

THEATRE FOR A NEW AUDIENCE

360° SERIES

VIEWFINDER: FACTS AND PERSPECTIVES
ON THE PLAY, PLAYWRIGHT, AND PRODUCTION



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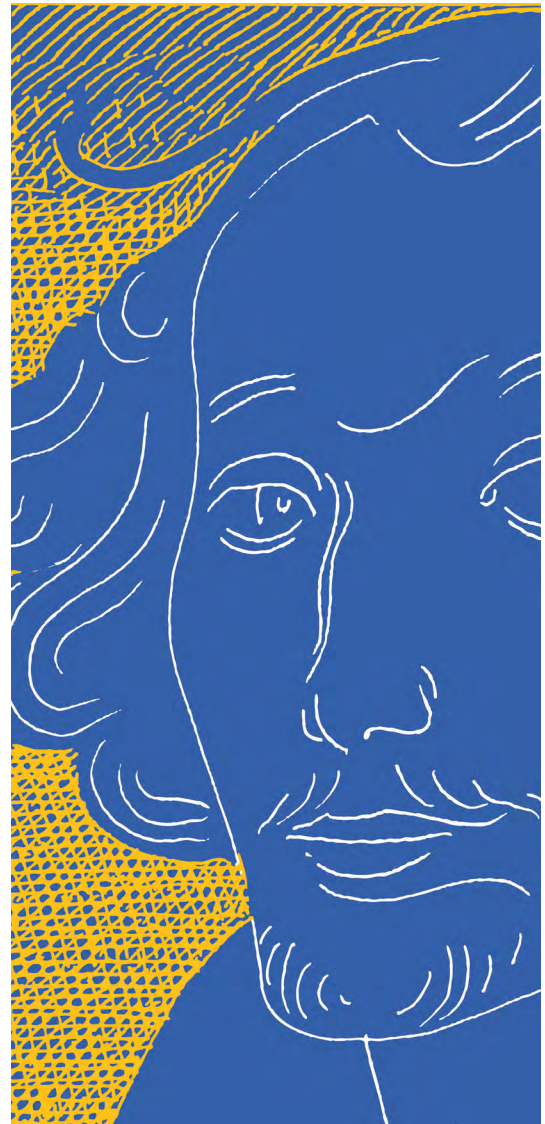
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THE PLAY SYNOPSIS AND CHARACTERS

Theseus, Duke of Athens, and Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons, anticipate their impending wedding, when Lord Egeus arrives with Lysander, Demetrius, and his daughter Hermia. Egeus demands she wed Demetrius, despite the fact she and Lysander are in love. Athenian law requires Hermia to either obey her father, or choose between death or life as a nun. Hermia and Lysander secretly plot to run away to the forest. They reveal their plans to Hermia's childhood friend Helena. Helena, who loves Demetrius and hopes to win his favor, informs him of the elopement. Demetrius pursues Hermia and Lysander into the forest; Helena follows.

A group of workingmen from Athens meet to discuss the play they hope to perform for the royal wedding. They arrange to rehearse in the woods.

Oberon and Titania, King and Queen of the Fairies, meet in the woods after a long separation and resume their jealous confrontation. Oberon takes revenge by ordering his servant Puck to fetch a magical flower. When the nectar is squeezed onto the sleeping Queen's eyes, she will fall in love with the next living creature that she sees.

Oberon spies Demetrius spurning Helena in the woods, and instructs Puck to also apply the nectar to Demetrius' eyes in hopes of uniting the two Athenians. However Puck mistakes the sleeping Lysander for Demetrius, unleashing a series of mishaps that reap havoc on the quartet of young lovers.

In another part of the woods, as the men rehearse their play, Puck transforms the head of one of the workmen, Bottom, into an ass, which sends his comrades running in fear. At that moment, Titania wakes and falls in love with Bottom the ass.

Chaos ensues deep into the night.

As day starts to break, Oberon realizes the extent of Puck's errors with the young lovers and orders him to immediately remedy the situation. In the meantime, Oberon releases Titania from her spell and Bottom is restored to human form.

It is now morning and Theseus, Hippolyta, and Egeus discover the sleeping lovers in the woods and learn of their newfound harmony. Egeus begs punishment, but Theseus overrules Egeus, decreeing that the lovers will marry as they wish, alongside Hippolyta and himself.

Bottom is reunited with his friends, and they learn they will perform their play for the royal wedding. After the performance, there is a dance. The clock tolls midnight. The three couples retire to their bedrooms. Oberon, Titania, and their fairies bless the marriages, and Puck blesses the house.

Characters

PUCK, Hobgoblin, and Master of Revels

OBERON, King of Shadows

TITANIA, Fairy Queen

The Athenian Court

Duke THESEUS

Queen HIPPOLYTA

Lord EGEUS

HERMIA

DEMETRIUS

LYSANDER

HELENA

The Rude Mechanicals, Workingmen

Peter QUINCE

Nick BOTTOM

Francis FLUTE

Robin STARVELING

Tom SNOUT

SNUG

The Rude Elementals, the Forest, Fairies and Spirits

THE PLAY SOURCES

A Midsummer Night's Dream is primarily concerned with transcendence, where love transcends circumstance and the pastoral setting of the play transcends reality as fairies rule the green world and meddle with mortal affairs. The play itself has transcended centuries, moving forward in time from the late 17th century into modernity as one of Shakespeare's most popular plays. It is also a play that transcends audience demographics as a result of the many offerings Shakespeare serves up, from rich language to playful quips to romance. Shakespeare gives his audience multiple points of access that carry over into the play itself. He infuses the play with a variety of issues, from universal themes like love and power, to Elizabethan England specific social issues such as class and marriage. On an equally interesting, but perhaps more subtle level, *Midsummer* can be seen in dialogue with the themes and works of other writers, both previous to and contemporary with Shakespeare's England.

In *Midsummer*, what resonates loudest and perhaps most interestingly, is Ovid's story of Pyramus and Thisbe found in the *The Metamorphoses*, completed circa 8 CE.¹ Shakespeare's use of Ovid as a literary source can be seen in the ancient Greek setting of the play's world as well as the characters that inhabit it. For example, Shakespeare derives his choice of name for Titania, the Queen of Fairies, directly from *The Metamorphoses*, where it appears five times.² The transformation of the character Bottom, whose head is turned into a donkey by Puck, is also derived at least partially from Ovid. Like Bottom, many characters in *The Metamorphoses* lose the dignity of human form without knowing how or why.³ However prominent and important Ovid's influence on *Midsummer* may be, other works, subtler and closer to home, cannot and should not be overlooked when considering the play's inspirations.

Geographically and socially, the theatrical world of London was small. As such, Shakespeare would have been well aware of his contemporaries. John Lyly's play *Gallathea*—probably first performed in London in 1588⁴—also drew from Ovid. In *Gallathea*, two beautiful virgins disguise themselves as boys and flee to the forest to avoid being sacrificed to Neptune. The thematic and structural similarities between the two plays point to the influence of *Gallathea* on *Midsummer*. Shakespeare also drew the dramatic frame and characters of *Midsummer* from England's earlier literature. For example, the matrimonial framing device is similar to Geoffrey Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*—written 1387-1400—in which the cousins Palamon and Arcite both fall in love with Emelye, sister of Hippolyta, queen of the Amazons, who is married to their captor Theseus. The wedding between Hippolyta and Theseus and the entangled romantic sub-plots of *Midsummer* are also echoes of Chaucer. Shakespeare probably also derived the idea of a King and Queen of Fairies, who quarrel between themselves and intervene in the affairs of human beings, from Chaucer's *Merchant's Tale*. In this tale, the king and queen, Pluto and Proserpine, debate about love, sex, and marital relations, similar to how Oberon and Titania take



Detail, *Pyramus and Thisbe* by Lucas van Leyden, 1514; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

1 Paster 276; Britannica (Ovid)

2 Holland 32

3 Paster 275

4 Chambers 18

THE PLAY SOURCES

sides to support Hippolyta and Theseus. However, Shakespeare complicates this idea by adding accusations of infidelity between Oberon and Hippolyta, and Titania and Theseus. Shakespeare further uses Chaucer as a source for the observance of ‘the rite of May,’ a folk custom still current in Elizabethan England and quite possibly known to Shakespeare himself. *Midsummer* blends this ‘rite of May,’ known as May Day, with another popular holiday, Midsummer’s Eve. May Day celebrates the return of spring through such activities as gathering wildflowers and green branches, weaving floral garlands, and the setting up of a decorated May tree, or Maypole, around which people danced. Midsummer’s Eve—the shortest night of the year, which carried suggestions of a magical time—is somewhat similar to May Day in celebratory ritual, centering on such activities as building bonfires, decking houses with greenery, and hanging lights. The function of incorporating these two celebrations is two fold: it offers an entry into the play for an audience that was familiar with these festivities; and incorporates the ripe issue of social order by juxtaposing these popular festivities with the exclusive royal wedding of Theseus and Hippolyta. Social order is a major theme of *Midsummer*, which is manifested in the split between Theseus’ court and the workingmen who moonlight as amateur actors. This aspect of the play would have certainly resonated with Shakespeare’s audience, offering another point of access, and perhaps more importantly, communal relief from the tension caused by class divide.

In regards to the fairy sub-plot, Shakespeare further draws from England’s literature. Although the name Titania comes from Ovid, the idea for her character is drawn from Edmund Spenser’s influential epic poem *The Faerie Queene*, published in 1590—just a few years before *Midsummer* was written. Spenser’s epic poem features the female ruler, Radigund, who, like an Amazon, governs, lives in a matriarchal society, and ultimately secures her own succession. At the time of *Midsummer*, Queen Elizabeth I had begun to appear in iconography as an Amazonian warrior. Therefore, against the background of Elizabeth I, the idea of women as self-reliant rulers made the Amazons of particular interest to the people of Shakespeare’s time. The source for Puck, the play’s most devious and perhaps most amusing character, is medieval English folklore. In Old and Middle English, the word simply meant “demon.” It was not until Shakespeare fused Robin Goodfellow, hobgoblins, and pucks—all originally belonging to the same group of fairies, a class of rough, hairy domestic spirits characterized by their mischievousness—that the single spirit, Puck, came about. The idea of Puck is undoubtedly closely linked to Cupid, as his dramatic function within the mythological schema of the play is that of a spirit responsible for creating irrational affection and transforming it into a harmonious and socially acceptable desire.

Shakespeare looks back, as in the case of Ovid and Chaucer, but also looks around, dealing with current issues and modern, local literature, and folklore. It is this blend of the past and the present, the universal and the immediate that allows this play to be so accessible, both for Shakespeare’s audience as well as ours.



Copy A, Print 5, *The Song of Los* by William Blake, 1795; British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum



Robin Goodfellow-Puck by Johann Heinrich Füssli (Henry Fuseli), 1787-1790; Museum zu Allerheiligen, Schaffhausen

THE PLAY PERSPECTIVES

The following quotes are selected perspectives on the play from notable scholars and artists.

“There couldn’t be a society of people who didn’t dream. They’d be dead in two weeks.”

— WILLIAM BURROUGHS, 1974 INTERVIEW

“In a world where magic and the supernatural are no longer a part of everyday life, once we are out of childhood the closest we come to magic is through our dreams; in this extra-terrestrial world we meet the part of ourselves which we bury under social convention.”

— JONATHAN BATE, *THE RSC SHAKESPEARE*

Bottom: “It shall be call’d ‘Bottom’s Dream’ because it hath no bottom.”

— *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM* 4.1.211-12

“In *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* the war amongst the fairies has resulted not only in a loss of control of the elements and seasons: human beings also have become at odds with each other. It is a kind of cold war and all life as well as all nature has been set a-jangling. It seems that the mortals can find peace only when Oberon and Titania have found it. And more than this—they can find it only after being drawn into the world of Dreams back to the roots of mythology and folklore and into Oberon’s domain of halfflight—more revealing by far in its fantasies than the world of Reality.”

— MICHAEL LANGHAM, DIRECTOR, *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM*, 1960 PROGRAM NOTE

“Fairies only deserve to be believed in when they have the capacity to be seriously unpleasant.”

— JONATHAN BATE, *THE RSC SHAKESPEARE*

“‘Midsummer’ refers to the summer solstice, when the noonday sun reaches the most elevated point in the heavens... There is the folk-belief that extreme heat is a cause of madness... Midsummer, then, is the time when people are most apt to imagine fantastic experiences.”

— ISAAC ASIMOV, *ASIMOV’S GUIDE TO SHAKESPEARE*

Theseus: “The lunatic, the lover, and the poet / Are of imagination all compact.”

— *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM* 5.1.7-8

“I believe in the immortality of the Theatre; it is a most joyous place to hide, for all those who have secretly put their childhood in their pockets and run off and away with it, to play on to the end of their days.”

— MAX REINHARDT, WHOSE PRODUCTION OF *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM* WAS REVIVED 17 TIMES BETWEEN 1905 AND 1939



Boy and a Tree by Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, 1779-1780; Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid

THE PLAY PERSPECTIVES

“Shakespeare drew upon his memories of two age-old festivals of the summer season which must have been familiar, since childhood, to him and his audience: May Day and Midsummer Eve. The May Day games, when the young people ran through the woods all night to gather boughs and flowers for the may-pole (a custom that scandalized the Puritans), suggest the nocturnal hide-and-seek of Hermia, Lysander, Helena, and Demetrius. Midsummer Eve, the summer solstice, was the time of ‘midsummer madness,’ and maidens were supposed to dream, that night, of their true loves—as Shakespeare’s young people, and even his Bottom and Titania, do in their odd ways.”

— FRANCIS FERGUSSON, *SHAKESPEARE: THE PATTERN IN HIS CARPET*

“All [the animals Oberon mentions when anointing Titania’s eyes] represent abundant sexual potency, and some of them play an important part in sexual demonology. Bottom is eventually transformed into an ass. But in this nightmarish summer night, the ass does not symbolize stupidity. From antiquity up to the Renaissance the ass was credited with the strongest sexual potency and among all quadrupeds was supposed to have the longest and hardest phallus.”

— JAN KOTT, *SHAKESPEARE OUR CONTEMPORARY*

“*A Midsummer Night’s Dream* resonates with our cultural self-reflexivity: modernity, or rather post-modernity, responds to the play’s ironic confusion of planes of reality and blurring of boundaries between the political, emotional, psychological, sexual, and spiritual. At one level the play suggests that life is complex and problematic, but things will work out. But at the margins, contained within the play’s various fictions, it recognizes only too clearly that they may not.”

— JONATHAN BATE, *THE RSC SHAKESPEARE*

“Good comedy is tragedy narrowly averted.”

— JONATHAN BATE, *THE RSC SHAKESPEARE*

“The greatest of Shakespeare’s comedies is also, from a certain point of view, the greatest of his plays...there is a sense in which the play is perhaps a greater triumph of psychology than *Hamlet* itself...*A Midsummer Night’s Dream* is a psychological study, not of a solitary man, but of a spirit that unites mankind.”

— G.K. CHESTERTON, “A MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM”



Amor Vincit Omnia by Caravaggio, 1601–1602; Gemäldegalerie, Berlin

DIALOGUES FINDING CONCORD IN DISCORD

Love, Dreams, and Drama in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* RICHARD C. McCOY

A *Midsummer Night's Dream* was once considered one of Shakespeare's lightest and gentlest romantic comedies. Its fairy magic seemed to assure us in Puck's words that "Jack shall have Jill / Naught shall go ill" (3.3.45-6), and a happy ending was guaranteed. Mendelssohn's famous "Wedding March," composed in 1842 as part of his suite of incidental music for the play, helped sustain that impression. But these feelings faded and were often sharply rejected by the mid-twentieth century. In discussing his legendary production of the play in 1970, Peter Brook says that the "fairy imagery which the Victorian and even post-Victorian tradition has given us in relation to the *Dream* has to be rejected—it has died on us." Nevertheless, Brook still says we cannot simply "take an anti-magical, a down-to-earth view of the *Dream*." The play requires recognition of its tentative take on its own magic and its complex if sympathetic view of romantic love; it demands, as Theseus says of its play-within-the-play, that we "find the concord of this discord" (5.1.60).

A Midsummer Night's Dream begins with an inescapable emphasis on the battle of the sexes. Theseus reminds his bride-to-be, Hippolyta, "I wooed thee with my sword / And won thy love doing thee injuries," and his promise to "wed thee in another key / With pomp, with triumph, and with reveling" (1.1.16-19) hardly softens his satisfaction in his conquest of this Amazon warrior. A young woman's father then enters to make a formal complaint against her for refusing to marry the man he's chosen, and he threatens her with death. Theseus backs him up by telling Hermia "your father should be as a god" (1.1.47), but she rejects the spouse her father favors, resisting a patriarchal "lordship whose unwished yoke / My soul consents not to give sovereignty" (1.1.81-2). Once alone, she and her beloved Lysander lament that, "The course of true love never did run smooth" (1.1.134). Undaunted, they plan to flee Athens and the court and seek refuge in the wood, where the goddess of the moon, "Phoebe doth behold / Her silver visage in the wat'ry glass, / Decking with liquid pearl the bladed grass" (1.1.209-11). The beauty of the scene evoked by this exquisite language does not preclude recognition of the dramatic irony of romantic pledges made "By all the vows that ever men have broke" (1.1.175).



Title page of *Robin Goodfellow: His Mad Pranks and Merry Jests*, 1628

The battle of the sexes continues in the face-off of Oberon and Titania, fairy king and queen, "ill met by moonlight" (2.1.60). They rebuke each other for infidelities and betrayals, Titania accusing Oberon of sleeping with Hippolyta, and Oberon charging her with doting on Theseus. Titania insists, "These are the forgeries of jealousy" (2.1.81) and points out the grim environmental impact of their quarrels. Floods, famine, disease, and unseasonable weathers are attributed to the clash of these woodland sovereigns. Oberon responds that she can solve all these problems by giving up a "little changeling boy" (2.1.120)

FINDING CONCORD IN DISCORD RICHARD C. McCOY

in her custody, but she refuses his request. Oberon resolves to get even and “torment thee for this injury” (2.1.146). His weapon will be the flower that is called “love-in-idleness” whose juice “on sleeping eyelids laid / Will make or man or woman madly dote / Upon the next live creature that it sees” (2.1.68-172).

Oberon assigns his servant, Puck, to fetch the flower and apply its juice to Titania’s eyes. This “shrewd and knavish sprite” (2.1.33) cannot resist making additional mischief. When he comes upon a group of country bumpkins rehearsing a play they hope to present at court, he decides to “be an auditor— / An actor, too, perhaps, if I see cause” (3.1.67-8). Puck transforms Bottom, the most swaggering of these “hempen homespuns” (3.1.65) by planting an ass’s head on his shoulders. Then Titania awakens to find “mine

hath not seen, man’s hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream was” (4.1.204-7). Bottom is the only mortal to enter the fairy world, and his “most rare vision” (4.1.199-200) of its sublimities echoes St. Paul’s first epistle to the Corinthians describing a heavenly reward and mystical vision of God that the “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard.” But, unlike St. Paul and his divine revelation, Bottom and his dream remain earthbound and stay corporeally scrambled.

Puck and Bottom are in some ways mirror images. Another fairy in Titania’s entourage insults Puck as “thou lob of spirits” (2.1.16) while calling him by his other nickname, Robin Goodfellow; “lob” means country bumpkin, and its etymology links it to Old English and Germanic words for a lump of flesh. Robin Goodfellow was also known as Hobgoblin and was once associated with ghosts and evil spirits. By Shakespeare’s time, he was increasingly seen as a less sinister imp and practical joker. A 1628 joke book called *Robin Goodfellow: His Pranks and Merry Jest*s shows him on its title page as a faun, a mythical creature fusing the lower limbs of a goat with the torso of a man. In this incarnation, Robin is the flipped image of Bottom with his ass’s head and human body, but both of them are a combination of the physical and the spiritual, the bottom and the top. Oberon chastises Puck for making matters worse for the Athenian ladies and gentlemen by applying the love juice to the wrong man, but Puck delights in the lovers’ “fond pageant” of crisscrossed desires and declares, “what fools these mortals be!” (3.2.114-15). He also admits “those things do best please me / That befall prepost’rously” (3.2.120-1); as the word’s etymology indicates, the preposterous gives the posterior precedence by putting the ass before everything else and the bottom on top.

Eventually order is restored, and the lovers properly sorted out and reconciled. Oberon and Titania “are new in amity” (4.1.84). On discovering the lovers peacefully asleep in the forest, Duke Theseus wonders “How comes this gentle concord in the world” (4.1.140). For a time, all four lovers are baffled by their experience. To Hermia, “everything seems double” and Helena finds her beloved Demetrius “Mine own and not mine own” (4.1.187-9); they don’t even know whether they’re asleep or awake. By the play’s

**If we can acknowledge
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eye enthralled to thy shape” (3.1.123), and she becomes immediately infatuated with this donkey man. Every inch the fairy queen, she tells him, “I am a spirit of no common rate” (3.1.136) and declares her determination to “purge thy mortal grossness so / That thou shall like an airy spirit go” (3.1.142-3). But her powers are inadequate to that task, and Bottom remains a grossly physical mortal who takes pleasure in scratching his itches, the rustic music of “tongs and bones” (4.1.27), and, while an ass, a diet of oats and hay.

Oberon eventually administers an antidote that allows Titania to “See as thou wast wont to see” (4.1.69), and Puck removes the ass’s head from Bottom. When Bottom awakens he recalls his experiences among the fairies with difficulty. “The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man

FINDING CONCORD IN DISCORD RICHARD C. McCOY

last act, however, the gentlemen have clearly recovered their bearings. They also have regained a strong sense of their own superiority to the workingmen who presume to entertain them. Lysander and Demetrius eagerly join Theseus and Hippolyta in mocking these hapless “rude mechanicals” (3.2.9) and their efforts to stage a tragedy drawn from classic literature. The performance is certainly ridiculous as well as hilarious, but the hauteur and condescension of the “gentles” is also somewhat obnoxious.

Condescension towards social inferiors is a hallmark of many of Shakespeare’s early comedies. The drunken tinker, Christopher Sly, is made the butt of the joke by the Lord in the prelude to *The Taming of the Shrew*. When the *Comedy of Errors* was staged for revels at the Inns of Court, a mock trial was held the next day of the master of ceremonies responsible for having “foisted a Company of base and common fellows” upon such an illustrious group of “Ladies and Gentlewomen, and others of good Condition.” The jibe at the players was probably jocular, but jokes can still sting; it recalls the sneer of a university wit at Shakespeare as “an upstart Crow.” The next year, in *Love’s Labor’s Lost*, the young lords mock amateur efforts to depict the nine worthies of classical antiquity, but the worm turns when the schoolmaster tells them “This is not generous, not gentle, not humble” (5.2.417). There is no comparably direct reproach in *Midsummer Night’s Dream*. Indeed, Bottom is so impervious to the sarcasm of Theseus and Demetrius that he corrects them and explains that “the wall is down that parted their fathers” (5.1.337-8), offering a choice between an epilogue or dance as a grand finale. Theseus denies the players their epilogue and once their dance is over, he dismisses them and everyone else, sending all off to bed.

As soon as he exits though, the fairies conclude with a song and dance number that calls down blessings on the house and the marriages to come. And Puck gets the last word, delivering the epilogue the Duke tried to forestall. Initially he seems to capitulate to Theseus’ apparent contempt for playwrights and players. Early in the last act the Duke equates “the lunatic, the lover, and the poet” by linking their ability to “apprehend / More than cool reason ever comprehends” and to make something out of nothing (5.1.5-7). As for the players, “The best in this kind are but

shadows, and the worst are no worse if imagination amend them” (5.1.208-9). Puck echoes the Duke’s terminology in apologizing for the shortcomings of himself and his fellow players:

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended:
That you have but slumbered here,
While these visions did appear;
And this weak and idle theme,

No more yielding but a dream. (Epilogue 1-6)

We too are addressed as “Gentles” (Epilogue 7) and we can dismiss the entire play as a vaporous and foolish dream. But that would be to repeat the mistake of the “gentles” in the play, smug in their assurance of their own superiority and confident in their own “cool reason.” Alternatively we can do what Puck asks and “Give me your hands, if we be friends” (Epilogue 15). Puck is asking for applause of course, the conventional gesture at the end of every play. But he is also asking for us to join hands with the actors by replacing condescension with a willing suspension of disbelief, a spirit of imaginative cooperation, and a more sympathetic sense of community. That requires us to recognize that the plays are more than a “weak and idle” dream. If we can acknowledge our own implication in human folly we can see the truth of these powerful theatrical illusions.

NOTES

All Act, scene, and line numbers from the Norton Shakespeare, 2nd edition, edited by Stephen Greenblatt et al. (2008).

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DIALOGUES INTOXICATING PLANTS AND NARCOTIC THEATER

TANYA POLLARD



A *Midsummer Night's Dream* teems with strange and magical plants. "I know a bank where the wild thyme blows," Oberon alerts the audience:

Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine.
(2.2.249-252)

If the wild allure of this floral landscape is irresistible, the sleepy susceptibility it evokes is also unsettling. Couched amid its pleasures, even the most regal and powerful figure is drawn into unsuspecting ease: "There sleeps Titania sometime of the night, / Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight" (2.2.253-254). Titania's bed offers a false security. Its petal-strewn canopies will be invaded by yet another flower, the drug love-in-idleness, with which

Title page image of *The grete herball*, 1529; ©The University of Cambridge, Cambridge University Library Rare Books Room

Oberon will take control of her imagination and passions.

What are these plants, and why do they matter? Some of them harbor specific and sinister associations. The eglantine, or sweet briar rose, was identified with coldness, prickly thorns, virginity, and Queen Elizabeth, offering an apt adornment for a queen chilly towards her husband in a play reflecting darkly on marriage. The nodding violet posed different threats, evoking the quickly fading nature of youthful desire: Laertes warns Ophelia to think of Hamlet's love as "a fashion, and a toy in blood; / A violet in the youth of primy nature" (*Hamlet*, 1.3.6-7). The

INTOXICATING PLANTS AND NARCOTIC THEATER TANYA POLLARD

woodbine, on the other hand, which Titania also invokes during her dalliance with Bottom, was frequently described in the period as “twining” and “amorous,” and went on to become the name of a popular English cigarette brand. The plants that make up the play’s ecosystem are not simply ornamental. They, like the fairies with whom they share the wood, exert invisible powers over the lovers who come there seeking a haven.

The play’s vivid herbal landscape, like its supernatural inhabitants, draws on traditional English elements, but both are also permeated and changed by foreign imports. Titania reflects longingly on “the spiced Indian air” in which her votress would “sail upon the land / To fetch

**As Theseus, Hippolyta,
and the lovers reflect on
the play staged for their
nuptials, we join them,
watching both plays at
once, letting these visions
enter and transform us
through our eyes.**

me trifles, and return again / As from a voyage, rich with merchandise” (2.1.124, 132-134). This sense of exotic luxury prompts her passionate feelings about the votress’s son, the changeling boy who prompts the play’s primary marital rift. Similarly, increasing international travel and trade changed England’s botanical pharmacy rapidly in the late sixteenth century, introducing new substances such as tobacco and opium that took the country by storm. These drugs promised medical benefits, but also stirred unpredictable psycho-physiological transformations; like Titania’s Indian boy, they sparked troublesome cravings. With its potent plants and spells, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* evokes both the seductive allure and risks of this newly emerging pharmacopoeia. Titania’s own magic is overcome by that of the flowers that direct her desires. Similarly, the Athenians are lulled into sleep, love, and

enchantment by a combination of these flowers and Puck’s verbal incantations—as are we, the watching spectators. The play presents an escape into a narcotic world of magic, plants, and words, raising questions about the kinds of imaginative transformations we meet in our own escapes into the theater.

Midsummer moves towards marriage, and its flowers and fruits radiate amorous force. Not only do its plants include the twining woodbine and the passionate if short-lived violet, but the leader of the mechanicals, Quince—whose name is frequently repeated onstage—evokes a fruit popularly identified with love potions and fertility. But the most potent of the play’s flowers is love-in-idleness, or the wild pansy (named for *pensée*, or thought), a member of the passionate violet family. Oberon describes the flower as an aphrodisiac whose power stems from one of Cupid’s arrows. Missing its target, the arrow instead hit

a little western flower,

Before milk-white, now purple with love’s wound,
And maidens call it love-in-idleness.

Fetch me that flow’r; the herb I showed thee once:
The juice of it on sleeping eyelids laid
Will make or man or woman madly dote

Upon the next live creature that it sees. (2.1.166-172)

Love-in-idleness brings about doting, from an Old English word meaning to be silly, deranged, or out of one’s wits; to act or talk foolishly or stupidly; or to decay, like a tree; it is cognate with Dutch, German, and Icelandic words meaning to nap or sleep. Shakespeare’s use of dote—a word used six times in *Midsummer*, more than in any of his other plays—merges these definitions with the word’s more newly emerging meanings of to be infatuatedly fond of; to bestow excessive love or fondness on or upon; to be foolishly in love. Yet the earlier, and still primary, senses are hardly erased: love, in this play, is the loss of one’s mind. So too is the wood, a word which in Shakespeare’s time meant not only a forest but also, as an adjective, out of one’s mind, insane, lunatic; going beyond all reasonable bounds; utterly senseless; extremely rash or reckless. When Demetrius says, shortly after these lines, “And here am I, and wood within this wood” (2.1.192), he emphasizes the forest’s affinity with insanity, as well as with wooing. He also comments, implicitly, on the aptness of tree-lined pastoral settings for the comedy of romantic folly that

INTOXICATING PLANTS AND NARCOTIC THEATER TANYA POLLARD

A Midsummer Night's Dream introduces to the English popular stage.

If the play's transformations are brought about by plants, they achieve their effects especially through the eyes, which are even more crucial and omnipresent onstage than the repeatedly mentioned flowers. The word "eye" occurs in the play 48 times, more than in any other Shakespeare play except *King Lear*, which features 52. Eyes in this play are the primary vehicles through which characters receive information, feelings, and spells; they are caught, turned, streaked, charmed, anointed, opened, shut, parted, rolled, pleased, pressed, approved, washed, enthralled, latched, and praised. And these actions are also physically performed onstage, rather than merely spoken, so we who watch the play can see for ourselves the vulnerability of eyes to both delight and danger. As Bottom warns, in imagining the tearful impact of his own dramatic performance, "let the audience look to their eyes" (1.2.27-28).

The importance of the eyes as a portal into the innermost parts of body and soul was a commonplace in early modern English love poetry and medical writings, but Bottom's reference to audiences reminds us of their special resonance for the theater. Upon reading the mechanicals' account of their *Pyramus and Thisbe* production, Theseus says, "I will hear that play" (5.1.81), but immediately he and Hippolyta go on to discuss what they will see. In fact, characters such as Wall and Moonshine go out of their way to call attention to the elaborate visual cues and props that illustrate their roles, just as the lovers and fairies that we watch similarly turn to intensely visual imagery. This is not all that the two plays share: with its star-crossed lovers escaping by moonlight to the pleasures and perils of the natural world, *Pyramus and Thisbe* offers a comically melodramatic version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. As Theseus, Hippolyta, and the lovers reflect on the play staged for their nuptials, we join them, watching both plays at once, letting these visions enter and transform us through our eyes.

The play directly emphasizes the analogy between its onstage and offstage audiences, raising questions about the consequences of dreams, midsummer and otherwise.

Oberon presents the lovers' visions as the products of the sleeping imagination: he tells Puck to ensure that the lovers will "think no more of this night's accidents, / But as the fierce vexation of a dream" (4.1.71-72). And his plan seems to work. "My Oberon," Titania starts up, "what visions have I seen!" (4.1.79). Demetrius suspects that the dream is ongoing. "Are you sure / That we are awake?," he wonders; "It seems to me / That yet we sleep, we dream" (4.1.195-197). Bottom announces, "I have had a most rare vision. I have had a dream, past the wit of man to say what dream it was" (4.1.207-209). Yet we have seen them experience these visions with their eyes open, and Puck goes on to suggest that we, the audience, are the ones who have actually slept and dreamed. "If we shadows have offended," he apologizes in closing,

Think but this and all is mended:

That you have but slumbered here,

While these visions did appear.

And this weak and idle theme,

No more yielding but a dream. (5.1.425-430)

Whose eyes have been streaked, charmed, and drugged in this play? If we, rather than the sleeping figures onstage, have been dosed with the narcotic force of the forest, is the playwright the pharmacist? In its anatomy of the imagination, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* twins the theater with other intoxicating plants. Those who escape to these wooded bowers, it suggests, will not come away unchanged.

NOTES

All Act, scene, and line numbers from the Signet Classics edition, edited by Wolfgang Clemen (Penguin, 1963 w/ multiple reprints).

TANYA POLLARD is Professor of English at Brooklyn College and the Graduate Center, CUNY. Her publications include *Shakespeare's Theater: A Sourcebook* (Blackwell, 2004), *Drugs and Theater in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2005), and a co-edited volume, *Shakespearean Sensations: Experiencing Literature in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2013), as well as numerous essays on early modern theater in journals and edited volumes. A former Rhodes scholar, she served on a national advisory counsel to the U. S. Secretary of Education from 1994-2000, has received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Mellon Foundation, and the Whiting Foundation, and was interviewed by Ethan Hawke in a BBC/PBS documentary on *Macbeth*. She is currently writing a book about the reception of Greek plays in sixteenth-century Europe, and their impact on the development of popular dramatic genres in early modern England.

THE PLAY SELECTED PERFORMANCE HISTORY

- 1595-1596 *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is first performed by the Lord Chamberlain's men. Some scholars have theorized that the play was written and performed for a noble's wedding, but there is no evidence to support the theory.
- 1604 The first recorded performance of *Midsummer* at court is noted by Dudley Carleton.
- 1661 *The Merry Conceited Humours of Bottom the Weaver*, a condensed version of *Midsummer* with only the comedic scenes included, is published. It is the first example of the many English adaptations of *Midsummer* that only focus on the mechanicals (the workingmen) or the fairies until the mid-nineteenth century.²
- 1662 The first—and perhaps only—Restoration production of the play is performed. Restoration diarist Samuel Pepys wrote that it was “the most insipid ridiculous play that I ever saw in my life.”¹
- 1692-1816 During this period, there are few known productions of the full play. The major productions are loose adaptations of the play in operatic or ballet form. Many of the staging choices made by these adaptations affect stagings of the play even into the twentieth century. *The Fairy Queen*, an operatic adaptation composed by Henry Purcell first performed in 1692, cuts and reorganizes text and adds characters to create more opportunities for songs, dances, and special effects. It is the first adaptation of *Midsummer* to emphasize the exotic locations of Athens and the fairies' forest with music, dances, and scenery. In 1755, David Garrick produces *The Fairies*, an operatic adaptation with music by John Christopher Smith. It focuses on the lovers and the fairies, who are played by children—a stage convention that continues well into the nineteenth century. Frederic Reynolds' adaptation of 1816 is performed at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden, London. Besides moving scenes around, the adaptation adds a “Grand Pageant” commemorating Theseus' heroic triumphs over the Centaurs and the Minotaur” to the ending.² In 1833, by Felix Mendelssohn adds his score to Reynold's adaptation.
- 1840 This production, staged at Covent Garden starring actor/manager Lucia Elizabeth “Madame” Vestris as Oberon, restores much of the original text. While it is the first since the Restoration to show the play as “an organic and integrated whole,” it is still staged in as “an operatic spectacular” with ballet dances and an enormous chorus of fairies.³ This production started a trend for casting Oberon and Puck as women.⁹



“The Palace of Theseus, Act V Scene II, ‘A Midsummer Nights Dream,’” print of set design by F. Loyds, c. 1856; This print is of Charles Keat's 1856 production (not included in the performance history); Victoria and Albert Museum, London



“A Midsummer Night's Dream,” directed by J. Stuart Blackton and Charles Kent for Vitagraph Films, 1909, Brooklyn

1 In DiGangi, Mario. “Significant Performances.” *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. By William Shakespeare. Ed. Mario DiGangi. New York, NY: Barnes & Noble, 2006. 250.

2 DiGangi 251

3 Foakes, R. A. “The Play on the Stage.” Introduction. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. By William Shakespeare. Ed. R. A. Foakes. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge UP, 2003. 8, 14.

THE PLAY SELECTED PERFORMANCE HISTORY

- 1909 The first silent film version of the play is produced by the Vitagraph Company in Brooklyn, near Erasmus. It runs eleven minutes and is shot outdoors.
- 1914 Harley Granville Barker's ground-breaking production at the Savoy Theatre in London ignores operatic stagings of the past, focusing instead on the full text of the play. Controversially, Barker replaces Mendelssohn's score with English folk music.
- 1959 Peter Hall's production at Stratford is set in an Elizabethan manor house with Elizabethan costumes and music. This production is noted for its "rougher, edgier" staging with "gritty and impish" fairies and "clumsy, confused and awkward" lovers.⁴
- 1960 Benjamin Britten's three-act opera focuses more on the forest world than the Athenian court. It has a harsher, less romantic feel than earlier adaptations. The fairies were played by boys.⁵
- 1968 Peter Hall's film adaptation of his 1959 production is shot. The film focuses on the sexual, bestial underpinnings of the play.⁶
- 1970 Peter Brook's production, the most celebrated and well known production of the play in the twentieth century, is staged. It is a very conceptual and theatrical production, staged in a white box with three walls that have wires representing trees and trapezes for the fairies in the forest scenes. There is also a catwalk about the set, where musicians, stagehands and fairies appear during the performance.
- 1992 Robert Lepage's production at the Royal National Theatre "[stresses] the darkness, danger, and eroticism of dreams." The forest scenes feature mud and pools of water that can only be cleaned off by a shower onstage, which represents the act of waking.⁷
- 2003 Edward Hall's Watermill Theater-Propeller production features an all-male cast and "no attempt to disguise the gender of the actors playing the female roles." This production emphasizes the physical comedy and bawdy humor of the play.⁸



George Burrows and Donald Callroop as Oberon and Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, directed by Harley Granville Barker, 1914; Victoria and Albert Museum, London



Mechanicals and fairies in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, directed by Peter Brook, 1970; photo by Reg Wilson, © RSC

⁴ DiGangi 253

⁵ Foakes, R. A. "The Play on the Stage." Introduction. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. By William Shakespeare. Ed. R. A. Foakes. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge UP, 2003. 19.

⁶ DiGangi 253

⁷ DiGangi 255

⁸ DiGangi 256

THE PLAYWRIGHT BIOGRAPHY

The most celebrated and widely produced of the world's great playwrights, Shakespeare was born and raised in the small country town of Stratford-upon-Avon, where his parents were prominent citizens, though his father, a tanner and glove-maker, seems to have suffered financial reverses around the time young William's formal education apparently ceased in 1577. He married a local girl, Anne Hathaway, in 1582, and over the next decade the marriage produced three children. Shakespeare's only son, Hamnet, died at age 11, in 1596; his daughters Judith and Susanna survived him.

How and why Shakespeare entered the theatrical profession is unclear. He seems to have come to London in the late 1580s, and quickly made himself indispensable as a reviser of old plays and a supplier of new ones. By 1594, he had become a shareholder, along with the prominent actor Richard Burbage and the latter's business-manager brother, Cuthbert, in the Lord Chamberlain's Men, one of the dominant theatre companies of its day, popular with the public and frequently in demand for performances at Queen Elizabeth's court. In the reign of her successor, King James I, the troupe was officially taken under royal protection and became the King's Men.

While he appeared regularly in works by others, Shakespeare's principal function seems to have been turning out new plays for his companies. Working in all the standard genres of the time—tragedy, comedy, romance, and episodes from British history—he rapidly developed both remarkable expertise and a startlingly individual, innovative style. His *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was first printed in 1600 and probably written in 1595-6. Some scholars believe, without hard evidence, that it was a commission for a noble wedding. A highly popular work that has attracted many of the world's greatest directors and inspired an opera by Benjamin Britten, *Midsummer* is the earliest of his great romantic comedies (with *Much Ado About Nothing*, *As You Like It*, and *Twelfth Night*). Shakespeare retired from the King's Men around 1612, spending the last years of his life with his family in Stratford, where he died in 1616. His plays have never been off the stage.

Theatres return to them time and again for their brilliant storytelling, theatrical excitement, incisive character expression, and memorably intense poetry. To this day, Shakespeare is still the most performed, translated, adapted, quoted, analyzed, and discussed author in the entire history of dramatic literature. Figures from his plays like Hamlet, Falstaff, Lear, Rosalind, Viola, Shylock, Prospero, Puck, and Bottom have virtually taken on an independent existence in the world.

In presenting this biography, Theatre for a New Audience acknowledges that there are and have been prominent individuals who continue to question whether the man from Stratford known as William Shakespeare wrote the plays attributed to him.



Chandos Portrait, artist and authenticity unconfirmed, 1610; National Portrait Gallery, London

THE PLAYWRIGHT TIMELINE

- 1558 At the age of 25, Elizabeth Tudor is proclaimed Elizabeth I Queen of England, succeeding Mary I.
- 1564 William is born to John Shakespeare and Mary Arden of Stratford-upon-Avon.
- 1565 John Shakespeare is made an alderman of Stratford.
- 1566 James Stuart is born to Mary Queen of Scots and Henry Stuart. Elizabeth is made his Godmother.
- 1567 The Red Lion playhouse opens in Whitechapel, east of the city walls.
- 1568 John Shakespeare is elected Bailiff of Stratford.
- 1569 Richard Burbage is born. Richard, the son of James Burbage, will eventually play most of Shakespeare's leading parts like Hamlet, Richard III, Othello, and Lear.
- 1572 The "Act for the Punishment of Vagabonds" is enacted, requiring all companies of players to be authorized or licensed by individuals of the nobility. With licensure comes the financial backing and stature that solidifies and legitimizes repertory companies in London, effectively laying the foundation for the explosion of dramatic literature, players, and purpose-built theatres of the following decades.
- 1576 James Burbage opens the Theatre, London's first purpose-built playhouse, in Shoreditch, north of the city walls.
- 1578 Mary Arden Shakespeare pawns her estate at Wilmcote and her lands at Snitterfield to help pay off family debts.
- 1580 John Shakespeare is sued for his inability to redeem Mary's pawned properties.
- 1582 18-year old William Shakespeare marries Anne Hathaway.
- 1583 Susanna is born to William and Anne Shakespeare.
- 1585 Twins, Hamnet and Judith, are born to William and Anne Shakespeare.
- John Shakespeare is fined for not attending church.
- 1587 The Rose playhouse opens on Bankside in Surrey.
John Shakespeare loses his position as alderman.
- 1590 *The Faerie Queene*, Books I-III by Edmund Spenser first published.
Henry VI, part 1
- 1591 *Henry VI*, parts 2 and 3
- 1592 *Richard III*
- 1593 In London, deaths from the plague are listed at over 10,000.
Comedy of Errors; *Titus Andronicus*; *The Taming of the Shrew*



The Hampton Portrait of Elizabeth I by Steven van der Meulen, c.1563



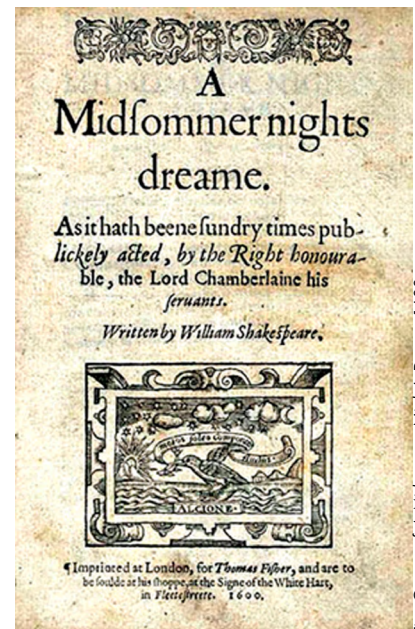
A Marriage Feast at Bermondsey by Joris Hoefnagel, c.1569. This painting depicts English men and women of a variety of social classes in Elizabethan England.

THE PLAYWRIGHT TIMELINE

- 1594 London's theatres officially reopen.
William Shakespeare becomes a shareholder in the Lord Chamberlain's Men, helmed by James Burbage and his sons, Richard and Cuthbert.
The Two Gentlemen of Verona; Love's Labour's Lost; King John
"Venus and Adonis" and "The Rape of Lucrece," Shakespeare's epic poems, published.
- 1595 *Richard II; Romeo and Juliet; A Midsummer Night's Dream*
- 1596 *The Faerie Queene*, Books IV-VI by Edmund Spenser first published.
John Shakespeare is granted a coat of arms.
Shakespeare's son, Hamnet, dies at the age of eleven.
The Merchant of Venice; Henry IV, Part 1
- 1597 James Burbage refurbishes the Blackfriars Theatre, located within the walls of the City of London. The company is unable to occupy it due to complaints from its neighbors. Various companies of boy players are allowed to occupy the Blackfriars after 1600.
The Merry Wives of Windsor
- 1598 James Burbage's the Theatre is closed. Building materials from the Theatre are used in building the Globe.
Henry IV, Part 2; Much Ado About Nothing
- 1599 The Globe opens. The principle clown of the Lord Chamberlain's Men, Will Kempe, leaves the company. Robert Armin takes over Kempe's parts, including Bottom.
Henry V; Julius Caesar; As You Like It
- 1600 Entry for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* appears in the Stationer's Register; first quarto is published.
Hamlet
- 1601 John Shakespeare dies.
Twelfth Night; Troilus and Cressida
"The Phoenix and the Turtle," Shakespeare's last epic poem, is published in Robert Chester's *Love's Martyr*.
- 1602 *All's Well That Ends Well*
- 1603 Queen Elizabeth dies, and James VI of Scotland is declared James I King of England.
The Lord Chamberlain's Men, Shakespeare's company, are licensed by King James and renamed the King's Men.



Joan, 1st wife of Edward Alleyn (considered, along with Richard Burbage, one of the greatest actors of his time) by an artist of the British School, 1596; Dulwich Picture Gallery, London



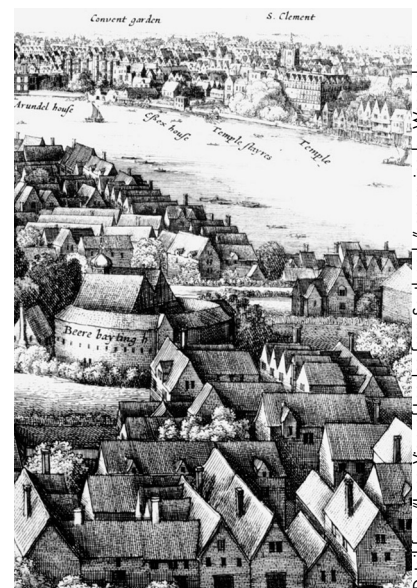
First Quarto of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 1600

THE PLAYWRIGHT TIMELINE

- 1604 *Measure for Measure; Othello*
- 1605 *King Lear*
- 1606 Parliament passes “An Act to Restrain Abuses of Players.” The Act censures specific language in plays.
Macbeth; Antony and Cleopatra
- 1607 *Coriolanus; Timon of Athens; Pericles*
- 1608 The King’s Men are permitted to occupy the Blackfriars Theatre.
Mary Arden Shakespeare dies.
- 1609 Sonnets published.
Cymbeline
- 1610 *The Winter’s Tale*
- 1611 The authorized King James Bible published.
The Tempest
- 1612 Shakespeare retires to Stratford.
Henry VIII, co-written by John Fletcher and Shakespeare; *Cardenio*, a play that is not extant
- 1613 The Globe catches fire during a performance of *Henry VIII* and burns down.
Two Noble Kinsmen co-written by John Fletcher and Shakespeare.
- 1614 The Globe is rebuilt and opens.
- 1616 Shakespeare dies on April 23 and is buried in Stratford’s holy Trinity Church.
- 1619 Richard Burbage dies.
- 1623 The First Folio of Shakespeare’s complete works is published.
Anne Hathaway dies.
- 1625 King James dies and is succeeded by Charles I.



Portrait of James by John de Critz, c. 1606; Dulwich Picture Gallery, London



Detail from “Long View of London from Southwark,” engraving by Venceslaus Hollar, 1647; Hollar mislabeled the Globe as the “Beere baying” arena and vice versa.

DIALOGUES IN CONVERSATION WITH JULIE TAYMOR

ALISA SOLOMON



Julie Taymor and Jeffrey Horowitz in rehearsal for Theatre for a New Audience's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; photographed at New 42nd Street Studios; photo by Gerry Goodstein.

Julie Taymor's new production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Theatre for a New Audience was, in a way, 30 years in the making. Back in 1984, she inadvertently planted the idea in Founding Artistic Director Jeffrey Horowitz's head that she should direct the play some day.

At that time, Taymor was a young but highly experienced theater artist who had been living in New York for a few years after spending some four

years studying and making theater in Indonesia, with earlier stints elsewhere in Asia and Europe. She quickly began making waves in the downtown New York theater scene—and making them with beautiful, billowing fabric, like the sheet that changed from a huge tablecloth into the undulating Red Sea in Elizabeth Swados's *The Haggadah* in 1980. That project also featured Taymor's life-size puppets of disputatious rabbis and their wives; leaping shadow frogs, flies, and pestilent plagues; a looming straw Angel of Death. Horowitz was only one of many producing directors knocked out by the work who invited Taymor to design a show. Specifically, she made masks, puppets, and costumes for Theatre for a New Audience's 50-minute version of *Midsummer* that ran at the Public Theater. Afterwards (as Horowitz tells it), Taymor idly mentioned to him that had she directed the production, she'd have done it differently.

Though Horowitz was not about to mount *Midsummer* again any time soon, he hired Taymor to direct *The Tempest* two years later—the production that, as he has said, put the Theatre “on the artistic map” with its enchanting intelligence: Ariel as a Bunraku puppet, Stephano and Trinculo as commedia dell'arte characters, Caliban encrusted in clay. From then on, Taymor had a home at Theatre for a New Audience. (Another relationship blossomed out of the 1984 *Midsummer*: a friend of the composer Elliot Goldenthal had urged him to go see Taymor's work in that show. They quickly became regular artistic partners—he provided the music for *The Tempest* and virtually all subsequent productions—and, eventually, life partners.)

Theatre for a New Audience regulars will well recall the psychologically rich and robust reading of her *Taming of the Shrew* (1988), the terrifying stylized violence of her *Titus Andronicus* (1994), and the whimsy of her production of Carlo Goldoni's philosophical fable, *The Green Bird* (2000). And by the way, she kept a bit busy in the meantime, plying her theatrical wizardry in opera houses, film studios, and iconic productions like *Juan Darien* and, of course, *The Lion King*.

ALISA SOLOMON IN CONVERSATION WITH JULIE TAYMOR

To open Theatre for a New Audience's first home, Horowitz is making good that 30-year-old notion. With *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Taymor reenters Shakespeare's world of magic, menace, marriage, myth, and transformation, this time as director. We discussed her approach to the play just as rehearsals moved from a midtown studio into the inspiring space of the newly christened Polonsky Shakespeare Center.

SOLOMON: Julie, this is the first production in Theatre for a New Audience's new home. They invited you to direct it, given your long and happy relationship with the theater, going back some three decades. So that's a logical choice. So is the play itself. Why do you think *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is the right play for blessing the new space?

TAYMOR: It has a history of doing that. From what I've read, the New Amsterdam on 42nd street opened with *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1903. And other theaters as well. The actual play is about a marriage. It was probably created for a wedding ceremony. And in a way, when one creates a new theater, it is like a wedding between the public and the new space. The end of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is literally the blessing of the house. Titania, Oberon, and the Fairies—in this production they're called the Rude Elementals, but the Fairies, in most productions—are there to bless this new house.

So it seemed an apt ritual for our new theater, here. My instinct is to do tragedies, normally. I love *Titus Andronicus*. I think *Titus* is a completely realistic play, completely. There are some parts that are hard to make work, but basically just go to any war state that we have now and it's not any less grotesque. And I'd love to do *Macbeth*. I love *King Lear* and the other more serious of Shakespeare's plays. But I think that this one just felt like the right joyous celebration to open Theatre for a New Audiences' new home.

SOLOMON: Yes, it *is* a joyous celebration and was part of a wedding celebration as far as we know historically, and yet there are some sinister elements in this play.

TAYMOR: Of course, because that's natural to Shakespeare. He is basically presenting to you love in all its glory, warts and all. He is saying: This is every aspect of love. As *Titus* was a complete investigation, a dissertation, on every kind of violence that can possibly be perpetrated, this is every kind of love. It's love at first sight, innocent love, love twisted by the mind, love twisted by drugs, love twisted by lust, love twisted by jealousy, by a marriage on the rocks, love twisted by violence. You've got the Duke of Athens ready to get married to his Amazonian bride, whom he most likely raped and conquered.

He says: I won thee with violence—I wooed thee with violence and won thee by my sword. So what I love about Shakespeare is that he doesn't create a kind of goody-two-shoes view of marriage or of love. He says, beware of love and enjoy it, but it's ephemeral, it's quixotic, it's unreliable, it's transformative, it's not to be trusted: all of these things. And we try and create marriages, and rules, and codification of what is an irrational state of being, an emotional state of being. As soon as you try to put a harness on it, it will sometimes rear its head and gallop away; you'll lose control.

So the point is that it's not easy to control. Then, there's the other aspect of the play, which for us in this day and age is tough, which is that he has conquered this queen, and she doesn't become unconquered. And Titania is kind of given her comeuppance, in a way, by Oberon having her juiced and having her fall in love with a beast. She is humiliated and runs right back into the arms of Oberon and gives up her Indian boy. That is the symbol of their disharmony.

SOLOMON: Is that something you're trying to undercut in some way? When you directed *Taming of the Shrew*, as I remember, you found a kind of counter-reading, an angle different from the one from which it had been regarded for many years.

TAYMOR: Well, I think that Shakespeare's too smart a guy. He was very apt at writing the truth about everything.

ALISA SOLOMON IN CONVERSATION WITH JULIE TAYMOR

I think that he saw what middle-age marriage is like. And he understood in *The Taming of the Shrew* what it is to be a smart woman and just not want to put up with bullshit. So Kate is called a shrew, but is she really? Isn't she just more loud, more angry because of the situation of her life, that she can't make a choice of the man she wants? I'm not bothered by the female part of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. I'm not exploring that. I think the characters and situations are rich enough that one doesn't need to lay a whole other level on top of it. I really like to just uncover in these plays what is already there.

SOLOMON: That reminds me of what Theseus says about the *Pyramus and Thisbe* play he's about to see at the end of *Midsummer*: "never anything can be amiss / When simpleness and duty tender it." Then he asks the audience to fill in whatever may be lacking with their imaginations, something that has always been characteristic of your work. Ever since the first piece of yours that I saw in the early 1980s, I have always been struck by how you can create such wonder and beautiful spectacle with, if I may so call them, simple tricks of theater. And this approach seems especially apt for this play, which is so much about the workings of the imagination. Would you describe some of the techniques you're using here, how they involve the audience, and how far you can go in creating illusion before doing too much for the audience?

TAYMOR: Yes. When I have been interviewed about *Lion King*, I have often talked about filling in the blanks, that you don't need it all. The Globe Theater, the theater that Shakespeare worked in predominantly, was an empty space, most likely. What is so profound is that the language fills in those blanks and creates the battlefields and the court, and the throne rooms, and the taverns; he uses language. But for me as a director, his language is also extremely visual and therefore it also inspires me to create visuals.

What Es Devlin, the set designer, and I are trying to do in the design and the concept here, is that everything comes from a bed sheet, everything. It starts with a bed as a most obvious and simple image,

of a man—in this case a he-she because our Puck is whatever gender you want to call Puck—sleeping. And from that moment, the trees that push up that mattress are the dream that infiltrates our minds when we go to sleep, takes over. And then the Rude Mechanicals come and literally take ropes with hooks, very mechanical, very banal, very in your face.

They hook up the corners of the bed sheet, they raise it up into the sky, and lo and behold, there are clouds. So these Rude Mechanicals who are working men of Athens or New York City, they are our crew, they are our theater makers, our behind-the-scenes carpenters, tailors, Bottom the Weaver: These are the guys who make magic happen. They take from nature and they make tables out of trees and chairs out of trees. They make costumes out of the sky. It's this constant back and forth between the poetic, the ephemeral, the spiritual, the intangible, irrational world, and the banal, direct world.

Also, the forest comes alive. Now, does it come alive with every single plant and green leaf? No, of course not. We're using black and white bamboo rods. It's extremely sculptural. Between the rods and the sheets, that's pretty much the elements of this production. There are one or two cases where we have some furniture, but that's for the Rude Mechanicals, who are the practical guys. The rest is constantly moving canopies that become wedding tents, that become tablecloths. I've worked in that vernacular before with [*The*] *Haggadah* at the Public Theater. The tablecloth in the Passover ceremony just spread out and became the Red Sea. Or *The Tempest* where the sail was the shadow screen at the same time.

Midsummer is on a bigger scale. You're seeing all of the ropes. The theater is very exposed. And we're using lights and projections. So you may get literal trees, but they're on moving fabric. It's not like a static image; it's on something that's changeable and moving. It's very ephemeral and dreamlike in that sense, and extremely hard to control. We are doing our best, but it is humans, and ropes, and wind, and air. And so it has a kind of changeable, quixotic quality.

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SOLOMON: That does seem to fit the sense of the play itself: the forest is unpredictable and—

TAYMOR: Well, that's the point. This day of midsummer madness that Shakespeare was riffing off of, is like any of those things in topsy-turvy. In most cultures there is at least one day where everything turns upside down. What he did with this night is to put everybody into an unsafe place where anything can happen.

What's more, Demetrius is the only one of the lovers that is never unjuiced. It's a small, but important twist that the love juice reveals the simple truth of his love for Helena. The drug melts away societal notions of money and beauty, the notion that Hermia is the more appropriate mate. It is only in this state that Demetrius' first yearnings for Helena can be rediscovered.

SOLOMON: And isn't he the one who keeps referring to rationality to talk about the sudden love that he experiences?

TAYMOR: Yes, completely. They're always talking about what is rational. And even Bottom talks about that. The beauty of Bottom's dream is, I think, at the heart of what Shakespeare is also saying: Don't explain it. Don't analyze your dreams. The dream is somehow connected to the unfathomable, which is God-like, and we as humans shouldn't go there. I mean, we shouldn't try to control that, as well. I love that. I think that's beautiful.

And that's why children are so important to this production because they're pre-control.

SOLOMON: You're using children as the Fairies—right?—or the Elementals, as you are calling them.

TAYMOR: Yes, there are 20 prepubescent kids. They not only play the Fairies, as written, but also play the forest. They're the trees, the creatures, dogs, does, snakes, bats, moths. They are the wind, they're your mind. They're Puck's posse, who terrorize the

Mechanicals when Bottom changes. They're an incarnation of the emotions of the lovers. They're the nightmare of Hermia. They are the elements.

SOLOMON: Were you jumping off of the scholarly conjecture that historically, in the original production, the Fairies were indeed played by children?

TAYMOR: No. I don't care what other productions did, though I would imagine that they would have been children. I think it works better with children, just the idea of it, the energy.

Most initiation ceremonies all over the world are when you're 13 or so, when you finally start to have sexuality that is recognizable and separates boys from girls, and they have to control their nature. That's what we call it: our *nature*. So I wanted that feeling. What has been amazing in the rehearsals with these kids is the sheer joy they get out of a trap opening, or a line coming down.

I mean, seriously, the unfettered, sheer, pure, direct, emotion.

SOLOMON: Isn't that the thrilling thing that theater lets all of us do—I mean, don't we get to have that sort of childlike wonder?

TAYMOR: Well, that's what I hope. It goes to a DNA part of us that relates to the first shadows on the wall that were made into foxes and rabbits. Where we suspended our disbelief and we said: "Oh, yes, I know it's a hand with a light behind it casting a shadow; but no it's not, it's a fox, it's a rabbit."

SOLOMON: "How easy is a bush suppos'd a bear," as Theseus says.

TAYMOR: Yes. That's exactly what it is.

SOLOMON: So let's talk about shadows, since it's an element that you have long used in your work, and was such a significant part of your early study in theater. Oberon is the King of Shadows. The actors

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are referred to as shadows, most famously in Puck's epilogue. How are you pulling up the shadow element and physicalizing that?

TAYMOR: We are doing a lot of shadows because, obviously with fabric, if you're doing projections, you can't help but have shadows. But there are deliberate shadows, as well. I never see any evidence that Oberon is called the King of the Fairies. It's not in the text anywhere, and King of Shadows is. But I think when the actor playing Puck says, "if we shadows have offended," Puck is talking about the actors. The actors in Shakespeare are shadowing our lives.

They're shadowing us with a different perspective. And you can like it, or you might not like it. And you might find it fearful. Shakespeare was bringing up the magical world of fairies and elves, which in that time, probably would have been considered dangerous and, like you said, sinister, and anti-Christianity. This is a world of animism and of old fairytales and ancient beliefs that would come from the country.

He was treading on dangerous ground. There's a part where Oberon says: 'We are spirits of another sort. We're not the negative spirits.' Even though there's darkness in Titania and Oberon, really Oberon is very positive. He's trying to help Helena, and help the lovers find their true loves.

SOLOMON: Let's talk a little about the acting. I know in the past you've worked with the idea of ideographs, of a kind of essential, distilled-down gesture that helps define the inner experience and thematic concerns of characters in a physical way. Is that guiding your work here, as well?

TAYMOR: I don't know if I've worked on that, not as much as in the past. I think this has been really more just finding the parts. It's very physical, though. It's not dance-y, but there are moves that are highly stylized. And surely for the character of Puck we have talked about the physicality, and the physicality of Oberon and Titania. That's just how I work. But I wouldn't say that I'm asking them to find an ideograph

in the way that I might have done in the past. Not in the same kind of codified way.

SOLOMON: What qualities are the actors you cast bringing to the roles?

TAYMOR: David Harewood as Oberon brings explosive power, incredible sexuality, but there's also fun and joy and devilishness. He's not just the big, bad Oberon. He's loving, and it's a very complete character that way. But he's jealous, he's got all of that. And our wonderful Tina Benko as Titania is stunning. She has got incredible imperial queen-like nature to her, very chiseled, but also has a low-brow bawdiness, and a very human side. Those characters have to straddle the more stylized idea, something that is more abstract, more an essence of being the Fairy Queen, or the King of Shadows, and not just the humans.

They are not humans. But that doesn't mean—not unlike the Greek Gods—that they're not operating with completely human emotion, which they are. So that's always with these characters, the hardest thing.

As Puck, Kathryn Hunter is such a transformer physically, and she can do so many marvelous things with her body. I am using it. We are really using it. She's astounding and can contort, and can jump on Oberon, and can move around. Everything she does comes from the character. She operates from the script. The words, the language move her. It's always organic.

I've read many times that the four lovers are indistinguishable, but I didn't find that at all. They're very clearly defined. Lysander is a poet, a rebel. Perhaps this is the reason why Hermia's father, Egeus, doesn't want him to marry his daughter. Lysander speaks in such forward language, and is a romantic and a wild boy. It's clear that he's the 'hippie.' He's the one that the father does not want. Whereas Demetrius is straighter, stiffer, he's almost—we're not doing this, but the Wall Street banker's son—a son-in-law who could be like a mini Egeus.

And he's a liar. He's given his love to Helena, and

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sees somebody else and his eyes turn, for what reason we don't know. But if you go with those ideas, then, when you're casting, you can find actors who have such differences that make the characters even more definitive individuals.

SOLOMON: We're running out of time, so let me ask you one last thing. People know this play; they have expectations of it. They also have expectations of you that maybe can feel a little burdensome. Are there any preconceptions you'd like to disabuse people of in advance?

TAYMOR: One of the reasons I've never directed *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, was because I felt like it was what people thought was up my alley because of *The Lion King* and puppetry, and all that. And that's why I gravitate more toward the human plays, the plays that don't have this world of magic and other-worldly creatures. But our Rude Elementals are extremely human in that they don't have accoutrements that make them Fairies. They're children. And it's their energy and their essence that makes them these characters, not objects that they're holding or anything like that.

I couldn't imagine—unless you use puppets, which would work very well—how else would you do those characters?

Some people set the play in the streets of LA and street people are the fairies. There's all that kind of stuff that's been done a lot. Or, you place it in Haiti, or you place it in Brazil or something, so you use another cultural reference to be able to understand the Fairies. That's totally acceptable, it's great, it's just we're not doing that. We're not placing it in a time period or place. It's really its own time and place and space.

SOLOMON: And maybe all importantly the space of the theater.

TAYMOR: Really all importantly. You're extremely aware of the theater. Everything—the scaffolding, the ropes, the wires—you're going to see through these

things. And we're really using the height and the depth of the new theater. The mechanics of the theater are part of the magic.

ALISA SOLOMON is a teacher, writer and dramaturg living in New York City. She directs the Arts and Culture concentration in the MA program at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism. Her criticism, essays, and political reporting have appeared in a wide range of magazines and newspapers, including the *New York Times*, *Nation*, *Forward*, *Theater*, and *Village Voice* (where she was on the staff for 21 years). Her book, *Re-Dressing the Canon: Essays on Theater and Gender* (Routledge, 1997) won the George Jean Nathan Award for Dramatic Criticism. She is the co-editor (with Tony Kushner) of the anthology *Wrestling with Zion: Progressive Jewish-American Responses to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Grove, 2003). Her new book, *Wonder of Wonders: A Cultural History of Fiddler on the Roof*, is just out from Metropolitan Books (Holt).

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ZACH APPELMAN (*Demetrius*) credits include *War Horse* (Broadway); The title role in *Henry V* (Folger Theatre); *Romeo & Juliet* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre); *Death of A Salesman*, *Arcadia*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Winter's Tale* (Chautauqua Theater Company); and *King Lear*, *As You Like It* (Shakespeare Santa Cruz). He has appeared on television in "Homeland," and "Law & Order: SVU," as well as the feature film "Kill Your Darlings." BFA, UC Santa Barbara; MFA, Yale School of Drama.

BRENDAN AVERETT (*Snug*). Off-Broadway: *As You Like It* (Shakespeare in the Park); *Massacre (Sing to Your Children)* (Rattlestick Theater); *Passion Play* (Epic Theatre Ensemble). Regional Theatre: *Romeo and Juliet* (Actor's Theatre of Louisville); *Of Mice and Men* (Cincinnati Playhouse); *Passion Play* (Yale Repertory Theatre); *Hamlet* and *The Chairs* (Court Theatre). Other Theatre: *Measure for Measure*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Stratford Shakespeare Festival of Canada). Television: "Trapped in the Closet," "Law & Order SVU," "Blossom."

OLIVIA BAK (*Rude Elemental*). After years of dance and numerous TV commercials, Olivia is thrilled to be making her professional stage debut as a member of this incredible team.

MARCUS BELLAMY (*Rude Elemental*). Born and raised in Port Charlotte Florida, Marcus first studied at The Florida Dance Workshop under direction of Michelle and Susan Labousier; then later continued his education at Interlochen Arts Academy and The Juilliard School. Bellamy first met Julie Taymor on her film *Across The Universe!* He is very excited and thankful to be a part of this special cast and crew of *A Midsummers Night's Dream!* Thank you God!

TINA BENKO (*Titania*) recently played the title roles in *Jackie* (Lucille Lortel nomination) at the Womens Project directed by Tea Alagic and Toni Morrison's play *Desdemona* directed by Peter Sellars (Holland Festival/Napoli/Barbican). Other theatre includes Katori Hall's *Whaddabloodclot!!!* at Williamstown Theatre Festival; *The Little Foxes* (New York Theatre Workshop); *Marie and Bruce* (The New Group); and *Rough Sketch* (59East 59). TV and Film credits include *Contest*, *Admission*, *The Avengers*, *Are We Officially Dating*, *Photo-Op*, "Ugly Betty," "Unforgettable," "Royal Pains," and "Brotherhood."

CIARAN BOWLING (*Rude Elemental*). Born & Bred—London/England, Junior at LaGuardia HS. Huge thanks to my amazing drama studio, especially Ms. Faison, Mr. Shifman, Ms. Tsantilas, and Mr. Bonventre.

JARRETT AUSTIN BROWN (*Rude Elemental*) has performed with some of New York's top choreographers and won many awards. He studies dance in high school. He is from Queens, NY.

MAX CASELLA (*Bottom*) currently featured in Woody Allen's *Blue Jasmine*. Upcoming films include: Spike Lee's *Oldboy* and *Inside Llewyn Davis* by the Coen Brothers. Television: "The Sopranos," "Boardwalk Empire," "Doogie Howser." Broadway: *Relatively Speaking*, *The Lion King* (original "Timon" –Drama Desk Nomination; Theater World Award). Off-Broadway: *Souls of Naples* (TFANA), Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* (Public Theater). Played "Clov" to John Turturro's "Hamm" in Beckett's *Endgame* at BAM. Apologies to William Kempe.



Tina Benko; photo by Es Devlin

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ROGER CLARK (*Theseus*) thrilled to be a part of launching TFANA's new home. Theatre work spans 45 countries and includes Off Broadway: *Picture of Dorian Gray* (Sonnet Rep. Signature Theater) *In Your Image* (OTSP;59E59 studios). Off-Off-Broadway: *Anna Christie* (Metropolitan Playhouse) Regional: *The Unexpected Guest* (Mount Gretna Theater, PA) *South Beach Babylon* (Florida Studio Theatre) Tour: *Macbeth* (ADGE), *Death of a Salesman* (ADGE). TV: "Zero Hour" (ABC), "The Wild West" (BBC). Twitter: @rclark98.

JON VIKTOR CORPUZ (*Rude Elemental*). Off-Broadway Debut! Broadway: *Godspell* (2032 - Telly). Regional: *The King & I* (Chulalongkorn). Thanks to God, family, Judy, Victoria, Katie, Michele, Julie, Brian, Deborah, Jonathan, cast. #slänt

CHRISTINA DIMANCHE (*Rude Elemental*) makes her debut in theater on this stage. She feels blessed and grateful and prays that this is only the beginning.

LILLY ENGLERT (*Hermia*) graduated in May 2013 from The Stella Adler studio of acting. Previous roles include Jessica in *The Merchant of Venice* and Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*. Lilly is very excited to be making her Off-Broadway debut in such a wonderful theatre and with such an incredible company of actors.

JAKE L. FARAGALLI (*Rude Elemental*) is excited to perform in this production. Past credits: *Oliver* (Oliver), *Snoopy* (Snoopy), *Mockingbird* (Jem), *Mulan* (Mushu), *Tom Sawyer* (Tom), *Willy Wonka* (Charlie).

JARYD FARCON (*Rude Elemental*). Professional debut. Attends LaGuardia High School, Championship Ballroom Dancer, Knicks City Kid. Thank you to my family, dance coaches, MSA, Deborah Brown, and Julie Taymor.

JOE GRIFASI (*Peter Quince*). Broadway: *Dinner at Eight*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, *The Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, *The Boys Next Door* (Drama Desk Nomination). Other theatres: Stratford Festival, Goodman Theater, Yale Rep. As director: *One Slight Hitch* by Lewis Black, *Cup of Coffee* by Preston Sturges. Over fifty films including *The Deer Hunter*, *Naked Gun*, *Presumed Innocent*, *Big Business*, *Batman Forever*, *Benny & Joon*. Television: "Law & Order" and numerous others.

DAVID HAREWOOD (*Oberon*). Theater: *Othello*, *Welcome to Thebes*, *Henry IV* (National Theater); *The Mountaintop* (Theater 503; West End (Olivier Award for Best New Play)). Films: *The Third Person* (Paul Haggis), *The Man Inside* (Dan Turner), *Blood Diamond* (Edward Zwick), *Separate Lies* (Julian Fellowes). Television: "Homeland" (Showtime); "Treasure Island" (SyFy); "Hustle" (AMC); "Strike Back" (Cinemax); "Dr. Who," "Mrs. Mandela," "Robin Hood" (BBC). Order of the British Empire (MBE) from Queen Elizabeth II. Nomination SAG Award—"Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Drama Series for Homeland" (2013).

JAKE HOROWITZ (*Lysander*) was last seen Off-Broadway in Barrow Street's production of *Our Town*. He is a recent graduate of LaGuardia High School and is continuing his studies as an actor at CalArts. He extends deep thanks to his family and his many excellent teachers.



Tina Benko and David Harewood; photo by Es Devlin

THE PRODUCTION CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

KATHRYN HUNTER (*Puck*). Theatre includes as Actor: *Kafka's Monkey* (NY); *Fragments* (Peter Brook); *King Lear* (title role)(London, Tokyo); *Richard III* (title role) (Shakespeare's Globe); *The Visit* (Theatre de Complicite/National Theatre) (Olivier award Best Actress); *The Skriker* (Caryl Churchill) (Olivier nomination Best Actress); *Spoonface Steinberg* (Lee Hall). As Director includes: *My Perfect Mind (Young Vic)*; *Othello* (RSC); *Comedy of Errors, Pericles* (Shakespeare's Globe); *Aristophanes's Birds* (National Theatre). Film includes: *Harry Potter, All or Nothing* (Mike Leigh).

ZACHARY INFANTE (*Francis Flute*) recently graduated from NYU with a BFA in Drama after studying at CAP21 and ETW studios. Prior to training, Zach worked extensively with the Not-For-Profit organizations for children with cancer. The Sunshine Kids and The Valerie Fund. Credits include Liz Swados' *The Reality Show*, The Paper Mill Playhouse's *Peter Pan*, and the film *The School of Rock* starring Jack Black. Proud Alum of NYU's premier a capella group The N'Harmonics.

REIMI KANEKO (*Rude Elemental*). A sophomore at LaGuardia High School of Performing Arts in Manhattan, loves the art of dance. She's delighted to make her debut in this production.

SOPHIA LILLIS (*Rude Elemental / Moth*) lives in Brooklyn with Gracie (bull dog), Crackle (cat) and Jake (twin brother), among others. She is in the sixth grade.

ROBERT LANGDON LLOYD (*Egeus*). For Theatre for a New Audience he appeared in *Othello, Measure for Measure, Macbeth, The Broken Heart, The Taming of the Shrew,* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. He was a founding member of Peter Brook's Paris Company and a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company. American credits include world tour of Brook's *Dream, Lear* (San Francisco Opera), *Conference of the Birds* (La MaMa), *The Mahabharata* (BAM), VOICETheatre's *Legacy*.

JOHNNY MARX (*Rude Elemental*) is thankful for the opportunity to work with the brilliant creative team on this amazing production. Love and thanks to my supportive family!

MANDI MASDEN (*Helena*). TFANA: Debut. Off-Broadway: *The Piano Lesson* (Signature Theatre Company). Regional: *Shipwrecked! An Entertainment* (Cincinnati Playhouse In the Park), *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Othello, A Christmas Carol* (Denver Center Theatre Company), *Ragtime* (PPTOPA), *Ruined* (Plowshares Theatre Company). Other theatre credits include *Angels in America, The Three Sisters, The Winter's Tale, HAIR, Ah! Wilderness, As You Like It, Into the Woods,* and *The Love Song of J. Robert Oppenheimer*. MFA, The National Theatre Conservatory.

JACOB MING-TRENT (*Snout*). Broadway: *Hands on a Hardbody* (Ronald Mcowan), *Shrek the Musical* (Papa Ogre). Off-Broadway: *The Merchant of Venice* (TFANA), *On the Levee* (L.C.T), *Widowers' Houses* (Epic). National tours: *Spelling Bee* (First National), *Continental Divide* (Time Magazine Theatre Event of the Year). Other theaters: Public theater, Playwrights Horizons, New Georges, McCarter Theatre, Barbican Theatre, Yale Rep, La Jolla Playhouse, Berkeley Rep, Long Wharf, Williamstown etc. TV: "Law & Order," "Bored to Death," "30 Rock," "Unforgettable". Film: *Forbidden Love, Fort Greene*.



Zach Appelman, Lilly Engler, and Jake Horowitz; photo by Gerry Goodstein

THE PRODUCTION CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

OKWUI OKPOKWASILI (*Hippolyta*) continues to develop Bronx Gothic, a solo work co-commissioned by Danspace Project and PS 122, running in the 2014 COIL festival. Two time Bessie Award winner for Ralph Lemon's *Come Home Charley Patton* and an original work, *Pent-up: a revenge dance*. Select New York theater: *Sounding*, *Young Jean Lee's Lear*. Selected Film: *The Interpreter*, *The Hoax*.

ISAIAH REGISTER (*Rude Elemental*) is excited to be performing in his first theater role in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Isaiah has appeared in commercials and has experience with voice-over work.

BRIANA ROBINSON (*Rude Elemental*). A native of Gary, Indiana, Briana Robinson began dancing at her church when she was eight years old. Ms. Robinson's formal dance training began at the age of eleven, at the Emerson School for the Visual and Performing Arts, where she graduated as the salutatorian of her class. In 2013, Ms. Robinson graduated and received her Bachelor in Fine Arts degree, from The Juilliard School in New York City.

WILLA SCOLARI (*Rude Elemental*) fell in love with dance when Jacques d'Amboise's National Dance Institute taught at her elementary school. Since then, she has thrived in NDI's outstanding programs.

SOPHIE SHAPIRO (*Rude Elemental / Cobweb*) is thrilled to be making her professional debut with TFANA! Many thanks to production, Brian and especially Julie for this amazing opportunity. Love to family!

ALEX SHIMIZU (*Rude Elemental*) has performed leadings roles with Jacques d'Amboise's National Dance Institute and can be seen as "Rock" on Nicktoon's "Alien Dawn".

EMMET SMITH (*Rude Elemental / Peaseblossom*) thrilled for TFANA debut! Off-Broadway: *Soul Doctor*. Amateur: *A Chorus Line* (Paul), *Seussical* (Horton), *Cymbeline*, *Curtains*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*. Thanks to mentors at Hunter, NDI, Manitou, parents, Ian!

MADISON SMITH (*Rude Elemental*). NYC debut. Nora Brennan and Deborah Brown thank you for this opportunity! Thanks to my family, friends and King Centre family for all of your love.

AZALEA TWINING (*Rude Elemental / Mustardseed*) performed *The Marches* recently with the Isadora Duncan Company. For *Vampire Hunters*, a student-produced film, she acted, composed and recorded the theme song.

CASSIDY VANVONNO (*Rude Elemental*) is 12, from Ocean City, Maryland. Favorite Credit: Little Mermaid (Ariel). Love/Thanks: Family, Friends, Take 3 Talent, Kara Mikula, Julie Taymor, MSND Creative Team!

WILLIAM YOUMANS (*Starveling*). Broadway: *Hands on a Hardbody*, *Wicked*, *Finian's Rainbow*, *The Little Foxes*, *Farnsworth Invention*, *Big River*, *Baz Luhrmann's La Boheme*, *Titanic*, *Pirate Queen*, *Billy Elliot*. Off-Broadway: *Brundibar* (Kushner), *Road Show* (Sondheim), *Giant*, *Coraline*, *Henry V* (Delacourt). Movies/TV: *Extremely Loud And Incredibly Close*, *A League of Their Own*, *Nadine*, *Compromising Positions*, *Mrs. Soffel*, *Little Match Girl*, *Roanoke*. Ten million cop shows.



Emmit Smith and Kathryn Hunter; photo by Es Devlin

THE PRODUCTION CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

JONATHAN MASTRO (*Music Supervisor / Keyboard / Conductor*) with TFANA: *The Taming of the Shrew*. Off Broadway: David Cromer's groundbreaking *Our Town* (original music, music direction, Simon Stimson); *Hit The Wall* (Barrow St); *Paris Commune* (Civilians/BAM Next Wave). Also Emily Bergl's Music Director (Café Carlyle, Oak Room, etc.) Regional: Goodman, Huntington, Lookingglass, Broad Stage, Barrel of Monkeys. For S, G and H.

WILSON TORRES (*Percussion*) A New York native. BM, MM from Manhattan School of Music in orchestral percussion. Graduate of The Juilliard School M.A.P., Pre-College program, and F.H. LaGuardia High School of Music and Art. Broadway: Tony and Grammy Award winning *In the Heights*, *Lysistrata Jones* and *The Wiz* (Encores). Tours: *Lion King* (San Francisco, 1st National, Cheetah), and *Wicked* (1st National). Orchestral: San Francisco Symphony, New Jersey Symphony and Albany Symphony. Wilson is a proud endorser of Latin Percussion, Sabian Cymbals and Remo drum heads.

JULIE TAYMOR (*Director*). TFANA: *The Tempest*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Titus Andronicus*, *The Green Bird*. Broadway: *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark*, *The Lion King* (Tony Awards – Best Direction of a Musical, Best Costumes), *Juan Darien: A Carnival Mass* (five Tony nominations), *The Green Bird*. Off-Broadway: *The Transposed Heads*, *Liberty's Taken*. Opera: *Oedipus Rex* starring Jessye Norman (International Classical Music Award), *Salomé*, *The Flying Dutchman*, *Die Zauberflöte* and *The Magic Flute* (abridged English version), both of which have been performed in repertory at the Metropolitan Opera, Elliot Goldenthal's *Grendel*. Film: *The Tempest* with Helen Mirren, *Across the Universe* (Golden Globe nomination), *Frida* (two Academy Awards), and *Titus*, starring Anthony Hopkins and Jessica Lange. Taymor is a 1991 recipient of the MacArthur "genius" Fellowship.

ELLIOT GOLDENTHAL (*Music Composer*) TFANA: *The Tempest*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Titus Andronicus*, *The Green Bird*. Broadway: *Juan Darien: A Carnival Mass* (five Tony nominations including Best Score), *The Green Bird*. Off-Broadway: *The Transposed Heads*, *Liberty's Taken*. Goldenthal wrote the original two-act opera *Grendel* for which he was named one of two finalists for the 2006 Pulitzer Prize in music. Commissioned by American Ballet Theatre to compose three-act ballet *Othello* which debuted at the Metropolitan Opera. Wrote large-scale symphonic piece, *Fire Water Paper: A Vietnam Oratorio* commissioned by Pacific Symphony. Film credits include: *Frida* (Academy Award and Golden Globe), *Interview With the Vampire* and *Michael Collins* (Oscar nominations), *Public Enemies*, *Heat*, *The Butcher Boy* and Julie Taymor's *The Tempest*, *Across The Universe*, and *Titus*.

ES DEVLIN (*Scenic Designer*). Es is an Olivier Award winning designer working internationally in Opera, Theatre, Dance and Pop. Her concert designs include: Kanye West, Jay Z, Lady Gaga, PetShopBoys and Goldfrapp. Es is based in London and designs for the Royal Shakespeare Company, Royal National Theatre and Royal Opera House. Film designs include collaborations with Sally Potter and Mike Figgis. Recent work includes: *Master and Margarita* (Complicité); *Les Troyens* (Royal Opera House, Vienna, La Scala); *Massive Attack v Adam Curtis* (Armory), and the Closing Ceremony of the London 2012 Olympic Games. Forthcoming projects include: *Roberto Devereux* (The Met), *Machinal* (Roundabout at American Airlines); *American Psycho - the Musical* at the Almeida, London. Es has been awarded Olivier, Linbury, TMA and multiple TPi awards.

CONSTANCE HOFFMAN (*Costume Designer*) has designed costumes for opera, dance, and theatre internationally, regionally, and in New York City. Her credits include collaborations with theatre artists such as Mark Lamos, Julie Taymor, Eliot Feld, and Mikhail Baryshnikov, opera directors Robert Carsen, David Alden, Christopher Alden, Keith Warner, and entertainer Bette Midler. On her Broadway debut, she earned a Tony nomination and an Outer Critics Circle Award for her designs for *The Green Bird*, directed by Julie Taymor.

DON HOLDER (*Lighting Designer*) has been collaborating with TFANA and Julie Taymor since *Titus Andronicus* in 1994. Broadway credits include: *The Lion King* and *South Pacific* (Tony award), *Golden Boy*, *Ragtime*, *Les Liasons Dangereuses*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *Juan Darien* (all Tony nominated), *Spiderman*, *Big Fish*, *Bullets Over Broadway*, and *The Bridges of Madison County*. Opera: *Two Boys* and *The Magic Flute* (Metropolitan Opera). Television: "Smash" Seasons 1 and 2.

MATT TIERNEY (*Sound Designer*) Recent: Elevator Repair Service's *Arguendo* (The Public), *The Select (The Sun Also Rises)* (Lortel, Obie awards, 2012), *The Sound and the Fury (April Seventh, 1928)* (NYTW). *Detroit, Kin, This* (Playwrights Horizons); *Luck of the Irish* (LCT3); *Uncle Vanya, ...Death of Walt Disney, Blasted* (Hewes award) (SoHo Rep); Other: The Wooster Group; MTC; Alley Theatre; A.R.T.; Woolly Mammoth; McCarter Theatre; Shakespeare Theatre Company; BAM; Center Theatre Group.

THE PRODUCTION CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

SVEN ORTEL (*Projection Designer*) is a Tony-nominated projection designer. He works internationally creating projections and imagery for Theatre, Opera, Dance, Musical and beyond. To foster the future of his profession, Sven mentors young projection designers, teaches, gives master classes and has created an online resource for projection design (projctn.com). Sven lives in Brooklyn, NY. He loves to cycle around the city and running around the Brooklyn waterfront and Prospect Park. More info at: www.svenortel.com.

BRIAN BROOKS (*Choreographer*) was recently awarded with a 2013 Guggenheim Fellowship. He is a proud recipient of the NY City Center Fellowship, the Jerome Robbins New Essential Works Grant and the Joyce Theater's Artist Residency. Performing his choreography internationally with NY City Ballet Principal Dancer Wendy Whelan, Brooks is also preparing for his company's debut at BAM, presented in their 2013 Next Wave Festival. He lives in New York City.

AIREALISTIC (*Aerial Design and Flight*) is a site-specific aerial theater company specializing in manual fly systems for people, props and scenery. Combining rock climbing, sailing and rescue technologies with traditional theater rigging, we produce solutions for film, television, theater and live events. Credits include 2008 Olympics, Dancing with the Stars, Cirque du Soleil and The Bregenz Festival in Austria. We are delighted to collaborate with this talented group of people on this exceptional production.

ANDREW WADE (*Vocal Coach*) is Resident Director of Voice at Theatre for a New Audience where he has coached *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Broken Heart*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Chair*, and *Notes from Underground*. Head of Voice, RSC, 1990-2003. Assistant Voice Director, RSC, 1987-1990. Verse Consultant, *Shakespeare in Love*. Adjunct faculty at Julliard and Guest Artist at Stella Adler Studio. At Guthrie Theater Andrew has coached *Primerose Path*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Hamlet* and *As You Like It*. He is Voice Director for *Matilda* and Director of Voice & Speech at The Public Theater.



Jacob Ming Treft, Zachary Infante, Max Casella, Brendan Everett, and William Youmans; photo by Gerry Goodstein

THE PRODUCTION CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

JONATHAN KALB (*Dramaturg*) is Literary Advisor and Resident Artist at Theatre for a New Audience and Professor of Theatre at Hunter College, CUNY. He has twice won the George Jean Nathan Award for Dramatic Criticism, which he received for his books *Beckett in Performance* (1991) and *Great Lengths: Seven Works of Marathon Theater* (2012). *Great Lengths* also won the Theater Library Association's George Freedley Award.

DEBORAH BROWN (*Casting Director*). This is Deborah Brown's 22nd season with Theatre for a New Audience. She has cast for Broadway, Off-Broadway and many of the leading regional theatres in the country. She shared an Emmy for the HBO series "From the Earth to the Moon." Other television includes "The Days and Nights of Molly Dodd" and New York casting on "Band of Brothers."

LORI LUNDQUIST (*Production Stage Manager*) has worked on Broadway with *The Best Man*, *Fosse*, *Holiday*, as well as National Tours of *Spelling Bee*, *Will Roger's Follies*, *Fosse*. Some NYC credits include *Into The Woods*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Musical*, *The Shaggs*, *The Burnt Part Boys*, The Roundabout Theatre, NYSAF and New York City Opera. She has worked regionally at The Ordway, Trinity Repertory Company, Long Wharf Theatre, Hartford Stage Company, The Alley Theatre, and Kansas City Rep. Proud member of AEA.

KAT THARP (*Production Manager / Line Producer*) This is Kat's first TFANA production, and she is delighted to be part of the Midsummer team! Many thanks and much love to her friends and family, especially her Mom & Dad, Brother Ron, Erin, Leeann, Rogue, and Aunt Irene for their steadfast support and encouragement. Kat has previously worked with: Target Margin, Ma-Yi, NAATCO, Alpine Theater Project, Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, & more. MFA: Yale School of Drama.

BRANDON MASON (*Recorded Music Soundtrack Mixing / Balance Engineer*). Theatre debut. Previous projects with Julie Taymor and Elliot Goldenthal together: *Across The Universe* and *The Tempest*. Other credits: soundtracks for *The Runaways*, *Tropic Thunder*, *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*, and record releases by Fiona Apple, Shooter Jennings, 101 Crustaceans, Secret Machines, David Bowie, and many others.

RICK MARTINEZ (*Electronic Music Designer*) worked with Elliot Goldenthal on movie scores, plays, a ballet, and an opera. As a composer, Martinez created scores for films and theater, such as *The Longoria Affair*, an Emmy-nominated PBS film; and *The Dog in the Manger* for The Shakespeare Theater Company in Washington, D.C.

BETTIE O. ROGERS (*Hair & Wig Designer*). Broadway credits for hair design include *A View from the Bridge*; *Bring in 'da Noise, Bring in 'da Funk*; *One Mo' Time*; *Riverdance on Broadway*; *Street Corner Symphony*; and *Swinging on a Star*. Currently, Ms. Rogers is in her 8th season as the Department Head Hairstylist for NBC's "Saturday Night Live," for which she's received 3 Emmy Awards (2008, 2012, 2013) for a total of 6 nominations.

ANDREW SOTOMAYOR (*Makeup Designer*). Before becoming a makeup artist, Andrew trained in musical theater and also studied at Shakespeare's Globe in London. He's since worked with dozens of celebrities for appearances on *Project Runway*, *The Today Show*, *Jimmy Fallon*, and *Saturday Night Live*, and assisted on fashion shows for Chanel, Dior, Marchesa, and Oscar de La Renta. Thank you Constance Hoffman for the guidance, and Julie Taymor for the dream come true. AndrewSotomayor.com
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DANIEL WURTZEL (*Fabric & Fans Artist*) creates aerial and atmospheric effects for theater, circus, special events, and as permanent art installations. His work includes: Cirque du Soleil's *Amaluna* directed by Diane Paulus, Robert Lepage's *Cartes* and Music Hall of Belgium's *Peter Pan*, The Latin Grammy Awards, Jonas Brothers concerts and other Cirque du Soleil shows. Corporate clients: Mercedes Benz, Louis Vuitton, Samsung, Audi, Cisco Systems, Canali, Royal Dutch Shell, the Bundesliga and Hyundai.

THE PRODUCTION CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM



Kathryn Hunter and David Harewood; photo by Es Devlin

RESOURCES GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACT 1, SCENE 1

dowager a woman whose husband is dead and who is in the enjoyment of some title or some property that has come to her from him

Theseus: She lingers my desires,

Like to a step-dame or a dowager

Long withering out a young man revenue

solemnity an occasion of ceremony; an observance or celebration of special importance; a festival or other similar occasion

Hippolyta: And then the moon, like to a silver bow

New-bent in heaven, shall behold the night Of our solemnities.

knack a trick; a deceitful or crafty device; a mean or underhand trick

nosegay a bunch of flowers or herbs, especially ones having a sweet smell

sweetmeats sweet foods, such as sugared cakes or pastry

Egeus: And stolen the impression of her fantasy With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds, conceits,

Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats, messengers

Of strong prevailment in unhardened youth

abjure to renounce on oath

Theseus: Either to die the death or to abjure For ever the society of men.

Diana patroness of virginity and of hunting; the moon-goddess

Theseus: Or else to wed Demetrius, as he would; Or on Diana's altar to protest

For aye austerity and single life.

edict that which is proclaimed by authority as a rule of action; an order issued by a sovereign to his subjects

Hermia: If then true lovers have been ever crossed,

It stands as an edict in destiny

Cupid's strongest bow In Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Book 1), Cupid is said to have two kinds of arrows: arrows with heads of gold and arrows with heads of lead. The golden arrows made people fall in

love, while the lead arrows made people fall out of love.

Hermia: My good Lysander!

I swear to thee, by Cupid's strongest bow,

By his best arrow with the golden head,

Venus The ancient Roman goddess of beauty and love; Cupid's mother and the Roman goddess of love, and she traveled in a chariot drawn by doves.

Hermia: By the simplicity of Venus' doves,

And by that fire which...Carthage

queen...false Trojan The Carthage Queen is Dido, whose suicide by fire is recounted by the Roman poet Virgil in *The Aeneid*. A survivor of the Trojan War, Aeneas lands in Carthage, where Dido takes him in as her lover, but he abandons her in order to fulfill his destiny as founder of the Roman Empire. Betrayed by the false Trojan, Dido throws herself on a pyre.

Hermia: And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage queen,

When the false Trojan under sail was seen,

lodestar stars used by sailors for navigation

Helena: Your eyes are lodestars, and your tongue's sweet air

Phoebe alternative name for Diana, the goddess of the moon

Lysander: To-morrow night, when Phoebe doth behold

Her silver visage in the watery glass,

waggish playfully mischievous

Helena: As waggish boys in game themselves foreswear,

So the boy Love is perjured everywhere.

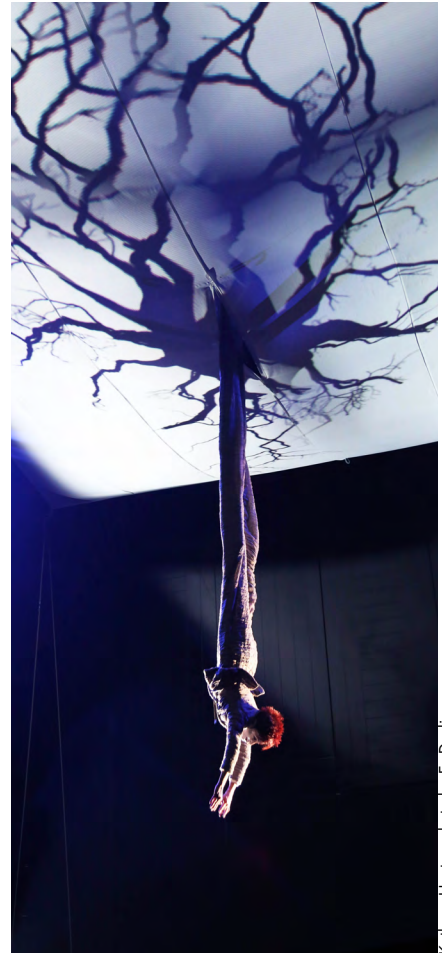
ACT 1, SCENE 2

bellows an instrument or machine constructed to furnish a strong blast of air; used to blow fire or supply air to a wind-instrument, as an organ, harmonium, or concertina

Quince: Francis Flute, the bellows-mender?

tinker a craftsman who mends pots, kettles, and other metal household utensils

Quince: Tom Snout, the tinker?



Kathryn Hunter; photo by Es Devlin

joiner a craftsman whose occupation it is to construct things by joining pieces of wood

Quince: Snug, the joiner, you the lion's part;

extempore at the moment, without premeditation or preparation; off-hand

Quince: You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring.

ACT 2, SCENE 1

dale a valley; a hole in the ground; a hollow, pit, gulf

brier a prickly, thorny bush or shrub

Fairy: Over hill, over dale, Through bush, thorough brier, Over park, over pale, Thorough flood, thorough fire;

cowslips a well-known wild plant in pastures and grassy banks, with drooping umbels of fragrant yellow flowers

Fairy: I must go seek some dewdrops here,

RESOURCES GLOSSARY OF TERMS

And hang a pearl in every cowslips' ear.

changeling a child supposed to have been left by fairies in exchange for one stolen
Robin: Because that she, as her attendant, hath A lovely boy stol'n from an Indian king, She never had so sweet a changeling;

quern a small hand-mill for grinding corn, pepper, mustard, etc.
Fairy: Are not you he That frights the maidens of the villag'ry, Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern,

Corin...Phyllida In Elizabethan pastoral literature, *Corin* and *Phyllida* were conventional names for a lovesick shepherd and his beloved shepherdess.
Titania: When thou hast stolen away from fairy land, And in the shape of Corin sat all day, Playing on pipes of corn and versing love To amorous Phyllida.

Perigenia, whom he ravished...With Ariadne and Antiopa In *The Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans*, the ancient Roman writer Plutarch recounts how Theseus ravished and broke his faith with women such as Perigenia, Ariadne, and Antiopa.
Oberon: Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night From Perigenia, whom he ravished? And make him with fair Aegles break his faith, With Ariadne and Antiopa?

murrion the flesh of animals that have died of disease; infectious disease, plague, pestilence
Titania: The fold stands empty in the drowned field, And crows are fatted with the murrion flock;

hoary-headed a head covered with short dense white or whitish hairs
chaplet a wreath for the head, usually a garland of flowers or leaves
Titania: And thorough this distemperature we see The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts Far in the fresh lap of the crimson rose, And on old Hiems' thin and icy crown

An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds Is, as in mockery, set:

votress (female version of votary) one who has made, or is bound by, a special vow
Titania: His mother was a votress of my order:

dulcet sweet to the ear; soothing, gentle
Oberon: ...And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath

leviathan the name of some aquatic animal (real or imaginary) of enormous size
Oberon: Ere the leviathan can swim a league.

Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase In Greek mythology, Apollo was in love with Daphne. When Apollo pursued her, Daphne prayed to the Earth or to her father to rescue her, whereupon she was transformed into a laurel.
Helena: The wildest hath not such a heart as you.

Run when you will, the story shall be changed: Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase;

oxlips a woodland plant having drooping umbels of pale yellow flower

woodbine a name for various plants of a climbing habit, such as ivy

eglantine type of rose
Oberon: I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,

Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows, Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine, With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine:

ACT 2, SCENE 2

Philomel a poetic or literary name for the nightingale (in allusion to the myth of the maiden Philomela's transformation into that bird. The myth is featured in Book VI of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*)

Titania: Philomel, with melody Sing in our sweet lullaby;

churl a man, possibly without or of lower rank

Puck: Churl, upon thy eyes I throw All the power this charm doth owe.

surfeit gluttony

Lysander: For as a surfeit of the sweetest things The deepest loathing to the stomach brings,

tiring-house a dressing-room, especially the room or place in which the actors dressed for the stage

Quince: This green plot shall be our stage, this hawthorn-brake our tiring-house;

By'r lakin A contraction of 'By our ladykin,' or "little lady" (i.e. By the Virgin Mary)
Snout: By'r lakin, a parlous fear.

ACT 3, SCENE 1

casement a frame or sash forming a window or part of a window, opening on hinges attached to the upright side of the frame in which it is fixed

Bottom: Why, then may you leave a casement of the great chamber window,

ousel the (European) blackbird
Bottom: The ousel cock so black of hue,

gleek to make a jest or gibe
Bottom: Nay, I can gleek upon occasion.

gambol to run and jump about playfully
Titania: Hop in his walks and gambol in his eyes;

ACT 3, SCENE 2

cur as a term of contempt: a surly, ill-bred, low, or cowardly fellow
Hermia: Out, dog! out, cur! thou drivest me past the bounds Of maiden's patience.

adder a snake, serpent
Hermia: Could not a worm, an adder, do so much?

misprision a misunderstanding; a mistake
Oberon: Of thy misprision must perforce ensue Some true love turn'd and not a false turn'd true.

engild to brighten with golden light
Lysander: Fair Helena, who more engilds the night Than all you fiery O's and eyes of light.

RESOURCES GLOSSARY OF TERMS

burr a thing or person difficult to get rid of; to “shake off”

Lysander: Hang off, thou cat, thou burr! vile thing, let loose,

minimus a very small or insignificant creature

*Lysander: Get you gone, you dwarf;
You minimus, of hindering knot-grass made;
You bead, you acorn.*

welkin the sky

Acheron In Greek mythology, one of the rivers of Hell

*Oberon: The starry welkin cover thou anon
With drooping fog as black as Acheron,*

wend to turn over, revolve; to alter the position or direction of

*Oberon: And back to Athens shall the lovers
wend,*

recreant designating a person who admits to having been defeated or overcome

*Puck: Come, recreant; come, thou child;
I'll whip thee with a rod: he is defiled
That draws a sword on thee.*

ACT 4, SCENE 1

neaf a clenched hand; a fist

*Bottom: Give me your neaf; Monsieur
Mustardseed.*

provender food, provisions; dry food, as hay, oats, etc.

*Bottom: Truly, a peck of provender: I could
munch your good dry oats.*

Hercules A celebrated hero of classical myth, who after death was ranked among the gods and received divine honors.

Cadmus the legendary founder of the city of Thebes

hounds of Sparta Spartan hounds were famous for their hunting abilities.

*Hippolyta: I was with Hercules and Cadmus
once,*

*When in a wood of Crete they bay'd the bear
With bounds of Sparta:*



David Harewood, Tina Benko, Max Casella, and Kathryn Hunter; photo by Gerry Goodstein

ACT 4, SCENE 2

paramour love or sexual desire for a person; a lover

*Quince: Yea and the best person too; and he is a
very paramour for a sweet voice.*

*Flute: You must say 'paragon:' a paramour is,
God bless us, a thing of naught.*

ACT 5, SCENE 1

The Battle of the Centaurs the legendary

Hercules won a famous victory against the Centaurs (mythical creatures half man, half horse)

*Theseus: The battle with the Centaurs, to be
sung*

tipsy Bacchanals...Thracian singer In

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Book 11), the Thracian singer Orpheus was torn to pieces by the Bacchanals, frenzied and drunken women who worshipped Bacchus, the god of wine.

*Theseus: The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals,
Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage.'*

dole fate, destiny

*Bottom: But mark, poor knight,
What dreadful dole is here!*

thrum each of the ends of the warp-threads

left unweaved and remaining attached to the loom when the web is cut off

Bottom: Cut thread and thrum;

pap a breast

Bottom: Out, sword, and wound

The pap of Pyramus;

Ay, that left pap,

Where heart doth hop:

imbrue of a weapon piercing a part

Flute: Come, blade, my breast imbrue:

Bergomask A lusty 16th-century dance

depicting the reputedly awkward manners of the inhabitants of Bergamo, in northern Italy, where the dance supposedly originated.

*Bottom: Will it please you to see the epilogue, or
to hear a Bergomask dance between two of
our company? [...]*

triple Hecate's team The team of dragons

pulling Hecate's chariot. The Greek goddess of night, Hecate, took three-separate forms: as Cynthia (or Luna), in the sky; as Diana on Earth; and as Proserpina in the underworld.

Puck: And we fairies, that do run

By the triple Hecate's team,

From the presence of the sun,

ditty the words of a song

Oberon: And this ditty, after me,

Sing, and dance it trippingly.

by rote by heart

Titania: First, rehearse your song by rote

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About Theatre for a New Audience

Founded in 1979 by Jeffrey Horowitz, the mission of Theatre for a New Audience is to develop and vitalize the performance and study of Shakespeare and classic drama. Theatre for a New Audience produces for audiences Off-Broadway and has also toured nationally, internationally and to Broadway. We are guided in our work by five core values: a reverence for language, a spirit of adventure, a commitment to diversity, a dedication to learning, and a spirit of service. These values inform what we do with artists, how we interact with audiences, and how we manage our organization.

Theatre for a New Audience Education Programs

Theatre for a New Audience is an award-winning company recognized for artistic excellence. Our education programs introduce students to Shakespeare and other classics with the same artistic integrity that we apply to our productions. Through our unique and exciting methodology, students engage in hands-on learning that involves all aspects of literacy set in the context of theatre education. Our residencies are structured to address City and State Learning Standards both in English Language Arts and the Arts, the New York City DOE's Curriculum Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Theater, and the Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts. Begun in 1984, our programs have served over 125,000 students, ages 9 through 18, in New York City Public Schools city-wide.

A New Home in Brooklyn: Theatre for a New Audience at Polonsky Shakespeare Center

After 33 seasons of award-winning and internationally-acclaimed productions, Theatre for a New Audience's Polonsky Shakespeare Center is now open in the Downtown Brooklyn Cultural District.

Designed by celebrated architect Hugh Hardy, the Theatre's Polonsky Shakespeare Center is the first theatre in New York designed and built expressly for classic drama since Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont in the 1960s. The 27,500 square-foot facility is a unique performance space in New York. The 299-seat Samuel H. Scripps Mainstage, inspired by the Cottesloe at London's National Theatre, combines an Elizabethan courtyard theatre with modern theatre technology that allows the stage and seating to be arranged in seven configurations. The new facility also includes the Theodore C. Rogers Studio (a 50-seat rehearsal/performance studio), and theatrical support spaces. The City of New York-developed Arts Plaza, designed by landscape architect Ken Smith, creates a natural gathering place around the building. In addition, Polonsky Shakespeare Center is also one of the few sustainable (green) theatres in the country, with an anticipated LEED-NC Silver rating from the United States Green Building Council.

Now with a home of its own, Theatre for a New Audience is contributing to the continued renaissance of Downtown Brooklyn. In addition to its season of plays, the Theatre is expanding its education and humanities offerings to include lectures and activities for families, as well as seminars, workshops, and other activities for artists, scholars, and families. When not in use by the Theatre, its new facility will be available for rental, bringing much needed affordable performing and rehearsal space to the community.

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THEATRE FOR A NEW AUDIENCE MAJOR SUPPORTERS

Even with capacity audiences, box office and other earned income account for only 30% of the Theatre's operating budget. The Theatre expresses its deepest thanks to the following Foundations, Corporations Government Agencies and Individuals for their generous support of the Theatre's Humanities, Education, and Outreach programs.



**NATIONAL
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Theatre for a New Audience's Humanities programming receives support from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in these programs do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

A Challenge Grant from the NEH is being matched 3:1 to create a \$1.7 million Humanities endowment fund to support these programs in perpetuity. Leading matching gifts to the NEH grant were provided by Joan and Robert Arnow, Norman and Elaine Brodsky, The Durst Organization, Perry and Marty Granoff, Stephanie and Tim Ingrassia, John J. Kerr & Nora Wren Kerr, Litowitz Foundation, Inc., Robert and Wendy MacDonald, Sandy and Stephen Perl binder, The Prospect Hill Foundation, Inc., and Theodore C. Rogers, and from purchasers in the Theatre's Seat for Shakespeare Campaign.

For more information on naming a seat or making a gift to the NEH match, please contact James Lynes, Capital Campaign Director, at 212-229-2819 x29, or by email at jlynes@tfana.org.



Theatre for a New Audience's productions and education programs receive support from the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; and from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

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