

# Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet opens to rave reviews

Erin Bennett  
Business/Ad Manager

*"Two households both alike in dignity/ In fair Verona where we lay our scene/ From forth the fatal loins of these two foes/ A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life/ Whose misadventures piteous overthrows/ Doth with their death bury their parents' strife."*

So opens William Shakespeare's classic epic, *Romeo & Juliet*. The plot of *Romeo & Juliet* is timeless, reflected in literature and movies through the ages. Last Friday, Baz Luhrmann (*Strictly Ballroom*) released his controversial version to massive crowds. Despite the doubt of the critics, the film was an excellent portrayal of Shakespeare's masterpiece.

In 1968, Franco Zeffirelli released a heralded version that

embraced the text and the setting almost exactly as Shakespeare had written it.

But the skepticism from the critics that shrouded the new film before its release was not eased by



The two star-crossed lovers as played by Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes.

the trailer and teasers that did little to explain Luhrmann's vision, boasting Old English with an American accent set in obviously ultramodern society.

Welcome to the Verona of the 90s. In Shakespeare's time, the weapons of choice were swords. In Luhrmann's world, everyone, including Friar Laurence, sports at least one gun. Shakespeare's characters sped away on valiant horses; Luhrmann's insanely drive their luxury cars.

If Luhrmann's purpose is to make Shakespeare more accessible to today's generation of short attention spans, his film serves that purpose well. The eccentric movie draws you in from the very beginning scene of an anchorwoman in an antiquated television set reciting the lines of *Chorus* from the original play.

Leonardo DiCaprio does an excellent job as an ultrasensitive Romeo with a flare only he could have pulled off. Claire Danes as Juliet plays a

character that is shy, yet strong, alluring, yet headstrong.

Though I was familiar with the plot, I still found myself hoping Juliet would stop Romeo before he drank the lethal poison, that somehow these two troubled lovers would defy the stars and survive in their world. Alas, it is not the case and many tears could be heard at the dramatic climax in which Juliet takes her life, not with a dagger as Shakespeare intended, but with Romeo's 9mm pistol.

Overall, the movie was well-written, extremely well-acted and appealed to all of the emotions Shakespeare originally intended.

*"For never was a story of more woe/ Than this of Juliet and her Romeo."*



All pictures used for this article are available at <http://www.romeoandjuliet.com>.

## Report Card

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S  
**ROMEO + JULIET**

Plot A, Intensity A,  
Entertainment A  
Overall grade A+

## 'Sleepers' hits the mark



Jon Roberts  
A&E Editor

The movie *"Sleepers"* is based on the controversial best seller by Lorenzo Carattera. It centers on four boys growing up in Hell's Kitchen during the mid-60s who are sent to hell-on-earth for a practical joke that turns tragic. The boys are sent to Wilkinson Home for Boys, where they are put through hell by the guards. This movie stars Brad Pitt, Jason Patric, Kevin Bacon, Robert DeNiro and Dustin Hoffman. The movie is an intense walk through the lives of the four boys. *"Sleepers"* is not for the meek, but it has still grossed almost \$36 million in its first three weeks.

Overall grade: A-



Brad Pitt (far left) and Jason Patric play two of the Hell's Kitchen boys as adults.



Robert DeNiro (right) plays Father Bobby, the young boys' mentor and priest.



## Millennium: the next X-Files?

Brendon Neal  
Sports Editor

*Millennium*, a new sci-fi horror series from Fox TV, has shown tremendous potential in its first two weeks.

The central location of the television series is Seattle, WA. The main character, Frank Black, (played by Lance Henriksen) is an ex-cop/FBI agent who tried to quit after an unknown stalker began taking pictures of his wife and young daughter and mailing the photos to Frank. Frank thinks the stalker is gone but, at the end of the first episode, he opens some mail and finds pictures. This part of the plot may wear thin as time goes on since it very similar to a show on Channel 8 called *Profiler*.

As the show begins, Frank and his family have just moved to Seattle and is working as a con-

sultant for a mysterious organization called "The Millennium Group." Its mission appears to be stopping killers whose actions are based on the legends/prophesies surrounding the year 2000. Frank can see through the eyes of killers. By getting near where a murder occurred, he can visualize part of the events surrounding the murder.

The show is produced by Chris Carter, producer of *The X-files*. Its only weakness is that Carter is overfocusing on converting *X-files* fans to this show. For instance, in the promotion for the second episode, a "werewolf" seems to appear and change shape; but the episode has nothing to do with the supernatural. *Millennium* is more focused on science rather than the unknown.

Carter just needs to focus on *Millennium* itself. It has shown

itself to be good in its own right, and fans who have enjoyed Carter before and non-Xphiles alike will enjoy this new show.

Frank has made the comment "We just can't sit back and hope for a happy ending" when asked if the group really believes in the prophecies. I give *Millennium* a cautious four stars because it is early yet and anyone can make two good episodes.



Lance Henriksen (above) plays Frank Black, the main character in "Millennium."

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