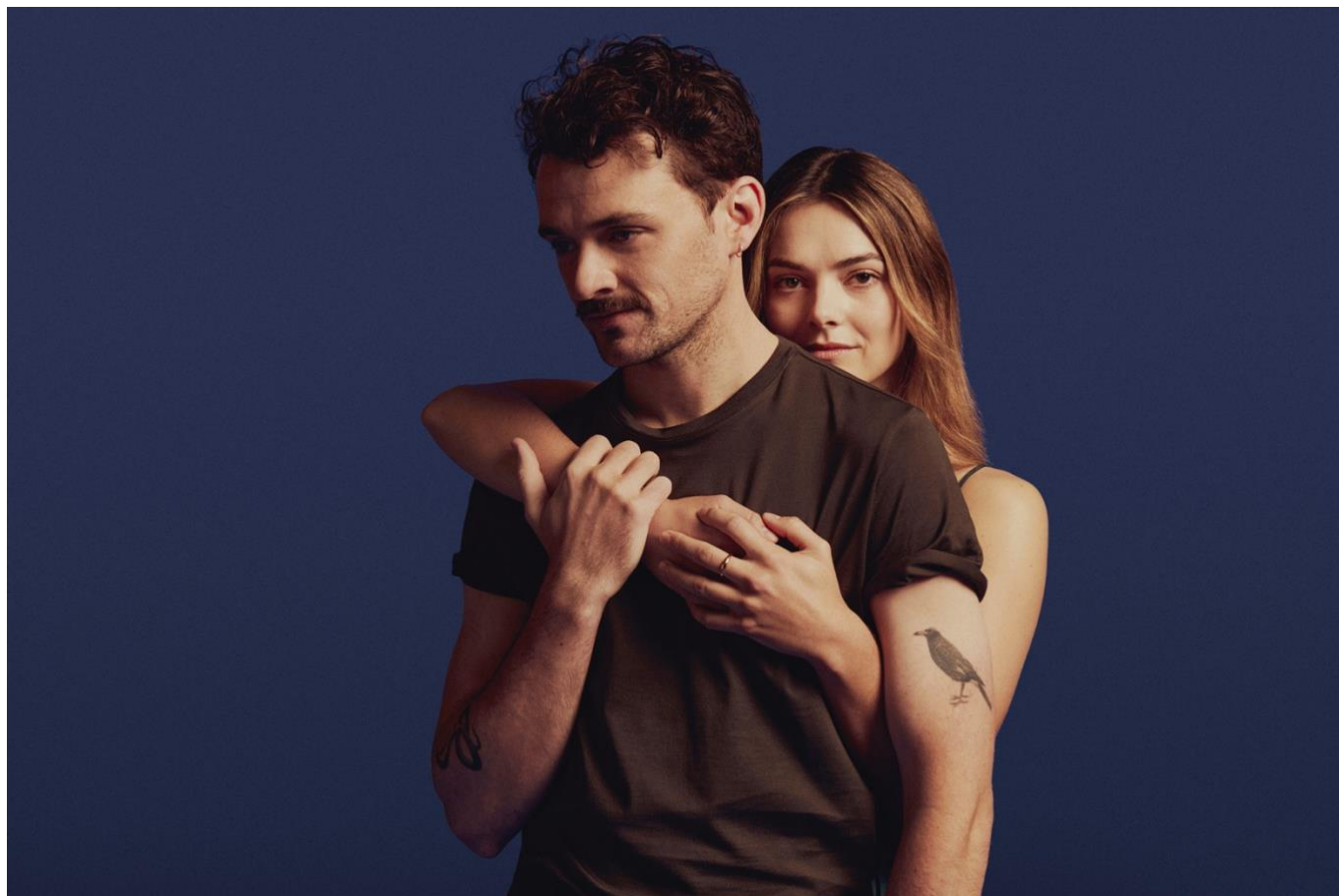


**Bell Shakespeare presents a new raw and intimate production of
*Romeo and Juliet***

- The first full production presented in the company's theatre *The Neilson Nutshell*, before touring to Melbourne -



Bell Shakespeare will present a new production of *Romeo and Juliet* this winter, marking its first full production in the company's theatre **The Neilson Nutshell** at Pier 2/3 at Walsh Bay Arts Precinct from **23 June – 27 August**. The play will also tour to **Arts Centre Melbourne** for a two-week season from **14 – 29 July 2023**.

Artistic Director Peter Evans' beautifully intimate version of the play stars **Jacob Warner** (*Macbeth*, *Hamlet*) and **Rose Riley** (*Hamlet*, *Richard 3*) as the star-crossed lovers, giving a more mature exploration of the characters. This casting, as well as the roles of Mercutio and Paris to be played by women, reflects Evans' continued interest over the past few years in selecting actors for what they bring to a role rather than being the correct age or gender, offering interesting new insights into the characters and storyline.

The production gives audiences a closer look at arguably Shakespeare's most famous play, delving into the intensity and the heartbreak of this evocative tragedy. The story of the young lovers' chance meeting unfolds against an enchanting starry sky. Their forbidden love leads them down a dangerous path, and they will risk everything to break free of the unending, violent feud between their families.

Artistic Director Peter Evans said: *"I am excited that perennial favourite Romeo and Juliet is our first full production in The Neilson Nutshell. This early tragedy from Shakespeare is endlessly fascinating. Romeo and Juliet is of course the saddest of sad plays but also one of the funniest and naughtiest tragedies ever written. It is a tragedy of accidents where a community's selfish, ancient feud fatally impacts the young people. In The Neilson Nutshell this will be raw and contemporary, and you will be up close and personal with this great play. I am pleased to continue my collaboration with Rose Riley and Jacob Warner as Juliet and Romeo. Funny, irreverent, and fearless actors who will take these great roles by the scruff of the neck. Not to be missed. We are also pleased to be taking our 'Nutshell' production to the semi-circular space of the Fairfax Studio at the Arts Centre in Melbourne, so wonderful for Shakespeare."*

Alongside Warner and Riley, the cast includes **Bell Shakespeare Founding Artistic Director John Bell's** daughter **Lucy Bell**, **Blazey Best**, **James Evans**, **Alex King**, **Robert Menzies**, **Kyle Morrison**, **Monica Sayers** and **Leinad Walker**.

The creative team includes Set and Costume Designer **Anna Tregloan**, Lighting Designer **Benjamin Cisterne**, Composer and Sound Designer **Max Lyandvert**, Movement and Fight Director **Nigel Poulton**, Dramaturg **James Evans**, and Text Consultant **Ben Crystal**.

Tickets available [here](#).

Ends

MEDIA CONTACTS: For more information and interview requests please contact Articulate: Jasmine Hersee, jasmine@articulatepr.com.au, 0451 087 196.

IMAGES [HERE](#).

CAST:

Jacob Warner as **Romeo**
Rose Riley as **Juliet**
Lucy Bell as **Nurse**
Blazey Best as **Mercutio/Prince**
James Evans as **Capulet**
Alex King as **Paris**
Robert Menzies as **Friar Laurence**
Kyle Morrison as **Benvolio**
Monica Sayers as **Lady Capulet**
Leinad Walker as **Tybalt/Friar John**

CREATIVE TEAM:

Director Peter Evans
Set and Costume Designer Anna Tregloan
Lighting Designer Benjamin Cisterne
Composer & Sound Designer Max Lyandvert
Movement & Fight Director Nigel Poulton
Dramaturg James Evans
Text Consultant Ben Crystal

ABOUT BELL SHAKESPEARE

Bell Shakespeare is Australia's national theatre company specialising in the works of William Shakespeare and his contemporaries. Founded in 1990 with the aim of sharing Shakespeare's plays in a way that was relevant and exciting to all Australians, the company has evolved further than its visionary founder, John Bell AO, could have hoped.

Today, Bell Shakespeare tours major theatre productions, education programs and outreach initiatives to every state and territory in Australia. Performing and teaching in theatres, schools, juvenile justice centres and regional and remote communities, the company enjoys unrivalled reach and impact, further extending its influence through innovative digital programs.