



UW ODYSSEY PROJECT'S MEMORABLE AFTERNOON OF DRAMA



ROMEO & JULIET

AMERICAN PLAYERS THEATRE
SEPTEMBER 30, 2023



Thanks to American Players Theatre (APT), American Family Insurance, and other donors for sponsoring a trip for Odyssey students and their families to see “Romeo & Juliet” on Saturday, September 30th, at 2 PM. Students traveled by coach bus, had a picnic lunch, met with APT company actor Gavin Lawrence, and enjoyed the show. Here are some comments and photos from this magical afternoon.

I had a very good time on September 30th at APT, and Romeo & Juliet was off the charts—an awesome performance.

American Players Theater is absolutely my favorite in Wisconsin. The scenery and surroundings are peaceful, and the plays I’ve seen have always satisfied.

I would like to thank the donors and Odyssey for making it possible to have such a good and cultured experience with the arts.

I love the diversity of the actors and actresses.

Without the donors, I would certainly not be able to enjoy this. Feeling blessed. **(Ruthie Allen)**



The play to me was amazing. I loved how Romeo was deaf. It was a very different experience. That made the play to me so much better.

Both Jay and Michael, my sons, liked the play a lot. They both smiled.

Even though I knew the play, it still made me cry, so thank you very much. The play was amazing. **(Margarita Barajas)**

I really enjoyed The American Players Theatre’s rendition of “Romeo & Juliet.” I especially liked the addition of sign language along with speech from the cast.

One of my favorite lines from the play was when Juliet said “Close the front door” after meeting Paris at the Friar’s home. **(Marcia D. Brown)**

It was definitely an experience that I'll never forget. I have never been to an outdoor play. The actors were very good. I almost thought about taking acting classes after. **(Bresha Green)**

This was an excellent play. I could see the communication between Romeo and Juliet was not a language barrier between them. Also, with the other members of the play, true love came alive. I was so impressed seeing it because there was something new about all the roles that each actor brought to us. The sign language was so amazing. This was my first time seeing a production live in sign language. **(Naomi Lathrop)**



My sons and I attended the APT "Romeo & Juliet." It was the first time for me. I assumed that the play was indoors. The scenery was amazing. It reminded me of when my class went to Ravenwood camp when I attended elementary school. The romantic story of Romeo and Juliet was an amazing play. My family and I truly appreciate the opportunity to have seen a great play and spent time with one another. Thank you, Odyssey Project, and everyone else that made this event happen. Including the food, taking pictures, and the great bus ride. **(Kimberly Rodgers)**



We enjoyed the play. It was amazing to see it in a different assembly. That was amazing to see.
(Tyrone Hudson)

I had a blast. First of all, kudos to you guys. Great job all around. The bus driver, I watched his excitement as he got lunch, a show, and great new friends. Kudos to him. The play was outstanding!!! “Woe, is my Woo” LOL. Oh yeah, I was teased about the Wench Roselind (Roslyn). The costumes, props, and actors were outstanding.

I can’t wait until our next outing.

Thanks to American Family for the food. Thanks to APT for the tickets. **(Roslyn Phillips)**

The trip to APT was awesome. The APT Staff rolled out the red carpet for the Odyssey Project.

When our bus arrived in the parking lot, and I saw the APT staff waiting for us and driving those carts straight to the bus to assist with students getting up the hill and with the taking our items up to the picnic area, MY HEART WENT INTO OVERDRIVE WITH JOY!!!

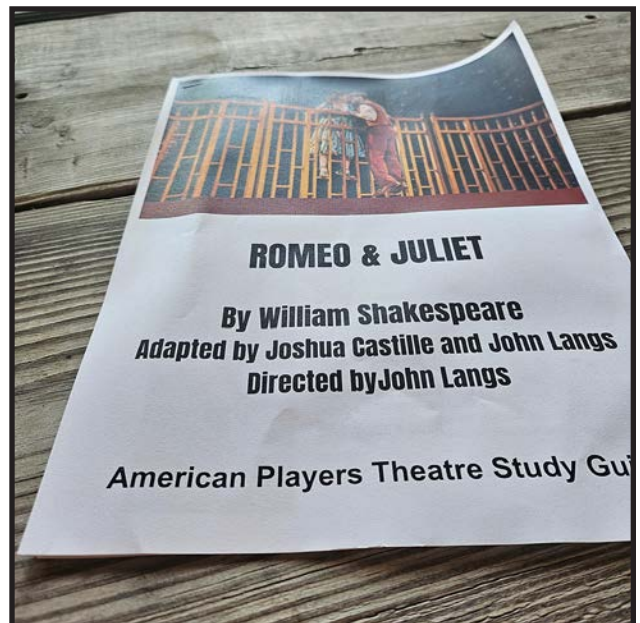
In addition, each staff member provided the personal touch that made this experience very special for Odyssey from our arrival until our departure.



Of course, Gavin gives us a personal performance by coming to visit us at the picnic area. He is always approachable and kind. The atmosphere that he creates leaves memorable moments that our students will never forget.

APT always puts a unique twist on plays. I truly appreciate the many voices of Romeo (women and men) that the audience was able to enjoy! The actors/actresses in the play were over the top, and I would go back to see this play again and again and again.

Thank you for another unique experience at APT. I am excited about attending in 2024!!! **(Char Braxton)**



First of all, thank you, to the Odyssey Project and APT for giving us the opportunity to see such a great play!

About the play, I'd like to say that it was an incredible exposure and a great opportunity to witness my first play, "Romeo & Juliet," and it was a unique one that I will never forget.

What struck me the most was the play's commitment to inclusivity and diversity. As a minority and Latino, I loved seeing Afro-Americans, Latinos, and the incorporation of sign language. It added a beautiful layer of representation and accessibility to the performance. It truly highlighted the universality of Shakespeare's timeless tale of love and tragedy, making it an unforgettable experience for me. **(Luis Perez-Olguin)**

I took my 15-year-old daughter, Sidney, to see Shakespeare's tragedy "Romeo & Juliet" on Saturday at American Players Theatre in Spring Green. We read about the story while she was in grade school.



After we got our seats, I went through my regular play ritual of closing my eyes...visualizing the play, in my mind, and placing myself in the time and place. I could feel the energy of the play that resonated throughout the actors and actresses, the scenes, and the scenery. It was, to me, incredible!

I was looking forward to seeing a live version of the play. It was spoken in old English, and I translated some of the words to Sidney during the play, which was truly fun and funny for both of us!



Seeing actors and actresses of color made the play more relatable to both of us in many ways.

The story, though written in the late 1500s, is still so memorable, moving, and timeless.

The play was cool and sad with moments and brief scenes of banter and laughter, which I found endearing.

"Romeo & Juliet," to me, was about two teens who met and fell in love, but because they came from different families, they were forbidden to be together. It reminded me of race or class situations that continue to happen even now. It was funny watching Romeo and Juliet and their friends hanging out and having fun and just being teens like my daughter and her friends do.

When they first met, I could see and feel the chemistry in the room and throughout the stage. It was infectious. They were the cool kids and their friends!

At the beginning of the play watching them pretend to not like each other was funny. When they first met, their banter, sharp wit, sarcasm, and body language was saying, “I like you but I don’t,” typical teen and sometimes adult behavior which we experience and see on a regular basis. But having it spoken in old English put a new and different twist on it. It’s funny, it reminded me of a white guy trying to understand the words and lyrics of rap music!

Romeo and Juliet’s friends get involved and bring friends drama. They highlight the differences of why they should not be together, and soon, so do the parents. Juliet’s parents decide that to make sure Romeo and Juliet’s relationship doesn’t go any further, they will try to marry her off to someone she doesn’t love. That’s when the story breaks bad, so to speak. I don’t want to ruin the ending by telling you how it ends, but you most likely already know. It’s sad but still beautiful and poignant.

As a black man in this society who has been in interracial relationships and is a father of a biracial teen daughter, I have and can totally identify with this play in almost every way.



In a lot of ways, the play Romeo and Juliet became personal. Their relationship, the play, was similar to an interracial relationship, but one based on social differences, not color of skin.

I could see myself in my past going through some of the same situations they did and thinking, sometime soon, so will Sidney. The play played on my recurring thoughts about my daughter and how she sees and values herself, as well as what she wants and expects from friends and eventually real relationships.

I think everyone should see or read the play in some form and talk about it because it’s about relationships gone wrong to the extreme. It’s about how to learn life lessons so we don’t make past negative experiences a recurring theme. **(Bruce Moore)**

