

Onstage love from real lovers at MPL



Beatrice (Noelle Fair) and Benedick (Jon Ciccarelli) match words in Hudson Shakespeare Company's 2010 production of "Much Ado About Nothing" in Monument Park, Fort Lee. COURTESY HUDSON SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

The Course of True Love
Wednesday, Feb. 14, 7 p.m.

Hudson Shakespeare Company
Free
Montclair Public Library

50 S. Fullerton Ave.

To register, call 973-744-0500 ext. 2235

montclairlibrary.org

Hudsonshakespeare.org

By STEFANIE SEARS

For Montclair Local

On Valentine's Day, love will be in the air at the Montclair Public Library.

"The Course of True Love" will be performed by the Jersey City-based Hudson Shakespeare Company at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 14. Admission is free, but registration is required.

Jon Ciccarelli, the artistic director, and Noelle Fair, the managing director, are married and use their relationship in the show, saying that it mirrors the relationship of the couple Benedick and Beatrice from "Much Ado About Nothing."

"The Course of True Love," which is delivered in a hybrid of Old and Modern English, centers on the many (about 15 or 16) couples, tragic and comedic as well as historic and romantic, in Shakespeare's repertoire. The show, which incorporates music, costume designs from different time periods and various styles, has a Cary Grant and Katharine Hepburn feel to it, Ciccarelli said. Kate and Petruchio from "The Taming of the Shrew" even engage in a sword fight.

"We are hoping this event will allow community members to have a memorable Valentine's Day evening, even for those on a tight budget," said Jill DeMarco, the library's adult services librarian, who booked the performance. "The Hudson Shakespeare Company always puts on an amazing performance. They have performed 'Macbeth' and 'Taming of the Shrew' here before."

"The Course of True Love" library tour kicked off on Jan. 30 and will continue through March 4. Other shows coming up this

season include "The Tempest" (June), "All's Well That End's Well" (July) and a fall tour of Thomas Kyd's "The Spanish Tragedy."

"We actually played Benedick and Beatrice before we were married back for a summer show we did in 2010," Ciccarelli said.

Fair said, "A passion for Shakespeare is part of the reason we fell for one another. We both not only talked about Shakespeare as something we enjoy doing as actors, but beyond that we both really love the intellectual side of Shakespeare. I think Benedick and Beatrice are the biggest wordplay couple ever. They are incredibly smart and Jon is really sarcastic and funny, and I'm sassy."

Ciccarelli even proposed to Fair in front of the Globe Theatre in London.

While in graduate school in Britain, Fair participated in a program called "Staging Shakespeare," in which the playwright's works were revamped. Fair directed the "Romeo and Juliet" scene, and the idea took off from there.

Fair said, "I wrote the first draft and we've been workshopping this since early November."

For Ciccarelli and Fair, "The Course of True Love" runs onstage.