
Star Crossed Stagecoach features THE TRAGEDY OF ROMEO & JULIET

The 2015 production from Montana Shakes! is Star Crossed Stagecoach, the fifth play in the All the West’s a Stage series. Johnny Dropbottom is once again knee deep in adventure with his old pal Augustus Babylon. Along the way they battle with the oily and stubborn rapscallion Aloysius Holdsworth, who believes the story of Romeo and Juliet should only be told from the Capulet’s side. Together, with expert swordswoman and constant source of positivity, Samantha Sweetgrace, they weave through the classic tale of love discussing various elements of the story including: setting, character, theme and, conflict. Join in on the adventure, and follow the touring actors as they fight fantastic duels, fall in love, and cause more mayhem than a stagecoach full of frogs!

Johnny, Samantha, Augustus, and members of the audience will play characters in scenes from Romeo and Juliet, including the duel of the Montagues and Capulets and the famous balcony scene!

YOU, our audience!
**ROMEO & JULIET:**
A Brief Look at the Plot

Star Crossed Stagecoach features scenes and characters from Shakespeare's great tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet*. The Montagues and Capulets have been feuding for years. Romeo, of the Montague family, unwittingly meets Juliet, of the Capulet family, when he and his pals crash a party hosted by Juliet's father. It's love at first sight and the two lovers hastily get married in secret.

Tybalt, Juliet's cousin, recognizes Romeo at the party and vows revenge for breaking into their party uninvited. Mercutio defends Romeo and is killed in a duel by Tybalt and Romeo in a rage kills Tybalt. Romeo is banished from seeing his new wife. Juliet makes a plan to "appear dead" so that she can be reunited with Romeo. She plans to send a letter to the banished Romeo to tell him this plan but unfortunately the message never gets through to Romeo and he happens upon her body and believes her to be dead. Grief-stricken, he kills himself. When she awakes and sees her love, Juliet uses a dagger to end her life.

**THEATER ETIQUETTE**

Going to see a play is a very different experience from going to the movies. During live theatre, the audience is as important a part of the experience as the actors. Here are some tips for young audience members that will help make the experience great.

**LIVE RESPONSE IS GREAT!** A live performance is like a conversation between the actors and the audience. The more the audience responds (appropriately), the more the actors get excited about telling the story.

**THE ACTORS CAN SEE AND HEAR YOU.** If an audience member is not paying attention and chatting with a friend instead, the actors know it. Theatre actors have only one chance with each audience to communicate clearly, so it is their job to 'check in' with the audience and make sure they're understanding. If you're not paying attention, the actors will know it.

**TEACHERS SHOULD LEAD THE WAY.** Teachers, we are performing for you as well as the students. Sitting among students and experiencing the play with them can help to enhance their experiences as well as your own. Remember, besides learning about Shakespeare, we are trying to educate students on how to see and enjoy live theatre. Please, lead the way, and let us know if you enjoyed the performance, too!
As Johnny mentions in the play, conflict often resulted in sword fights in Shakespeare’s day and every ‘gentleman’ was expected to know how to properly use the rapier. The rapier is a long thin sword that was used to cut and thrust an opponent. Both Tybalt and Mercutio are expert swordsman but they fight in different styles: Tybalt is the technical fighter while Mercutio is more of a street brawler. Audiences at the time would be familiar with these fight terms:

“A GENTLEMAN OF THE VERY FIRST HOUSE” - Mercutio says that Tybalt has trained at the best fight school

BITE YOUR THUMB - An insult. To bite one’s thumb was to show disrespect to someone

DRAW - To take the sword out of its sheath

DUELIST - A master fighter

THE HAI - The thrust that goes straight through

MINIM REST - Good technique in a sword fight

PASSADO - A forward thrust of the rapier

PUNTO REVERSE - A backhand thrust of the rapier

ANON - In a minute

BESCREEN’D - Hidden by darkness

COUNSEL - Private thoughts

DOFF - Remove

ENMITY - Hatred

PRINCE OF CATS - Used by Mercutio to mock Tybalt’s hot temper. Tybalt shares his name with the popular medieval beast fable in “Reynard the Fox”

THEE/THOU - You

THY - Your