



The Capulet parents (Warren Kluber, Sam Greenspan and Jason Sample-March) speak disapprovingly to Juliet (Craig Lamm)

GRETCHYN DREW

Tender Is the Night

And strong the boys of Shakespeare

Want a fresh take on an oft-produced classic? An evening of surprising emotion wrung from a story you've probably heard too many times? Then head to *Shakespeare's R+J*, playing for just one more weekend at the Lord Leebrick Theatre.

Lots of the Bard in these environs at the moment — *Merry Wives of Windsor* at Shakespeare in the Park, which runs through Aug. 30 at Amazon Community Park, and *The Comedy of Errors* with the Roving Park Players, opening at Bethel Community Park Saturday, Aug. 16 (see the Calendar for details) — but this one's a bit different. As I mentioned in last week's preview, Leebrick Artistic Director Craig Willis read the play years ago and kept the idea of directing it simmering on

some back burner. Then, when a number of talented young actors auditioned this spring for John Schmor's *Hamlet/zombie mashup Or Not to Be*, Willis realized he had a chance to cast and direct Joe Calarco's play-within-a-play. Well, lucky Eugene.

The Leebrick has a small space for a stage, and the actors on it usually have to work with fairly complex sets, which means their acting can't get too physical. But in *R+J*, with only a trunk and a long furl of red cloth as props and set, the four actors get serious with physical options. Young men playing even younger men — high school boys in a repressed boarding school, hiding what they're doing — they bounce off of each other and the floor, sometimes using force to communicate

The actors must convey the boys' feelings by glance and movement, for none of the script comes from inner thoughts.

New Name, Old Flame

Willamette Brewery relaunches as Oakshire

The next time you're ordering up a pint of locally crafted brew at your regular watering hole, you'll likely spot a new player among the familiar row of tap handles. But Oakshire Brewing, though you might not recognize the name or logo, isn't exactly the new kid on the block. Formerly known as Willamette Brewery, the freshly branded Oakshire Brewing is still providing bar-goers from Eugene to Portland with the same quality-driven craft beers we've come to know and love. But why the name change and new logo? And why Oakshire?

In September of last year, Willamette Brewery received a cease and desist letter from Laurelwood Brewery. Portland-based Laurelwood was concerned about similar logos, both depicting silhouettes of trees. Laurelwood feared that customers would confuse the two tree logos and erroneously associate the two breweries. In late April of this year, Willamette Brewery received yet another legally threatening letter — this time from local wine producer Willamette Valley Vineyards, stating that they owned the trademark for the name "Willamette" on alcoholic beverages. Willamette



Brewery's Jeff Althouse had already sought the advice of a trademark attorney and was conjuring up ideas for a new name for the brewery as early as March 2008.

"We finalized on 'Oakshire' in mid-May," Althouse said, "and the transition to 'Oakshire Brewing' will be completed this week, once we've swapped out all the old tap handles." With his brother Chris, Jeff spoke about the rebranding process at Oakshire's inaugural name-change picnic last Sunday. It was a beautiful afternoon as the new logo, a stylized, solitary oak tree developed by Bryan Taylor of Treemen Design, flew high on a banner atop the modestly sized brewery. Jeff welcomed family and friends of the brewery while talented head brewer Todd Friedman looked on with a smile as everyone sampled his full line of Oakshire beers. Live music and hearty conversation filled the air. Speaking to the crowd, Jeff said: "The oak tree is the quintessential symbol of the Willamette Valley. The solitary oak signifies the strength and solidarity of Oregonians. As for 'shire,' in our minds, this describes our bioregion and the people that live and thrive here."

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what they can't outwardly state.

The actors must convey the boys' feelings almost purely by glance and movement because most of the script comes from Shakespeare, and none of it from their own thoughts. Best at this is Craig Lamm as Student 2, who primarily plays Juliet. Jason Sample-March plays Student 1, who serves most often as Romeo; in a key moment of the young lovers' marriage scene, Sample-March must convey the nimble mind of the

student while retaining Romeo's love for Juliet — and he does it well.

A bit more of the boys and a bit less of Shakespeare's play would help the second half, but that's a fault in the script. Willis' direction and the malleable bodies of the four actors, combined with a fair go at dealing with Shakespearean cadence, make this one a production not to miss.

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Shakespeare's *R+J* runs through Aug. 17 at the Lord Leebrick Theatre. www.lordleebrick.com or 465-1506 for tix.

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