

THE EMPIRE

2026 MAJOR PRODUCTION



**PRODUCTION
& AUDITION
INFORMATION PACK**



PRODUCTION & AUDITION INFORMATION PACK

Please read the following information and complete the online registration form by

9am Monday 13 October 2025

Register for your audition via our website
empiretheatre.com.au/audition

Auditions will be held at The Empire, Church Theatre, 54 Neil Street Toowoomba.
Please follow signage upon arrival.

AUDITIONS FROM FRIDAY 24 OCTOBER TO MONDAY 27 OCTOBER 2025

FRIDAY 24 OCTOBER	6PM – 9:30PM
SATURDAY 25 OCTOBER	9AM – 5:30PM
SUNDAY 26 OCTOBER	9AM – 5:30PM
MONDAY 27 OCTOBER	6PM – 9:30PM

CALLBACKS & OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

Role callbacks will be held as necessary over the audition period.

All auditionees must be available for call backs **9am – 5:30pm Saturday 1 & Sunday 2 November 2025**

If needed, callbacks may continue and occur on **6pm – 9:30pm Monday 3 November 2025**

Applicants will be emailed with their confirmed time to attend their audition.

The audition process may take up to 10 minutes for sing/act and 45 minutes for dance.

Positions in the show are open to people aged 16 years and up.

Auditionees must have turned 16 by 1 December 2025.

There are no children/youth roles in this production.

THE TEAM



DIRECTOR Tim Hill

NIDA graduate and Matilda Award nominated Queensland-based director of musical theatre, plays, cabaret, dance and film, Tim Hill returns to The Empire to direct the 2026 production of *& JULIET* after his highly popular production of fairytale comedy *Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella* (Broadway Version) in 2024.

Mr Hill's recent directorial credits including *Chicago* (Queensland College of Dance/ QDC), *Into the Woods* and *Merrily We Roll Along* (Ad Astra Theatre Company) and taking on the role of Resident Director for *The Woman in Black* (Woodward Productions) starring Daniel MacPherson and John Waters, which premiered at The Empire in 2024 before touring the country.

Mr Hill took on his first director role at The Empire fresh from a successful season of *Billy Elliot The Musical* at The Star Gold Coast in 2023. His other musical theatre credits include *Gcodspell* (QDC – 2023), *Mamma Mia!* (Star Gold Coast, 2021), *Wicked* and *Fame* (Matt Ward Entertainment/HOTA, 2019), *Spring Awakening* (Underground Broadway 2018- Matilda Nomination for Best Director), *Bang Bang!* Featuring Ronda Burchmore (TAM Presents/Brisbane Festival 2018), a sold-out production of *RENT* (QPAC/Matt Ward Entertainment- 2018) and *Mary Poppins* (Arts Centre Gold Coast 2016).



CHOREOGRAPHER Tess Hill

Tess Hill is a Brisbane based teacher, choreographer and director. The Empire welcomes Tess back for the third time to choreograph the 2026 production of *& JULIET* after she brought to life the choreography in two of The Empire's major productions of *Mamma Mia!* in 2020 and *Cinderella* in 2024.

Her credits include; *Rent* (QPAC – choreographer), *Spring Awakening* (Metro Arts – Assistant Director and assistant choreographer), *Mamma Mia* (Empire Theatre – Choreographer), *I am King I am Queen* (Sydney Fringe – Director), *Billy Elliot* (The Star Gold Coast – Children's Director), *Cinderella* (Empire Theatre – Choreographer), *The Unreal Housewives of the Gold Coast* (Grand Electric – Director & Choreographer).



MUSIC SUPERVISOR Luke Kennedy

Luke Kennedy shot to international attention in 2013 as Ricky Martin's grand finalist on Season 2 of *The Voice Australia*. As series runner-up, Luke was the first artist to secure a #1 single on the iTunes charts with 'Time To Say Goodbye'. He performed with Ricky Martin as a special guest on his 2013 Australian tour and released his debut album, 'A Time For Us', which debuted at #6 on the ARIA charts.

Luke has extensive international touring experience with The TEN Tenors and is a founding member of the big band supergroup Swing On This. He has toured the country with The Little Red Company productions *From Johnny To Jack*, *Rumour Has It*, *Skyfall*, *Your Song*, *Golden* and *There's Something About Music*.

In addition to his performance credits, Luke has considerable experience as a music supervisor and vocal coach. Luke is currently Senior Producer and Music Supervisor for The Little Red Company's broadcast and theatrical work including Nine Network's *Lord Mayor's Christmas Carols* from 2021 to 2024. Luke's vocal coaching credits include *The Voice Australia* – Seasons 6, 7, 8 and 9, Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University and Creative Generation.

AUDITION TEAM

In addition to our core team, our audition team will also include;

THE EMPIRE – PRODUCER Tim Panitz

Please be aware that other individuals including production staff may be present at some stages of the process.

CASTING STATEMENT

We warmly welcome performers of all backgrounds, ethnicities, identities, beliefs, skills, and ages to audition for *& JULIET*. This production celebrates the power of diversity and inclusion, and we are committed to creating a safe, supportive, and vibrant environment where every performer's story and talent is valued. If you are passionate, curious, and open-hearted, we encourage you to bring your unique voice to our cast. Everyone is invited to be a part of this joyful reimagining.

WHAT TO PREPARE FOR YOUR AUDITION

FOR AN ONSTAGE ROLE

Each person auditioning for a principal role or ensemble (including dancers) will be asked to sing two own choice songs, read a section of a supplied script and take some stage direction from the panel, and take part in a movement/dance audition. Most roles in & *JULIET* require on stage cast to sing, act and dance. Select roles require less dancing but may still require movement.

SINGING

Please prepare two songs in the musical theatre pop style. It is suggested that auditionees choose songs that will best show their singing abilities.

You should prepare approximately 32 bars of each song (approximately 1 minute per song is a good guide). The Panel may not hear both songs at the audition. Be prepared to be stopped and started throughout your song, and to take both musical and acting direction from the Panel.

ACTING SCRIPT

Excerpts from the script will be forwarded to you with your confirmed audition time. Please peruse the character breakdown below and learn the pieces relevant to roles for which you wish to audition. Due to time constraints, you will only be able to audition for a maximum of two roles in the audition process.

If you do not wish to audition for a particular role, you will still be required to prepare one excerpt. While it is not essential, auditionees are better able to show their abilities when lines are thoroughly memorised.

DANCE

A movement/dance group audition will be held separately to your singing/acting audition in small groups. Please ensure you wear appropriate clothing and footwear i.e. no short skirts, tight jeans or sandals.

There is no need to prepare anything for this audition, it will be taught to you by the choreographer on the day.

ACCOMPANIMENT FOR INDIVIDUAL AUDITIONS

- You may bring your own piano accompanist, or
- Use the supplied facilities to play your CD or digital backing track (via 3.5mm jack). Ensure there are no vocals on the track.

Please contact us if you require the details of an experienced accompanist. There is usually a small charge for this service negotiable with the individual accompanist. A rehearsal is highly recommended before your audition day.

INVOLVEMENT BEHIND THE SCENES

ORCHESTRA

To submit an expression of interest in being part of the & *JULIET* orchestra, please send a brief email outlining your instrumental and ensemble experience. A guide to the required instrumentation is listed on page 9 of this document. Please email: orchestra@empiretheatre.com.au to submit your interest.

BUILD AND CREW

If you are interested in helping sew, cut, paint, light, lift, or iron the wonderful costumes, sets and special effects that make up the magical & *JULIET* world then drop us a line. We are always looking for volunteers interested in making magic happen. Please let us know where your skills and interest lie.

Please email: productions@empiretheatre.com.au to submit your interest.

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

To submit an expression of interest in being involved as an Assistant Stage Manager for & *JULIET* please send a brief email outlining your experience and interest in similar roles.

Please email: productions@empiretheatre.com.au to submit your interest.

YOUR COMMITMENT TO REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCES

All people auditioning should be prepared to commit to attending rehearsals and performances on the dates listed below.

An Overview of key dates including rehearsals, tech rehearsals, dress rehearsals and performances can be found on page 7 of this document.

MEET AND GREET

Our meet and greet will take place at The Empire at a time to be advised. This is when the cast and crew get together for the first time to see the design presentation.

Here you will get your scripts, read through the show, and meet the team.

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

A rehearsal schedule listing required cast members for specific scenes will be issued. Not all cast will be required at all rehearsals. A lead role commitment may be higher than for smaller roles and ensemble. A schedule detailing this and any other required times over production week will be distributed at the start of rehearsals. We must have full commitment to attend all of these rehearsals in order for you to be involved.

FROM SATURDAY 17 JANUARY 2026 REHEARSALS WILL BE HELD

SATURDAY	9:30am – 5:30pm (inc. break)
SUNDAY	9:30am – 5:30pm (inc. break)
MONDAY	6pm – 9.30pm
TUESDAY	6pm – 9.30pm

DRESS REHEARSALS

Tech and Dress rehearsals will be scheduled from **Saturday 7th to Thursday 12th March 2026**.

These scheduled rehearsals must be attended by all members of the Company.

PERFORMANCES

PERFORMANCE #1	7:30pm	Friday 13 March 2026
PERFORMANCE #2	7:30pm	Saturday 14 March 2026
PERFORMANCE #3	2:30pm	Sunday 15 March 2026
PERFORMANCE #4	7:30pm	Friday 20 March 2026
PERFORMANCE #5	7:30pm	Saturday 21 March 2026
PERFORMANCE #6	2:30pm	Sunday 22 March 2026

Additional performances may go on sale to meet demands.

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW & KEY DATES

WEEK	DATE	TIME	LOCATION	ACTIVITY
WEEK 1	Saturday 17 January	9:30am - 5:30pm	Armitage Centre	Design Presentation / First Rehearsal
	Sunday 18 January	9:30am - 5:30pm	Armitage Centre	Rehearsal
	Monday 19 January	6pm - 9:30pm	Armitage Centre	Rehearsal
	Tuesday 20 January	6pm - 9:30pm	Armitage Centre	Rehearsal
WEEK 2	Saturday 24 January	9:30am - 5:30pm	Armitage Centre	Rehearsal
	Sunday 25 January	9:30am - 5:30pm	Armitage Centre	Rehearsal
	Tuesday 27 January	6pm - 9:30pm	Armitage Centre	Rehearsal
WEEK 3	Saturday 31 January	9:30am - 5:30pm	Armitage Centre	Rehearsal
	Sunday 1 February	9:30am - 5:30pm	Armitage Centre	Rehearsal
	Monday 2 February	6pm - 9:30pm	Armitage Centre	Rehearsal
	Tuesday 3 February	6pm - 9:30pm	Armitage Centre	Rehearsal
WEEK 4	Saturday 7 February	9:30am - 5:30pm	Armitage Centre	Rehearsal
	Sunday 8 February	9:30am - 5:30pm	Armitage Centre	Rehearsal
	Monday 9 February	6pm - 9:30pm	Armitage Centre	Rehearsal
	Tuesday 10 February	6pm - 9:30pm	Armitage Centre	Rehearsal
WEEK 5	Saturday 14 February	9:30am - 5:30pm	Studio	Rehearsal
	Sunday 15 February	9:30am - 5:30pm	Studio	Rehearsal
	Monday 16 February	6pm - 9:30pm	Studio	Rehearsal
	Tuesday 17 February	6pm - 9:30pm	Studio	Rehearsal
WEEK 6	Saturday 2 February	9:30am - 5:30pm	Studio	Rehearsal
	Sunday 22 February	9:30am - 5:30pm	Studio	Rehearsal - Show Run
	Monday 23 February	6pm - 9:30pm	Studio	Rehearsal
	Tuesday 24 February	6pm - 9:30pm	Studio	Rehearsal
WEEK 7	Saturday 28 February	9:30am - 5:30pm	Studio	Rehearsal
	Sunday 1 March	9:30am - 5:30pm	Studio	Rehearsal - Show Run
	Monday 2 March	6pm - 9:30pm	Studio	Rehearsal
	Thursday 5 March	6pm - 9:30pm	Main Auditorium	Sitzprobe
WEEK 8	Saturday 7 March	9am - 6pm	Main Auditorium	Tech Rehearsal
	Sunday 8 March	9am - 6pm	Main Auditorium	Tech Rehearsal
	Monday 9 March	6pm - 10pm	Main Auditorium	Dress Rehearsal
	Tuesday 10 March	6pm - 10pm	Main Auditorium	Dress Rehearsal
	Wednesday 11 March	6pm - 10pm	Main Auditorium	HOLD
	Thursday 12 March	6pm - 10pm	Main Auditorium	Preview Performance
	Friday 13 March	6pm - 10pm	Main Auditorium	Performance #1
WEEK 9	Saturday 14 March	6pm - 10pm	Main Auditorium	Performance #2
	Sunday 15 March	12:30pm - 4:30pm	Main Auditorium	Performance #3
	Thursday 19 March	6pm - 10pm	Main Auditorium	HOLD
	Friday 20 March	6pm - 10pm	Main Auditorium	Performance #4
	Saturday 21 March	6pm - 10pm	Main Auditorium	Performance #5
	Sunday 22 March	12:30pm - 4:30pm	Main Auditorium	Performance #6

This schedule is subject to change.

ROLES

PRINCIPAL ROLES		VOCAL RANGE
JULIET	A bold, independent young woman who defies her tragic fate in Shakespeare to rediscover herself, leaving Verona for Paris and embracing life on her own terms. Driven, headstrong, and curious, she leads the story's arc of self-discovery and empowerment.	F3 – F#5. Strong Musical Theatre Pop.
ANNE	William Shakespeare's witty and assertive wife who insists on rewriting Juliet's fate, injecting herself into the narrative to creatively and emotionally challenge her husband. She's a comedic and heartfelt force, channelling marital tension into storytelling innovation.	E5 – A3. Strong Musical Theatre Pop.
WILLIAM	The famed Bard who narrates and awkwardly shapes the evolving story as Juliet's fate shifts. Resisting Anne's changes with stubborn humour while remaining essential to the creation of the new plot. He balances artistic pride with unexpected openness to rewriting his legacy.	Db3 – Bb4. Strong Musical Theatre Pop.
MAY	Juliet's non-binary best friend, grappling with societal constraints around gender and self-expression, yet finding confidence and identity in creativity and friendship. A tender, authentic presence who reflects the show's modern inclusivity and emotional heart.	(B2) G3 – A4. Strong Musical Theatre Pop.
ANGELIQUE	Juliet's devoted confidante and former nurse, torn between protecting Juliet by staying or stepping out to reclaim her own life. Fiercely loyal yet quietly yearning for autonomy, she bridges maternal care with personal transformation.	E3 – E5. Strong Musical Theatre Pop.
FRANCOIS	A shy and charming young Frenchman obligated by his father to either marry or join the military, whose world opens unexpectedly when he meets Juliet and discovers new possibilities in love and self. His earnest vulnerability grows into courage across the story.	Bb2 – B4. Strong Musical Theatre Pop.
LANCE	Francois's strict, demanding father, who nonetheless reveals a softer side through a rekindled romance with Angelique. A figure of expectation whose emotional complexity emerges when faced with past love and current change.	F2 – F4. French Accent.
ROMEO	Juliet's dramatic ex-lover whose suicide at the start of the musical catalyses her journey. Though he remains a presence through memory, remorse, and unexpected re-appearances. Full of charm and chaos, he embodies both the past Juliet must overcome and the love she both mourns and outgrows.	E3 – E5. Strong Musical Theatre Pop.

ROLES

ENSEMBLE ROLES		VOCAL RANGE
JUDITH	A spirited, drama-loving member of Shakespeare's troupe who welcomes the audience into Juliet's world with warmth and humour.	Any Sings to D5 belt
RICHARD	Shakespeare's flamboyant hype-man, buzzing with energy and theatrical flair.	Tenor/Baritone Sings to A4
LUCY	A vivacious, groove-loving presence who speaks her mind and brings laughter to every scene.	Any Sings to D5 belt
ELEANOR	A poised and regal figure within the ensemble, adding balance and grace to the troupe.	Any Sings to D5 belt
LORD CAPULET	Juliet's authoritative yet occasionally tender father, embodying power and tradition.	Tenor/Baritone Sings to A4
LADY CAPULET	Juliet's mother, whose commanding presence conveys both familial authority and emotional weight.	Mezzo or Alto Sings to D5 belt
BENVOLIO	Romeo's loyal best friend, a fun-loving companion and all-around legend of Verona. (portrayed by a femme ensemble member)	Mezzo or Alto Sings to D5 belt
FEMME PLAYERS	Interchanging parts include Susanna, Rosaline, Helena, Portia, and other lively ensemble roles that bring comedy, heart, and versatility across the story. These tracks will be developed in collaboration with the actors to showcase their individuality and strengths.	Sopranos B3 – C6 Mezzos F3 – A5 Altos D3 – E5
MASC PLAYERS	Interchanging parts include Augustine, Henry, Gregory, Kempe, and other dynamic ensemble roles that add humour, energy, and texture throughout the narrative. These tracks will be developed in collaboration with the actors to highlight their unique qualities and performance style.	Tenors B2 – C5 Baritones F2 – G5 Basses C2 – E4

INSTRUMENTATION		
Keyboard 1	Bass/Synth Bass	Violin II
Keyboard 2	Drums	Viola
Guitars	Violin I	Cello
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MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

Larger Than Life

I Want It That Way

Baby One More Time

Show Me the Meaning of Being Lonely

Domino

Show Me Love

Blow

I'm Not a Girl, Not Yet a Woman

Overprotected

Confident

Teenage Dream/Break Free

Oops!... I Did It Again

I Kissed a Girl

It's My Life

ACT II

Love Me Like You Do

Since U Been Gone

Whataya Want From Me

One More Try

Problem/Can't Feel My Face

That's The Way It Is

Everybody (Backstreet's Back)

As Long As You Love Me

It's Gonna Be Me

Stronger

Shape of My Heart

Fuckin' Perfect

Roar

I Want It That Way (Reprise)

Can't Stop the Feeling

THE PLOT

ACT I

William Shakespeare is introduced by the cast at his first production of *Romeo and Juliet*, and welcomes the audience to his newest play ("Larger than Life"). Shakespeare then also introduces his wife, Anne Hathaway, who is visiting from Stratford-upon-Avon to see the play. She suggests he change the ending, wondering what would have happened if Juliet did not kill herself, much to Shakespeare's displeasure ("I Want It That Way"). Nevertheless, Shakespeare allows his wife to explain her idea for the play, which begins with Juliet waking up to find Romeo dead ("...Baby One More Time").

At Romeo's funeral, Juliet finds out that Romeo had many other relationships, with both men and women ("Show Me the Meaning of Being Lonely") and, upon learning of their forbidden relationship, Juliet's parents decide they will send her to a convent. May, Juliet's non-binary friend, and Angelique, her nurse, come to her rescue, while Anne writes herself into the play as 'April', another of Juliet's friends. The four of them decide to take a road trip to Paris ("Domino"). Anne writes Shakespeare into her story as well, as a carriage driver, as the trip to Paris begins ("Show Me Love").

Once in France, a party is set up for Francois, a new character. His father, Lance, tells him he must either marry or join the army, even though Francois does not wish to pursue either option. Meanwhile, Juliet, Angelique, May, and April sneak into the party ("Blow"). Francois notices their arrival, but does not mind them crashing his party. May tells Juliet about their struggles as a non-binary person in a binary world ("I'm Not a Girl, Not Yet a Woman"). Francois and Juliet begin to bond about their stifled lives and shared experiences ("Overprotected"). Francois finds himself attracted to Juliet, and they dance together ("Confident").

Angelique and Lance spend the night together, and it is revealed that she was formerly the nurse to his children. Lance asks her to stay, while Angelique wants to continue to look after Juliet ("Teenage Dream/Break Free"). Juliet wakes up next to Francois, who proposes, inflicting Juliet to agonise about her previous relationship with Romeo ("Oops!... I Did It Again"). When her parents arrive to take her to the convent, she quickly accepts Francois's proposal, before discovering Angelique and Lance's previous relationship. Anne challenges Shakespeare for forcing Juliet to marry again, and complains that he never writes about happy marriages.

Deciding that he needs to introduce a conflict or a plot twist to Anne's version of the play, Shakespeare has Francois and May meet again. After the two share a sudden kiss, they both feel conflicted ("I Kissed a Girl"). Complicating situations, Shakespeare intends to bring Romeo back from the dead, despite Anne's protests. Romeo arrives and declares his return, saying that he has come back for his wife ("It's My Life").



ACT II

Romeo finds Juliet, forgives her for not killing herself, and wants to go back to being married to her ("Love Me Like You Do"). Juliet reveals to Romeo she's now engaged to Francois ("Since U Been Gone"). Shakespeare is frustrated with Anne because Juliet did not listen to Romeo's side of events. Anne counters that this is important to her and that she feels Shakespeare cares more about his plays than his family. Angered, Anne breaks Shakespeare's quill, meaning that neither of them can make any further changes to the story.

May grows angry at Francois for ignoring their feelings and for still planning on marrying Juliet ("Whataya Want From Me"), while Juliet complains to May that Romeo lied to her. Francois grows worried, as he hasn't told Juliet about his feelings for May.

Romeo and Juliet meet up again, where Romeo reflects that he only ever felt valued for his looks and that Juliet made him want to be a better person ("One More Try"). Despite their recent bonding, Juliet remains uncertain of her feelings towards Romeo ("Problem/Can't Feel My Face"). Francois's brother (in fact Shakespeare in disguise) invites Romeo to join the family band, who will play at Juliet and Francois's wedding. Angelique, in the meantime, proposes to Lance.

Anne discovers that Juliet is still in love with Romeo and recounts her own romance with Shakespeare ("That's the Way It Is"). At the wedding, Shakespeare, May, Francois, Lance and Romeo perform ("Everybody"). Francois begins to read his vows to Juliet ("As Long as You Love Me"). However, both Juliet and Francois change their minds about getting married, with Francois confessing his feelings for May ("It's Gonna Be Me"). This prompts Romeo to again confess his love to Juliet while her parents insist she return to Verona with them, stating that they know what's best for her, which Juliet refutes ("Stronger").

Lance apologizes to Francois and accepts his and May's relationship ("Shape of My Heart"). Angelique reassures Juliet that she will never leave her ("Fuckin' Perfect"), but Juliet insists Angelique goes with Lance, before deciding to be confident and take charge of her own destiny ("Roar").

Shakespeare complains that Anne ruined his play, and that he only brought back Romeo to give Juliet the happy ending he thought Anne wanted. Anne refutes this, saying she wants Juliet to be able to make her own choices. Realizing he has hurt Anne, Shakespeare apologizes ("I Want It That Way – Reprise").

Shakespeare and Anne agree there does not need to be a conclusive ending, rather a new beginning. Romeo apologizes to Juliet and they decide to go on a first date, Angelique and Lance get married, and Francois and May begin a relationship.

Shakespeare and the company perform ("Can't Stop the Feeling!").

Music and Lyrics by
MAX MARTIN AND FRIENDS

Book by
DAVID WEST READ

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THE EMPIRE

