

Imagine a world where Romeo didn't love Juliet, and Juliet could not care less about Romeo. A world where the Bard himself doesn't know how the story will end. South County High School's passionate production team transformed this tragedy into a comedy with a modern twist with their production of *Bromeo and Juliet*.

Dominique Monette wrote and directed this unique take on the well known Shakespearean play. Boredom in quarantine struck an urge in the sophomore writer to create theatre again. She wrote this play in the fall of 2020 and wanted to collect as much feedback as possible before premiering the show next year on the stage. The journey of this play was inspiring to hear about and enlightens hope that theatre like this will be produced in person soon.

*Bromeo and Juliet* was a spoof on the original story, *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare. Monette added many quotes referencing the aforementioned tale, further emphasizing that this is a different interpretation of the show with a modern day point of view. The plot itself started off with a conversation between the Bard and Sister Lawrence, who described the "true" version of Romeo and Juliet to the man that started it all. Many minor changes were made, including Juliet's negative perspective on marrying at thirteen and Romeo's excessive narcissism, adding a contemporary twist.

Romeo (Aadith Iyer) executed his narcissistic lines hilariously. It was very clear from the start that Romeo was only looking at himself through that Zoom screen with no care in the world for Juliet. Iyer was spot on when he mocked his mother when she asked him "wherefore art thou Romeo," impressive acting for a performance that was prepared in four days. Madi Madamba played Juliet like a modern day feminist. She had the desire to travel the world before she got married instead of being trapped in a marriage at thirteen. There was a point in the show where Juliet tried to kill her future husband with the poison, and Madamba's sincerity in that moment makes for an even sharper contrast to the original play.

Tybalt (Parker Bryant) was the ideal best friend to Juliet, and his connection with her felt like they were best friends in real life. He pretended to be Juliet to procrastinate her wedding and made for great comedic relief in a serious moment between the Capulets and Montagues. Lady Capulet (Aren Iverson) had an amazing performance with an over dramatic flair. Her interpretation of the character was stark from the others as she got furious at her daughter's reluctance for marriage, and her face visibly became red.

As for technical elements, the Zoom backgrounds were creative and worked well to set the scenes in the streets of Italy and the Capulet home. They took advantage of the virtual environment and added a story book intro transition and a written goodbye at the end. The music was student composed (Zach Patel) and was a fitting introduction to a renaissance comedy. It was up tempo and had a storybook fairytale feeling surrounding it.

This performance lent itself well to a Zoom setting and proved that you can successfully transform a tragedy into a comedy. The completely student-run production team should be very proud of themselves and take an actual bow when the show premieres next year on the South County High School Stage!