

HUDSON VALLEY

Shakespeare

FESTIVAL

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HUDSON VALLEY SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES 2012 SEASON

(Cold Spring, NY) – Terry O'Brien, Founding Artistic Director of the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, has announced the 2012 season that will run from mid-June through Labor Day weekend.

The plays, which run in repertory, are *Love's Labour's Lost*, directed by O'Brien and *Romeo and Juliet*, directed by Associate Artistic Director Christopher Edwards. The third play, which will likely not be Shakespeare, will be announced later this year.

In discussing the new season and his decision to direct *Love's Labour's Lost* just weeks after closing the Festival's 25th season, O'Brien said "The shows I've directed for the past several years, *Hamlet*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Pericles* and *Cymbeline*, have been adventurous, aggressive, powerful stories and I haven't done anything light or romantic for a long time. *Love's Labour's Lost* will give me the chance to switch gears."

As most people have come to know, music plays an important role in most HVSF productions and for O'Brien, he often begins his directing process by listening to music. "With *Hamlet* I was listening to a lot of heavy metal, and now I'm listening to Stravinsky's 'Pastorale', a lovely, wonderful, complex and moving piece of music, which is how the relationships in *Love's Labour's Lost* feel to me. There is comedy and there is certainly romance, but it feels more grown-up. One of the things I particularly love about the play is the ending, which, unlike most Shakespeare comedies, isn't neatly tied up. I think it's more interesting that way and allows the story to really stay with you as you discuss it with friends and imagine for yourself what the future holds for the lovers."

Young, impetuous love and tragedy stir the world of *Romeo and Juliet*. Perhaps one of the best known and loved of Shakespeare's plays, Edwards hopes that audiences will let go of their preconceived ideas about the story. "The challenge with *Romeo and Juliet* is that we are all so familiar with the play. The key is to simply allow yourself to experience and be moved by the story. It's about young love and the tragic loss of innocence. I think it really reflects what teenagers deal with today. Kids have an innate sense of hope and possibility and they often act on those feelings impulsively only to have their hopes dashed as the realities and turmoil of the world set in. It is such a rich and beautifully told story I hope people will give themselves the opportunity to rediscover *Romeo and Juliet*."

Fast and accessible are two oft-cited traits of the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival. As important as the actors and directors are, O'Brien believes the audience plays an equally important role in every season. "The actor/audience connection is at the heart of our work and I believe it is what has made us so successful. We are committed to bringing our work especially to people who never believed they could comprehend or

enjoy Shakespeare. I want our audience to understand that for us the real moment of creation occurs not in the isolation of the rehearsal studio, but when the actors engage with the audience in the blast furnace of live performance.”

The region’s only professional resident Shakespeare company, HVSF makes its home under a specially designed tent theater perched high upon the banks of the Hudson River, on the grounds of the historic Boscobel House and Gardens in Garrison, New York. Using the dramatic views of the Hudson Highlands and the sweeping vistas from the elegant lawns of Boscobel as near-perfect stage scenery, the critically acclaimed Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival presents unparalleled productions with the perfect marriage of theater and nature. Audience members are invited to arrive two hours early in order to enjoy a picnic meal—with one of the most spectacular al fresco views—on the grounds of the estate.

“Populism without pandering: that’s the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival’s style and I’ve never seen it go wrong.”

—Terry Teachout, *The Wall Street Journal*

TICKETS AND INFORMATION

Tickets will be available online in early 2012 at: www.hvshakespeare.org.

For more **information** about the 2012 season at the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, as well as information about their ongoing Education and Community Outreach Programs, visit www.hvshakespeare.org or contact the HVSF office at (845) 809-5750.

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