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Romeo And Juliet: BBC Dramatization (BBC Radio Presents)



Synopsis

"The permanent popularity, now of mythic intensity, of Romeo and Juliet is more than justified," writes eminent scholar Harold Bloom, "since the play is the largest and most persuasive celebration of romantic love in Western literature." William Shakespeare (1564-1616) based his early romantic tragedy on Arthur Brooke's 1562 poem *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet*. Shakespeare's resulting masterpiece, in turn, has inspired countless retellings around the world in mediums that include literature, dance, stage, and screen. "It is Shakespear all over, and Shakespear when he was young," declares William Hazlitt (1778-1830), acclaimed British essayist and critic, in his exuberant Introduction to this Modern Library edition. "Two households, both alike in dignity, In fair Verona, where we lay our scene, From ancient grudge break to new mutiny, Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean. From forth the fatal loins of these two foes, A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life; Whose misadventur'd piteous overthrows, Do with their death bury their parents' strife."--Prologue From the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I am a teacher and have taught "Romeo and Juliet" quite a few times over the years. I don't mind that some of the interpretations are different than I have imagined. After all, when someone produces a play, it's their interpretation of it (see differences between the Zeffirelli and Lurhman's movie versions). I teach students by having them listen to this version in class. It's definitely the best audio performance I have heard and find it valuable to use. I could do without the dramatic music

before/after scenes, but this is merely nitpicking.

This radio adaptation is interesting in some ways, but it remains rather short on its objective. The sound universe created behind the voices is rather diminutive. Some voices are not that very accurate : Juliet is rather old-sounding and Romeo is quite late in his twenties at least. Lord Capulet speaks as if he were plain drunk all the time. But what's more some interpretations are defective. The famous sonnet during the dance is just badly done. The tone is wrong. The wit is flattened, etc. The balcony scene is slightly better, luckily. Romeo, by the way, is too much of a hooligan, of an aggressive character, not at all in keeping with the world we can vaguely hear behind. Finally there are some cuts and some changes in the text that are not at all justified, such as "pacing" for "passing". Dr Jacques COULARDEAU, Paris Universities II and IX.

This is a fantastic full presentation of one of the classics of drama and literature. Kenneth Branagh and cast created a presentation full of emotion and understanding. Highly recommended!

Romeo and Juliet is the nicer love story I've never read. It got everything: the love, the hate, the passion, the death. It's an example of human feelings. Amazing! "Give me my Romeo and when he shall die cut him into little stars so all the world will be in love with night..."

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