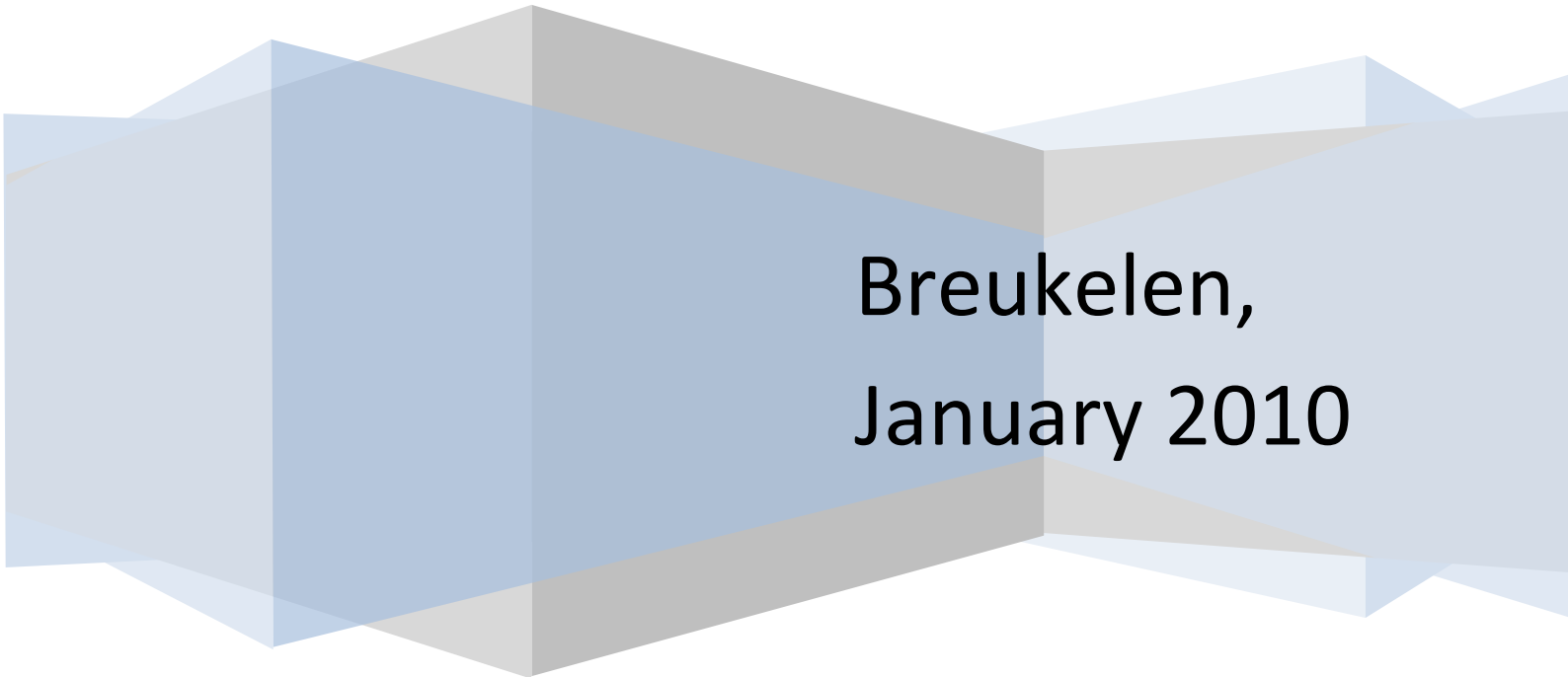


Profielwerkstuk 5 havo

Romeo and Juliet: How has William Shakespeare's original play been modernized in films?

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Breukelen,
January 2010

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Prologue

For our English essay we had the assignment to write an essay about a subject, which had a connection to English or American culture or literature. We had the opportunity to choose from subjects given in advance. We had no real connection with the given subjects and we did not think we could interest ourselves enough to spend such a long time working at one of those topics.

A lot has been said already about probably the most famous work of William Shakespeare: 'Romeo and Juliet'. However, we are interested in the deeper meaning of Shakespeare's magnificent poetry in his scriptwriting. Why did Shakespeare use such visualistic language? And how has Romeo and Juliet gained the popularity it has today?

In our essay we will answer the previous questions by investigating and answering our main question:

How has Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet play been modernized in films?

By means of this question we will deal with Shakespeare's original play of Romeo and Juliet and two film adaptations of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet. The first adaptation we will analyse is a production by Irving Thalberg, which was released in 1936. We will use Baz Luhrmann's production for our second analysis. This film was released in 1996.

We will divide the main question into several subtopics. We will start with analyzing what Romeo and Juliet actually is and how the play has evolved over the years. In additional subtopics we will discuss the films. In both productions we will examine the use of language, pronunciation and imagery. We will also pay attention to the clothing, décor, realism and characters. In the last subtopic we will take a look at the critics given by professor James Berardinelli about Thalberg's and Luhrmann's production and we will give our own opinion on both productions.

Breukelen, January 2010

*Dyonne Letter
Elzemieke Janzen*

What is 'Romeo and Juliet'?

Shakespeare was known for his stylish poetic use of language in his scriptwriting. 'Romeo and Juliet' is no exception. The play was made out of the massive amounts of eccentric word-combinations and wordplays. But what techniques did Shakespeare use to make his play this phenomenal?

Blank verse

Two-thirds of Romeo and Juliet is written in blank verse. Blank verse, or unrhymed iambic pentameter, is verse without rhyme (mainly end rhyme). It is made up of unrhymed lines that are ten syllables long, with the syllables alternating between unaccented and accented, the even-numbered syllables addressing the accents. A famous example is Romeo's speech:

*But, soft, what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief
That thou her maid art far more fair than she¹*

Blank verse is considered best for dramatic verse in English, since it is so close to the natural rhythms of English speech and easy to adapt to different levels of language. Shakespeare uses blank verse very frequently, having characters from Peter to Prince Escalus speak in blank verse, but still in recognizable and suitable voices. Using blank verse, Shakespeare had a greater freedom of expression than if he were writing rhymed verse, since he is not limited by the need to find rhyming words to end his lines. Also, he avoids the dullness which often occurs when a whole play is written in rhyme.

Alternating rhyme

Alternating rhyme is defined as rhyme in which, in a group of four lines, the first line rhymes with the third and the second line rhymes with the fourth, known as the ABAB pattern. An example of alternating rhyme is when Juliet excuses Romeo's touch:

*"Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,
Which mannerly devotion shows in this;
For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,
And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss"²*

Alternating rhyme is often used in love scenes, because this highly formal kind of verse suits the refined declarations of lovers very well.

Prose

¹ William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, ed. John Ingledew, Act II, scene 2

² William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, ed. John Ingledew, Act I, scene 5

There is a considerable amount of prose in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Prose is a piece of text which is very much like everyday communication, including the lack of regular rhythm. Prose writing is often used for discussions between common people. Shakespeare assigns the prose lines mostly to the servants. In the opening of Act I, Scene 5 the servants speak informally about the amount of work they have to do:

First servant

"Where's Potpan, that he helps not to take away? He shift a trencher? He scrape a trencher?"

Second servant

"When good manners shall lie all in one or two men's hands, and they unwashed too, 'tis a foul thing."

First servant

*"Away with the joint-stools, remove the court-capboard, look to the plate. Good thou, save me a piece of marchpane, and, as thou loves me, let the porter let in Susan Grindstone and Nell."*³

The English Sonnet

The English word "sonnet" comes from the Italian word "sonetto," meaning "little song." The English sonnet is often called Shakespearean sonnet, not because Shakespeare was the first to write in this form, but because he became its most famous practitioner.

A Shakespearean sonnet consists of fourteen lines, where each line contains ten syllables. Every sentence is written in iambic pentameter.

Iambic pentameter is a pattern of an unemphasized syllable followed by an emphasized syllable, which is repeated five times. It contains three stanzas of four lines (quatrains), followed by a rhyming stanza of two lines (couplet).

The rhyme scheme in a Shakespearean sonnet is ABAB CDCD EFEF GG.

A very famous example of the Shakespearean sonnet in *Romeo and Juliet*, is when Romeo sees Juliet for the first time:

*O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear;
Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!
So shines a new-born swan trapping with crows,
As this fair lady o'er her fellows shows.
The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand,
And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.
Did my heart love till now? forswear it, sight!
I never saw true beauty till this night.*

(and to Juliet)

*If I profane with my unworsted hand
This holy shrine, the gentle sin is this,*

³ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, act I, scene 5

*My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand
To smooth the rough touch with a gentle kiss*⁴

Imagery

Image

Writers are able to present our minds with a picture, by using certain words that explain an action or idea. This can be done by using words of something else, with which the action has some likeness and association. Those pictures evoked in poems are referred to as 'imagery'. Imagery can be acknowledged with our eyes, ears, tongue, nose and skin. In the case of Romeo and Juliet, imagery can also give us an understanding of a person, or experience;

*"Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear"*⁵

Here Romeo is trying to explain Juliet's beauty to us, by comparing Juliet to a jewel which shines out in the night. An Ethiopian is a very dark-skinned man or woman from Ethiopia. A jewel (or diamond) will stand out even more against a dark background (from the Ethiop's ear) and will appear even more shining.

Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet contains a lot of literary devices, in order to keep the readers focused, amused and involved in the story during the play. Below you will find the most important literary devices Shakespeare used in Romeo and Juliet.

Simile

Romeo's quote from above is a simile. A simile is defined as "A figure of speech in which two essentially unlike things are compared, often in a phrase introduced by like or as" as in "she is like a rose".⁶ Similes are often used to emphasize a certain characteristic of a thing or person. You can reflect this to the above, where Romeo emphasizes Juliet's beauty. By using similes, a writer makes sure he gets his message across the way he meant it to be. An excellent simile would tell us even more than a simple fact of phrase like 'she is very beautiful' could ever do.

Lord Capulet when he sees Juliet is 'dead' :

"Death lies on her like an untimely frost"

The poison Juliet took was meant to make her look dead, and it worked out:

⁴ William Shakespears, Romeo and Juliet, ed. John Ingledew, Act I, scene 5

⁵ William Shakespears, Romeo and Juliet, ed. John Ingledew, Act I, scene 5

⁶ <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/simile>

*"Her blood is settled, and her joints are stiff."*⁷

Lord Capulet is especially concerned about the timing of Juliet's death: she was about to get married to Paris, a young man with a high status. The poison made it look like Juliet was frozen; she laid so serene, with a pale skin and her blood settled.

Metaphor

Like a simile, a metaphor is a comparison, but a metaphor is an indirect comparison. Metaphors are not introduced by words as "as" or "like", but it is stated like a fact "*she is a rose*". A very famous metaphor is when Romeo sees Juliet in the hall in Capulet's house for the first time:

*"O she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night"*⁸

Romeo is saying here, that Juliet has to teach the torches to burn bright, which means that Juliet is brighter than the torches. This is a poetic enlargement, since torches can not be taught. The light of the torches stands for beauty, and Juliet is extraordinary beautiful. It is important for Romeo to say this, so we, as audience, can create a picture of what Juliet looks like.

*"Love is a smoke made with the fume of sighs,
Being purg'd, a fire sparkling in lover's eyes,
Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with loving tears.
What is it else? A madness most discreet,
A choking gall, and a preserving sweet"*⁹

This time, Romeo presents love as a negative image. He says that love is the smoke which is made with what comes out when you breathe out heavily, being upset about something.

Pun

*"Ask for me tomorrow, and you shall find me a grave man."*¹⁰

After Mercutio realizes he has been fatally wounded, he is still able to be humorous. Grave means "serious", but in this case it means "dead". The quote above is an example of a pun.

A pun is a use of words which is usually humorous. It can be based on three things. The first is that it can be based on the several meanings of one word, like Mercutio's quote above. Secondly, it can be based on a similarity of meaning between words

⁷ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, act IV, scene 5

⁸ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, act I, scene 5

⁹ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, act I, scene 1

¹⁰ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, act III, scene 1

that are pronounced the same. Also, it can be based on the difference in meanings between two words pronounced the same and spelled somewhat similarly, like:

*"Not I, believe me. You have dancing shoes
With nimble soles; I have a soul of lead
So stakes me to the ground I can not move."*¹¹

And the opening scene in a street in Verona, with the two servants of the Capulet household:

Sampson

"Gregory, on my word, we'll not carry coals."

Gregory

"No, for then we should be colliers."

Sampson

"I mean, and we be in choler, we'll draw."

Gregory

*"Ay, while you live, draw your neck out of collar."*¹²

With "To not carry coals", Sampson means they will not be doing dirty work which is beneath their dignity. Gregory pretends to understand the words in their ordinary meaning; which is why he refers to colliers; men who carry coal.

Sampson again means "if we are angry (in choler) we will draw our swords, ready to fight". Gregory mistakes Sampson's word choler as a remark to the collar; the rope put around the neck of a condemned man by the hangman. So the play is on the words colliers, choler and collar, which all sound alike.

Personification

Personification is a form of imagery, in which the lifeless nature or abstract notions are approached as a (living) person.

*"But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou, her maid, art far more fair than she."*¹³

¹¹ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, act I, scene 4

¹² William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, act I, scene 1

¹³ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, Act II, scene 2

Here Romeo is looking up at the window to Juliet's balcony. Shakespeare already used a metaphor to compare Juliet's beauty to the rising sun and this follows by a personification. With the rising of the sun, the darkness of the night fades away and so it is "killed".

The moon is represented as being so *envious* of Juliet's beauty, that it is "*sick and pale with grief*" that Juliet is "*far more fair*" than the moon is.

The moon is here personified as "*she*", representing a woman who is jealous of Juliet. Through "*Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon*", Romeo asks Juliet to appear on the balcony, so she could brighten up the night with her beauty and "*kill*" the darkness.

*"Thou detestable maw, thou womb of death,
Gorg'd with the dearest morsel of the earth,
Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,"*¹⁴

Romeo also gives the tomb human qualities in this speech. He speaks of the tomb as a belly and a womb in a very negative way, "*detestable*", because it has taken 'his' Juliet. He says it has eaten ("*Gorg'd*") itself full of Juliet. Although the tomb is a large shelter, he only sees Juliet lying there, who is the love of his life and means the world to him. He calls the tomb's doors "rotten jaws", which refers to the awful thing which happened inside of the tomb.

Themes, Motives, Symbols

Before addressing the themes, motives and symbols in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, it is necessary to explain what we regard as a theme, a motive and a symbol in this assignment.

A theme is defined as the subject or underlying intensions of a literary work. This does not only depend on what is written in the text, but also relies on the interpretation of the reader. In *Romeo and Juliet* it is hard to define one special theme and so we will speak of 'thematics'. We define a motive as an element or known fact that repeatedly returns in a literary work. Followed by a symbol, which we define as an action or object that represents a certain action or thought.

Thematics

Light and Dark

Obviously, lightness and darkness play a huge role in *Romeo and Juliet*. Many of these references relate to Romeo and Juliet themselves. Already at first sight, Romeo sees the huge difference between Juliet and the other people present at the Capulets party:

*"O she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night
As a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear,"*¹⁵

¹⁴ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, Act V, scene 3

¹⁵ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, act I, scene 5

And then, when Benvolio is looking for Romeo, he compares Romeo's love to the darkness of the night:

*"Blind is his love, and best befits the dark."*¹⁶

When Romeo finds Juliet at her balcony, revealing his love for her, he speaks:

"But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?"

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun."

"The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars

As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven

Would through the airy region stream so bright

*That birds would sing and think it were not night."*¹⁵

Then, when Juliet speaks, Romeo says:

"She speaks!"

O, speak again, bright angel! for thou art

As glorious to this night, being o'er my head

As is a winged messenger of heaven

Unto the white-upturned wondering eyes

*Of mortals that fall back to gaze on him"*¹⁷

Here, Romeo compares Juliet to an angel. Of course, when being in love, comparing your love to an angel is not rare, but Romeo truly believes Juliet is angelic. An angel is "*glorious to the night*" because it exposes in a "*glory*", a ring of light enclosing its body. It would make people "fall back" with their faces turned to the sky and their eyes put upward.

"The grey-eyed morn smiles on the frowning night,

Check'ring the eastern clouds with streaks of light;

And fleckled darkness like a drunkard reels

From forth day's path and Titan's fiery wheels.

Now, ere the sun advance his burning eye

*The day to cheer and night's dark drew to dry,"*¹⁵

It is early in the morning, there is still dusk. Dusk stands for a combination of darkness and light. This dusk therefore represents Romeo's and Juliet's situation. On the one hand, the night is a pleasant thing, because they can experience their love and passion. On the other hand, the night is a hazardous time, because it is full of uncertainty and danger ("*the frowning night*"). Before daytime, Romeo and Juliet would have to be apart, because they can not be seen together. The dusk therefore represents the day and the bitter reality that follows.

In the darkness, Romeo is able to remain unseen by Juliet's kinsmen under her balcony. In this case, the night is their friend because they can meet secretly and develop their love, without interference of both families.

¹⁶ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, act II, scene 1

¹⁷ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, act II, scene 2

*"I have night's cloak to hide me from their eyes."*¹⁵

A while after the Nurse has given Juliet the delighted news that Romeo will marry her, Juliet waits for Romeo to come to her room and share the bed.

*"Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night;
That runaway's eyes may wink, and Romeo
Leap to these arms untalked of and unseen.
Lovers can see to do their amorous rites
By their own beauties; or, if love be blind
It best agrees with night."*¹⁶

Lying in bed, she imagines what the night will bring her. With the curtains closed, they will be in the dark, expressing their love to each other. The dark will not be a problem, since the two lovers are "*beauties*", they will provide brightness themselves. The providing of light by the two lovers, refers to the balcony scene where Romeo described Juliet as an angel shining bright in the night.

"*if love be blind, it best agrees with night*" refers to act II, scene 1, where Benvolio remarks Romeo's love for Juliet is blind and so it "*best befits the dark*".

*"Give me my Romeo; and when I shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine
That all the world will be in love with night
And pay no worship to the garish sun."*¹⁷

In her daydream, Juliet talks about the desire to be together with Romeo always, even if she might die. This could be achieved by 'cutting him out in little stars', so he will return every night, bringing brightness in the dark by shining like a star. He would be shining so bright, that everyone would fall in love with the night, because it outshines the sun. Romeo is thus presented by Juliet as an immortal presence. The only night Romeo and Juliet had together has come to an end. The sun is about to rise, and Romeo is getting ready to leave, when Juliet speaks:

*"Wilt thou be gone? It is not yet near day.
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear."*¹⁸

Juliet tries to persuade Romeo to stay, but when she realizes how dangerous it is for him to stay because of his banishment, she wants him to leave. The lark's song has feared Romeo to stay in Verona. Juliet makes an effort to reassure him, that it was only the nightingale he heard, but Romeo knows better and says:

¹⁸ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, act III, scene 2

¹⁹ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, Act III, scene 5

*"Look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east."*¹⁷

Strokes of sunlight come through the clouds, but those streaks are 'envious' because they declare the end of the enjoyment the lovers have had in the night. This sadness continues and even evolves in Romeo's next lines:

*"Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.
I must be gone and live, or stay and die."*¹⁷

Especially his last line, expose the earnest of the lovers' situation. The night has ended, and the day announces its arrival, which is said to be 'jocund', or cheerful. You can imagine the announcement of day is not cheerful at all for Romeo, because for him, it means death. Realizing this, Romeo sees the irony of the situation. The lighter it gets, the worse their suffering is:

*"More light and light, more dark and dark our woes."*¹⁷

Darkness has completely taken over at the end of Romeo and Juliet's lives, which also means the end of the play. The Prince makes a final statement:

*"A glooming peace this morning with it brings;
The sun, for sorrow, will not show his head. (...)
For never was a story of more woe
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo."*²⁰

Motifs

Death

William Shakespeare uses the motif *death* throughout Romeo and Juliet, to keep the story flowing. He does this by killing people, which causes trouble for the lovers. Also, death is shown through premonitions and dreams of death. These premonitions and dreams occur both to Romeo and Juliet.

Shakespeare starts his play with a prologue, in which we hear death is inevitable: *"The fearful passage of their death-marked love..."*. We already know Romeo and Juliet's love will end in a cruel way. The two lovers meet at Capulets feast, which takes place in the first act of the play. When the feast has ended, we find Juliet saying *"... If he be, married, my grave is like to be*

²⁰ William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, ed. John Ingledew, Act V, scene 3

my wedding bed,"²¹. Hereby, she already marks her own ending of the story.

Romeo's presence at Capulets party is noticed by Tybalt. Tybalt has a strong feeling of hate against the Montagues, so Romeo's presence annoys him. We learn this feeling is one of the reasons for Tybalt to fight Romeo. In Act II, scene 4, Benvolio and Mercutio announce Romeo Tybalt has challenged him to a duel.

The Friar warns Romeo against carrying out his marriage with Juliet too soon.

Romeo agrees, but challenges death to destroy that moment: *"..Do thou but close our hands with holy words, then love-devouring death do what he dare; It is enough I may but call her mine..."*²²

Now, because the marriage was not carried out, these forbodings actually happened, such as the duel between Tybalt and Romeo (which followed in a duel between Tybalt and Mercutio). We know the reason for Romeo not wanting to fight Tybalt: he is secretly his kinsman. Mercutio is not aware of this and he takes Romeo's place and fights Tybalt. Romeo comes between the two men, but in that attempt, Mercutio is fatally wounded. Before he dies, he says: *"Why the devil came you between us...A plague o' both your houses! They have made worms' meat of me. I have it, and soundly too. A plague!"*²³. By cursing the two houses (both the Capulets and the Montagues), Mercutio is predicting the awful things which happen at the end of the play. Romeo, who is enraged about Mercutio's death, fights Tybalt and kills him. When the Prince arrives, he banishes Romeo to Mantua upon the penalty of death.

Because of his banishment, Romeo is unreachable for the messenger to deliver the Friar's letter. This banishment will eventually lead to even greater problems, later on in the play. Standing on her balcony Juliet speaks:

*"Give me my Romeo; and, when he shall die, take him and cut him out in little stars, and he will make the face of heaven so fine..."*²⁴.

Again, the characters forecast their own fate. When the Nurse enters, she informs Juliet that Tybalt has been slain by Romeo. Juliet sees the situation as if both men died, because she sees Romeo's banishment as death. Meanwhile, Romeo is at the Friar to express his self-pity. At the end of this scene, Romeo requests the Friar to tell him what part of the body his name is, so he can cut it out, in order to marry Juliet in public (without the problem of their surnames). This actually is a forecast as well, because he says he'd rather be dead than be with Juliet in secret.

²¹ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, Act I, scene 5

²² William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, Act II, scene 6

²³ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, Act III, scene 1

²⁴ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, Act III, scene 2

Capulet, in an attempt to cheer Juliet up, decides to marry Juliet off to count Paris. What he does not know is what we know: Juliet is married to Romeo. Then Lady Capulet states: *"I'll send one in Mantua, where that same banished runaway doth live, that he shall soon keep Tybalt company..."*²⁵

which states Romeo's death at the end of the play.

When she hears Juliet is not willing to marry Paris, she wishes her daughter to be married to her grave: another prophecy. It seems like Lady Capulet can see in the future, because Juliet will take a poison which causes her to appear dead, in Act IV, scene 5.

That night, the lovers spend the night together for the first time. In the morning, Juliet makes another prophecy: *"O God, I have an ill-divining soul! Methinks I see thee, now thou art below, as one dead in the bottom of a tomb. Either my eyesight fails me, or thou lookest pale..."*²⁶

In Act IV, Juliet goes to the Friar to ask for advice. She threatens to kill herself if the Friar would not be willing to help her, because she only sees one solution: death, just like Romeo. The Friar gives her a poison to appear dead on her wedding day. That night, Juliet imagines herself being surrounded by corpses. She says to the Nurse: *"Farewell! God knows when we shall meet again..."*²⁷

This is such an obvious prophesy, it is hard to imagine the Nurse would not have noticed this wordplay. Just in case the poison would not work, Juliet takes a dagger to bed.

At the same time, the Friar has given a messenger the assignment to deliver a letter to Romeo, in which the Friar informs him of the poison-plan. The messenger does not succeed in this, because he has been locked up in a house where the plague prevails. The plague is another sign of death, which deems the two lovers.

Strange enough, Balthasar, Romeo's servant, is not delayed by any problem, he delivers the news of Juliet's death without a problem. *"I dreamt that my lady came and found me dead..."*²⁸

Romeo wakes up, telling us his forecasting dream at the beginning of Act V, act I. Balthasar gives Romeo the awful news: *"Her body sleeps in Capel's monument, and her immortal part with angels lives..."*²⁸ After Balthasar is gone, Romeo decides to visit an apothecary, to get some

²⁵ William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, ed. John Ingledew, Act III, scene 5

²⁶ William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, ed. John Ingledew, Act III, scene 5

²⁷ William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, ed. John Ingledew, Act IV, scene 3

²⁸ William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, ed. John Ingledew, Act V, scene 1

poison to kill himself to be with Juliet again.

In the final scene we see Romeo and Balthasar arrive at Juliet's tombe, where Paris is already present. Romeo asks Balthasar to do two things: to deliver a letter to his family in the morning, and not to come to the grave no matter what he hears (Act V, scene 3) . Romeo even threatens Balthasar with death if he would check out what he hears. I think Romeo goes too far in this. Balthasar is his servant and therefore needs to be loyal to his master. It is natural he would want to prevent Romeo from killing himself, because he has the moral sense to look further on in the future. However, Balthasar listens to Romeo and does not return.

Romeo addresses the grave, before opening it. He presents it as a beast and is enraged for 'eating' Juliet:

*"Thou detestable maw, thou womb of death, gorged with the dearest morsel of the earth, thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open, and in despite I'll cram thee with more food."*²⁹

While opening the grave Paris appears, because he thinks Romeo has bad intentions. Romeo does not want to fight Paris and he does not even know it is Paris, because he came from behind. Still, they fight and Paris dies. Then Romeo discovers it is County Paris, the man Juliet was supposed to get married to.

In the tomb, Romeo takes a look at Juliet and says:

*"Death, that hath sucked the honey of thy breath, hath had no power yet upon thy beauty... That unsubstantial Death is amorous, and that the lean abhorred monster keeps thee here in dark to be his paramour?"*¹³

Romeo's words are very sweet and loving, because he tells how death has taken away Juliet's life, but her beauty still remains. He also accuses death of keeping away Juliet as a his wife. *"Here's to my love. O true apothecary! Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die."*²⁹

Romeo has died and the Friar arrives at the scene. Of course, he is too late, but he is there when Juliet awakens. The Friar asks Juliet to come with him, but Juliet wants to be with Romeo. *"O churl! drunk all, and left no friendly drop to help me after?"*²⁹ Juliet wishes to die as well, since now she is sure she will never be with Romeo alive.

Throughout Romeo and Juliet, death is presented in many different ways.

Shakespeare used personifications of death, he related to many prophecies of death and troubles and used actual deaths to make his motif clear to us. By doing this the

²⁹ William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, ed. John Ingledew, Act V, scene 3

'Shakespearean way', in a very expressive words and language, every action in Romeo and Juliet is justified. Romeo and Juliet therefore becomes a smoothly running tragedy.

Symbols

Queen Mab

Mercutio's famous Queen Mab speech:

*"O, then, I see Queen Mab hath been with you.
She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the fore-finger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomies
Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep;
Her wagon-spokes made of long spinners' legs,
The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,
The traces of the smallest spider's web,
The collars of the moonshine's watery beams,
Her whip of cricket's bone; the lash of film;
Her waggoner a small grey-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm
Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid:
Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut
Made by the joiner squirrel or an old grub,
Time out o' mind the fairies' coachmakers.
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;
O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies straight,
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees,
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,
Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are:
Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit;
And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail
Tickling a parson's nose as 'he lies asleep,
Then dreams, he of another benefice:
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,
Of healths five-fathom deep; and then anon
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,
And being thus frighted swears a prayer or two
And sleeps again. This is that very Mab
That plaits the manes of horses in the night,
And bakes the elflocks in foul sluttish hairs,
Which once untangled, much misfortune bodes:
This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,*

*That presses them and learns them first to bear,
Making them women of good carriage:
This is she—*³⁰

We, as an audience, already know Romeo and his friends are heading to Capulet's feast. The discussion on the beach, followed by Mercutio's enormous speech, seems a bit odd for that reason. On forehand, Romeo had a wrong feeling about the feast that night, that it would ultimately lead to death. Still, he joins his friends. Although the scene may seem odd, it increases the general sense of fate through Romeo's feeling.

Mercutio's Queen Mab speech functions as an introduction to the rest of his actions and use of language throughout the play. The name Queen Mab was an insult in Shakespeare's time, because it was synonymous with 'prostitute'.

Gavin Marshall, assistant director of William Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet' production, performed by the Royal Shakespeare Company in 2004 : "Queen Mab" is such a famous speech but it's really a bit of nonsense made interesting because of the psychology that underpins it. It's very poetic and pretty and it shows Mercutio's genius at being able to improvise, to make things up on the spot, rather like people do today in comedy workshops (*Saturday Night Live*, *Who's Line is it Anyway?* and so on). Mercutio loves word play and word association and once he gets started, he's on a roll - only rapidly he loses control. He starts off making a pretty little Ladybird book of Arthur Rackham fairies but very quickly moves on to underlying themes of sex - dirty sex - and death. It does not, for example, take him long to switch from fairies in love to herpes. He talks of plagues of blisters on lovers' lips and breath tainted with 'sweetmeats' - i.e. the 'lover' has cold sores from fellatio. Then he talks of 'ambuscados', 'Spanish blades' and 'foul sluttish hairs' - of drinking and whoring. The imagery goes to nasty, dark, violent, misogynistic places and suddenly Romeo can bear it no more and has to stop him."³¹



In the 1936 production of *Romeo and Juliet*, the Queen Mab is really presented as a fairy, which brings tales in your dreams. In Luhrmann's modernized function, Queen Mab comes in the shape of an extacy pil.

As Romeo says "*Thy drugs are quick*", he already becomes unwell, which is why he heads to the bathroom. When he feels fine again, he stares at the fish in the aquarium, which is the boundary between the ladies- and gentlemen's bathroom.

³⁰ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, Act I, scene 4

³¹ <http://www.rsc.org.uk/romeo/learning/mab.html>

This is where he meets Juliet. She was at her side of the bathroom, staring at the fish. Well, his love for Juliet certainly is a good thing. Although he got that out of an unpleasant Queen Mab experience.

The characters

Romeo

In the story 'Romeo and Juliet', Shakespeare has drawn the attention of the main characters on their youth. The other characters in the story behave more mature than the actual age of the personalities. When it comes to Romeo this is not the case. Compared to the other characters, Romeo is a really youthful person. This strengthens the difference in the heartbreaking story of Romeo and Juliet, surrounded by old, blind, heartless people in an incomprehensible world with quarrels between families, which they do not care about. Youth is also an excuse for their recklessness and impatience which leads to death.

Unlike other characters that are really static, Romeo and Juliet are dynamic characters. In the beginning Romeo is in love with Rosaline, but this can not be described as real love. Because you do not know anything about their story, his love for her does not seem to have any meaning. Moreover, when Romeo gets dumped by Rosaline he does not really seem sincerely heartbroken.

Romeo:

*"Did my heart love till now? Forswear it sight, For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night."*³²

Assuming the answer is no, Juliet is Romeo's first love, and his first step to maturity is this story. Their love develops really fast; when they only know each other for a few minutes, they have their first kiss. It shows the impatience of Romeo, but his strong love for Juliet as well. In the words they tell each other is a sign of real love and real passion. Even though their love is hasty, as beholder you feel like their love is sincere.

Friar Laurence:

*"Holy Saint Francis, what a change is here! Is Rosaline, that thou didst love so dear, so soon forsaken? Young men's love then lies, Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes"*³³

The impatience also has a big part in this story. Romeo can not see beyond today and tomorrow. On the long term he has no idea what fate is waiting for him. When

³² William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, ed. John Ingledew, Act I, scene 5

³³ William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, ed. John Ingledew, Act II, scene 3

Romeo and Juliet only just know each other, they decide to marry. They do not think or care about the relation between their families. All that matters to Romeo is love and life seems like a sweet dream to Romeo.

Romeo:

*"Tybalt, the reason that I have to love thee Doth much excuse the appertaining rage. To such a greeting. Villain am I none."*³⁴

But Romeo has to awake from his dream as soon as Tybalt kills Mercutio. He has to face the fact that life is not sweet at all. Romeo is furious and kills Tybalt. Because of this Romeo has to hide, as he should be killed for this deed. All this makes Romeo feel hysterical and he panics like a little child. But when he has plucked up his courage he takes another step to maturity.

As he encounters his next setback, Juliet's death, he remains moist. He decides to die with Juliet. When he arrives at her grave he meets Paris. Paris wants to get in a fight with him but Romeo tries to prevent that, because he sees killing Tybalt as a sin, and he does not want to kill someone again. Still Paris chooses to fight with him and Romeo kills Paris. Romeo drinks the poison he bought, and dies. But not as a child anymore, he died as a grown up.

Romeo:

*"For fear of that, I still will stay with thee, And never from this palace of dim night Depart again, here I will remain With worms that are thy chamber-maids."*³⁵

Juliet

Juliet is a youthful character as well, but she has always been a girl with her own will, and her own way to solve things. She does not really care about the feelings of her family when she falls in love with Romeo. She refuses to marry Paris, and she wants to marry Romeo which is her family's enemy. This might show disrespect to her family but her devotion to Romeo as well.

Juliet:

"Deny thy father, and refuse thy name."

*"Or if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love, and I'll no longer be Capulet."*³⁶

In 'Romeo and Juliet' you will notice the nurse is always there to care for Juliet and help her with difficult matters. But when she chose to pretend death for Romeo she

³⁴ William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, ed. John Ingledew, Act III, scene 1

³⁵ William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, ed. John Ingledew, Act V, scene 3

³⁶ William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, ed. John Ingledew, Act II, scene 2

did not inform the nurse. This is how we know Juliet has grown up a little bit and she has gotten more independent from others.

Juliet:

*"Ay, those attires are best; but gentle Nurse, I pray thee leave me to myself tonight."*³⁷

When Juliet wakes up from her trance she finds out Romeo is dead. In 'Romeo and Juliet', Juliet always seems to be a really strong woman who is in control of her own faith.

Juliet:

*"This is thy sheath; there rest, and let me die"*³⁸

The combination of a strong will, bad relationship with her family, and really strong love for Romeo causes the ending of Juliet's life. But this story can be seen as a story with a happy end. Romeo and Juliet are together again and after many years the two families make peace again.

Lord Capulet

Lord Capulet is Juliet's father, he does care about Juliet and that might be the reason why he chose to let her marry Paris. Normally girls of her class marry earlier than Juliet did, which means Capulet took a lot of care and time to choose a good husband for her. When Juliet rejects to marry Paris when he **has** already arranged everything, his angry reaction is understandable. Still you might feel like Capulet is the villain in this story because as a viewer or reader, you support the relationship between Romeo and Juliet.

Lady Capulet

There seems to be no love between Lady Capulet and Lord Capulet. She was probably forced to marry him because he was a good marriage candidate. She has a cold personality and does not seem to be bothered by important issues like the feelings of her child. That could cause problems, like the relation between the Capulets and Montagues being ignored, which shows that Lady Capulet prefers to take everything the easy way.

The Nurse

³⁷ William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, ed. John Ingledew, Act IV, scene 3

³⁸ William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, ed. John Ingledew, Act V, scene 3

As lady Capulet does not seem to have ever played a mother role in Juliet's life, the Nurse is most likely Juliet's mother. The Nurse does not behave like a typical nurse, but her behaviour is typical. Every sentence she seems to be joking around, and she is always speaking really straightforward.

Even though she knows Romeo is a Montague, she is willing to help Juliet, but she did not think about the family relation between the Montagues and Capulets. When Romeo kills Tybalt she does have to face this fact. Although she starts to doubt this, she does not have any time to decide what is best. When Juliet is getting forced to marry Paris, the nurse does not help Juliet because she does not want to get herself in trouble with the Capulets. Because of this the Nurse lost the trust that Juliet gave her. When the Nurse finds out Juliet is dead, she discovers this in a rather funny way, which characterizes the clumsy character of the nurse.

Nurse: “

‘I must needs wake you. Lady, lady, lady! Alas, alas, help, help, my lady’s dead!’”³⁹

Tybalt

Tybalt is the showpiece of the Capulet family, he is proud and thinks highly about his own fighting skills. Therefore he is always willing to fight. Shakespeare has chosen to represent Tybalt as a villain. The fact that he sees fighting as a good solution to quarrels gives him a negative character and how he killed Mercutio was quite unfair. What is seen as a villain today, is someone who fights for his own rights. This is not entirely the case when it comes to Tybalt. He fights for his family, the Capulets and justice towards the Montagues as well. This is still a bit pathetic, but since the story is viewed from Romeo's character, the Montagues, as a spectator you will not feel remorse for Tybalt's death, except that he was slain too late and was slain by the wrong man.

The Montagues

The Montagues are much less present in the story than the Capulets. What is clear is that the Montagues do not want to have a quarrel with the Capulets. Lady Montague: *“Thou shalt not stir one foot to seek a foe.”* Moreover, they seem much more caring than the Capulets. Lady Montague: *“Oh where is Romeo? Saw you him today? Right glad I am he was not at this fray.”* What gives a positive impression about the Montagues and pleads for Juliet's disloyalty to her own family.

Benvolio

Benvolio is Romeo's friend. He is more mature than Romeo. He is provident about

³⁹ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, Act IV, scene 5

Romeo, but rather than support him with adult advice, he will give light and adolescent advice.

Benvolio:

"Be ruled by me, forget to think of her."

Romeo:

"O teach me how should I forget to think."

Benvolio:

*"By giving liberty unto thine eyes." Examine other beauties."*⁴⁰

Benvolio is not in favor of participating in a battle, and when there is a conflict he will first try to solve it in a different way. But once someone has started a fight he will join the fight.

Mercutio

Mercutio enjoys life and generally speaking he is always positive and really humoristic. Even on the moment he is about to die he is fooling around.

Mercutio:

*"help me into some house Benvolio, or I shall faint. A plague o' both your houses! they made worm meat of me. I have it, and soundly too. Your houses!"*⁴¹

Mercutio is in favour of peace, but if Romeo is being insulted by Tybalt, he stands up for Romeo and has a fight with Tybalt. This shows the bravery of Mercutio and the loyal friendship between Romeo and Mercutio.

Prince Escalus

The Prince only has a small role in the play and he only occurs when someone starts a fight in the play. The Prince likes justice and is able to get a clear vision about the problems in the city. He makes sober decisions to solve a problem.

Friar Laurence

Friar Laurence is not involved in the quarrel between the two families. Because of this he has no objections to the relationship of Romeo and Juliet. He knows Romeo sincerely loves Juliet, so he chooses to help fulfill Romeo's wish. He is even prepared to lie for that and advises Juliet to pretend death. Unfortunately, all this does not go as they expected.

⁴⁰ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, Act I, scene 1

⁴¹ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, Act III, scene 1

The origin of Romeo and Juliet

Stories about star crossed lovers separated because of quarrels between families were well known in Shakespeare's time. A story existed much alike 'Romeo and Juliet' before Shakespeare wrote his play. The first story which is known to be alike Romeo and Juliet is called Ephesiaca by Xenophon of Ephesus, written in the second century AD. Although many people think Shakespeare did not know this story.

Ephesiaca :

*Two teenagers, Anthia and Habrocomes, fall in love and marry. Anthia becomes separated from her husband and is rescued from robbers by a man named Perilaus, who then seeks to marry her. To escape this second marriage Anthia bribes a physician to prescribe her a potion with which to commit suicide. Unknowing to her, he actually gives her a drug that will merely feign death. She swallows this potion on her wedding day. Thought dead, she is interred in a tomb where she awakens only to be carried away by tomb-robbers. Habrocomes learns of Anthia's apparent death and hastens to her tomb. After many twists of plot he is reunited with Anthia.*⁴²

An other story which seems alike Romeo and Juliet is *Cinquante Novelle* written by Massucio Salernitano in 1476. But no one can say for sure if Shakespeare used this story to write Romeo and Juliet.

Cinquante Novelle :

*Mariotto and Giannozza of Sienna who secretly married by a friar. Mariotto is banished after he kills a citizen in a quarrel, and Giannozza's father arranges a marriage for her. The friar provides Giannozza with a sleeping potion; she is thought dead and entombed. In the meantime word is sent to Mariotto of her plan. The message never reaches him as the messenger is attacked by robbers, so when Giannozza sets sail for Alexandria to be with her love, Mariotto returns home to mourn Giannozza. While attempting to open her tomb, Mariotto is arrested and beheaded. Giannozza witnesses the execution, cradles the fallen head and subsequently dies of a broken heart.*⁴²

Another story written before Shakespeare wrote Romeo and Juliet is *Istoria novellamente ritrovata di due nobili amanti* by Luigi Da Porte between 1485 and 1529. This story is about happenings in Verona. This story is much alike Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet' and must be related to the play from Shakespeare. It varies in a few ways.

Names of the characters

In the story the names are almost the same. Da Porte was an Italian and so the names he used were Italian. Juliet was named Giulietta, The Capulets were called

⁴² <http://www.balletmet.org/Notes/Shakespeare.html>

Cappeletti, Mercutio Marcuccio, Tybalt Theobaldo, Friar Laurence Friar Lorenzo and Paris Conti de Lodrone.

Cause of death

An other difference is that Juliet dies by holding her breath in the story of Matteo, instead of stabbing herself to death in Shakespeare's story. This story was translated and elaborated by Matteo Bandello in 1554 (*Nouvelle*) and Boistuau and Bellforest in 1559 (*Histoires Tragiques*). They added the origins of Benvolio and the Nurse to the story. The poem *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet* written by Bandello and translated by Arthur Brooke in 1562 is known as the biggest source of Romeo and Juliet written by Shakespeare. The biggest change Shakespeare made in this story is the time scale. Bandello's story takes nine months and Romeo and Juliet live together for seven weeks. In Shakespeare's play the whole story takes only five days and they only sleep together for one night. By this way the story is getting a bigger tragedy and becomes more explosive.

What is the difference between Shakespeare's original Romeo and Juliet play and Irving Thalberg's Romeo and Juliet from 1936?

Irving Thalberg was the first producer to adapt William Shakespeare's Romeo & Juliet to the screen. His film was nominated for four awards and overall accepted as a honorable try to make a film of Shakespeare's play. Although Thalberg's film comes closest to the real play compared to other screen adaptations, there are still some differences. In regard to language, pronunciation and imagery, these differences will be discussed.

Language

The changes to the language, made by Thalberg and his team, are little ones. For example, he has given characters as the clown, the servants and the musicians a smaller amount of text than in the original play. He probably did this because those characters did not really make a difference to the plot and the film would have gotten too long. Friar Lawrence has a smaller share in the film as well. His speeches are quite long most of the time. Thalberg has reduced his speeches to the minimum, by looking at the main point of the speech and leaving out the rest. For example in Act II, scene 2, Friar Lawrence replies to Romeo:

*"Holy Saint Francis, what a change is here!
Is Rosaline that thou didst love so dear
So soon forsaken? Young men's love then lies
Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes."*

This is actually followed by another 12 lines, but as you can see his main point is given.

Another example is when Romeo tries to persuade the Nurse to marry him to Juliet (Act II, scene 3). Taking the money, the Nurse replies: "This afternoon, sir? Well, she shall be there." and she leaves. Again, the talking does not contain any fuss. But, Thalberg had to leave out quite some passages to achieve this.

*"Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?
Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy name,
When I, thy three-hours wife, have mangled it?"*

This is the beginning of a long speech full of mourn, anger and confusion. Juliet has just heard that Romeo killed Tybalt, which gives her a mixed feeling. She has lost her cousin because of her husband. Juliet's emotions are clarified by close-up scenes of her face and the sentences she speaks tell enough to understand her feelings.

One thing that I noticed, while analyzing Shakespeare's original play and Thalberg's film, is the use of language of Romeo and Juliet in the film. Whereas conversations between other characters are shortened, the dialogues between Romeo and Juliet remain the same as in the original play. I think this is due to the fact that the story is about Romeo and Juliet and so every dialogue and spoken word, is of importance to the story. Their actions and their thoughts are of influence to other characters, so we would not understand the other characters' reaction, if we did not hear Romeo and Juliet's dialogue.



I pointed out before, Juliet considers the Nurse as her mother. The Nurse is the person who she trusts and even tells about the secret marriage. In Thalberg's film, there is even less conversation between Juliet and her mother than in the original play. This makes the contrast of Juliet's real mother and her surrogate mother even bigger. To focus on the love between Romeo and Juliet, Thalberg has left out passages of dialogues between Juliet and Paris. This creates the illusion we do not know a thing about Paris and so Juliet does not either. This makes Romeo and Juliet's love more sincere.

The Nurse discovers Juliet is 'dead' in Act IV, scene 5. She calls Lord and Lady Capulet and the three of them mourn at Juliet's bed. In the original play, this continues when Friar Lawrence and Paris enter. They talk about the preparations for her funeral and the Nurse cancels all festivities. The musicians continue a discussion with Peter. All this would make a film very dreadful, because it adds no value to the film.

After Juliet's funeral (Act V, scene 3), the original play contains a large piece of text including the watchmen, Friar Lawrence, Lord Capulet, Lord Montague and the Prince. It is about the horrific sight of the two dead lovers and how this deed could have happened. Friar Lawrence explains here about the secret marriage and the failure of the arriving of the letter. Instead, the film contains the Prince's last words to the ending of the play. It is better this way, because we as readers were already aware of the actions happened which lead to the deaths.

Pronunciation

The age of the characters probably is of great value to the credibility of the Shakespearean language. In Thalberg's production, the pronunciation and the facial expressions are very realistic. This makes the film a pleasure to watch, enjoying the beauty of the Shakespearean language at the same time.

Imagery

In the street in Verona, both the Capulets and the Montagues are announced by

trumpeteers, followed by the inhabitants, who gather around. This immediately shows that both families are very powerful and the 'normal' people look up to the Capulets and the Montagues. The arrival of the families also means a spectacle for the inhabitants. When a fight occurs between the two families and their servants, the Prince arrives with his knights. In a moment after he speaks, everyone is silent and looks up to him. It is clear the Prince is a very influential and eminent person in Verona and even the Capulet family and the Montague family obey his orders. The Prince's appearance even speaks *power*: he rides a white horse, while all his knights ride brown horses and his harness consists of all shiny, silver ornaments. His silver helmet has six pointy staves, which makes the Prince even taller and more impressive than he already is.



Probably the biggest difference between the original play and Thalberg's film, is the age of the main characters. Shakespeare has set Juliet's age on 13, almost 14, and Romeo is supposed to be 16-18.

Leslie Howard, as Romeo and Norma Shearer as Juliet are of a totally different age: Leslie was 43 at the time of recording Romeo and Juliet, and Norma was 36! There could be several reasons for the age difference. First of all, Norma Shearer was Irving Thalberg's wife, who was the producer of 1936's Romeo & Juliet. Because of this, she got the role of Juliet very easily. The role of Romeo took a lot more time: it was turned down by five other actors, before Leslie Howard was cast. All other actors were of younger age, from 29 to 39. Actors like John Gielgud and Laurence Olivier, known as one of the biggest actors of that time, both played Shakespeare's Romeo & Juliet in theatres. Therefore, they thought the play would not work on screen.

At the time of recording, it was not common for younger actors to play such difficult roles. Shakespeare was seen as heavy and ambitious, even for the more experienced actors, because most people were hugely impressed by the Shakespearean word use. Because Romeo & Juliet is a tragedy, with a roller coaster of different emotions, the acting needed to be done by more experienced actors.



Clothing

The clothing in the movie Romeo and Juliet from 1963 is equal to the clothing from the 15th century. The haircuts are also the same.



The male

In the movie the man wears tights with long sleeved tops. Everybody has a covered head, in the case of a man, these are hats in different shapes. Rich men often wear a decorated hat which are made of more solid looking materials. Their clothing is often more decorated as well. Sir Capulet and Sir Montague are one of the few men that do not wear tights. Instead, they wear long jackets which reach to the ground.



The female

All the ladies wear dresses. Most of them have layers and are also decorated. Dresses of rich ladies are highly decorated with jewels and stitched with shining wire. Their heads are also covered, often their hats are big and contain a veil, these hats are also decorated with shining materials, and some wear flowers on their hats. The poorer ones often carry a shapeless piece of cloth around their head. The clothing of these poor women is less colourful and has almost no decoration.



Poor villagers

Rich villagers

Many people in town are servants of the Capulets or the Montagues. You can indicate a clear difference between them, as both families have a different guard. The Capulets' servants wear a light suit with a farmer's hat on their suit and shield. The Montagues' servants wear a dark suit with a bird on their suit and shield.



Left: Capulet



Right: Montague

Décor

This film contains loads of different sets and they are all decorated and built very well. The buildings are similar to the buildings from the 15th century and contain decoration equal to the objects from this time.

The film begins with the entrance of the Capulets and the Montagues at the same time. This leads to a fight between both families. In this part of the film you will see loads of extras fighting or watching this battle. By adding so many people to this part, it gives you a view of a lively and realistic city from the 15th century.



But this is not the only moment when you will find loads of extras who add something attractive to the movie. At simple moments, like when Mercutio and Benvolio are having a little chat in town, right before the fight between Mercutio and Tybalt you see a lively village. The fountain is covered with birds and people pass by, which gives a realistic scene of a village. The producers chose to put some entertainment in this village as well. Three men are doing stunts and a little guy is playing on a trumpet. Some women are laughing and Benvolio and Mercutio are definitely having fun. Not much later everything changes and Mercutio and Tybalt get into a fight. Because the mood before that was so good, there is a big contrast between these moments, which gives the fight a serious feeling.

Another notable aspect about the décor is the background, which in most cases, is the sky. Normally a sky will move, but this does not happen in Thalberg's film. Sometimes buildings in the backgrounds have a fake appearance. It is hard to tell how they did this, as you can not find anything about this on the internet. But I assume they might have used painted scenery, or used cardboard for some unimportant buildings in the back. But because the view changes when the camera point changes, the background changed as well. This means the background should have been real, or they changed the picture on the blue screen or switched the painted wall. As the point of view only changes twice, this is possible.



Characters

The characters in this production try to be the same as the characters from the original play. But they chose the characters to be older than the characters from Shakespeare's original play. I do not think they did that to give more meaning to the movie but because it was more convenient.



Left:
Juliet
Played by: Norma Shearer
Born in: 1902



Right:
Lady Montague
Played by: Virginia Hammond
Born in: 1893



Left:
Benvolio
Played by: Reginald Denny
Born in: 1891



Right:
Romeo
Played by: Leslie Howard
Born in: 1893



Left:
Lord Capulet
Played by: C. Aubrey Smith
Born in: 1863



Right:
Lady Capulet
Played by: Violet Kemble Cooper
Born in: 1886



Left:
Prince Escalus
Played by: Conway Tearle
Born in: 1878



Right: Mercutio
Played by: John Barrymore
Born in: 1882



Left:
Paris
Played by: Ralph Forbes
Born in: 1896

Right:
Friar Laurence
Played by:
Henry Kolker
Born in: 1870



Left:
Lord Montague
Played by: Robert Warwick
Born in: 1878

Right:
Tybalt
Played by:
Basil Rathbone
Born in: 1892



Left:
Nurse
Played by: Edna May Oliver
Born in: 1883

Right:
Peter
Played by:
Andy Devine
Born in: 1905



Realism

The way the characters act is not always convincing, but this does not mean the actors have bad acting skills. Because the story is based on a play, they also act like actors from a play. This means many of their emotions are being exaggerated. Sometimes they will look at the camera while talking (just like speaking to the audience in a play) which normally would not happen in a film.

Because there weren't many special effects, the action scenes are not really as interesting as they are these days. When someone gets stabbed, it is not hard to see they stab besides the body of the one being stabbed. Neither Mercutio's death is not convincing either, because the movie is in black and white it might even take you some time to figure the darker spot on Mercutio's body is blood. The transition of small bloodstain to big bloodstain, is neither convincing. The first few shots the bloodstain is small, and the last few shots the bloodstain is quite big. But you do not see a clear enlarging of the bloodstain while watching one shot.



What is the difference between Shakespeare's original Romeo and Juliet play and Baz Luhrmann's Romeo and Juliet from 1996?

The first thing to catch your eye, is the film poster of Baz Luhrmann's version of Romeo and Juliet. Because you did not remember anything about guns and the clothes look quite fashionable as well for the 16th century. Luhrmann's film is a shortened modernization of William Shakespeare's original play. It is designed to interest a much younger audience, but at the same time it retains the original Shakespearean dialogue. While watching Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes perform as Romeo & Juliet, much more adjustments to Shakespeare's original play can be discovered. All these adjustments can be categorized.

Language

The first thing you notice when the film introduces its characters, is that Lady and Lord Capulet, and Lady and Lord Montague, are given 'real names' this time. Now Lord Capulet is called Fulgencio and Lady Capulet is called Gloria. Lord Montague is given the name Ted and Lady Montague is given the name Caroline. Besides Abraham, who is called Abra in Luhrmann's movie, everybody keeps the same name. Those names were not very common in the 16th century. Luhrmann cleverly used the names to make the Capulets and the Montagues more approachable and more human.

The language and word use has changed since the 16th century. Therefore, it is not surprising that Luhrmann in some cases changes words. He does this in such a way that we would hardly notice the word change, unless you would read the script along the film. An example is Act I, Scene 4, outside Capulet's house. Here Romeo and Mercutio are in a discussion and Mercutio originally says: "(...) *Athwart* men's noses as they lie asleep." Luhrmann changed this into: "Over men's noses as they lie asleep." Except some of these tiny changes, Luhrmann uses the original dialogues very well. He had to skip some lines of the original play, because the movie would have become too long otherwise. The lines he skipped are mostly lines in which Shakespeare very extensively 'explains' what he meant by that previous line. The explaining lines, are lines in which Shakespeare emphasises something. For example, when Romeo talks about Juliet's beauty, he does this in the original play in about 15 lines. This same talk takes about 8 lines or less in Luhrmann's movie. This is a very clever thing, because Luhrmann was able to use special effects in his movie, which already emphasise the action, without also speaking it out loud. This way, the movie is very attractive to look at and does not take as long as the original play.

Just after the Nurse has discovered Juliet is 'dead', Shakespeare's original play contains a lot more conversation than in the film. In the play, friar Lawrence and Paris enter, to grieve for some time and discuss about the funeral. The next conversation (which is probably in Capulet's hall), starts with the Nurse telling the musicians they can pack up their instruments, because there will not be anything to play for. This is followed by a conversation between the musicians and Peter, because Peter asks the musicians to play for him, but they refuse. All this is not in the film, because Juliet's death would become too dreadful to watch, as we know Juliet is not really dead. The discussion between the musicians and Peter does not add anything

specific to the film and is therefore taken away.

Shakespeare makes use of a lot of puns and other wordplays in his original script. Luhrmann has put that element in his film as well. For example, when the Montagues are at the gas station, and they see nuns passing by, they say: *Hubble bubble, holy trouble*. Further on in the movie, we see the Capulet's house, which is heavily guarded. When Romeo jumps over the fence, the lights at the Capulets turn on, and Romeo says:

*"What light through yonder window breaks?"*⁴³

At the gas station is a sign which says "Add more fuel to your fire". This is taken very literally by Tybalt. In this case, the fire is the fight in which the Montagues and the Capulets are involved, and the fuel is the hate they have for each other.

Luhrmann uses an important medium in his film: the television. What in Shakespeare's script is a prologue or ending text, now is presented by a newscaster as if it is breaking news:

*"(...) From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life."*⁴⁴

And the newspapers' headlines say:

"Ancient grudge", "New mutiny" and "Civil blood makes civil hands unclean".

Pronunciation

As said before, Luhrmann uses the exact language as Shakespeare's original play. Instead of making this a big deal, the actors talk like it is their daily language.

The actors do not emphasise their articulation, they often have a cigarette in their mouth, or look away while talking. This all together makes it sometimes hard to understand what they are saying, because you are not very familiar with the Shakespearean language. As you know, the Montagues and Capulets are enemies. They often challenge each other to fight, and they do this by using a very suggestive tone in their words. This makes the other one react immediately, because they feel the need to show off and prove themselves.

If you look at the characters closely, you will notice that they actually do not really fit their roles. The actors chosen for the characters are often used to show off and intimidate us with their looks and actions, rather than bringing Shakespeare's poetry across. Although the actors speak the Shakespearean dialogue quite fluently, the words do not always seem to get the attention they need, to make you believe them.

⁴³ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, Act III, scene 1

⁴⁴ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, Prologue

Imagery

While Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* takes place in the 16th century, Luhrmann chose to put the present world as a setting for his film. Soon we discover that horses have been replaced for cars, guns have come in the place of swords and the calm village streets have been shifted for the busy city life. It soon becomes clear that Verona Beach is a very materialistic world, in which people are intimidated by cars, cloths and richness.

To portray a city where religion and nation are one, an enormous statue of Jesus has been put in images of Mexico city. All images taken from the helicopter are from Mexico city. Two colossal skyscrapers are shown, with one showing the name of the Montagues and the other one showing the name of the Capulets. The images from the air of a huge city, makes you feel intimidated and humble immediately.

At the gasstation, we see Tybalt fight. He does this in such a way, we would call him 'a show off'. But in Shakespeare's text, Tybalt's fightingstyle is described as showy and pompous. Mercutio and Benvolio both laugh about it, but Tybalt has actually been at a Spanisch fencing school. The way he moves his body during the fights, the way he holds his hands and places his feet, looks very much alike flamenco dancing. At first we may say he is a show off, but Tybalt's movements give his character an own style. Also, he shows more power and control of the situation, then when he would stand straight, raise his arm and shoot at the Montagues.

The 'show' Tybalt gives using his gun, is a bit like in western movies. This can be said because of the well-known slow-motion and fast tracking shots, crash zooms (like on Abra's teeth grill, which says 'S/N') and of course, the music. By these actions and certain camera shots, an image of a character is put very clearly. Even without understanding the Shakespearean language, people will understand Tybalt is a scary guy who knows how to handle his weapon. He is a feared person. So by his actions, the audience will understand Tybalt's function in the story.

And even though Luhrmann has replaced the swords for guns, he used that same principles for gunfights as they are used in fights with a sword. It has the same codes; like you never shoot anybody in the back, in a duel you are only allowed to have one bullet in your gun, and you have to be really provoked to kill somebody.

Non verbal-communication

Of course, imagery is also created by non-verbal communication. And so, Shakespeare's message is exposed by clothing and the scenery. For example, when Romeo and Juliet meet for the first time (which is at the bathroom), he calls her a 'bright angel' and calls Romeo 'my prince'. To strengthen this, Juliet wears wings and is dressed in white and Romeo has a sort of harness on. And so, non-verbal communication can say a lot about a personality. During the movie, the audience pays more and more attention to little details. This way, a missing button on one's jacket can say a lot about one's personality, without it literally explaining.

The difference in types of scenes is huge in Romeo & Juliet. The fighting scenes are very fast; the actions are fast, the actors speak very fast and a lot of things happen at the same time. Then the love scenes (like the famous balcony scene, which is turned into a poolscene by Luhrmann) are very slow. This is necessary, because love is a slow and luxurious emotion, which needs time to develop.

Relationship between Juliet and her mother

In Shakespeare's original play, Lady Capulet and Juliet get along quite well. There is not too much interaction between both, which makes clear the mother-daughter relationship is not that well. However, Luhrmann's production exaggerates that. In the beginning of the film, lady Capulet is preparing for her party, dressed up like Cleopatra. She is very abrupt and treats Juliet like she is a possession. After Tybalt died, Lady Capulet seems more caring and loving to Juliet. It becomes clear Lady Capulet has a very fluctuating personality.

Because the Nurse is around Juliet almost whole day, Juliet and the Nurse can get along very well. Juliet trusts the Nurse in telling her she is unwilling to marry Paris, because her heart belongs to Romeo. Therefore, the Nurse acts as a surrogate mum.



Luhrmann's Romeo & Juliet has gained an image from its film posters. As I said in my introduction, the posters show a very modernized version of William Shakespeare's Romeo & Juliet. But Luhrmann and his cast have gone even further: they have developed 18 different film posters! These different film posters are designed for all different countries.

Clothing

The story takes place in Verona City, this is an American place at the beach in the 20th century. As the producer of this script **has** only occupied with the text of the original story he gave himself freedom in clothing. By letting the story play in an opposite place from the original story, he was able to create a big contrast with the original scene.

The Montague boys

A lot can be said about the cloths the Capulets and Montagues wear. The Montagues appear in Hawaiian shirts, with bare chests and flat, wide pants. Their Hawaiian shirts seemed a bit immature to me at first sight, but if you look closely, you can see all images. In the print of the clothing is a deeper meaning as well. The prints were especially designed for the characters. Romeo wears a vintage print, designed two years before recording and reinterpreted and produced in Mexico. Those images are references to Verona Beach (like the map of Verona Beach on Benvolio's print) and religious image writings (like Tybalts shirt). The fact that they have bare chests, actually means something brave, which you would not say at first sight.



The Montagues reject the Capulets' bullet proof shirts, and therefore want to show them in their way they are not scared of the Capulets.

The Montagues have a weird hair colour, which is orange at Benvolio's and a sort of pink at Sampson's and they wear their hair in a sort of spikes. They show in a yellow car, where the Capulets show in a blue car. Both cars are very large, masculine and extravagant and both function as status symbols, but the yellow colour matches the Montagues' shirts and immaturity, where the blue car seems very tough and fierce.

Blok work tattoo's are also symbol for the Montague's. Gregory has such a tattoo on the back of his head. Benvolio wears a necklace to show his affiliation with the Montague's, he also wears a religious necklace.

The Capulet boys

The Italian looks of the Capulet boys was an important addition. In Shakespeare's time Italians in London weren't respected. They were known to be rebellious criminals. In this way the producer made real villains in accordance with Shakespeare's time. The Capulets appear in tight



pants, with tight shirts and one Capulet even appears in a suit. Their cloths are more dark-coloured, which has a more mature appearance. The Caplets also have earrings, dark mutton chops and a small, dark beard, dark eyebrows and dark hair. They have a much more confident look in their eyes and their movements show courage.

Tybalt's car was build from a real car and carefully shaped. The plates on the car were also designed to reflect the personalities of the Capulet's and Montague's. The Capulet's care was named "the noble executioner"

The most important thing about the clothing of the Capulet's are their bulletproof vests. Tybalt's vest is decorated with a religious print and he carries two guns with a religious print as well. Threatening jewelry and decorative tattoo's are used as adornment as well.

This makes the guys a bunch of wild beach boys which have at first sight nothing in common with the guys from the 15th century, who wear posh clothing with tights. But there is an interesting similarity between them, This is their weapon. Of course the guys from the 20th century will not carry swords with them. But they do all carry a gun with them, not just a gun, but a gun with "sword" written on it. In this way the producer made a little link between both times in a funny way. The gun holsters are also a part of their clothing, and the gun bud is decorated with an emblem representing their family.

The parents

The parents are wealthy dressed with pretty dresses, jewelry and nice posh suits, just like Juliet and the Nurse. You will not find them hanging on the streets like the boys, but they rather spend their time in the mansion. In this way their clothing suits their environment.

In the film there was a costume ball. In the script, you will not be able to make clear what kind of ball it was, but we do expect a ball with pretty dresses and expensive suits here. Not a costume ball in which Juliet's parents are vulgarly dressed. By changing something that has never been written but interpreted in a more logical way, the producer made an interesting view on the personality of the Capulets. Just like Mercutio was dressed as a transvestite, this could never have been happened in the 15th century even though it does suit the original character of Mercutio. This way the producer is able to tell the same story with the same script in a total different way.

Décor

Much time was spent on building the décor. For only decorating the entrance hall, a crew worked for 24 hours. But the hard work paid off as they won an award for best décor. The Capulet mansion was based on a real mansion in Mexico city, which originally was a monument. They emphasized the monument with furniture and statuary to make it feel more like a mansion than a monument. The entrance hall was also based on a hall in Mexico city, it had the perfect look but it did not work for the staging of the scene. The elevator used for Romeo's and Juliet's first kiss was made from moveable board, to allow the camera to move around freely in the elevator.

The garden of the house of the Capulets was also built on a set. The pillar which makes Romeo able to hide from the security guards from the Capulet's is inspired on a mansion from Miami. The shell on which Juliet is sitting when Romeo kisses her was specially made on the height of Juliet, so she could perfectly sit there.

In product advertising in the movie, designers tried to stick with the English Language used by Shakespeare. They added as many Shakespeare quotes as possible.

The gas station scene was recorded in an abandoned gas station in Mexico City. All that was left of the gas station was the wall, which they painted blue with palm trees. The gas station itself was built by the production team of Romeo and Juliet. The pumps of the gas station are moveable to make the recording easier.

For the film they used the beach from Vera cruse Mexico. This place was also deserted. Here they built a road, telegraph poles and planted artificial palm trees. The village with cafes and bars was built on the set.

In the background of the scene there were some buildings which had to be hidden in the movie. They did this with billboards and walls painted with graffiti inspired by Shakespeare, which was done by actors in their spare time. The fire works on the beach at night were special effects.

The monument of Jesus was a symbol of the importance of religion in the city. It was never really built, but it got photo shopped into the scenes.

Characters

Some characters in the story have changed a lot, although the basics did not change. Benvolio kept the role of Romeo's support, Mercutio was still a joker and entertainer, and Romeo a charming guy. But important personalities have been changed.

Benvolio

In the script, he can be considered as a brave and wise man. But when we look at the guy in Luhrmann's film we do not get this impression. When he points out his gun, you can see the fear in his eyes. When he lies on the ground and the fuel hose is being disconnected from the car, the fuel splashes on his face and when he runs away, you will see him stumble on the hood of a car. You will not be able to take him serious as a stable and strong man anymore.

Mercutio

In the script, Mercutio gives the impression of a poetic dreamy guy, but in this movie Mercutio insanely screams out the poems instead of presenting his poems with passion. Mercutio is always known as the entertainer and he is a charmer to everyone. In Luhrmann's film, he dresses as a transvestite to the Capulets' feast. He is the only one in the film, who's character can dress up like that and set a show. Mercutio is generally thought to be adventurous, a comedian and a free spirit. Due to his humor and extravagant, friendly personality, he is the perfect candidate to play a transvestite. His name fits his character very well too: Mercutio is related to the word

*“mercurial”, which means “having an unpredictable and fast changing mood”.*⁴⁵



Romeo

An important point in the story of ‘Romeo and Juliet’, is the development of Romeo; the way he grows up from a teenager into a man. He learns to love and to be strong. These two points are fully ignored in the movie. The famous balcony scene was exchanged for a dive in a swimming pool. An important point in the balcony scene is the inaccessibility between the lovers and the way they know how to get across the love without touching and kissing. The sentences show the sincere love between them and make their love real. In the movie, most time is spend on the kissing, the words loose their value and their feelings turn from love into lust.

In the script, when Romeo has killed Tybalt, Romeo will get anxious and lose control. But he learned from that and when he heard Juliet was dead, he was able to stay calm. This is an important point in the script which shows that Romeo has grown up. But in the movie, bad will turn into worse. When he has killed Tybalt, he will shed a few tears, but just like in the script, he is able to get himself back together. But when he hears Juliet is dead, he really loses control and cries dramatically. Instead of showing that he has learned from killing Tybalt, which was shown in the script by letting Romeo say how sorry he was for killing Tybalt to Paris and letting him say he does not want to kill Paris, Romeo takes a man hostage and he shoots at the cops who are trying to arrest him.

The Nurse

They left out an important line of The Nurse. This is where she tells about Susan, her daughter who is with god. It makes clear why the Nurse takes so much care of Juliet, and it gives her more personality. As where The Nurse is an important character in the script, she does not have the same purpose and meaning in Luhrmann’s film.

Lady Capulet

In the script, you will think of her as a decent person, but they used the Capulets to

⁴⁵ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mercurial>

put some vulgarly humor in the movie. Right before the party Lady Capulet walks in her underwear with a transparent robe with fur, and too much make up. She drinks alcohol, is arrogant toward Juliet and kisses with Tybalt on the party. In the script, she is just a cold and heartless mother, but in the movie, she has changed into an unsuitable parent.



Lord Capulet

Although he does seem to care about Juliet, when she rejects him to marry Paris, he is furious. He abuses her and has zero respect for her decision. In the script, Lord Capulet is mad as well, but he is not violent. Just like his wife he was drunk at the party and dressed vulgarly. This makes him an irresponsible parent as well, which is the opposite from the kind of impression the Capulet's leave in Shakespeare's original play.

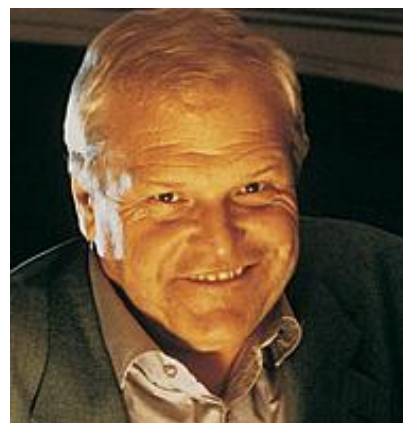
Cast Romeo and Juliet 1996:

Benvolio

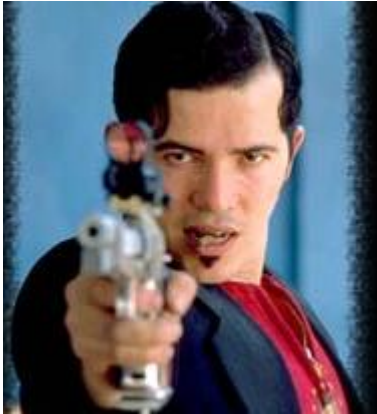
Dash Mihok

Lord Motague

Brian Dennehy



Tybalt John Leguizamo



Lady Montague Christina Pickles



Lord Capulet Paul Sorvino



Prince Escalus Vondie Curtis-Hall



Romeo Leonardo DiCaprio



Nurse Miriam Margolyes



Paris

Paul Rudd



Juliet

Clair Danes



Lady Capulet

Diane Venora



Mercutio

Harrold Perrineau



Realism

Because language does not suit the characters and the time, this gives an unrealistic impression. As some characters neither bring Shakespeare's words convincingly their characters also lose some realism.

In other ways the movie is really realistic. The special effects, like the gun shots and fire works seem real, but they are not. Just like some set buildings which are actually fake, seem realistic.

What is the difference between Thalberg's *Romeo and Juliet* and Luhrmann's *Romeo and Juliet*?

Language

*"Benvolio, who began this bloody fray?"*⁴⁶. This question, asked by the Prince after Romeo killed Tybalt, occurs in Thalberg's production. Benvolio starts explaining in detail what happened, but this is not the case in Luhrmann's film. Here, lady Capulet speaks to the Prince:

*"Some twenty of them fought in this black strife,
And all those twenty could but kill one life.
I beg for justice, which thou, Prince, must give:
Romeo slew Tybalt; Romeo must not live."*⁴⁷

The reason Luhrmann avoids the Prince's question to Benvolio and the following explaining, is because we, as observers, already know who started this fray. A repetition of information is not necessary in this case, because the actions all speak for themselves.

*"What if this mixture do not work at all?
Shall I be married then to-morrow morning?"*⁴⁸

Juliet is obviously doubting the Friar's poison. She even calls back the Nurse, to comfort her. But then she realizes she has to do this on her own and she corrects herself. In Shakespeare's play, Juliet is doubting out loud, whether to take the poison or not. This is also the case in Thalberg's production. But, in Luhrmann's film, this long speech has been cut out. I think this shows a more mature Juliet. She shows she is determined to put this through and it shows a lot of courage.

As told before, Shakespeare's play takes place in about six to nine days. The poem which was an inspiration for Shakespeare's play, took about nine months. Luhrmann plays the story even faster. At least, that's what it looks like. Because of the fast camera work and a lot of drama continuously following each other, you almost get the idea the story takes place in about two or three days. You feel like everything happens at the same time. Luhrmann has cut and pasted quite something in Shakespeare's play. Like in Act III, scene 3, after Romeo tried to kill himself with a dagger, the plot suddenly goes back to Act III, scene 2, after a couple of sentences

⁴⁶ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, Act III, scene 1

⁴⁷ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, Act III, scene 1

⁴⁸ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, Act IV, scene 3

the plot goes back to Act III, scene 4. Just after Act III, scene 4 started, the plot goes back to Act III, scene 2 again. By doing this, Luhrmann created an even faster flowing plot. This is a huge difference with the 1936 production.

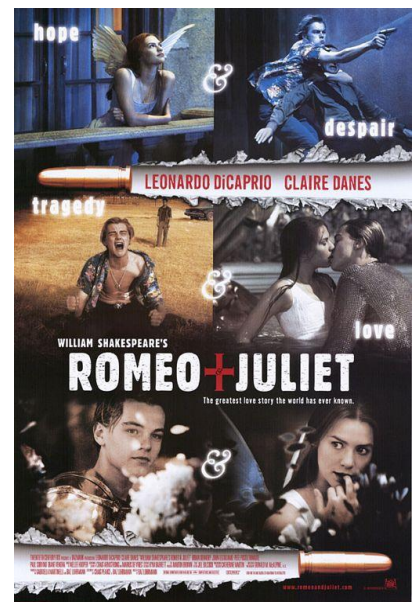
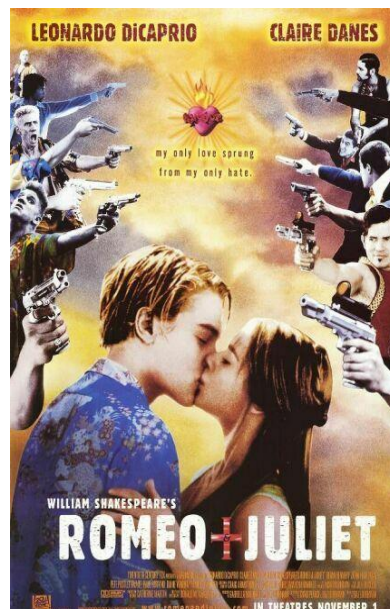
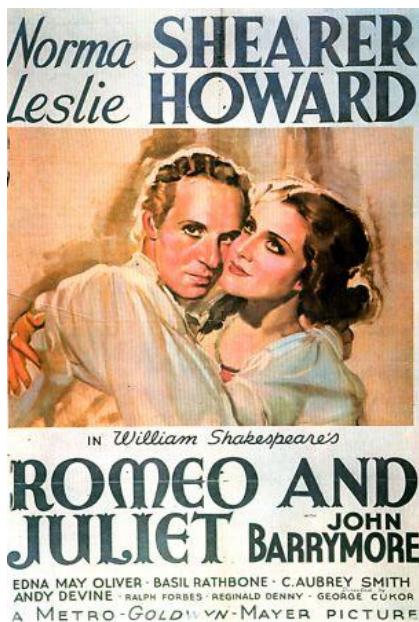
Pronunciation

The difference in the pronunciation from the actors between both productions is quite clear. The 1936 production projects the story as if it were in Shakespeare's time. Therefore the language sounds naturally and reliable. Although the actors try their best, the 1996 production does not sound the way it should be. Of course this is a very personal thing. It probably is the combination of the most modern surroundings, actions and decor with the old-fashioned language which makes it seem unnatural. There are certainly times when I do believe what the characters are saying, but compared to the 1936 productions, Luhrmann's production is less convincing. I must say Luhrmann did a great job, doing what he did, but maybe the actors (and especially Romeo and Juliet) needed to be older to be totally convincing.

Imagery

Film posters

Before even watching both films, you can already see some major differences by analysing the film poster. Below are the most used film posters of both Romeo & Juliet's.



The first thing that crosses my eyes, is the way *Romeo and Juliet* is shown. In the older version it is just *Romeo and Juliet*, but Luhrmann put it as *Romeo + Juliet*, where the + serves as a cross. This cross stands for Catholicism. Catholicism was highly respected during the Shakespearean times, and it is quite influential to Luhrmann's film. For example, Juliet gives Romeo a necklace with a cross pendant in the balcony scene. She is also found praying in her room for Romeo's safety, and when she is found 'dead', she is placed in a room that is covered in crosses and candle lights. These little actions are references to the Shakespearean times. In some kind of way Luhrmann had to, in order to keep his credibility. He had already made so many changes to the original part, he had to put an aspect in his film which stood for the Shakespearean times. In that way, the 1936 version is much more sober. Probably Thalberg thought it was so obvious his film took place in the Shakespearean time, he did not feel the need to emphasize the era.

Another outstanding factor are the supporting acts in *Romeo & Juliet*. It is obvious both films emphasize *Romeo & Juliet*, but without the supporting acts, *Romeo & Juliet* would not have been the tragedy it has become. As you can see, Thalberg chose to emphasize their names, while Luhrmann preferred to show the characters in picture. This shows, Thalberg wants you to know who plays in 'his' *Romeo & Juliet*. Luhrmann wants you to pay more attention to the actions, instead of the actors.

Furthermore, the colours used in the 1936's film poster are serene, loving and peaceful. It looks like the poster is very easily made, with only the main characters shown. This creates the feeling that the film is not seeking for action or absolute tragedy, but it is trying to carry the message Shakespeare had in mind with his play. Contrary Thalberg, Luhrmann and his crew created a film poster which is trying to summarize the plot. With pictures and short, catchy words and phrases ("*My only love sprung from my only hate*", "*Hope*", "*Tragedy*", "*Despair*", "*Love*") it tries to give you an insight on what the film is about. With the pictures used, Luhrmann's crew is especially telling you the film is very intense, with lots of different emotions and actions happening. The darker colours which are used for this film poster also tells you it is a very deep, powerful film. This is also contrary to Thalberg's film poster, whereas the colours almost present it like a light-hearted and innocent film.

The last difference between the film posters which I will discuss, is the way *Romeo and Juliet* are presented. On the 1936's film poster, *Romeo and Juliet* are put close to each other, holding each other, but looking in different directions. On the 1996's film poster, *Romeo and Juliet* kiss, while holding each other. These facts set a tone for the film. As you might have noticed while watching Thalberg's *Romeo & Juliet*, there is not so much sexual interaction between *Romeo and Juliet*. In the 1930's and 1940's, there was a lot more chastity than we have nowadays, and so the film poster breathes *decency*. In Luhrmann's film *Romeo and Juliet* kiss a lot more, are shown 'naked' while they lie in bed, *Romeo* often has a bare chest and so on. All this little details could be predicted by the film poster.

Below you can see the difference in bed scenes.



Thalberg's production films both Romeo and Juliet with all their cloths on, while Juliet lies underneath the blanket and Romeo lies on top of the blanket. As you can see, Luhrmann filmed Romeo and Juliet half naked, only covered by a little blanket, a little above their hips. It definitely marks the modern times. Nowadays we see much more people nude, or partly nude, broadcasted in everyday shows. Sex is a much more common subject and people do not even look surprised when they would hear about teenagers of Romeo's and Juliet's age, sleeping together. And, of course, sex sells nowadays.

Romeo and Juliet's immaturity is stressed by actions like hiding themselves under a blanket.



The films

Chorus

While watching both films, you will notice the difference in chorus presentation. In Thalberg's *Romeo and Juliet*, the prologue is spoken out by a sort of town crier, set in a painting. In Luhrmann's film, the prologue is presented to us by a newsreader. This is a logical change, due to the contrast in era. It would not make sense at all if we would have seen a town crier in Luhrmann's film, because nowadays town criers are almost extinct.

Starting the family brawl

In a street in Verona, the Capulets and the Montagues are announced by trumpets. In Cukor's film we can see that the servants of both families already make suggestive movements to each other. This is followed by the quarrel whether a servant of the Capulets did bite his thumb to the Montague's servants or not. From here, a fight follows between the servants of both families, in which the members of the family get involved as well. Soon, everyone present on the street is in a fight. This creates the image that the feud between the two families is bigger than we might think, because the whole town is involved in it. Luhrmann handles this more discreetly: in his film we see a member of the Montague family bite his thumb at a Capulet and therefore start a brawl. This brawl only involves the Montagues and Capulets themselves, not any other person around the gas station.

Marriage

Juliet tells her mother that *"It is an honour that I dream not of"*⁴⁹ to get married. Juliet is obedient and apprehensive to do what her parents wish, so she agrees to marry Paris. In both films, Juliet has said to marry Paris, before they see Romeo. As you know, after

⁴⁹ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. John Ingledew, Act I, scene 3

meeting Romeo, Juliet does not want to get married to Paris anymore. So where Juliet (before she met Romeo) is anxious to do what her parents wish, Juliet is resisting her parents' wish (after she met Romeo). This already marks a change in Juliet's character: she wants to decide for herself who to marry, whereas she used to rely on her mum and dad to decide on her husband.

Capulets feast

Analysing the actions in both Romeo and Juliet's, one thing struck my mind. In Thalberg's film, Peter, Nurse's servant, asks Romeo if he can read. Romeo and Benvolio joke about that, and Peter is about to walk away and ask someone else, when Romeo answers he will help him. Reading the guest list of Capulets' feast, Romeo comes across Rosaline's name. This way, he knows she will be coming to the party. Luhrmann modernised this event, by giving the newscaster the job to announce the Capulets party and its guests. Romeo and Benvolio see this, while playing pool, and therefore know about Roseline's visit to Capulets party.

But what if Peter would have walked away in Thalberg's film? Then Romeo would not have known about Rosaline coming to the Capulets' feast, he would not have been there, so he would not have seen Juliet and they would not have fallen in love, so the whole story would not be such a tragedy. But, let's not get carried away, because Thalberg had all the power to control those actions. His intention was probably to put the viewer with *what if's*, like mine. Maybe Cukor wanted to get rid of all the facts: first this happens, then that happens and everything is certain to follow in that order.

As said before, horses are replaced by cars and swords are replaced by guns. But on their way to the Capulets' feast, we see everybody going by foot, in Cukor's film. What has happened to the horses? Were the guests who were invited not rich enough to afford a horse? This will probably not be the case, since the Capulets were a wealthy family, with wealthy friends and relatives. Was it a matter of guests being the BOB? I do not think people in that time thought about riding their horse drunk, as being dangerous. It probably was a matter of space, to put all those horses in stables.

Dark-skinned people

As you might have noticed, Luhrmann's film has more dark-skinned actors than Thalberg's production. The only dark-skinned man to appear in Thalberg's production, has the function of a servant. This can be seen as quite a low rank. Those days, dark-skinned people were not as accepted as they are now. Considered acceptance of dark-skinned people, large progress can be seen in Luhrmann's production. Which may be quite logical, because nowadays, we can not think of a society without people with all different coloured faces. In the 1996 production, the dark-skinned people have high functions. To start with the singer, she was invited to enjoy the people at the Capulet's party by singing. In her crew were several dark-skinned musicians as well. Then Mercutio.

Besides a good friend of Romeo, he is a kinsman to the Prince. The Prince is a dark-skinned man as well! The ruler people look up to, obey to and respect is a dark-skinned man. This is a revolution from Shakespeare's time. But, as we have already discussed in detail, Luhrmann's production is a hugely modernized production, in compare to the original play. And dark-skinned people can not be missed in that.



Juliet's room

People with status, like the Capulets, were supposed to act to their status all the time. Children were treated like adults, and often needed to grow up very quickly. This reflects in Juliet's bedroom.

Below is Juliet's bedroom in Luhrmann's film. He gave her a princess- like room, with the appearance of letting her be a teenager, like her peers.



Juliet's grave

Juliet is a wealthy Capulet. She is treated like a princess and adored by everyone. For that reason, I would have expected a more extensively decorated tomb. I think the picture below is very somber, especially compared to the room where Juliet is placed, in Luhrmann's film. It might have to do with Catholicism, which was very important in Shakespeare's time. However, Luhrmann put lots of references to Catholicism in his film production, which created the pictures below: the totally opposite image.





Differences between the movies

As the film from 1936 takes place in the 15th century and the one from 1996 takes place at the end of the 20th century, it's not surprising there is a huge difference between both movies. The biggest difference between both is the location on which it



plays. In Thalberg's film, he uses a little village in the middle ages with classic houses and women and men in 15th century dresses, whereas Luhrmann's film takes place in a big city with modern buildings. Another difference is the reason of the quarrel. In the film from 1936, this is not clear.

But the reason for the quarrel in the film from 1996 seems to be because of business, as both have a big company.

There is also a big difference between the erotica in the movies. In the movie from 1936 kisses are holy and only appear for a short time in the movie. Except for seeing Romeo and Juliet waking up in the same bed, there is not any sign of sex as they are both fully dressed when they wake up. In the movie from 1996, they kiss openly and for a long time. The sex is clear in this movie as you see them taking off each other's clothes and waking up naked. Some perverted things that would have never been accepted in the 15th century were added to the modern movie as well. Some examples of these are Sampson licking his nipple and Lady Capulet, kissing with her own nephew Tybalt. This is accepted by the public these days. This means sex and kissing has gotten more accepted over the years.

The special effects have changed a lot as well. In the movie from 1996 the shooting

seems real, unlike the stabbing in the old version. This also accounts for the blood used for Merutio's death. In Luhrmann's film this is convincing, but it is not in the film from 1936. They also used special effects to make fireworks at Verona beach, but you will not notice this is fake.

Many of the shots from the 1936 film were really long and filmed from one position. Often when two people spoke to each other, they would film both until they were done talking and when they moved, the camera would trace them. In the newer version this happens way less, and taking close-ups is more common. So the way of recording and editing a movie has changed as well. What Luhrmann does well is the use of special effects and camera-shots to visualize or exaggerate certain emotions. He does this far more often than Thalberg did. The reason probably is the era of producing: Luhrmann had far more techniques he could use than Thalberg. Considering their use of material and every other aspect which comes with screen adaptations, both producers did a great job!

What are the comments from professors on both Romeo and Juliet films and what do we think of that?

Romeo and Juliet (1996)

A Film Review by James Berardinelli

RATING: ★★☆☆ (out of ★★★★★)

United States, 1996

U.S. Release Date: 11/1/96 (wide)

Running Length: 2:00

MPAA Classification: PG-13 (Mature themes, violence)

Theatrical Aspect Ratio: 2.35:1

Cast: Leonardo DiCaprio, Claire Danes, Brian Dennehy, John Leguizamo, Pete Postlethwaite, Paul Sorvino, Miriam Margolyes, Diane Venora, Harold Perrineau

Director: Baz Luhrmann

Producer: Gabriella Martinelli and Baz Luhrmann

Screenplay: Craig Pearce and Baz Luhrmann based on the play by William Shakespeare

Cinematography: Donald M. McAlpine

Music: Nellee Hooper

U.S. Distributor: Twentieth Century Fox

In [Looking for Richard](#), actor/director Al Pacino expresses his great hope for his film - to extend his enthusiasm for the Bard's plays to a broader audience. In a very different way, that's what Baz Luhrmann ([Strictly Ballroom](#)) is attempting to do with this radical approach to "Romeo and Juliet". Luhrmann hasn't fashioned this motion picture with the stodgy, elitist Shakespeare "purist" in mind. Instead, by incorporating lively, modern imagery with a throbbing rock soundtrack and hip actors, he has taken aim at an audience that would normally regard Shakespeare as a chore to be endured in school, not a passionate drama to ignite the screen.

Make no mistake, this *Romeo and Juliet* is not the match of Franco Zeffirelli's unforgettable 1968 classic. While Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes make an effective couple, their romance does not burn with the white-hot intensity of Leonard Whiting and Olivia Hussey's. Nevertheless, this interpretation is so fundamentally different from anything to have come before it that there's no danger of repetition. By the same token, there have been two different "Richard III"s in the past twelve months, and no one is complaining.

For those who are not aware, "Romeo and Juliet" tells the tale of two "star-cross'd" teenage lovers who secretly fall for each other and marry. Their families, the Montagues and Capulets, have been fierce enemies for decades, and, even as Romeo and Juliet say their wedding vows, new violence breaks out between the clans. In the end, their love is doomed. When Romeo mistakenly believes Juliet is dead, he poisons himself. And, when Juliet discovers that he is dead, she too commits suicide.

Luhrmann's *Romeo and Juliet* (properly titled *William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet*) takes the play and deposits it in a modern Verona Beach that is part decaying Miami and part Mexico City. By the director's own admission, this is a created world,

borrowing aspects of its unique visual style from such diverse periods as the 1940s, 1970s, and 1990s, and using a variety of classic films (most notably *Rebel Without a Cause*) for inspiration. Fast cars with roaring engines replace horses. Guns stand in for swords and daggers. The resulting hybrid background is startling.

Romeo and Juliet's camera is restless, always moving. There are times when the rapid cuts and raging soundtrack might cause understandable confusion between the movie and a rock video. Indeed, with all the camera tricks, special effects (such as a roiling storm), and riotous splashes of color, it's easy to lose the story in the style. Luhrmann's intent was never to drown Shakespeare's dialogue in technique, but it happens, especially early in the film. In the process, the more subtle intangibles of the romance are irretrievably lost.

The movie settles down when Romeo (DiCaprio) and Juliet (Danes) first come face-to-face, gazing at each other through the transparent panes of an aquarium while a love ballad plays in the background. It's a delicately romantic moment whose magic is never quite matched by any other scene in the film. Danes makes a breathtaking Juliet, merging strength and fragility into one. DiCaprio is not quite as successful as Romeo; there are times when his delivery of Shakespeare's dialogue sounds forced, and, on at least one occasion (when he learns about Juliet's supposed death), he goes way over-the-top.

The supporting cast has its share of successes and failures. John Leguizamo plays a particularly effective Tybalt, Juliet's Latino cousin. Despite a terrible accent, Miriam Margolyes gives a delightful interpretation of Juliet's nurse. In a daring move that works, Harold Perrineau's Mercutio is presented as a high-energy drag queen who gets a chance to strut his stuff to a disco tune with Shakespearean lyrics. Pete Postlethwaite (as Father Laurence) and Vondie Curtis-Hall (Captain Prince) are both at ease in their roles. Brian Dennehy's presence is, as always, imposing, but, as Lord Montague, he does not have more than a handful of lines. Less successful are Paul Sorvino's cartoon-like portrayal of Lord Capulet and Diane Verona's Blanche DuBois-flavored version of his wife. And a pair of characters, Paul Rudd's Paris and Jesse Bradford's Balthasar, are so ineffectual that they're virtually invisible.

There are moments of comedy in Shakespeare's play, and Luhrmann tries to transfer some of these over, in addition to adding a few of his own. One in particular, with Romeo ineptly scaling a trellis for the famous balcony sequence, is ill-placed. Also, there are times when the director gets a little *too* cute. A run-down theater in Verona is called "The Globe" (the name of the locale where Shakespeare's plays were originally performed), and the astute viewer will catch visual references to "The Merchant of Verona Beach", "Rozencranzky's", "Wherefore L'Amour", and "Out, Out Damn Spot Cleaners".

Ultimately, no matter how many innovative and unconventional flourishes it applies, the success of any adaptation of a Shakespeare play is determined by two factors: the competence of the director and the ability of the main cast members. Luhrmann, Danes, and DiCaprio place this *Romeo and Juliet* in capable hands. And, while such a loud, brash interpretation may not go down in cinematic history as the definitive version of the play, hopefully it will open a few eyes and widen the audience willing to venture into any movie bearing the credit "based on the play by William Shakespeare."⁵⁰

⁵⁰ http://www.reelviews.net/movies/r/romeo_juliet.html

Criticizing this review

Berardinelli has drawn an important point about the effects of the modernization of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, which is the type of audience. People who are fond of Shakespeare or old literature would normally be interested to watch a film from *Romeo and Juliet*. But nowadays teenagers will not feel attracted to this at all. By modernizing this story and adding a famous cast (Danes and DiCaprio) another audience was attracted.

As for the love between Danes and DiCaprio I have not seen the movie with Berardinelli refers to a *Romeo and Juliet* film with Leonard Whiting and Olivia Hussey's as *Romeo and Juliet*. I have not seen this movie, so I can not judge a persuasive nature of DiCaprio's and Danes' loves compared to the characters Berardinelli refers to. Although I think their love contains much passion, the magnificent romance used in Shakespeare's script got lost due to the lack in poetic skills from the characters.

According to Berardinelli, Luhrmann has drowned Shakespeare's dialogue, but I do not agree with this. Luhrmann stuck to the script and in such dissimilar environment as Luhrmann used, I am amazed he was able to do this. Even though he did use the same script the meaning of what the script said did change due to backgrounds giving another sphere and character giving the sentences a different meaning by intonation or facial expression. For example, when Romeo enters the Capulets' garden he will describe Juliet's prettiness. In Shakespeare's play, this seems a poetic and romantic scene. But in the film, Romeo is panting from his tiring climb to the garden and squeezing his eyes to see what is happening inside the house. Before that he got shocked by the lights turning on in the film and clumsy as he is, he tried to hide. This takes away Romeo's charm and exchanged it for a psychopathic stalker attitude. To me this is not drowning Shakespeare's dialogue, but just bringing the play in different light, which is pretty impressive as well.

As for the camera use I think Luhrmann did a great job as well. There are fast shots indeed, but in action scenes this brings more power to the scenes. But for romantic scenes the camera maintain calm. In this way Luhrmann created shots combining to the mood of the story.

The way Luhrmann added things connected to Shakespeare's '*Romeo and Juliet*' seems like a good addition to me, and I am neither in favor of calling this *too-cute*. I think the way Luhrmann did this was really smooth. People who know nothing about Shakespeare will not notice this, and neither will they be bothered by this. For people who do recognize this it is a good joke, but every spectator has a different sense of humor.

Conclusion

In this essay, we have tried to answer our main question:

How has Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet play been modernized in films?

We have achieved this by analysing subtopics and the corresponding sub questions. Analyzing Shakespeare's original play was the first thing to do: *What is Romeo and Juliet? And how has Romeo and Juliet evolved over the years?* Next, we paid attention to Irving Thalberg's filmproduction from 1936 and Baz Luhrmann's film production from 1996. We examined these films by the following questions: *What is the difference between Shakespeare's original Romeo and Juliet play and Irving Thalberg's Romeo and Juliet from 1936? And what is the difference between Shakespeare's original Romeo and Juliet play and Baz Luhrmann's Romeo and Juliet from 1996?* Then we compared both film productions by the question: *What is the difference between Thalberg's Romeo and Juliet and Luhrmann's Romeo and Juliet?* Lastly, we had a look at what critics had to say about both productions and we commented on that.

The story of Romeo and Juliet had existed for some time already, but it only became successful after Shakespeare dealt with it. Shakespeare's use of blank verse, alternating rhyme and prose, makes his language accessible to everyone. Although we might not always understand what he means, the way he presents our minds with a picture *"Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear"* is an excellent and exquisite act. The Shakespearean word use will always fascinate us, because it is the perfect combination with daily life problems. His presentation of love troubles and doubts, makes us identify with his characters.

As successful as Romeo and Juliet is written, no producer would dare to try improving Shakespeare's play. Except for leaving some parts out, the productions we analysed, stick to Shakespeare's original script. The parts which are left out, had no additional value to the film. This concerns for example, extensive explaining about one's feelings, which is depicted in film by close-ups on the emotions. Also, because of the length of the film, some parts were left out. Both films already last two hours.

Irving Thalberg was the first producer to adapt Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet to the screen. This already was a modernisation on its own. Because we do not have any information about how Romeo and Juliet was played on stage in the earlier times, we can not say whether Thalberg made any changes to his film in comparison to the play. As far as we could see, Thalberg made no noticeable changes to his film.

Baz Luhrmann's production in 1996 is the opposite of Thalberg's production. The main change is the location on where the story of Romeo and Juliet takes place; Quiet village life is replaced for the modern, busy city life. Luhrmann made numerous changes in his film. He replaced the horses for cars, and swords for guns. By doing

this, Luhrmann created a scene which could truly happen today.

In this production the newscaster takes over the role of the storyteller, by presenting the story as a news fragment. Due to the new technologies, the producers were able to create better shots, especially crash-zooms, to emphasize certain emotions. The pool scene, which was originally the balcony scene, could not have been created in such detail, in the earlier days. And last but not least: the big difference in erotica in both productions and the play. Of course, it is hard to tell from the play, whether the kisses are small kisses or vulgar French kisses, but in both films the contrast is huge. Nowadays, sex and nudity is a much more common and accepted subject, than it was during filming Thalberg's production. This influences Romeo and Juliet's passion enormously. In the 1936 production, the kissing was very modest and rare. Whereas in Luhrmann's production Romeo and Juliet are all over each other constantly.

These modernizations led to totally different film posters. The poster of the 1936 production is very simple and serene. In contrast to Luhrmann's production poster, which screams the story from the paper. It has a much darker background, which suggests action and death, and it already summarizes the story in catchy words.

Romeo and Juliet can be a great inspiration to other stories and it does not matter how much it will be modernized, because there never was a story of more woe, than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

Epilogue

In this essay we examined Romeo and Juliet, a great work from William Shakespeare. We gained knowledge about the way Shakespeare used his language to bring his words 'alive' and visualize them for the audience. Because Romeo and Juliet is a play which is based on daily problems of teenagers, we recognize ourselves in the characters and identify with them. Especially because we recognize ourselves in the characters, the story is timeless. In combination with Shakespeare's use of language the story never gets dull. We have analyzed the tactics used by producers to make Romeo and Juliet into a successful film production.

Despite the fact we have learned a lot from making this essay some things did not go the way we planned. We initially wanted to write this essay about the main question "How did Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet influence the English literature?" But we could not find enough information to write a well argued essay. Unfortunately we spend a lot of time searching for information about this and therefore lost about 20 hours of useful work time.

During analyzing Romeo and Juliet we found out that there was more to say about the original play and the film productions than initially thought. Of course analyzing both films took a lot of time. We had to stop the film very often to make notes and play certain parts of the film over and over again. Therefore, processing the notes and information took a lot more time than we expected, which is why we got in trouble with the planning schedule. Because of this, we had to work our butts off to get this essay finished on time.

We started of very ambitious, by determining we wanted to write this essay in English. We thought of it as an extra challenge. Ultimately, writing this essay would probably have gone more fluently if we had done it in Dutch. However, we had no trouble working together and the job division worked out fine. We underestimated the language and imagery part of Romeo and Juliet tremendously, but we expect to hand in a great essay!

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Books

NEW SWAN SHAKESPEARE *Romeo and Juliet*

General editor Bernard Lott M.A.,PH.D.

Edited by John Ingledew, M.A.

ISBN 0 582 52729 5

SHAKESPEARE TRAGEDIES 1

Vertaald door Willy Courteaux

Uitgeverij De Nederlandsche Boekhandel

ISBN 90 284 1434 7

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Journal

Logboek profielwerkstuk Engels Dyonne Letter en Elzemieke Janzen

Datum	Tijd (in klokuren)	Plaats	Wat
10 september 2009	5 uur	RSG Broklede	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Onderwerpen gezocht Hoofdvraag en deelvragen geformuleerd
16 september 2009	1.5 uur	Thuis, bibliotheek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Algemene informatie gezocht Romeo & Juliet Bibliotheek bezocht en Romeo & Juliet geleend Romeo & Juliet gelezen
17 september 2009	5 uur	RSG Broklede	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introductie Google Aps Informatie gezocht voor deelvraag 1 & 4
22/23 september 2009	3 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informatie gezocht voor deelvraag 3 & 4 & 6
24 september 2009	5 uur	RSG Broklede	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nieuwe deelvragen en hoofdvraag bedacht Informatie over de nieuwe deelvragen gezocht Overlegd of de nieuwe deelvragen uitvoerbaar zijn
29/30 september	3 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> De film 'Romeo and Juliet' uit 1936 gezocht De film 'Romeo and Juliet' uit 1936 gedownload
1 oktober	5 uur	RSG Broklede, bibliotheek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2e Engelse boek met het originele script van Romeo and Juliet gezocht en geleend Boek geleend met Nederlandse vertaling van het originele script van Romeo and Juliet en achtergrondinformatie DVD van Romeo and Juliet geleend De film 'Romeo and Juliet' uit 1936 gedeeltelijk bekeken
6 oktober	1 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> De eerste 15 bladzijden van het originele toneelstuk 'Romeo and Juliet' gelezen en aantekeningen gemaakt
8 oktober	5 uur	RSG Broklede	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> De eerste 50 minuten van de film 'Romeo and Juliet' uit 1936 geanalyseerd De film 'Romeo and Juliet' uit 1936 vergeleken met het originele script wat de tekst betreft
11 oktober	1 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bruikbare informatie uit boeken over Shakespeare's werk opgezocht en overgetypt
15 oktober	5 uur	RSG Broklede	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Romeo & Juliet uit 1936 deel 2 geanalyseerd
29 oktober	5 uur	RSG Broklede	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Romeo & Juliet uit 1936 deel 2 geanalyseerd

11 november	2 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Romeo & Juliet uit 1936 deel 2 geanalyseerd Specifiek informatie van woordgebruik in Romeo & Juliet gezocht
12 november	2 uur	RSG Broklede	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begonnen met schrijven van samenvatting Romeo & Juliet Commentaar gezocht op de films Romeo & Juliet 1936 en 1996
19 november	5 uur	RSG Broklede	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informatie gezocht Language 1.1 Karakter analyse Romeo gemaakt
22 november	1 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vertaald karakter analyse Romeo
24 november	5 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informatie opgezocht en afgemaakt Language 1.1
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3 december	5 uur	RSG Broklede	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overige karakter analyses gemaakt Language 1.1 aangevuld en afgemaakt, language 1.2 gemaakt
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13 december	2.5 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Afgemaakt deelvraag 1.2 Gemaakt deelvraag 1.3
17 december	5 uur	RSG Broklede	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gemaakt Language 1.3 Gemaakt deelvraag 2
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22 december	1.25 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Film Romeo & Juliet 1996 geanalyseerd
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28 december	4.5 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Romeo + Juliet (1996) gekeken en aantekeningen gemaakt Deelvraag 3 gemaakt
29 december	2 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> geschreven informatie bij elkaar verzamelt extra informatie van de Romeo + Juliet (1996) DVD bekeken
31 december	3.5 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aantekeningen Romeo + Juliet (1996) uitgewerkt en getypt
2 januari	3 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deelvraag 3 gemaakt Deelvraag 4 gemaakt
3 januari	5 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Film Romeo & Juliet 1936 opnieuw bekeken, aantekeningen gemaakt Deelvraag 5 gemaakt
4 januari	5 uur	RSG Broklede	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Afbeeldingen van Romeo & Juliet film 1936 geselecteerd Thema 'light and dark' deelvraag 1

			afgemaakt
4 januari	1 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informatie voor deelvraag 5 geschreven
5 januari	3 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prologue geschreven • Epilogue geschreven • Index gemaakt • Alle documenten bij elkaar gezet
6 januari	4.5 uur	RSG Brokledde	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alle informatie nagelopen, gecheckt op dubbele informatie en heen en weer schuiven van onderwerpen • Conclusion geschreven • Voorblad gemaakt
6 januari	6 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deelvraag 3 afgemaakt • Deelvraag 4 afgemaakt • Deelvraag 5 afgemaakt • Gewerkt aan Motifs & Symbols
6 Januari	2 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bekijken van recensies • mijn mening vergeleken met de recensie
7 januari	3 uur	RSG Brokledde	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Afronden motif 'death' • PWS opmaken en afronden
20 februari	3 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spel/grammatica/woordvolgorde foutjes verbeteren
22 februari	3 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overleg wat er nog moet gebeuren + verdeling taken • Werken aan presentatie profielwerkstuk + powerpoint
26 februari	5 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bronvermelding maken • Afbeeldingen personages 1996 zoeken • Laatste afbeeldingen zoeken • Doorlezen en lettertypes/groottes gelijk maken
1 maart	8 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laatste keer controleren • Verbeteren van fouten • Film stukken 1936 toegevoegd aan powerpoint
2 maart	4 uur	Thuis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film stukken 1996 toegevoegd aan powerpoint
2 maart	2 uur	RSG Brokledde	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tekst bij filmpjes voor de presentatie geschreven • Fouten verbeterd