



## **BRAVE SPIRITS THEATRE ARCHIVE**

PRESS RELEASE  
*Romeo and Juliet*  
2013

**Director:** Victoria Reinsel

**Artistic Director:** Charlene V. Smith  
**Resident Dramaturg:** Claire Kimball

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## **Brave Spirits Theatre Performs *Romeo and Juliet*.**

**PRESS NIGHT:** Wednesday, June 12

Press photos available at [www.bravespiritstheatre.com/upcoming.html](http://www.bravespiritstheatre.com/upcoming.html)

### **CONTACT**

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For more information, visit our website at [www.bravespiritstheatre.com](http://www.bravespiritstheatre.com)

### **ROMEO AND JULIET**

Brave Spirits Theatre is proud to announce its fourth production, William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

#### **O God, I have an ill-divining soul!**

Driven by both passion and pragmatism, Juliet embarks upon her journey from adolescence through womanhood to death in the span of only four summer days. Tempers are short, emotions are extreme, and time melts like an ice cube in the heat.

Performed in Brave Spirits' fast-paced, ensemble-driven style, Shakespeare's classic tale of young love takes on added urgency. Victoria Reinsel and Charlene V. Smith previously teamed up to explore Juliet's story in a one-woman play, *What, Lamb! What, Ladybird!*, which had its world premiere at the 2011 Capital Fringe Festival. *What, Lamb! What, Ladybird!*, performed by Charlene V. Smith and directed by Victoria Reinsel, received five stars from *MD Theatre Guide* and was hailed as "dynamic" with "abundant wit and charm."

*Romeo and Juliet* will perform Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights at 8pm, and Saturday matinees at 2pm, from June 12 – June 22. Press night is Wednesday, June 12th at 8pm. There will be a pay-what-you-will preview performance on Tuesday, June 11th at 8pm. The performances will take place at the Atlas Performing Arts Center in their Lab Theatre II, located at 1333 H Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002 ([www.atlasarts.org](http://www.atlasarts.org)). Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$10 for students and seniors. Tickets are on sale through the Atlas PAC website.

The cast is made up of actors from across the DC region with extensive experience in Shakespeare and early modern drama. They have worked with the American Shakespeare Center, the Shakespeare Theatre Company, Folger Theatre, Theater at Monmouth, Taffety Punk Theatre Company, Virginia Shakespeare Festival, Orlando Shakespeare Theater, and Chesapeake Shakespeare Company, among others. The cast includes Jessica Aimone, Danny Cackley, Brandon Cater, Luke Cieslewicz, Nello DeBlasio, Connor J. Hogan, Mark McCarver, Emily Morrison, Carlos Saldaña, Charlene V. Smith, and Shelby Sours. The production also includes fight direction by Casey Kaleba, movement coaching by Rachel Hynes, and choreography by Mark McCarver.

## Cast Information

**Jessica Aimone** (Nurse, Prince) THEATRE: *Big Love* (Thyona) at Hub Theater; *Klecksography: Home for the Holidays* (Mother) at Rorschach Theater Company; *The Red Balloon* (Maman) at Adventure Theatre; *Holiday* (Susan), *The Violet Hour* (Rosamund) at 1st Stage; *Macbeth* (Lady MacDuff), *Love's Labors Lost* (Katherine), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Mistress Page) at American Shakespeare Center; *As You Like It* (Phebe), *Antony and Cleopatra* (Octavia), *The Liar* (Rosaura) at Theater at Monmouth.

**Danny Cackley** (Mercutio, Balthasar, Fight and Music Captain) THEATRE: *Othello* (Cassio, Montano U/S) at Folger Theatre; *The Walworth Farce* (Blake U/S) at Studio Theatre; *A Commedia Romeo & Juliet* (Romeo, Lord Montague), *Tales of Marriage and Mozzarella* (Ensemble), *Quatro Scenari* (Ensemble) at Faction of Fools; *The Tempest* (Trinculo, Gonzalo, Boatswain), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Claudio, Conrade, Friar) at Lean & Hungry Theater (Radio/NPR). EDUCATION: BA in Drama, University of Virginia. Danny is a certified Actor/Combatant with the Society of American Fight Directors (Unarmed, Rapier & Dagger, and Broadsword). UPCOMING: *Macbeth*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *The Odyssey* with Tour 65 of the National Players.

**Brandon Michael Cater** (Romeo, Gregory, Set Designer) THEATRE: *Smudge* (Nicholas Stillman) at Pinky Swear Productions; *The Breakfast Club* (Brian Johnson) at Next Stage (Los Angeles), *Los Angeles 60 Second Play Festival* (Multiple Characters); *On An Average Day* (Robert) at CTG; *Alone It Stands* (Tony Ward, Multiple Roles, Helen Hayes Award Nomination) at Keegan Theatre; *Enchanted April* (Antony Wilding) at Vagabond Theatre; *The Tale of the Allergist's Wife* (Mohammed) at Fell's Point Corner Theatre; *The Hobbit* (Gollum) at Pumpkin Theatre. SCREEN: *Ping Pong Summer*, *America's Most Wanted*, *The Wire*, *NFL Ray Lewis Sack Ad*, *Comcast Sports South SEC Baseball Ad*. TRAINING: BA in Theatre/Film/Video from Stevenson University; AA in Acting from American Academy of Dramatic Arts New York/Los Angeles.

**Luke Cieslewicz** (Friar Laurence, Tybalt) THEATRE: *Twelfth Night* (Sir Andrew) at Perchance to Dream DC; *Holly Down in Heaven* (Puppeteer) at Forum Theatre; *A Maze* (Tom/Alexander/Gunter), *Klecksography* (various) at Rorschach Theatre; *Reflections* (Harry), *Twelfth Night* (Sir Andrew) at Wandering Souls; *Morgue Story* (Tom), *The Horrors of Online Dating* (Frenziapine), *Mondo Andronicus* (Bassianus/Chiron) at Molotov Theatre; *Romeo & Juliet* (Friar Laurence), *The Merchant of Venice* (Launcelot) at Lean & Hungry Theater; *Hamlet* (Rosencrantz, Gravedigger, Marcellus) at Great River Shakespeare Festival. TRAINING: BA in Film, Television, and Theatre from University of Notre Dame. UPCOMING: *The Tragical Mirth of Marriage and Love* at Pallas Theatre as part of the DC Fringe Festival.

**Nello DeBlasio** (Lord Montague, Servant, Friar John) THEATRE: *All's Well That Ends Well* (LaFew), *The Atheist's Tragedy* (Montferrers) at Academy for Classical Acting; *Julius Caesar* (Mark Antony) at Capital City Players; *Romeo & Juliet* (Benvolio) at Silver Spring Stage; *King*

*Lear* (Edmund), *Macbeth* (Banquo), *The Merchant of Venice* (Bassanio) at Cedar Lane Stage; *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Oberon) at St. Mark's Players; *Richard III* (Rivers) at the Arlington Players; *Hamlet* (Horatio) at Theater of the Seventh Sister (PA); *The Seagull* (Konstantin) at Quotidian Theatre Company; *The Show-Off* (Frank) at American Century Theater. TRAINING: MFA in Classical Acting from the Shakespeare Theatre's Academy for Classical Acting at GWU.

**Connor J. Hogan** (Benvolio, Watch) THEATRE: *The Mystorical Hystery of Henry (I)V* (Lady Percy/Francis), *Richard III* (Prince Edward) at WSC Avant Bard; *Einstein's Dreams* (Edward) at Spooky Action; *As You Like It* (Silvius), *The Taming of the Shrew* (Biondello), *Othello* (Clown) at Virginia Shakespeare Festival; *The Mercurial Roadshow* (Ray) at Virginia Theatre Machine; *Little Shop of Horrors* (Seymour) at William and Mary Theatre. TRAINING: BA in Theatre from College of William and Mary.

**Mark McCarver** (Paris, Sampson, Choreographer) THEATRE: *Medieval Story Land* (Blue Knight et al) at Capital Fringe/Red Knight Productions; *Twelfth Night* (Sebastian) at Perchance to Dream Theatre; *Corpus Christi* (Judas Iscariot), *The History Boys* (Irwin), *A Chorus Line* (Zach) at San Pedro Playhouse; *Romeo & Juliet* (Romeo) at Main Street Theater; *The Lion in Winter* (Geoffrey) at Classic Theatre of San Antonio. DIRECTING: *Burn This* at Proxy Theatre Company; *Top Girls* at Attic Theater; CHOREOGRAPHY: *Crazy For You*, *H.M.S. Pinafore* at Canterbury Summer Theatre; UPCOMING: *The Lady in the Van* (Underwood) at Unexpected Stage Company; *The Children's Hour* (Director) at Port City Playhouse; TRAINING: BA in Drama from Trinity University; Syracuse University Drama Program - London; Shakespeare's Globe.

**Emily Morrison** (Lady Montague, Apothecary, Page) THEATRE: *The Pundit* (Alice), *But Love Is My Middle Name* (Self) at Capital Fringe; *Little Murders* (Marjorie) at American Century Theater; *War of the Worlds* (Chorus) at Scena Theatre; *Lie With Me* (Deanna) at Mutineer/Charter; *Richard III* (Elizabeth) at Shakespeare at Play, LA; *Frankie & Johnny in the Claire de Lune* (Frankie) at Elephant Theatre, LA; FILM/TV: *The Nextnik*, *Blonde in Summer* (AFI), *Cat Dragged In* (AFI); *Evil Twins* (Investigation Discovery) TRAINING: Shakespeare Theatre Company, A Noise Within (LA); Actors Circle Theatre (LA). Emily is Board President of the Actors' Center.

**Victoria Reinsel** (Director) THEATRE: *Blood Wedding* (Bride) at Constellation Theatre Company; *Much Ado About Nothing* (Margaret) at Taffety Punk Theatre Company; *Richard III* (Lady Anne, Rivers, Richard, Duke of York), *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Julia, Co-Director) at Brave Spirits Theatre; *Much Ado About Nothing* (Hero), *Titus Andronicus* (Lavinia), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Anne Page, Rugby, William), *Henry IV, Part 1* (Lady Mortimer, Peto) at American Shakespeare Center; *Julius Caesar* (Soothsayer) at Orlando Shakespeare Theatre; *Pericles* (Marina) at Mary Baldwin College (directed by Tina Packer); TRAINING: MFA and M.Litt in Shakespeare and Performance from MBC; BA in Theatre/Literature from Marboro College; Shakespeare & Company; British-American Drama Academy.

**Carlos Saldaña** (Lord Capulet) THEATRE: *The Roberto Clemente Story (Hombre/Ensemble)* at Gala Theatre; *Zorro (Sergeant Gonzalez)* at Constellation Theatre Company; *Danny and the Deep Blue Sea (Danny)* at Kennedy Center; *As You Like It (Jaques De Boys)*, *Antony and Cleopatra (Philo, Canidius)*, *Julius Caesar (Lucius, Strato)*, *Much Ado About Nothing (Verges)* at McKelligon Canyon Amphitheatre; *Macbeth (Porter)*, *The Diary of Anne Frank (Dussel)*, *Our Town (George Gibbs)*, *The Fantasticks (Mortimer)* at Wise Family Theatre; *Raised in Captivity (Sebastian)* at Grand Central Studio Theatre; *Brilliant Traces (Henry Harry)*, *Stop Kiss (George)*, *Betty's Summer Vacation (Buck)* at UTEP Fox Fine Arts Studio Theatre. UPCOMING: *Much Ado About Nothing* at Shakespeare Theatre Company; *After the Revolution* at Theatre J.

**Charlene V. Smith** (Juliet, Chorus, Abraham) THEATRE: *Margaret: A Tyger's Heart (Margaret)* at Mary Baldwin College; *The Two Gentlemen of Verona (Silvia, Lucetta, Co-Director)*, *What, Lamb! What, Ladybird!* (Solo Performance) at Brave Spirits Theatre; *Much Ado About Nothing (Beatrice)* at Baltimore Shakespeare Factory; *Macbeth (Witch 1, Porter)* at Push/Pull Theatre Company; *Measure for Measure (Isabella)*, *The Spanish Tragedy (Director)* at Rude Mechanicals. TRAINING: London Dramatic Academy; BA in Theatre/English from College of William and Mary, Phi Beta Kappa; M.Litt, MFA Candidate in Shakespeare and Performance from MBC. UPCOMING: *Dr. Faustus (Dr. Faustus)*, *Richard II (Director)* at MBC.

**Shelby Sours** (Lady Capulet) THEATRE: *Titus Andronicus (Tamora)* at Rude Mechanicals; *Hamlet (Gertrude)*, *Crimes of the Heart (Lenny)* at Firebelly Productions; *The Two Gentlemen of Verona (Ursula/Lucetta U/S)*, *The Tempest (Spirit/Iris/Juno U/S)* at Orlando Shakespeare Theatre; *Mrs. Farnsworth (Amy Needleman)* at Rep Stage; *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum (Domina U/S)* at Signature Theatre; *iMusical* at Washington Improv Theatre; *The Winter's Tale (Paulina)* at Illinois Wesleyan University; *A Midsummer Night's Dream (Nick Bottom)* at Educational Theatre Company. TRAINING: BFA in Music Theatre from Illinois Wesleyan University.

## About Brave Spirits Theatre

Brave Spirits Theatre, founded in 2011 by Victoria Reinsel and Charlene V. Smith, is a professional theatre company dedicated to bringing fresh, energetic productions of the works of William Shakespeare and other early modern playwrights to the Washington, D.C. region. We have a triangular focus: text, actor, and audience.

**Text:** We are unabashedly obsessed with language. We believe the text itself holds all the clues we need to perform an early modern play with truth and vitality. We examine imagery, verse, rhetorical devices, and embedded stage directions. Shakespeare and his contemporaries wrote beautiful poetry, but they also wrote bawdy, gritty, realistic prose and we embrace both with equal relish. In short, we trust the text and it is the basis of our work.

**Actor:** We are a company that believes the actor is at the center of the artistic process. We seek out artists who are willing to take creative risks, who are bold and courageous, who are ensemble-driven, and who are professionally-minded in their commitment to the art. The actor is the vessel through which the text comes to life, and as such the actor must be willing to bare his or her soul onstage, and must be intellectually, emotionally, physically, and spiritually adept.

**Audience:** We feel that the audience is the final ingredient needed to bring the play to life. In keeping with the early modern aesthetic, there is no fourth wall, and we engage the audience as a fellow actor, an active participant in the world of the play. Actors may turn the audience into a raucous mob, their confidants, or the butt of a joke. By playing with the audience rather than to them, we make these plays exciting, accessible, and relevant.

Brave Spirits Theatre debuted in the summer of 2011 with Shakespeare's early comedy *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Performed with just six actors, the production was lively and fresh, exploring the play's comedy, romance, and pathos. Maryland Shakespeare praised the production as performed with "imagination, and passion, and a love for the spoken word." Last summer, Brave Spirits applied their ensemble-driven, bare-bones style to Shakespeare's mammoth history play, *Richard III*. DC Theatre Scene noted that the production's "clever ferris wheel of props and toys spotlights a host of minor characters with a lot of personality" and Eric Minton of Shakespeareances.com hailed the performances as a place "where you can discover clarity of vision and superb talent flourishing under the mainstream radar."