



Symphony Tacoma Opens 73rd Season with Romeo and Juliet

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Tacoma, WA — **Symphony Tacoma** will open its 2019-2020 season on Saturday, October 19 at the Pantages Theater with an original production of *Romeo and Juliet*. This dramatic program combines Prokofiev's heart-wrenching ballet score with excerpts from Shakespeare's epic love story enacted by students from Tacoma's School of the Arts (SOTA). The performance also marks the beginning Sarah Ioannides' sixth season as music director.

Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* has long been celebrated as a favorite with audiences as both a ballet score and an orchestral concert piece. Originally the movements in each suite were arranged into well-balanced sequences rather than structured narratively chronological. In this program, Ioannides reordered the suites and selected passages from Shakespeare's play to tell the story of the famous star-crossed lovers.

SOTA students Libby Patsiga (*Romeo*), Annabelle Daniel (*Juliet*) and Alexandra Vilenius (*Tybalt*) will reprise their roles from SOTA's 2018 production of *Romeo and Juliet*. SOTA's Director of Theatrical Arts Gabriel McPherson will play the role of the narrator as well as serve as the stage director, and Director of Technical Theatre and Design Mark Thomason will technical direct the performance. The combination of the music interspersed with dramatic interludes in essence creates a symphonic poem.

Season ticket packages and single concert tickets (\$24 to \$83) are on sale through the Tacoma Arts Live box office. To order tickets, call 253-591-5894 or visit symphonytacoma.org. *Romeo*

and Juliet is sponsored by MultiCare, Gordon Thomas Honeywell, Pacific Northwest Eye Associates, The Gottfried and Mary Fuchs Foundation and Northwest Public Broadcasting.

ABOUT THE ACTORS

Annabelle Daniel is a junior at Tacoma School of the Arts. She has acted in many productions in the past at Tacoma Youth Theatre but the role of Juliet in the 2018 production of Romeo and Juliet was her first role at SOTA. Outside of theatre, she participates in Girl Scouts and enjoys playing music.

Alexandra Vilenius is a junior at Tacoma School of the Arts. The role of Tybalt in the 2018 production of Romeo and Juliet was her first role at SOTA. She is excited to continue growing as an actress through the next two years with the SOTA theatre program.

Elizabeth (Libby) Patsiga is a junior at Tacoma School of the Arts. The role of Romeo in the 2018 production of Romeo and Juliet was her first of eight roles at SOTA to date.

Gabriel McPherson is the Director of Theatrical Arts at SOTA. For the past twelve seasons, he has also served as Master Teaching Artist, Resident Director, and Resident Composer for the educational programs of Tacoma Arts Live. Gabriel and his writing partner and brother, Luke McPherson, have written four musicals for young audiences and are currently working on a musical adaptation of Louisa May Alcott's Little Men for the Cunningham Commission, scheduled to premiere at Chicago Playworks in 2021. Gabriel has a BFA in acting from the Theater School at DePaul University in Chicago, IL with a minor in music composition. In his prior life, Gabe toured with the first national tour and Broadway productions of Mamma Mia! for over two years. He is also a founding member of Seattle-based rock band Doxology.

Mark Thomason is Director of Technical Theatre and Design at SOTA and occasionally an adjunct professor at UP. Having worked professionally in the theatre industry for twenty years as a stagehand, lighting designer, technical director and production manager, he spends most of his time outside of teaching as a freelance lighting designer throughout the region or managing a film production studio for Zombie Orpheus Entertainment. He has produced all the SOTA theatre shows for the last several years.

Buy tickets at [Tacoma Arts Live](#).

