

# DIRECTOR'S NOTE: swear not by the moon

To inaugurate the first season of Langgam Performance Troupe, the company agreed that the best way to begin this theatrical journey is *not* through something new, but through something old and familiar instead. William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is, without a doubt, the quintessential example of what's old and (thoroughly) familiar in the world of drama and theater—so much so, that virtually everyone across cultures knows the landmark tragedy, whether or not they have actually read the play itself. However, in the process of adapting an overly-adapted classic such as *Romeo and Juliet*, we have come to realize that the task is actually more daunting than easy. For how does one make this adaptation particularly different from the rest? And how does one develop and work in order to make a cliché *appear* and *feel* authentic once again?

The trouble with clichés (and let's admit, *Romeo and Juliet* is the very pink of clichés) is that at one point, they actually began with a profound sense of truth about the world. Therefore, our main challenge was to rigorously trace ourselves back to that truth—amidst countless adaptations, amidst imitations, amidst assumptions, amidst judgment, amidst expectations, and amidst predictability. How do we remove the cliché quality of *Romeo and Juliet*? How do we break expectations and transform the play into something honest and new and raw?

Anchoring on *Romeo and Juliet's* theme of restricted love, the method of restriction became the best and only way to help us re-establish the truth: Restricting the dimension of the performance space. Restricting the size of the audience area. Restricting the ensemble to only four actors. Restricting the technical design to raw and amateur lighting equipment. Indeed, this method of restriction was a necessary tool in re-focusing our lens towards the well-known love story, and peeling off the superfluous layers so that we may finally come face to face with the play's complex honesty. *swear not by the moon* is, hopefully, a truthful outcome of that laborious endeavor.



Jenny Logico-Cruz

Director, *swear not by the moon*  
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