Wayne State University and has appeared in numerous productions at the Bonstelle Theatre, Hilberry Theatre and Saxtons Rivers Playhouse in Vermont.

Many of the 16 performances of "Romeo and Juliet" have been sold out for months, making the 2002-2003 season a very successful one for student groups and regular patrons of **Meadow Brook Theatre**.

"Romeo and Juliet" is suitable for middle- and high-school audiences. Good seats still are available for several performances. For more information, contact (248) 370-3316.

### SUMMARY

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