

October 25 & 26, 2022
 10AM & 12:30PM

The Acting Company

Kent Gash, Artistic Director
Margot Harley, Founder

Erik Schroeder, Managing Director
Earl D. Weiner, Board Chairman

presents

Romeo & Juliet

By **William Shakespeare**
 Directed by **Leah C. Gardiner**

Featuring

Torée Alexandre* Juliet
Zoe Anastassiou* Nurse
Edwin Brown III* Friar
Darius Deon* Tybalt
Sam Encarnacion* Benvolio
Max Antonio Gonzalez* Paris
Ty Camren Hawthorne Prince
Travis Raeburn* Mercutio
Christopher Then* Romeo
William Oliver Watkins* Lord Capulet
Eunice Woods* Lady Capulet
Caro Zeller* Lady Montague

Production Stage Manager
Melissa Richter*

Assistant Stage Manager
Josh-Andrew Wisdom*

General Manager
Pamela Reichen

Associate Artistic Director
Devin Brain

**Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.*

As a courtesy to the performers and fellow audience members, please be sure to silence all mobile devices. The use of recording equipment and the taking of photographs are strictly prohibited.



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 a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts

artistic director's note

By Kent Gash

Leah Gardiners' *Romeo & Juliet* engages the unstoppable essential vitality of loving hearts and the soul of youth — sometimes careless, sometimes reckless, always exhilarating. The lives in this play are lived at a kind of warp speed that is thrilling! There are moments in life when we feel invincible and throw caution to the winds. Actors, playwrights and all of us who make theater throw caution to the wind as the lights dim and we dare to imagine, create and embody a story to share with you, our audiences.

William Shakespeare is genius storyteller taking us on an unforgettable journey. If we're lucky, we experience this invincibility aligned with love — romantic love, love of fraternity, love of ideals and those who are like-minded or who have shared lived experiences and more importantly, we are Montague or Capulet and we come to love those who are different from us. As we mature this sense of being invincible can lead to some of life's most satisfying and unexpected adventures. These adventures help to forge our identities and our beliefs. In a truly fulfilled life, they enrich and uplift us and we in turn enrich and uplift the lives of others.

This classic story unleashed by this effervescent company of actors is reclaimed to enthral audiences anew. In every human heart lies, courage, loyalty, honor, faith, commitment and an invincible endless capacity to love — love flagrantly, with abandon and with joy! As we return to the theater and live performances, The Acting Company happily invites you to enjoy this classic romantic adventure. Welcome to The Acting Company! Welcome to theater!

meet the cast

Torée Alexandre (*Juliet*) hails from Yonkers, NY. She is a graduate of Point Park University where she studied acting and musical theater. She is honored and humbled to be working with The Acting Company. Her mother first introduced her to Shakespeare with "Sonnet 29," "When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes..." and she has had a deep appreciation for the Bard's words ever since. Giving many thanks to the people who inspire her: Paige, Mama, Mommy and CHI Talent. Glory to the Most High!

Zoe Anastassiou (*Nurse*) is a Greek-Aussie-Brit. She is currently seen in Emily Bohannon's *Virtue* featuring Margaret Colin and Joshua Henry, streaming on Broadway on Demand. Zoe was just seen in Megan Lohne's *Sharing Silence* as part of the Emerging Artists Theatre's New Work Series, as Lady Capulet and in a reading of *King Lear* directed by Austin Pendleton as part of The Workshop Theater's Annual Will-a-Thon.

Edwin Brown III (*Friar*) is from D.C. Off-Broadway credits include *Thoughts of a Colored Man* (Royal Family), *Separate and Equal* (59E59), *Fly* (Alabama Shakespeare Festival), *Wig Out!*, *Three Sisters* (Studio Theatre), *The Freedom Trial of Anthony Burns* (Coterie Theatre), *Freedom Rider* (KCRep) and *Venus* (Ira Aldridge Theatre). TV credits include *Lincoln's War at Washington* (Smithsonian Channel). Brown is a Howard and BADA alum with an MFA in acting and directing at KC Rep/UMKC.

meet the cast

Darius Deon (*Tybalt*) is a Grand Prairie, Texas native who is elated for this to be his National Tour debut! Previous credits include Brutus in *Julius Caesar* (Kentucky Shakespeare Tour) and Orlando/Sebastian in *As You Like It/Twelfth Night* (Texas Shakespeare Festival). He would also love to give all Glory and Honor to God, his family and his friends for their never-ending support. Romans 8:31.

Sam Encarnación (*Benvolio*) is proud to join The Acting Company in its 50th season. Credits include *The Paper Dreams of Harry Chin* (Indiana Rep), *The Bandaged Place* (New York Stage & Film), *Peter and the Starcatcher* (VSC), *Skin Deep Skin Tight* (Precariat Prod), *Long Way Go Down* (Harold Clurman Lab), *The Brothers Size* (Syracuse Stage and South African tour) and *Topdog/Underdog* (Peoples Theater Lab). Television credits include *Law & Order: SVU* and *Jessica Jones*. He is an alum of the conservatory at the Stella Adler Studio.

Max Antonio Gonzalez (*Paris*) is an actor, singer and dancer based in New York City. He graduated from the New Studio on Broadway at NYU Tisch School of the Arts. Credits include *For You, Paige* (Symphony Space), *Cinderella* (Alabama Shakespeare Festival), *The Fantasticks*, *West Side Story* and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Tibbits Opera House). Max is thrilled to be a part of The Acting Company. Sending love to Juan, Joan, Ana, Leo and Sophie!

Ty Camren Hawthorne (*Prince*) is an NYC-based artist hailing from the distant shores of Monterey, California. He is a recent graduate of The New Studio at NYU Tisch where he was humbled to receive the Outstanding Achievement in Studio award. Recent credits include immersive collaborations with Netflix such as *Stranger Things: The Experience*, *Money Heist: The Experience*. He is overjoyed to be joining The Acting Company and sharing the stage with this talented group.

Travis Raeburn (*Mercutio*) is a graduate of SUNY Purchase's Acting Conservatory (BFA) and LaGuardia High School. Most recent projects include MCC Theater's production of *Soft*. Some additional credits include *Wu-Tang: An American Saga*, *First Match*, commercials for MasterCard USA, Xfinity and Pop-Tarts, and *In the Southern Breeze* at Rattlestick Playwrights Theater. He thanks his mother, grandmother and family for their support. Black lives always will matter.

Christopher Then (*Romeo*) hails from Washington Heights in New York City (take the A train to 168th street). The bilingual New York native states, "Acting was something that I found myself always coming back to." He received his MFA from The New School for Drama. Previous credits include *Last Train to Tomorrow* (Alice Tully Hall), *Blu* (Roscoe Brown Theater) and *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* (NSD). He is beyond excited to make his Acting Company debut with this talented group of actors.

meet the cast

William Oliver Watkins (*Lord Capulet*) has been seen in *Perseverance* (Portland Stage), *Jordan* (Northern Stage), *Thirst* (CATF), *Sweat, Ruined, Jackie & Me, One Night in Miami* (Denver Center), *Othello, Twelfth Night* (Cincinnati Shakes), *Antigone, Camp Logan* (National Black Theatre), *The Christians, Merchant of Venice* (Gulfshore Playhouse), *A Raisin in the Sun* (Studio Arena). Screen credits include *The Endgame, New Amsterdam, The Forty-Year-Old Version, Bull, Law & Order: SVU, Blindspot, The Blacklist, Madam Secretary, Nasty Baby* and *Nurse Jackie*. Will is originally from Cincinnati, OH.

Enice Woods (*Lady Capulet*) is delighted you came to the show! Theater credits include *Bayard Rustin Inside Ashland* (People's Light), *Paradise Blue* (City Theatre), *Pipeline* (Alabama Shakespeare Festival), *Ohio State Murders* (Goodman Theatre), *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company) and *Her Portmanteau* (American Conservatory Theater) among others. Television credits include *Shameless* and *Chicago P.D.* Enice is represented by Gray Talent Group. Many thanks to God and her family for all their support!

Caro Zeller (*Montague*) has been seen as Imogene in *The Cymbeline Project*, Margarita Chacon, Alwynne/Ensemble in *The Copper Children*; Amelia/Ensemble in *Mother Road*; Luciana in *La Comedia of Errors* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); Ginny in *Elliot, A Soldier's Fugue* (Center Theatre Group) and Emma in *Fefu and Her Friends* (Circle X Theatre Company, Just Toys).

Film and television credits include *The Morning Show, Bruising for Besos, Over the Moon, Kiss Me, and Crime School*. Training: MFA in acting from USC.

meet the company

Leah C. Gardiner (*Director*) is an Obie Award-winning stage and film director known for the "incisive clarity" (*The New York Times*) of her work with physicality and text. Her work, ranging from Pulitzer-finalist new plays to Shakespeare to musicals, has been seen across the U.S., England and Japan. She recently completed a pair of TV projects, in both the U.S. and U.K., and is in development of two new commercial musicals.

Edward E. Haynes, Jr. (*Scenic Designer*) Credits include: 777 Theater, Two River Theatre Co., Trinity Rep., The Muny Theater, Mark Taper Forum, Ebony Repertory Theatre Company, South Coast Rep., Kirk Douglas Theatre, Geffen Playhouse, Berkeley Rep., East West Players, Pasadena Playhouse, The Hollywood Bowl, Antaeus Theater Co., Marin Theatre Co., Lone Tree Arts Center, TheatreWorks, Intiman Theatre, Alley Theatre, Alliance Theatre, Alabama Shakespeare Festival and many he can no longer remember. Television credits include *MTV's Spring Break, Hip Hop Harry* for the Discovery Kids/TLC Channel and *Culture Clash* for FOX TV.

Dawn Chiang (*Lighting Designer*) Broadway credits include *Zoot Suit* (co-designer) and *Tango Pasion*. Off-Broadway credits include

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Roundabout Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club (co-designer) and *Encores!* concert musicals at New York City Center. Opera credits: resident lighting designer at New York City Opera. Regional credits: Guthrie Theater, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Mark Taper Forum, South Coast Repertory and many more. Awards: Lighting Designer of the Year Award (Syracuse Area Live Theatre) and the Dramalogue Awards. Nominations: Maharam Design Award from American Theatre Wing, Los Angeles Drama Critics' Award and San Francisco Bay Area Critics' Award.

Lindsay Jones (*Original Music and Sound Designer*) Broadway credits: *Slave Play*, *The Nap*, *Bronx Bombers* and *A Time to Kill*. International credits: Royal Shakespeare Company (England) and the Stratford Shakespeare Festival (Canada). Regional credits: Mark Taper Forum, Arena Stage, Goodman Theatre and many others. Film credits: *A Note of Triumph* (2006 Academy Award, Best Documentary) for HBO Films. Awards: two Tony Award nominations (Best Score and Best Sound Design of a Play), seven Joseph Jefferson Awards and 24 nominations; two Ovation Awards and three nominations; and many others.

Lex Liang (*Costume Designer*) NYC/off-Broadway credits include 50+ productions. Regional credits: Actor's Theatre Louisville, Alliance, Asolo, Cleveland Playhouse, Cincinnati Playhouse, Dallas Theatre Center, Denver Center, Geva, The Guthrie, La Jolla, Pasadena Playhouse, Playmaker's, Portland Center Stage, St. Louis Rep., Syracuse Stage, Woolly

Mammoth and many more. Lex is the founder and principal of LDC Design Associates, an experiential event design and production company in NYC. Recent projects: *Operation Smile Gala*, *The Tony Awards Gala*, and BCBG's *30-Year Retrospective*, NYFW.

J. David Brimmer (*Fight Choreographer*) Broadway credits: *Pass Over*, *American Buffalo*, *Hangmen*, *Spring Awakening*, *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*, *Grace*, *Speed the Plow*, *Thérèse Raquin* and *Long Day's Journey into Night*. New York premieres: *Tambo and Bones*, *Heroes of the Fourth Turning*, *Socrates*, *Fairview*, *Barbecue*, *Is God Is*, *Yen*, *Gloria*, *An Octoroon*, *Blasted*, *Bethany*, *Blackbird*, *Bug* and *Killer Joe*. "Walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone." - G. Fox

Ann C. James (*Intimacy Coordinator*) has an extensive career in international stage direction and theater education spanning three decades. She recently made her debut as the first Black intimacy coordinator of Broadway for Antoinette Nwandu's *Pass Over*. She served as intimacy director and sensitivity specialist for the off-Broadway productions of Moises Kaufman's *Seven Deadly Sins* by Tectonic Theatre Project, *Seize the King* produced by Classical Theatre of Harlem, *Twilight Los Angeles: 1992* at Signature Theater, *F*cking A* at Fordham University and most recently for Dominique Morisseau's *Confederates*. On the west coast, James provides consultation and intimacy coordination for television and film. Her company, Intimacy Coordinators of Color, has partnerships with Adelphi University,

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New York University, Columbia University, American Conservatory Theater, Brown University, Trinity Repertory Theater, Harvard and A.R.T./New York.

Dr. Robert Shimko (*Adaptor and Dramaturg*) is the director of the School of Theatre & Dance at the University of Houston and the executive director and literary director of the Houston Shakespeare Festival. He has over 80 professional dramaturgy credits across the U.S., including several productions at the Alley Theatre and the Guthrie Theater. He is the author of the book *Alley Theatre: 75 Years* as well as numerous articles in scholarly journals and anthologies.

Xavier Clark (*Voice and Speech*) is a bilingual voice and speech practitioner from Turkey. He studied under teachers like Alitheya Phillips, Ursula Meyer and apprenticed with Dawn-Elin Fraser as part of her inaugural Dialect Coaches of Color cohort. He is a pilot instructor with New York Speech Coaching and an adjunct faculty member at NYU Tisch U.G. Drama through the Stella Adler Studio and Atlantic Acting School. Training: RADA, NYU (BFA) and UCSD (MFA).

Adesola Osakalumi (*Choreographer*) Broadway credits: *Skeleton Crew*, *Fela!* and *Equus*. Off-Broadway credits: *Cullud Wattah*, *Coal Country*, *Othello* (Public Theater), *runboyrun*, *Eyewitness Blues* (NYTW), *Syncing Ink* (Flea Theater), *Skeleton Crew* (Atlantic Theater), *Jam on the Groove* (Minetta Lane) and *Fela!* Regional credits: *In Your Arms*. Film and

TV credits: *Red Pill*, *Ibrahim*, *Sex and the City 2*, *Enchanted*, *Across the Universe*, *School of Rock*, *The Endgame* (NBC) and *Ice*. Osakalumi is a Bessie Award recipient and Drama Desk nominee.

Kis Knekt (*Assistant Scenic Designer and Props Supervisor*) holds an MFA in set design from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and a BFA from the University of Illinois. After working in New York as a freelance designer and assistant on Broadway, regional opera and television, Kis relocated to Los Angeles where she designed theme parks, corporate events, retail interiors and leading scenic on national commercials. She has recently returned to NYC and the theater!

Melissa Richter (*Stage Manager*) is thrilled to be working with The Acting Company for the first time! Select PSM credits include *The Mountaintop* (Weston Playhouse), *Attempts on Her Life* (The New School), *Native Gardens* (Gloucester Stage), *The Full Monty*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *The Royale*, *Ring of Fire*, *Blithe Spirit* and *Sex with Strangers* (Capital Repertory Theatre). Most recently she was the CSM for the touring productions of *Pretty Woman: The Musical* and *Jersey Boys*. Proud member of Actors' Equity Association.

Josh-Andrew Wisdom (*Assistant Stage Manager*) is a New York City-based freelance stage manager who recently finished his stage management apprenticeship at The Juilliard School. He is an alum of The University of Miami with a BFA in stage management. Previous credits include Juilliard

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productions of *Indecent* by Paula Vogel and *The Rake's Progress* by Stravinsky, as well as Undiscovered Works' production of *Hooded: Or Being Black for Dummies* by Tarrance Arvelle Chisholm.

Row Walters (*Production Manager and Audio Supervisor*) is thrilled to join The Acting Company family. She is a freelance production manager, sound and lighting designer and technician in Philadelphia, Atlanta and NYC. Most recently she has been production managing independent films across the country. Favorite shows include *Legally Blonde* (Kidz Theater), *A Hard Time* (FringeArts) and *Sunday in the Park with George* (Temple University). She has her BFA in Lighting Design from Syracuse University. Much love to Daria and Otto.

Kent Gash (*Artistic Director*)
Off-Broadway credits: *Barbecue* (Public Theatre), *Lockdown* (Rattlestick), co-author and director of *Langston in Harlem* (2010 Audelco Award, Best Musical), New York premiere of *Miss Evers' Boys* and revival of *Home* (Melting Pot Theatre), *Beggar's Holiday* (The York). Selected regional credits: *Choir Boy* (Steppenwolf (Jeff Award Nominee)), Studio Theatre DC and Marin Theatre), *Paradise Blue* (City Theatre), *Master Harold...* (Arizona Theatre), *Guys and Dolls* (Guthrie), *The Wiz* (Ford's), *The Gem of the Ocean* (South Coast Rep), *The Mountaintop* and *Topdog/Underdog* (Norton Award, Trinity Rep), *Wig Out* (Studio Theatre DC, Sundance) and *Comedy of Errors* (OSF). Upcoming projects: *The Three Musketeers* (OSF) and the world premiere musical *Billy Strayhorn*:

Something to Live For. Mr. Gash was associate artistic director of Alliance Theatre and Alabama Shakespeare Festival. He is the founding director of the New Studio on Broadway at Tisch, NYU. He is an alum of Carnegie-Mellon (BFA, acting) and UCLA (MFA, directing).

Erik Schroeder (*Managing Director*) served as managing director of The House Theatre of Chicago, director of marketing at Lookingglass Theatre, worked at the Manhattan Theatre Club and received the Leadership U Fellowship (Mellon Foundation, TCG). He is a co-producer of *Hadestown* (Broadway and National Tour). Erik was an adjunct instructor at Columbia College Chicago, board member of The Hypocrites and guest speaker for UChicago, Loyola, NAMP, LoAO and INTIX. He has produced/performed at 54 Below, Florida Studio Theatre, American Repertory Theatre and Actors Theatre of Louisville. He is a graduate of St. Olaf College and the Commercial Theatre Institute.

about the company

The Acting Company develops emerging actors and builds enthusiastic audiences for the theater by touring professional productions across the United States and providing educational programs, in-school residencies and teacher training workshops to thousands of audience members and students every year. Founded in 1972 by John Houseman and Margot Harley, the company now seeks to reinvent the definition of classical theater through the lens of who we are as citizens of the

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world today under the new leadership of artistic director Kent Gash. The Acting Company has toured 143 productions to millions of people in 48 states and 10 countries, has been honored with Tony, Obie, AUDELCO and LA Drama Critics Circle Awards, and helped launch the careers of two generations of actors including Patti LuPone, Kevin Kline, Rainn Wilson, Jesse L. Martin, Jeffrey Wright, Keith David, Hamish Linklater and Kelley Curran.

staff

Creative and Production Team

Kate Pitt, *Assistant Director*
Row Walters, *Production Manager and Audio Supervisor*
Kis Knekt, *Assistant Scenic Designer and Props Supervisor*
Hannah Sgambellone, *Technical Director*
Hannah Chalman, *Assistant Costume Designer*
Amanda Stutzman, *Tour Wardrobe Supervisor*
Kat C. Zhou, *Assistant Lighting Designer*
Devan Kelty, *Tour Lighting Supervisor*
Ilen DeNio, *Associate Sound and Music Designer*
Nina Field, *Production Audio*
Luzmyrna Crespo, *Associate Fight Choreographer*
Leon Qin and **Miles Segura**, *Fight Choreography Interns*
Anthony “YNOT” Denaro, *Assistant Choreographer*
Jessica E. Ellison, *Assistant Dramaturg*
John Anselmo and **Dan Mullins**, *Production Electricians*
Sara Rosenthal, *Production Assistant*
Victor Vasquez, *X Casting, Casting Agent*

The Acting Company

Kent Gash, *Artistic Director*
Erik Schroeder, *Managing Director*
Devin Brain, *Associate Artistic Director*
Pamela Reichen, *General Manager*
Hillary Cohen, *Director of Development*
Page Bofang Wark, *Company Manager*
Nayah Ferris, *Development Associate*
Maddie Hopfield, *Office Manager and Bookkeeper*

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acknowledgments

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Shane Marshall Brown, The Press Room,
Press Representative

Jason Baruch, Sendroff & Baruch, LLP

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+deceased

For post-show resources, please visit:
njpac.org/education-program/the-acting-company-romeo-juliet-resources