



## Poetry of Shakespeare Goes "Online" in Virginia Stage Company's Multi-Media Production of *//romeo&juliet/*

### A Bold New Staging Of The Classic Shakespeare Play

October 20 through November 8, 2009 at the Wells Theatre

Virginia Stage Company (VSC) presents the second play in its 2009-2010 season, a new modern adaptation of Shakespeare's timeless *Romeo and Juliet* in *//romeo&juliet/* running October 20 through November 8 at the Wells Theatre in downtown Norfolk.

VSC's presentation of *//romeo&juliet/* is unique as it integrates Shakespeare's original dialogue with on-stage 21st century digital multimedia including audio, video, internet technology and social networking communications.

Director and VSC Associate Artistic Director Patrick Mullins takes this timeless story of young lovers and places it into today's teenage and 20-something world filled with cell phones, laptops, email, text messages and Facebook friends. A classic play that is often considered a museum piece in the theater world now becomes a fresh new canvas in which multimedia is used to energize the passion within Shakespeare's poetic words.

As the text flashes across large video screens on stage and strategically mounted within the theater, it provides the audience with a deeper connection to the story and its characters in a contemporary context. As the legendary young couple connects with each other in modern ways, the weight of Shakespeare's poetry is infused with vibrancy and electricity. It allows the youth of today to be immersed in the beauty of this amazing love story without fear of being overwhelmed by the unfamiliarity of the verse.

In addition to the hi-tech on-stage presentation, *//romeo&juliet/* also breaks new ground by actively engaging the audience in the online world both before and after they've seen the play through live character Facebook pages found on Facebook.com. This gives the public the opportunity to connect with and chat directly with Romeo, Juliet and other main characters in the play on Facebook in real time, exchange email messages and post to the character's walls.

Tickets for *//romeo&juliet/* range in price from \$15 to \$45. A "Dress Rehearsal Night" performance is offered on Sunday, October 18 at 7:00pm with a Suggested Donation of \$10, and the popular Best Ticket in Town performances are Tuesday, October 20 at 7:00pm, Wednesday, October 21 at 8:00pm, and Thursday, October 22 at 8:00pm. Opening night is Friday, October 23 at 8:00pm. All tickets may be purchased through Ticketmaster by calling (800) 982-2787 or at any Ticketmaster outlet, at the VSC box office, or online at [www.vastage.com](http://www.vastage.com).

Following *//romeo&juliet/*, VSC presents its popular holiday tradition, *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, will follow November 29 - December 24, 2009. The spring will bring the remainder of the season with *Billy Bishop Goes To War* written and composed by John Gray in collaboration with Eric Peterson running January 19 - February 7, 2010 and *Around The World In 80 Days* adapted by Mark Brown from the novel by Jules Verne running February 23 - March 14, 2010. The 31st season will close with the American classic *A Raisin In The Sun*, by Lorraine Hansberry on the 50th anniversary of it's Broadway premiere, running March 30 - April 18, 2010.

Virginia Stage Company is the region's only fully professional resident theater company, serving an audience of nearly 90,000 yearly. In the years since its founding, Virginia Stage Company has made significant contributions to the quality of life in Hampton Roads: presenting more than 125 plays through more than 2500 performances; revitalizing and renovating the historic Wells Theatre; providing educational programs for students of all ages; and preserving the legacy of live theatre for future generations.

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Media Release

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