

ARTS AND CULTURE

The Company of Adventurers' Fundraiser a Huge Success!



Juliet (Geneviève Packer) and Romeo (Abbey Sugars-Keen).

PHOTO BY BRUCE DEACHMAN

By Cynthia Sugars

We are thrilled to announce that The Company of Adventurers' production of *Romeo and Juliet* this past September raised just over \$3100 for Harmony House (an Ottawa Women's Shelter). This is the most we've

raised since we founded the Company of Adventurers six years ago.

We'd like to extend an enormous THANK-YOU to our audiences from the Old Ottawa South and Glebe communities for supporting us. This year, we had a full house for almost every show! Directors and actors

alike had a wonderful time bringing this fabulous play to you. It is always a challenge to get the word out, so please tell your friends (we may add an extra show or two next year!). If you would like to be placed on our mailing list for future shows, please send an email to Cynthia at csugars@

uottawa.ca. And we are sorely in need of storage space (our poor house is bursting at the seams!). If anyone has a business with storage space that we might be able to use gratis or at a very low rental (we are a non-profit operation), please let us know!

Local Production of *Romeo and Juliet* Charms Audience, Young and Old Alike

By Nadine Dawson

For many years - six, as it turns out - I had heard rumours of local children performing Shakespeare. Some of the children's whispered names were even familiar to me, but in a distant sort of way that precluded further investigation. Once, I even happened upon a play in progress, not three blocks from my very home - taking place behind a curtained pathway that led behind an Old Ottawa South house. I ventured near, but alas! was turned away, the show was "sold out."

The mystery of this local phenomenon intensified. How can a Shakespearean play be staged in one of the neighbourhood's postage-stamp yards? And, more intriguingly, just who were these children who devoted their summer of leisure to learning lines penned four hundred years ago, in a tripping tongue clumsy to our modern ears?

And then, a break in the case arrived in the form of a personal

email, advertising a late-September rain-date performance of *Romeo and Juliet*, with a time AND a location. And so, I bundled myself up for the chill autumn air, having gobbled down an early repast, and headed down the road, tired from the week's work, but determined to get to the bottom of the mystery once and for all.

The streets were lined with parked cars and I despaired that I would miss even this opportunity to witness Shakespeare's most famous play, continually in production since its debut. As chance would have it, a taping of *The Price is Right* at Lansdowne had drawn the cars to the area, so there was no real threat to my coveted seat.

I arrived at the place, and was greeted by costumed actors who bid me choose a door: red or blue? Since I myself was caped in a rich red, woolen shawl, I entered by the door on the right, and passed into the thespian world of suspended disbelief

through an enchanting silk-lined corridor. I had entered Renaissance Verona at last!

A wooden deck alongside the back of the house provided the stage; to one side, an arbour that doubled as the apothecary's shop, to the other, a bench seat that became Juliet's bedchamber. To the rear was an arched seat and curtained entrance, and above, lo and behold! a balcony, custom constructed alongside one of the upstairs windows, complete with sturdy wooden ladder to carry the besotted Romeo to his love! Vines and potted plants suggested a beautiful Italian garden, and the spell of another time and place was cast.

The first mournful melody played on the violin from above and behind the gathered audience, cozily seated on an odd assortment of chairs in the walled and tiered yard, wrapped in blankets against the cold, and the play began.

The young actors were completely captivating! They delivered their

lines with an understanding of the play's nuances that belied their age, and my old ears heard the play anew.

Romeo was played with such a youthful innocence as could easily crack open adult cynicism, and Juliet's portrayal of the hesitant excitement of first love surely stirred alike both dreams and memories of fresh romance. The fiercely proud Tybalt, loyal companion Benvolio, darkly playful Mercutio, well-meaning Friar, and Paris, the awkwardly positioned "man of wax": all were played with enthusiasm and conviction. The Nurse lent a welcome comedic relief, and the apothecary mirrored the tone of the tragedy with a frenzied portrayal of the kind of action born of poverty and desperation. From the ineffective parents of the young lovers, to the commanding Prince, the citizen spectators, and the obedient yet flawed servants, the supporting cast of characters rounded out the tale with their competence and confidence.

Continued on pg. 19

ARTS AND CULTURE



"Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?": Capulets (Noor Alabed and James MacLean) and Montagues (Sophie Miliner and Darcy McCoy) facing off.



A masked ball at the Capulets.



Mercutio (Charlotte MacLean) and Tybalt (Neve Sugars-Keen) duelling, while Romeo, Benvolio, and Peter (Layla Esleben) look on.



Lady Capulet (Morgan Sugars-Keen) watches as the Nurse (Declan McCoy) misbehaves.



Lord Capulet (Rachel Lowenberg) forces Juliet (Geneviève Packer) to marry Paris.

PHOTOS BY CLINTON LEE

Cont. from pg. 18

If anything, the surrounding backyard ambiance heightened the enchantment of the experience, the occasional Canada geese honking overhead on their journey south, the sun's light gently fading to night, the resident cats who entered and exited the theatre space to cues of their own, weaving naturally amidst the actors as the timeless tale of love and loss unfolded.

Though the "two-hours traffic of our stage" took rather a bit longer in the careful hands of these young actors, the charm with which they

recounted *Romeo and Juliet* rendered every moment a delight.

It might have been the mulled wine served in potted mugs during the intermission that warmed my heart to The Company of Adventurers; it could have been the first-row audience of small children who were sharing stories from the first *four* times they had seen the production; it may have been the charmed setting, the melody of the mandolin, or the actors singing Renaissance rounds - whatever alchemy of magic wrought this evening of wonder, I bid these creative and talented young people to play on!

ROB MARLAND

FEATURED PROPERTIES



\$925,000

2028 RIDEAU RIVER DRIVE

OLD CITTAWA SOUTH

Waterfront lifestyle in Old Ottawa South. Solid renovated family home on the banks of the Rideau River next to Brighton Beech Park. Renovated kitchen, open to main floor addition. Large Living room with water views. Second floor master retreat with den and ensuite bath. Basement is finished with 3 piece bath, sauna & den/guest room.



\$675,000

181 HOPEWELL AVENUE

OLD CITTAWA SOUTH

What a great opportunity to live in a newer home in such an awesome location! This large semi detached features hardwood floors, a large kitchen, a Master bedroom with ensuite, a finished basement with oversized windows and even a garage! All of this just steps from Brewer park.



\$585,000

515 MCLEOD STREET

CENTRETOWN

Solid and charming three storey brick home with loads of space and character. Main level with traditional living and dining rooms has kitchen open to sitting area that leads to a quiet back yard with deck. Second level has large den, 2 bedrooms and 5 piece bathroom. Third level retreat has a full bathroom and two additional bedrooms.

ROYAL LEPAGE
Performance Realty

ROB MARLAND

SALES REPRESENTATIVE

TOP 1% FOR ROYAL LEPAGE IN CANADA
613.238.2801 | robmarland.com

165 Pretoria Ave. Ottawa, ON K1S 1X1

Not intended to solicit properties already listed for sale or buyers under contract. | * Based on closed and collected earnings

