

**Faction of Fools Theatre Company**  
presents

**A Commedia**  
***Romeo and Juliet***  
by **William Shakespeare**

*Shakespeare's greatest love story by DC's biggest fools*

<u>What:</u>	A Commedia <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> by William Shakespeare
<u>Who:</u>	Faction of Fools Theatre Company
<u>Where:</u>	Mead Theatre Lab at Flashpoint 916 G St NW Washington, DC 20001
<u>When:</u>	Thursday, January 12 – Saturday, February 4 Thursday, Friday, Saturday at 8:00pm, Sunday at 3:00pm Special Industry Night: Monday, Jan. 30 at 7:00pm Sign-Interpreted Performances: Friday, Jan. 27 at 8:00pm, and Sunday, Jan. 29 at 3:00pm
<u>Tickets:</u>	Regular: \$25, Children 12 and under: \$15, Students: \$20 Available at the door, 1-800-838-3006, and <a href="http://www.factionoffools.org">www.factionoffools.org</a> Appropriate for ages 9 and up Running time is approximately 70 minutes with no intermission
<u>Publicist:</u>	Rachel Spicknall, Director of PR: 202-641-0541 or <a href="mailto:pr@factionoffools.org">pr@factionoffools.org</a>
<u>Press Photos:</u>	Available at <a href="http://www.factionoffools.org/press/">http://www.factionoffools.org/press/</a>

**Faction of Fools Theatre Company**, DC's Commedia dell'Arte theatre company, continues its 2011-2012 season with **A Commedia ROMEO AND JULIET**. The classic story of two young lovers divided by a family feud borrows heavily from the tradition of the Italian Comedy. Our high-octane adaptation, featuring five actors in a one-hour cutting, joins physical spectacularity with Shakespeare's poetry and highlights tragedy by juxtaposing it with humor.

**Faction of Fools** has entertained audiences since 2009 with its ensemble-devised physical comedy employing masks, Commedia dell'Arte characters, and inventive movement and acrobatics. **A Commedia ROMEO AND JULIET** is our first full production utilizing Shakespeare's original language.

**Faction of Fools' A Commedia ROMEO AND JULIET** is an *R&J* that audiences have never seen before—even though it is based on Shakespeare's original inspiration for the play! His story of squabbling fathers, poetry-spouting lovers, and dim-witted servants draws heavily on the characters and conventions of Commedia dell'Arte. However, while Italian Comedy always ends with a wedding, Shakespeare's tale continues past the nuptials as hatred and violence

forestall a happy ending. Part comedy, part tragedy, Shakespeare's text succeeded originally by conjoining laughter and tears. By utilizing masks and physical characterizations from Commedia dell'Arte, Faction of Fools puts the comedy back into Shakespeare's *R&J*, allowing the tragic turns to cut all the more deeply. Shakespeare grew up on Commedia dell'Arte, and **Faction of Fools' A Commedia ROMEO AND JULIET** reunites the world's most popular playwright with history's most influential theatre style.

Faction of Fools' Artistic Director Matthew R. Wilson, one of America's leading experts in Commedia dell'Arte and a scholar of both English and Italian Renaissance theatre, directs the production. The entire story is presented by a cast of only five actors, including **Gwen Grastorf** (Constellation's *Flea in Her Ear* and *The Green Bird*, Happenstance's *Cabaret Macabre*), **Drew Kopas** (Constellation's *Ramayana*, Olney's *Da* and *Witness for the Prosecution*), **Toby Mulford** (Round House's *Amadeus*), **Paul Reisman** (STC's *Julius Caesar* and *A Servant of Two Masters*), and **Eva Wilhelm** (Taffety Punk's *Burn Your Bookes*, Folger's *Henry VIII*).

**A Commedia ROMEO AND JULIET** features Scenic Design by **Daniel Flint** (Faction of Fools' *The Mandrake*, technical director for Constellation Theatre), Costume Design by **Lynly Saunders** (Faction of Fools' *The Mandrake*, costume shop at Washington National Opera), Lighting Design by **Sarah Tundermann**, Sound Design by **Thomas Sowers** (No Rules' *Stop Kiss*), Music Composed by **Jesse Terrill** (Faction of Fools' *The Mandrake*, Folger Theatre's *Comedy of Errors*), and Masks by **Aaron Cromie**.

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