

“& Juliet” Audio Description Pre-Show Notes

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Show Information

& Juliet is a jukebox musical theatre show featuring hit songs written by Swedish songwriter Max Martin. & Juliet first premiered in Manchester, England on the 10th of September 2019 before its run on London's West End from November 2019 to March 2023. Productions have since been staged in Australia, Germany, Sweden and on Broadway.

& Juliet is a coming-of-age show which is loosely focused on the conclusion to the Shakespeare tragedy Romeo and Juliet. William Shakespeare's wife Anne Hathaway suggests changing the ending of the play where Juliet decides not to kill herself. Their conflicting views on the plot lead to a whirlwind trip from Verona to Paris and re-examines the notion of "star-crossed lovers".

Creative Team

Directors & Musical Directors – Rodrigo Medina Noel and William Pulley

Choreographer – Janina Hamerlok

Orchestra conductor – Ziv Pinco

Production Manager – Suzanne Prabhudesai

Stage Manager – Sue Odling

Set and Props

The Riverside Theatre is a traditional proscenium arch venue, with 761 seats across three levels: the stalls, the circle and the gallery. The architectural design is based on the common European Opera House concept to provide a warm, intimate and live performance space. The stage is approximately 12 metres wide by 5 metres deep and is raised above the audience floor level.

Surrounding the space is a grey stone wall separated into four sections. Each section has a black and gold lamp hanging approximately two metres off the ground. The cast enter and exit between the sections of the wall. There is one entrance at the back in the centre, and two on either side. Above the back wall is a screen which has different images projected onto it depending on the location for each scene. When we first enter, a series of wooden cross frames with white windows behind are projected.

The floor of the space has a series of orange diamonds around the perimeter. In the centre is a mosaic of yellow, blue and white diamonds forming a star shape. This section of the floor rotates and will be known as the rotating floor. At the front of the floor are gold details. At the front of the space on either side are two black boxes which have fire sparklers shooting out from the top.

At certain points during the show, a black curtain screens the space. This will be known as the gauze. Behind it, is a black stage curtain hiding the stage from sight.

Shoreditch Theatre

The show begins at a theatre in Shoreditch, which is an area of London. This is where the first performance of Romeo and Juliet was staged. On our left is a jukebox which has a dark brown base, two small speakers and panel at the top, a large song list in the centre, and two larger speakers at the bottom.

Directly in front of the centre gap of the wall is a sign in two sections. The upper section reads Romeo is in blue capitals, the lower section has a pink ampersand behind the word Juliet in yellow sentence case with a pink underline. These sign fly in and out from above as required. Extra letters of the word Romeo are scattered in front of the back wall.

Behind the sign on our left is a cluster of grey painted wooden stools. On our right, at the front is a writing desk at with papers across it. Behind the desk is a three metre tall, silver set of steps with handrails and a platform at the top.

Romeo's Funeral

Projected on the screen is a medieval style cathedral flanked by a rose on either side. Flown in front of it is a series of pink roses forming the letter 'R'. A brown wooden coffin with roses on the lid is brought on from our left into the front centre of the space.

Juliet's Bedroom

On our left in a clothes rack on wheels which has an array of dresses hanging from it, and hat boxes on the top. In the centre is a double bed with a white and pink backrest and a white bedside table on our right next to it. Further on our right is a cushioned bench. Projected on the screen is a blue and gold velvet stitched wall.

After leaving the bedroom, a white bicycle with a unicorn head on the front appears in the centre of the space. It is pulling a yellow carriage with four wheels and white daisies painted across the bottom. The carriage has two small windows at the top on either side, and a doorway covered by a white curtain at the front and back. As the bicycle and carriage travel to Paris, a model of the Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe, Moulin Rouge and a sign are brought on which all have fairy lights on them. A map of the journey from Verona to Paris is projected on the screen.

DuBois Castle Ballroom

Hanging at the back in the centre is a candle chandelier with a rope and crossbar underneath it. This is located above a small stage in the centre wall gap. On either side of the stage is a tall round bar table.

DuBois Castle Garden

Projected onto the screen is a partly cloudy sky. Directly in front of it are four evenly spaced arched windows.

On our left is a two metre tall, curved hedge with white flowers all over it. A stone bench sits directly in front of it. In the centre of the space is a white marble statue. On our right at the back is another curved hedge and stone bench, and in front of them is a metal table and chairs.

Lance DuBois' Bedroom

Covering the back of the space is a blue curtain. On our left is a dark brown table with light brown drawers and a mirror rising at the back. Next to it is a small square stool. In the centre is a double bed with a red and cream coloured backrest. On our right is a hat stand with clothes hanging from it.

Paris Street

Projected onto the screen are a series of apartment buildings in renaissance style architecture. Directly in front of it are three stained glass windows. On our left is a metal table and two chairs at the front and a streetlight at the back near the wall. On either side of the lamp is a percussive box called a Cajón which a performer sits on and plays with their hands. On our right against the back wall is another metal table and two chairs, and in front of them is a cart with flowers in it next to another streetlight.

Paris Bar

Act two begins in a bar near the DuBois castle. Projected on the screen is a menu of cocktails on our left, and in the centre is a sign in the shape of a martini glass which reads 'Maxim's Martini'. Photos fill the remainder of the projection space. At the front on our left is a square wooden table with a chair on either side. The bar itself is located behind this table and curves towards the back of the space. A stool is located on our side of the bar. Along the back wall, on our left is a round bar table, then another square table and chairs in the centre, and another round bar table on our right.

Bridal Suite

Projected on the screen here are blue fleur-de-lis arrowhead shape patterns on a black background. The bridal suite itself is located on our right. It has a white table between two white chairs against a pink wall.

DuBois Castle Ballroom, wedding

The ballroom when setup for the wedding has a long black stage across the space, approximately one metre tall with a set of steps leading up to it in the centre. On either side of this stage are rope bollards with adoring fans behind them. Projected on the screen is Du Bois Band in diamond filled capitals, in the centre of sparkling rotating circles.

Characters & Costumes

Juliet Capulet

Juliet Capulet, played by Jade Lee, is the overprotected daughter of the Capulet family. She has limited experience with love, but is also optimistic to learn to own her choices and love herself for who she truly is.

Juliet has wavy brown hair falling behind her shoulders. When she first appears, she has gold over-ear headphones around her neck and wears a pink strapless dress with an ankle length skirt over the top, and pink and black boots. A pink rose rests on the chest of this dress. The skirt is later removed to reveal the main dress is folded up past the knees. When this happens, she also put on a yellow and white jacket with a coat of arms on the back, and collects a backpack and sunglasses.

In act 2, she wears a blue bodice top with separate purple sleeves, black & purple trousers and white sneakers. Her white wedding dress consists of a strapless bodice top, and a thigh length skirt. In the song Roar, she wears a red and gold bodice top with large gold feathers across the chest, a red knee length skirt with gold vertical stripes over green stockings, and knee high pink boots. Afterwards, she wears white puff sleeves on her arms and a white skirt over the dress.

Anne Hathaway/April

Anne Hathaway, played by Marika Zorlu, is the strong-willed wife of William Shakespeare who is determined to see Juliet persevere with her own choices. Anne writes herself into the storyline as April, Juliet's best friend. This character will be referred to as Anne throughout the audio description.

Anne has dark brown hair tied back at start. She wears a series of dresses throughout the show. The first of these is a brown maids dress over a short sleeved white shirt. Worn over this is a short white sleeveless jacket with flowers across the front and a curved horn on the back with 'Hathaway' written underneath. As April, her dress is blue and green with white laces across the front.

William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare, played by Ben James, is the authoritative and jolly writer of Romeo and Juliet and brings a mischievous to rewriting the show with Anne.

William has a thinning head of hair and wears glasses with a dark frame, a yellow and green vest with a raven and quill on the back. This is worn over a white button up shirt rolled up to elbows, navy jeans & white sneakers. He also carries a quill which is a pen made from a bird's feather. When dressed as a carriage driver, he wears a white and gold jacket, and a white hat which has a wide brim with two white feathers resting on it.

François Du Bois

François Du Bois, played by Ryan McLean, is a playful yet misunderstood French musician who, like Juliet, is inexperienced in love.

In act one, He wears a blue leather vest with Fleur-de-lis arrowhead patterns over a white shirt, and black trousers with a gold stripe down each side. In act two, he wears a blue vest with gold buttons over a blue collared shirt with small yellow triangles over it, and navy trousers with a blue and gold helix pattern running down each side.

Lance Du Bois

Lance Du Bois, played by Brad Clarke, is the father of François. A burly ex-soldier and widowed single parent, Lance wants a better life for his son, but the weight of his expectations is driving them apart.

Lance has short greying hair and white whiskers. He wears a gold cape over a teal vest with narrow gold chains down the front and a white long sleeved shirt, gold trousers and black shoes. In front of his crotch on the trousers is a gold cod piece with a Fleur-de-Lis arrowhead on it. In bed, he wears the white shirt on its own and black shorts with multi coloured curvy lines on them.

May

May, played by Daniel Timmins, is Juliet's best friend, who is also on a journey of self discovery and lives outside of binary gender labels. In the audio description, May will have they/them pronouns.

May has short curly brown hair and wear a gold laurel leaf crown on their head with all costumes. In act one, they wear a mauve and pink jumpsuit with short sleeves and a white bodice. These colours represent the transgender flag. They carry a purple backpack when they first appear. In act two, they first wear a yellow shirt with a high collar and open chest, and long dark trousers. In the wedding, they were a white sleeveless jumpsuit over a pink tank top.

Angelique

Angelique, played by Annette Vitetta, is Juliet's nurse and confidante, and a former lover of Lance. She is boisterous, bawdy, and full of surprising sensuality that has long been repressed for Juliet's sake.

Angelique has her dark brown curly hair tied back with a purple headband. She first wears a green dress with gold details over a white short sleeved shirt. This is later removed to reveal an orange dress with narrow straps and an orange headband. The two dresses both expand behind waist which was the favoured style of dress for the period. In bed, the skirt is removed to reveal white pants. In act two, she wears a green hoodie with sewn flower on the front over the orange dress. At the wedding, her dress is white with blue down each side of the bodice.

Romeo Montague

Romeo Montague, a role shared in this production by Alexander Billett and Baxter Waller, is Juliet's first lover and a notorious womaniser, drama queen and true romantic person.

Romeo has short, dark brown hair slicked back and heavy make up on his face. He wears a black leather jacket with white and red roses across it. On the back of the jacket is the word

Montague above a broken heart with a sword running through it surrounded by silver safety pins. The left side of the heart is made up of different coloured gemstones, the right side is solid grey squares in a cushion pattern with small silver studs in each intersecting corner. This is worn over a white shirt with the buttons undone, a black singlet, black jeans, and black boots.

Du Bois Band

Before the wedding, William, Lance, May, François and Romeo form a boy band where they each wear a silver cap, silver jackets and shirts and silver and black pants and black shoes. They each also wear a black radio microphone on their heads.

Juliet's Parents

Juliet's parents follow a strict decree to which they intend their daughter follow. They appear intermittently trying to send Juliet to a convent.

Juliet's father wears short sleeved teal shirt with the front falling past the knees, white trousers and teal shoes. Juliet's mother wears a blue jacket with white bone and pearl arches over the shoulders. This is over a white shirt, a black skirt with an expanded hemline over silver pants and high heeled shoes.

Ensemble

The ensemble all switch roles depending on the scene. These include, but are not limited to, Shakespeare's company of players in the Shoreditch theatre, noble guests at the Renaissance ball, and fans of Du Bois band. Their costumes fuse renaissance era clothes with elements of hip hop.

End of pre-show notes.