

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**ROMEO & JULIET RE-IMAGINED!
*A Modern Twist That Is Sure To Peak Local Interest...***

SAINT JOHN - Saint John Theatre Company has taken a unique approach to the traditional *Romeo & Juliet* script by creating a bilingual adaptation of the text and setting the play in modern day New Brunswick. With the help of Bill Duncan, an educator from Samuel de Champlain School, Shakespeare's original text has been merged with a French translation of the script created by Victor Hugo. The resulting script makes the Capulet family a Francophone family while the Montagues are of Anglophone descent.

"Of course I am well aware that such an approach carries with it a certain degree of creative risk – but this is exactly why I have made the choice. Shakespeare likely wrote this play as a response to the life & death conflicts between Protestant and Catholic factions that dominated English Society in his era. Successive generations have used this play to comment on issues within their own society of the day. I feel that using the play to spark intelligent discussion around an important issue in our lives is equally fair game," notes Stephen Tobias, Director.



"The key to the play, for me – and part of the reason why this approach is working for us – is that the play is ultimately about reconciliation. The feuding factions come to realize the price that the next generation has paid for their hate and distrust and sees no way forward but to make amends and bury their civil strife."

Modern design concepts and a powerful music selection will be used during the production to create an amazing look and sound. Fight choreographer, Jean-Francois Gagnon – one of Canada's busiest fight choreographers – has been working with the cast to perfect the fight scenes throughout the production. *"We want to offer a show that is vibrant and original – a show that lives and breathes – a show with a musical score drawn from both English and French pop culture - a show that begins with a hockey fight and propels forward from there into a touching and tragic love story. We look forward to sharing it with you,"* adds Stephen Tobias.

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.

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