

Ho, Ho, Julia!

By: Ephraim Kishon

Play no. 290

Opening show: 29/12/1973

Directed by: Ephraim Kishon

Set by : Joseph Carl

Costumes by: Adina Reich

Music: Poldi Shaetzman

Dance by: Jaacov Kaluski

Lighting by: Natan Panturin

The Cast

Julia:	}	
Her daughter Lucretia	}	<u>Shoshana Shani</u>
The Nurse	}	
Romeo:	}	
Father Lorenzo	}	<u>Jehuda Efroni</u>
William Shakespeare	}	

The Play

"Ho Ho Julia" called by its author a "Musical Tragedy" is the light-hearted sequel to Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet".

In the original work it will be remembered, the famous lovers are the victims of a bloody family feud between the Montagues and the Capulets, the city of Verona in Italy. At the end of Shakespeare's tragedy, Juliet's father confessor, Lorenzo, gives her a sleeping potion so that her hard-hearted parents will take her for dead and she can secretly join her husband Romeo in the nearby town of Mantua. Romeo, who wasn't warned of the deception, poisons himself beside the supposed tomb of his beloved while Juliet, awaking too late from her sleep slumber, commits suicide.

Ephraim Kishon's comedy is based on the assumption that Juliet awoke in time to prevent Romeo from taking his life and that they were moreover lawfully married and have been living unhappily ever after for the past thirty years.

The strained relationship between the naïve, food-loving Romeo and the shriveled, dried-up Juliet, brings them to the verge of divorce, and the aging couple pour out their bitterness before two well known characters of the original play: Juliet's garrulous ninety years old nurse and the lecherous of William Shakespeare's ghost in their home only heightens the crisis between the couple. The English poet doesn't conceal his fury with Romeo and Juliet for having dared to defy him and stay alive in direct opposition to the "ideal end" he had written for them at the time. Moreover he falls in love with Lucretia, the couple's "hippie" daughter who violently detests her parents. The frustrated Shakespeare does all in his power to bring Kishon's play to the same tragic end, and he almost succeeds in making Romeo and Juliet poison each other with the same poison left over from the original drama.

The comedy takes place in Verona at the beginning of the 17th century, with costumes and décor of the period and with the three actors playing a number of successive roles, as customary on the Elizabethan stage. "Ho Ho, Julia" is a satire on the marriage institution and on the Shakespearian stage. It even takes a sidelong grin at the age old literary dispute as to who actually wrote the works of William Shakespeare.