


YOUTH THEATRE UNLIMITED PRESENTS
SHAKESPEARE'S

ROMEO & JULIET



JABAL

ABOUT YOUTH THEATRE UNLIMITED...



In 1973 the Institute for the Study and Development of Youth Theatre was established to provide professional theatre training to the Greater Hartford community. In the ten years since its inception, the name has been changed, the programs have expanded, and the organization has had to move its headquarters frequently. However, YTU's goal has always remained the same—professional theatre training.

At first, theatre training was limited to area teachers and their students. Theatre artists were sent into schools to instruct teachers in the use of drama as a teaching method and to expose children to performance skills they would find useful and enjoyable. In 1978, Clay Stevenson was added to the staff to focus and direct the organization's training program as only an accomplished director might do. Soon thereafter, students were given the opportunity to put their training into practice in the presentation of small performances.

As it became apparent that practical performance experience was an invaluable aspect of theatre training, a teen-aged performance company was developed that toured schools throughout the Greater Hartford area. With this new facet added to the organization's services, the name was changed to Youth Theatre

Unlimited in 1980. Under Mr. Stevenson's direction, YTU's Teen Company has presented such diverse productions as Sophocles' *Antigone* and the more contemporary *David and Lisa*.

In order to meet the need for professional training for adult actors and actresses, Youth Theatre Unlimited expanded its class offerings to service all age groups. These students soon required more extensive training and classes were added in voice, movement, and dance. In 1982, an adult performing group, The Performers Workshop, was established in order to continue to offer the unique combination of quality training and performance experience to all ages. At present, work is being done forming the Hartford Contemporary Dance Theatre under the guidance of resident choreographer Stephen Semien.

Today, Youth Theatre Unlimited has established itself as *the* theatre training center of the Greater Hartford area. The organization provides training and preparation for any person desiring to pursue a career in the theatre regardless of sex, race, or age. At the same time, the high artistic standards maintained in YTU productions have served as an integral part of the cultural enrichment of the Greater Hartford community.

*YOUTH THEATRE UNLIMITED PRESENTS
SHAKESPEARE'S*

ROMEO & JULIET

Director **Clay Stevenson**
Choreographer **Stephen Semien**
Set Designer **Linda M. Glass**
Lighting Designer **Vincent G. Boucher**
Sound Designer and Composer **Kenneth W. Steen**
Costume Designers **Lani Beck Johnson**
Kenneth Mooney

March 1 to March 24, 1984
The Avery Theatre, Wadsworth Atheneum
Hartford, Connecticut

Youth Theatre Unlimited is sponsored by
The Greater Hartford Arts Council and
The Connecticut Commission on the Arts

CAST (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)




Sampson	Michael Wallace
Gregory	David Leonard
Balthasar	Donald R. Jones
Abraham	Kenneth Woodberry
Benvolio	Ron McClelland
Tybalt	David Murphy
Officer	Wayne W. Bell Pretlow
Lord Capulet	Jim Mays
Lady Capulet	Deborah Reynolds
Lord Montague	Hank Frazier
Lady Montague	Lauren Womble
Prince Escalus	Bill Yousman
Romeo	Tyron Leggett
Paris	Michael Wallace
Nurse	Marsha Hogan
Juliet	Lisa Petruzzi
Mercutio	Billy Morrisette
First Servant	David Cappa
Second Servant	David Leonard
Old Capulet	David Leonard
Friar Laurence	Dennis Meyers
Peter	Michael Wallace
Page to Mercutio	Adam J. Dexter
Apothecary	Wayne W. Bell Pretlow
Friar John	Earle G. Stewart
Page to Paris	Colette Stamps
Chief Watchman	Earle G. Stewart
Second Watchman	Kenneth Woodberry
Third Watchman	Wayne W. Bell Pretlow
Chorus	Marsha Hogan
	Dennis Meyers
	Wayne W. Bell Pretlow
Citizens, Attendants, and additional Servants	Sandra Murphy
	Renana Magee
	Raquel Cion
	David Cappa
	Frank Medina
	Grace Andrea Baker
	Jeffrey Kagan-McCann
	Colette Stamps
	Christopher R. Dexter
	Tracey Hudgen
	Andre Bell Prelow

Act One: Late spring
Act Two: Early summer
Act Three: Late summer

Place: Verona, Italy

There will be two 10-minute intermissions.

PRODUCTION STAFF



Executive Producer	Alan Neal Levy
Technical Director	Linda M. Glass
Assistant to the Director	Stephen Semien
Stage Manager	Vashti DuBois
Assistant Stage Manager	J.M. Farrelly
Master Electrician	Vincent G. Boucher
Sound Technician	Kenneth W. Steen
Graphic Designer	Janet L. Abel
Program Design	Janet L. Abel
Costume Mistress	Dawn Dexter
Property Master	Jeffrey Kagan-McCann
Production Assistants	Dawn Dexter
	J.M. Farrelly
	Melanie Eyre
	Jeffrey Kagan-McCann

PRODUCTION CREW

Dawn Dexter
Jeffrey Kagan-McCann
Melanie Eyre
Marcy Neville
Eric Mendelson

Wayne W. Bell Pretlow
Andre Bell Pretlow
Damein Scarborough
Avis Swallow
Heather Hornyak

Youth Theatre Unlimited would like to give special thanks to the following.
Without your assistance this production would not have been possible.

Bob Wojick, ETA Printers
Arthur Andersen & Company
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Aetna Life & Casualty
Central Stage (CCSU)
Wesleyan University Theatre Dept.
Albertus Magnus School
The Farmington Co.

Deborah Reynolds
Jean Murphy
Frank Gherardi
Actors Attic
Adams Lighting Co.
Michael Isko
Trinity College
Dawn Dexter
Clayton Austin

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR...




Clay Stevenson came to Hartford in 1977 with an extensive theatrical background. He started his own theatre company in New York City called The Players Workshop and he was responsible for the first theatre program at Sing Sing Prison where his actors included Miguel Pinero who later created the electrifying *Short Eyes*. Mr. Stevenson has directed over one hundred plays throughout the United States and in such foreign countries as France, Germany, and Italy over the past twenty years. He has treated Hartford audiences to such critically acclaimed productions as *The Prodigal Sister*, *Trouble in Mind*, and *Mojo* (with Academy Award Nominee Howard Rollins).

Mr. Stevenson's work with young people in the Hartford area is equally extensive. In addition to the classes he teaches throughout the year at Youth Theatre Unlimited, Mr. Stevenson recently directed YTU's teen company productions of *Antigone* and *David and Lisa* and The Performers Workshop production of *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window*. He is probably best known in Hartford at the Artistic Director of the Hartford Stage Company Youth Theatre where, for the past six years, he has directed *West Side Story*, *The Me Nobody Knows*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *On The Town*, *The Boys From Syracuse*, *Kiss Me Kate*, and most recently Cole Porter's *Anything Goes*.

With Kudos to
Youth Theatre Unlimited
and
The Hartford Contemporary
Dance Theatre
Opportunity and Excellence

Rick Reynolds

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR...



As a director, I always try to choose a play that will be challenging not only to myself, but to my actors and technicians as well. Theatre is not a showplace: it is a laboratory where the reward of hard work is growth, involvement, and new insights. In choosing *Romeo & Juliet*, I believe that I have succeeded in presenting such an opportunity.

To prepare for a role in a Shakespearean play, an actor is faced with incredible demands—intellectually, emotionally, and physically. At first, I must communicate my concept of who the character is and what their relationship is to the other people in the play. It is also important that we reach an agreement on the setting of the play in order for the character's personality to be seen as a natural outgrowth of the environment and the immediate circumstances.

It is also the responsibility of the actor to create a complete emotional history for that character. People take actions only as a result of the four basic emotions—love, fear, anger, or guilt. And there is always a very logical reason for those emotions to surface in a given situation. We remember how we reacted in similar situations and we remember how we felt the last time we saw a particular person. In the same way, an actor on stage must remember not only past events but past emotions, in order to emotionally react to their present situation. Only then will an actor behave as if they were that person in those circumstances. And only then will an audience believe them.

When an actor uses these techniques to prepare for a role, every rehearsal and every performance will result in new insights. Acting, therefore, becomes a process of continual growth—much like life itself. And this, after all, is the essence of drama—“a moment of intense life,” as William Butler Yeats defined it.

The biggest challenge for me in directing *Romeo & Juliet* has been in trying to overcome the reticence that many people hold for Shakespeare. The subject matter of the play made it an ideal choice as a project for the combined efforts of our teen and adult acting companies. This will also result in attracting a diverse audience who are not necessarily familiar with Shakespeare or the language of his day. But these should not be obstacles. It is the people, the love and the tragedy in these young lovers' situation that are truly universal. While this production strives to remain true to the Elizabethan era, it could still happen today.

Every directorial decision I have made has been geared towards accomplishing this contemporary yet Elizabethan crossover. All the technical designs have been conceived to involve the audience in the action of the play. The costumes, set, lights, and music aim to suggest rather than define the specific time and place. Moods and atmospheres are more important than realism. It is entirely up to the individual actors and actresses, and therefore the audience as well, to make the space real.

RAPHAEL'S

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COMMENTS FROM THE CAST...



Acting is hard work. There are no shortcuts—no way to do it without giving my all.

Wayne W. Bell Pretlow

The younger cast members sense of commitment and enthusiasm infected all of us.

Deborah Reynolds

Younger...older...it doesn't matter. We all learn from each other; we all become a family.

Lisa Petruzzi

Shakespeare is a frightening project to me as an American actor. But with an understanding of the text, the true beauty of the language supports me as an actor and brings joy to my performance.

Dennis Meyers

Clay never dictates how to do something. He helps you to discover it on your own.

David Murphy

I have learned that there is always more for me to learn.

Billy Morissette

It's not any sort of magical transformation. I haven't turned into Romeo. But I have learned to believe that I am behaving as if I really were him.

Tyron Leggett

This experience will carry over into my dancing. Character development is just as important there.

Donald Jones

These characters are really no different than people today.

Michael Wallace

I was nervous at first about working with so many adults—they were all so professional. But they accepted us (teens) completely and made us feel important.

Colette Stamps

The professional atmosphere was incredible. We all were working towards the same goal, so we all helped each other.

David Leonard

Each new production brings a fuller awareness of what I have learned in Clay's classes.

Jim Mays

Clay is a director that an actor can trust.

Hank Frazier

This project has been challenging, inspirational, tough, thought-provoking, and maddening—the most influential experience in my life. I have really come to like Benvolio. Still, I learn something more about him every day.

Ron McClelland

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YOUTH THEATRE UNLIMITED



Administrative Staff

Executive Director Alan Neal Levy
Artistic Director Clay Stevenson
Resident Choreographer Stephen Semien
Administrative Assistant Dawn Dexter
Work/Study Intern Jeffrey Kagan-McCann
Intern Melanie Eyre

Board of Directors

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This production is made possible through funding by:

The Ensworth Foundation	Connecticut Mutual Life
The Hartford Courant Foundation	Hartford Steam Boiler
Travelers Insurance Company	CIGNA

Tax deductible donations to Youth Theatre Unlimited are welcome.
Donation envelopes are available in the lobby or may be mailed to:

Youth Theatre Unlimited
P.O. Box 3295
Hartford, CT 06103

YTU's UPCOMING EVENTS



Spring Classes

Our Spring semester of classes will run from April 9-June 16, 1984. Under the supervision of Artistic Director Clay Stevenson, classes will be offered in the following areas:

Teen Classes:

- Acting Technique
- Voice
- Mime

Adult Classes:

- Beginning Acting
- Intermediate Acting
- Advanced Acting
- Voice
- Mime

Registration forms available in the lobby.

End of Year Class Showings

At the conclusion of the Spring Semester, workshop presentations will be conducted for the Teen Acting Technique and Adult Intermediate and Advanced classes. The public is invited at no charge. Watch for details.

Performers Workshop

The Performers Workshop, YTU's Adult Performing Ensemble, will be presenting a new production in late May, to be directed by Clay Stevenson.

Mailing List

To keep up to date on all Youth Theatre Unlimited classes, productions, and other activities, please be sure to sign our mailing list book in the lobby.

Volunteers

Youth Theatre Unlimited is a non-profit organization that relies heavily on the voluntary assistance of area residents. If you or someone you know would like to volunteer time to help in our productions or administration, please let us know. For further information, contact Dawn Dexter at 523-4553.