

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MAY 8TH, 2012

**Irving Oil provides FREE Tickets to *Romeo & Juliet*
Matinee to 500 local area high school students**

SAINT JOHN - Thanks to recent funding from Irving Oil, the Saint John Theatre Company is able to offer 500 complimentary tickets to local high schools for a special student matinee performance of their modern day, New Brunswick based version of *Romeo & Juliet* which will be held on Thursday May 17th at 10:30am.

"Setting the scene in modern day New Brunswick with the two feuding families of French and English decent creates a modern day version of a classic tale that will get students talking," notes Stephen Tobias, Director. *"We feel this is a valuable production for local youth to take in, discuss and learn from."* Tickets have been offered to the following High Schools in the Saint John and surrounding area: SJHS, St Macs, HVHS, Simonds High, RHS, KVHS, RNS, Samuel de Champlain, Hampton High and St. Stephen High. Additional tickets can be purchased to the show at a special student rate of \$10 each. The show will be followed by a Q&A session with the cast.

In addition to the special student matinee a couple of additional student outreach activities are in the works. A student study guide produced in French and English will be made available to teachers. As well the cast and crew will be participating in school visits this week and next to discuss the production and its evolution from page to stage.

"Our commitment to the communities where we live and work is important to our company, and a healthy arts and culture sector is key to a strong community," said Carolyn Van der Veen, Irving Oil. **"We're pleased to partner with the Saint John Theatre Company and offer this educational opportunity to the local area high school students."**

"Romeo and Juliet, being one of the best known plays in the English language, will already be familiar to most Saint John theatre-goers, but I think that audiences will find that experiencing the play in two languages will help to underline the drama of the situation, and make the tragic conflict between the Capulets and the Montagues seem all the more relevant to people living in New Brunswick," adds Bill Duncan, educator from Samuel de Champlain School and Assistant Director.

Romeo & Juliet is the final production of the 2011-2012 SJTC Main Stage Season and will play at Imperial Theatre May 17-19, 2012. Tickets are available at Imperial Theatre box office by calling 674-4100.

For more information please contact:

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