**FILM FUN FACTS**

**CONSIDER THE SOURCE** – Filmmakers offer a nod to Shakespeare in several ways:

* In a nod to “Hamlet,” Miss Montague’s mailbox is numbered 2B, while her rival neighbor Mr. Capulet’s mailbox is 2B with a red slash through it (“NOT to be”).
* “Macbeth” is referenced in a scene in which Juliet is threatened by a bulldog. She slams shut her garden gate and shouts “Out!”—followed quickly by the dog’s distant owner yelling “Damned Spot!”
* Featherstone’s shed interior features a ticket stub for “As You Like It.”
* The truck that rolls through and accidently drops a couple teapots (later mistaken by several gnomes as a broken comrade), is marked “Tempest Teapots.”
* When the Goons glue Juliet to her pedestal, the glue is labeled “The Taming of the Glue.”

**FAMOUS FEATURES** -- Juliet’s face is inspired by several classic Hollywood faces, and of course Emily Blunt, who lends her voice to the character.

**FLAMINGO FORTUNE** -- Featherstone gets his name from Don Featherstone, the original sculptor of the classic plastic pink flamingo made popular in the 1960s. Even today, authentic versions of the decorative bird are embossed with Mr. Featherstone’s signature. Just look under the tail.

**STREET SMARTS** – Filmmakers conducted several research trips to Stratford Upon Avon to explore the world of the movie. Producer Steve Hamilton-Shaw hails from Stratford and served as a great authority.

* The Shakespeare statue in the film is based on the actual statue in Stratford, as is the park where the statue is located.
* A sequence that features a dog running through the streets of Stratford with Gnomeo in his mouth incorporates real life details of the neighborhood.

**REALITY STARS** -- Several real-life gnome-populated suburban British gardens helped inspire the locations for “Gnomeo & Juliet.”

**ALL IN THE FAMILY** – Seeking a disguise for Juliet, Nanette jumps onto the clothesline to fetch a black sock. During her descent, she passes a Kermit the Frog shirt hanging from the clothesline.

**FRUIT LOOP** -- Montague’s laptop has a Banana logo on it.

**NEPOTISM** -- The lawn hippo from “Gnomeo & Juliet” is based on one owned by director Kelly Asbury and kept in his California garden.

**HEARING VOICES** – A few behind-the-scenes pros stepped up to the microphone to lend their voices to “Gnomeo & Juliet.”

* Director Kelly Asbury voices the Goons.
* Assistant production manager for editorial Julio Bonet provides the voice of the Mankini Gnome.
* Associate editor Maurissa Horwitz lends her voice to the Call Me Girl.

**SURPRISE!** -- Producer David Furnish gifted the London office during pre-production with motion-activated farting gnomes. Emily Blunt and James McAvoy received them as well. <http://www.coolest-gadgets.com/20070621/the-farting-gnome/>

**HAPPILY EVER AFTER** -- Gnomeo and Juliet ride off into the sunset on a lawn mower with a sign on the back that reads “Matri*gnome*y.”

**ALL ELTON, ALL THE TIME** – “Gnomeo & Juliet” is the first feature film that exclusively features music from the Elton John-Bernie Taupin library.

* For the film’s score, composers James Newton Howard and Chris Bacon incorporated iconic Elton John-Bernie Taupin melodies such as “Tiny Dancer,” “Rocket Man,” “Bennie and The Jets” and “I’m Still Standing,” among others, and even invited John’s band to record the rock-and-roll segments of the score.

**ROCKET MEN** – Headed by Elton John, David Furnish and Steven Hamilton Shaw, Rocket Pictures was established in 1996 and has created the indies “It's a Boy Girl Thing” and “Women Talking Dirty,” as well as documentary “Elton John: Tantrums and Tiaras” and two series of the music talk show “Spectacle.” Next up for the production company, “Pride and Predator” adds an alien-horror twist to the Jane Austen world, before the company focuses exclusively on music-driven projects across film, TV and the stage.

**DID YOU GNOME…**

* Some believe that the garden gnome is a descendant of the Greco-Roman fertility god Priapus, whose statue was often found in ancient gardens.
* Garden gnomes, which were known as *gartenzwerg*—or garden dwarfs, date back to 19th century Germany (though the Czech town of Usti nad Labem and present-day Drawno, Poland, were also key players in the terracotta industry at the time).
* Philipp Griebel and August Heissner are credited with manufacturing the first garden gnomes, which ultimately spread throughout France and England.
* Garden gnomes have long been considered good luck and were adopted by farmers to watch over animals, crops and gardens. According to folklore, the gnomes awaken at night to tend to their chores with a magic touch.
* Garden gnomes made their way into the U.K. in 1847 thanks to Sir Charles Isham, whose trip to Germany netted 21 terracotta figures for his gardens in his Lamport Hall home in Northamptonshire. Just one has survived: Lampy is on display at Lamport Hall and is reportedly insured for a million pounds.
* Not everyone appreciates the garden gnome, who was banned from the U.K.’s prestigious Chelsea Flower Show (some feel the gnome detracts from serious garden design) until May 2010.
* Garden gnomes are also the subject of gnome-napping pranks. The practice, called gnoming, often involves capturing gnomes in an effort to return them to the wild.
	+ There are official organizations involved in gnoming, including the Garden Gnome Liberation Front, which has a presence in both France and Italy. The Italian organization MALAG (Movimento Autonomo per la Liberazione delle Anime da Giardino) claims to be establishing a European Gnome Sanctuary in Barga, Italy.
	+ Ann Atkin founded the Gnome Reserve & Wild Flower Garden in Devon, England, in 1978. Visitors receive a gnome hat upon arrival.
	+ In 2008, a 53-year-old French man in was arrested for allegedly stealing garden gnomes—more than 170.
* After Walt Disney’s first full-length animated feature “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” in 1937, many mass-produced garden gnomes reflected the plumper, happier features Disney artisans gave to six of the seven dwarfs (Grumpy was just Grumpy).
* The garden gnome’s popularity has surged in recent years.
	+ Travelocity adopted the Roaming Gnome in 2004.
	+ Games Sim City 4 (2004) and Half-Life 2: Episode Two (2007) also feature the garden creature.
* The Garden Gnome Theme Park in Trusetal, Germany, features more than 2,000 garden gnomes and is visited by more than 100,000 people annually.

**ABOUT THE MOVIE**

The greatest love story ever told, starring...garden gnomes? In the upcoming “Gnomeo & Juliet,” Shakespeare's revered tale gets a comical, off-the-wall makeover. Directed by Kelly Asbury (“Shrek 2”) and showcasing both classic and original songs by Elton John, the film features the voices of James McAvoy and Emily Blunt as Gnomeo and Juliet, who have as many obstacles to overcome as their quasi namesakes when they are caught up in a feud between neighbors. But with plastic pink flamingos and thrilling lawnmower races in the mix, can this young couple find lasting happiness? For more information, visit [gnomeoandjuliet.com](http://www.gnomeoandjuliet.com/) or like us on Facebook: [facebook.com/GnomeoandJulietMovie](http://www.facebook.com/GnomeoandJulietMovie).