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## **We Players, Montalvo join forces for 'Romeo & Juliet'**

Ramya Krishna - Town Crier Editorial Intern  
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### **Tina Case/Special to the Town Crier**

Maria Leigh plays Juliet in the We Players production of "Romeo & Juliet," scheduled through Sunday at the Montalvo Arts Center in Saratoga.

We Players and the Montalvo Arts Center have collaborated on an interactive performance of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" that enables audience members to follow the cast around the 104-year-old Mediterranean villa in Saratoga.

The production opened last week; remaining performances are scheduled 5 p.m. Thursday and noon and 5 p.m. Sunday.

“We’re calling it a ‘progressive theater experience,’” said Angela McConnell, Montalvo’s executive director and a Los Altos resident.

The property has been transformed into different sets from the iconic play, inviting audiences to experience fight scenes on the lawn as well as elaborate balls inside the villa.

McConnell encouraged the community to take part in some of the scenes and even suggested coming in costume to be a member of the Capulets’ ball.

“In this historic villa, they’re not going to be just sitting in chairs looking in a program, but really being in the production,” McConnell said of the audience, “and, really, I think being transformed and feeling the emotion of this very passionate play.”

Founded at Stanford University, We Players first connected with Montalvo last year when the theater group’s artistic director, Ava Roy, visited the property to talk with a visiting artist.

“She was really enchanted. ... She said that the property spoke to her,” McConnell said. “It just became a really wonderful collaboration from the start.”

The collaboration was not without challenges, however.

The “staging was challenging initially,” McConnell said, “but I think that came together very quickly.”

Overall, McConnell believes that the production “activates our grounds and ... gives our audience a chance to engage with Shakespeare’s masterpiece in very new and personal ways.”

Tickets are \$40-\$80.

The Montalvo Arts Center is located at 15400 Montalvo Road, Saratoga.

For tickets and more information, call (408) 961-5858 or visit [montalvoarts.org/weplayers](http://montalvoarts.org/weplayers).