



Old Globe Theatre | Cassius Carter Centre Stage | Lowell Davies Festival Theatre

News

Jack O'Brien, *Artistic Director*
Louis G. Spisto, *Executive Director*
Craig Noel, *Artistic Director*

P.O. Box 122171 Tel 619/231-1941
San Diego, CA Fax 619/231-5879
92112-2171 www.theoldglobe.org

For Immediate Release: July 6, 2005
Contact: Becky Biegelsen at (619) 231-1941
www.TheOldGlobe.org

THE OLD GLOBE PRESENTS FINALE OF *ROMEO Y JULIETA*
BI-NATIONAL EDUCATION PROJECT WITH FREE PERFORMANCES
IN SAN DIEGO, CHULA VISTA, AND TIJUANA

San Diego – The Old Globe is pleased to announce the finale of its innovative education program, the ***Romeo y Julieta* Bi-National Project**, which fosters a creative cultural exchange for students on both sides of the border. The year-long project culminates in July with five bilingual performances of Shakespeare's classic *Romeo and Juliet* in both San Diego and Tijuana. The cast of 60, comprised of students from ten high schools in the United States and Mexico and anchored by professional actors in the adult roles, will present an edgy, tuneful, age-appropriate adaptation of Shakespeare's classic in English and Spanish.

The project is produced by The Old Globe in partnership with the Centro Cultural Tijuana (CECUT) and is made possible in part by grants from Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price and the County of San Diego, U.S. Bank, and other generous sponsors.

Performances dates include: **July 22 at 8:00pm at Centro Cultural Tijuana (CECUT); July 23 at 5:00pm at Escuela Primaria "El Pípila", Colonia Obrera, Tercera Sección, Tijuana; July 24 at 3:00pm at Parque Teniente Guerrero, Tijuana; July 29 at 8:00pm at the Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego; and July 30 at 8:00pm at Memorial Park, Chula Vista.**

"The *Romeo y Julieta* Project is an extremely exciting undertaking. We're thrilled to be working with the Centro Cultural Tijuana on this important bi-national educational program," said Louis G. Spisto, Executive Director of The Old Globe. "The themes of this classic play provide a fitting metaphor for the project, where students from different cultures have come together to share a meaningful arts experience that offers insights into each other's lives."

-- more --

The *Romeo y Julieta* Project was launched by the Globe's Education Department last fall when Spisto engaged renowned director/educator Peter Webster to help develop this innovative cross-border program. Award-winning dramaturge and Globe Associate Artist Dakin Matthews and Globe Director of Education Bonnie Johnston then trained Teaching Artists in a series of workshops. These Teaching Artists worked in collaboration with high school teachers in San Diego and Chula Vista to implement the study of Shakespeare's classic tragedy.

The workshops explored the contemporary relevance of *Romeo and Juliet*, inviting the enthusiastic participation of more than 1000 students to discuss the artistic, ethical and social lessons taught by Shakespeare's timeless classic, while addressing the rigorous California State Standards for education. At the same time, Webster worked with students in Tijuana developing a condensed version of the play which was presented last November to an audience of nearly 3000 people at CECUT.

Students participating in these workshops were invited to audition for the touring production of *Romeo y Julieta*, performed in English, Spanish and Mixteco, an indigenous language that is widely spoken in the region. The resulting cast is a vivid example of the talent and diversity of the San Diego/Tijuana region. Approximately 90 minutes in length, the production will be presented at two sites in San Diego and Chula Vista, and three sites in Tijuana and will be free to the public.

"This production of *Romeo y Julieta* is the realization of a vision of The Old Globe and CECUT to create a bi-national and community project, with a cast mainly composed of high school students from both countries," said Teresa Vicencio Álvarez, General Director of CECUT. "This project has an important educational component, by which we seek to allow students from both sides of the border to experience five fundamental elements: tolerance, mature interpersonal relationships, the rejection of violence, the awareness of the danger in using drugs, and the acceptance of cultural and ethnic diversity."

Educational partners in the *Romeo y Julieta* Project include **Preparatoria Federal Lázaro Cárdenas** (Tijuana, Mexico); **Montgomery High School** (Chula Vista); **Sweetwater High School** (National City); **Bonita Vista High School** (Chula Vista); **Castle Park High School** (Chula Vista); **Otay Ranch High School** (Chula Vista); **High Tech High** (San Diego); **San Diego High School** (San Diego); **The Preuss School** (La Jolla) and **Valhalla High School** (El Cajon).

"The Old Globe has taken the lead in bringing its theatre expertise and professionalism to areas in our region that are underserved by major arts organizations. This ideal mix of the arts and education has created a sense of community in this vast region, and underscores the importance of the arts in our everyday lives," said Webster.

The Globe has joined forces with Peter Webster to launch this dynamic educational program to create a unique cross-border cultural experience for students in San Diego and Tijuana. Utilizing the work of William Shakespeare, which has been part of the Globe's heritage since its inception, the program introduces the timeless themes and ideas of Shakespeare's classic *Romeo and Juliet* to students while integrating the required literature curriculum for ninth grade students in California. Webster's credits include an Afro-Centric *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the concept, design and direction of *Distant Voices*, by Celeste Bedford-Walker, finalist for the prestigious Susan Smith-Blackburn International Prize, both for the Ensemble Theatre; *Illusions/Ilusiones*, an English and Spanish chamber opera commissioned by Utah Symphony and Opera, winner of Opera America's Success Award, and the world premiere of Mark Adamo's *Little Women* at Houston Grand Opera, which was broadcast nationally on PBS's Great Performances.

Sponsors for the *Romeo y Julieta* Bi-National Project include: Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price and the County of San Diego, Wells Fargo, Union Bank of California, U.S. Bank, Citigroup Foundation/Smith Barney, The Thursday Club Foundation, The Thomas C. Ackerman Foundation, the Walton Family Foundation, XLNC1 90.7 FM, Mission Federal Credit Union, The Pratt Memorial Fund, the San Diego Chargers, the City of Chula Vista Office of Cultural Arts, the U.S. Consulate General of Tijuana, the Mexican Consulate in San Diego, and HM Electronics, Inc. Production support is also generously donated by Kellogg Elementary School of the Chula Vista City School District (rehearsal space) and la Escuela Primaria Bilingüe Juan José de los Reyes Martínez "El Pípila"-José Vasconcelos, Tijuana (translation services, Spanish to Mixteco).

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE:

Friday, July 22 at 8:00pm: Tijuana Cultural Center (CECUT), Tijuana

Saturday, July 23 at 5:00pm: Escuela Primaria "El Pípila", Colonia Obrera, Tercera Sección, Tijuana

Sunday, July 24 at 3:00pm: Parque Teniente Guerrero, Tijuana

Friday, July 29 at 8:00pm: Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego

Saturday, July 30 at 8:00pm: Memorial Park, Chula Vista

ALL PERFORMANCES ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

For more information about The *Romeo y Julieta* Project, please contact The Old Globe Education Department at (619) 238-0043, x2144 (USA) or CECUT at teatrocecut@cecut.gob.mx (Mexico).

#

The internationally-acclaimed, Tony Award®-winning Old Globe is one of the most renowned regional theaters in the country and has stood as San Diego's flagship arts institution for 70 years. The Globe produces a year-round season of 15 plays and musicals on its three stages, including the highly-regarded Shakespeare festival. The Globe has become a gathering place for leading theater artists from around the world, as exemplified by Tom Stoppard, Daniel Sullivan, Tina Landau, Nora Ephron and John Goodman, among many others. Numerous Broadway-bound premieres and revivals, such as Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, The Full Monty and Damn Yankees, have been developed at the Globe and have gone on to enjoy highly successful runs in New York and at regional theatres across the country. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Jack O'Brien, Resident Artistic Director Jerry Patch, and Executive Director Louis G. Spisto, The Old Globe is at the forefront of the nation's leading performing arts organizations, setting the standard for excellence in the American theatre.