

PROSPERO PLAYERS PRESENTS



April 2017
at Newcastle Waldorf School
Glendale NSW



Prospera
players

A Midsummer Night's Dream Characters

THESEUS - Duke of Athens (Evan Graham)

HIPPOLYTA – Queen of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus
(Emma Viana)

EGEUS - Father to Hermia (David Morley)

LYSANDER - in love with Hermia (William Dyer Culhane)

DEMETRIUS – in love with Hermia (Jack Dalton)

PHILOSTRATE – Master of the Revels to Theseus
(Matthew Webster)

PETER QUINCE - a Carpenter who plays the 'Prologue' in the artisan's play
(Sarah Kendall)

SNUG - a Joiner who plays 'Lion' (Lisa Corser)

NICK BOTTOM - a Weaver who plays 'Pyramus' (Kirsty McCrudden)

FRANCIS FLUTE - a Bellows-mender who plays 'Thisbe' (Anissa Thomas)

TOM SNOUT - a Tinker who plays 'Wall' (Tracey Ashton)

ROBIN STARVELING - a Tailor who plays 'Moonshine' (Nick Jamieson)

HERMIA – Daughter to Egeus, in love with Lysander (Phoebe Kiriakidis)

HELENA - in love with Demetrius (Jacqueline Chapman)

OBERON - King of the fairies (Mike Peters)

TITANIA – Queen of the fairies (Emma Crowther)

PUCK or Robin Goodfellow – Oberon's mischievous servant (Mia Peters)

Fairies – Titania's retinue

(Emma Viana, Sunni West, Deanna Williams, Laura Zeller, Sophia Guentner)

Elf – servant to Oberon (Matthew Webster)

About the Play

Program Notes by Sophia Montefiore,
including ideas and quotes from Marek B. Majorek

“A Midsummer Night’s Dream” is one of William Shakespeare’s most popular comedies. It was written around 1594 and explores the theme of love in all its colours: desire and rejection, illusion and connection, humility and power play, courtship and marriage and also the ‘interrelation between the visible and invisible worlds’.

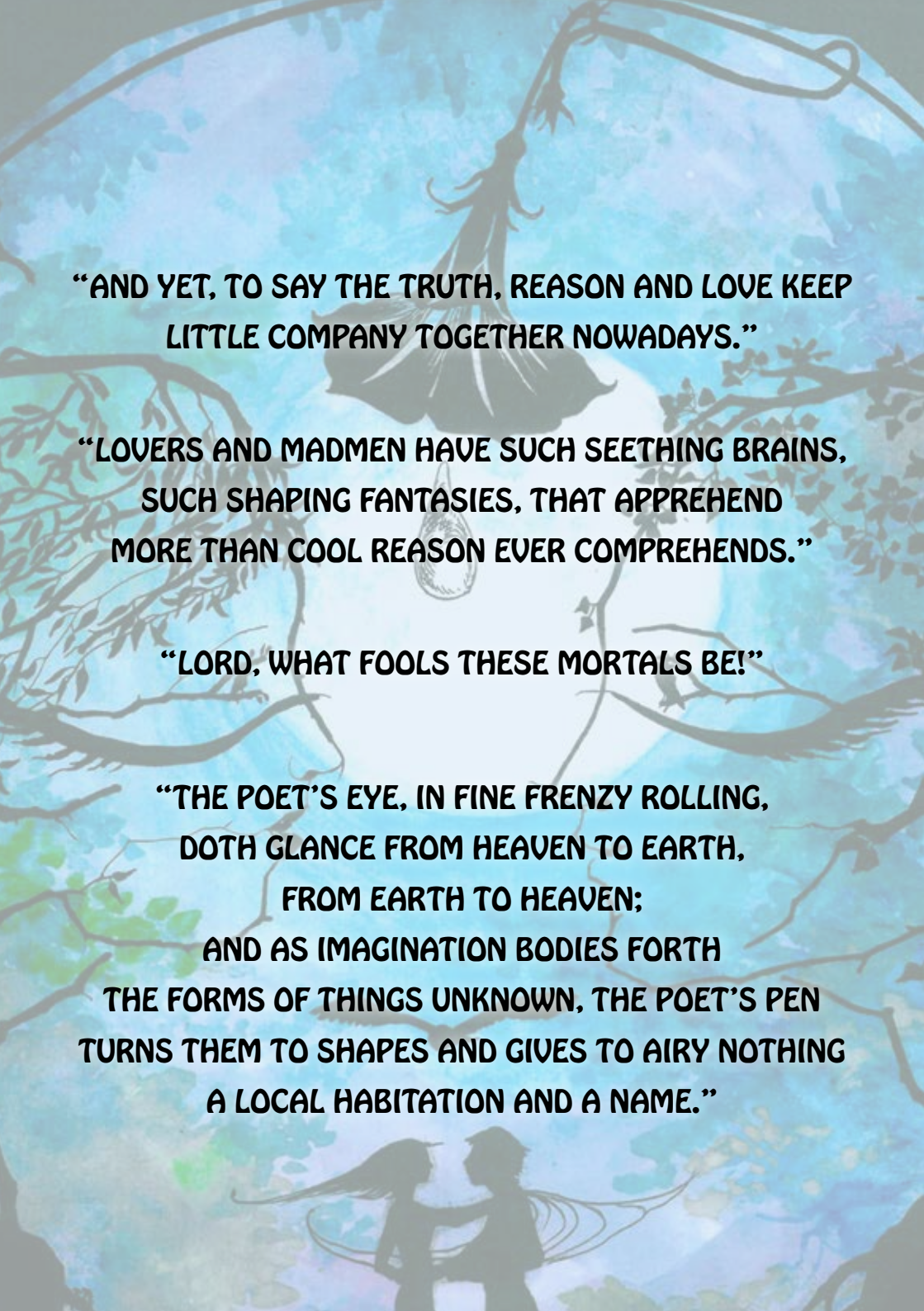
The characters belong to three levels (magical, courtly and earthly) and are connected together by the approaching wedding of the Duke of Athens, Theseus, and the Amazonian queen Hippolyta, which can only proceed after harmony has been established between the fairy king and queen, Titania and Oberon. This play is unusual amongst Shakespeare’s plays because of its lack of both heroes and villains. It is a very tolerant and affectionate probe into our human foibles in love and art, through a range of entanglements that often have the dangerous edge of tragedy to them ... “The course of true love never did run smooth.”

Shakespeare was very courageous writing the fairies into this play as the church condemned all ‘ancient superstitions’. Infamous witch trials took place in England in 1590 – the witches were accused of being able to make ‘men or women to love or hate other... and ‘can raise storms and tempests in the air either upon sea or land’ much like Oberon and Puck.

The fairies belong to English folklore and are remnants of the pre-Christian Druidic understanding of herbal remedies and forces of nature. Titania and Oberon’s quarrel echoes the disturbances in Nature and in turn the disturbed relations between the Athenians echo the disturbed relations between the fairies.

The moon is mentioned twenty-eight times during the play, reflecting the ever-changing dynamics of love and personal fulfilment, which Shakespeare’s characters portray. It is a symbol of regeneration and rules over the forest, which is in turn a world of dreams.

Some pertinent quotes from the play illustrate the timeless relevance that Shakespeare has woven into the comedy, I am sure some of these will resonate with your own views:



**“AND YET, TO SAY THE TRUTH, REASON AND LOVE KEEP
LITTLE COMPANY TOGETHER NOWADAYS.”**

**“LOVERS AND MADMEN HAVE SUCH SEETHING BRAINS,
SUCH SHAPING FANTASIES, THAT APPREHEND
MORE THAN COOL REASON EVER COMPREHENDS.”**

“LORD, WHAT FOOLS THESE MORTALS BE!”

**“THE POET’S EYE, IN FINE FRENZY ROLLING,
DOTH GLANCE FROM HEAVEN TO EARTH,
FROM EARTH TO HEAVEN;
AND AS IMAGINATION BODIES FORTH
THE FORMS OF THINGS UNKNOWN, THE POET’S PEN
TURNS THEM TO SHAPES AND GIVES TO AIRY NOTHING
A LOCAL HABITATION AND A NAME.”**

A Midsummer Night's Dream - Synopsis

Act 1

In the opening scene, Hermia refuses to comply with her father Egeus's wish for her to marry his chosen man, Demetrius. In response, Egeus quotes to Theseus an ancient Athenian law whereby a daughter must marry the suitor chosen by her father. Hermia and her lover Lysander therefore decide to elope and meet in the forest. Hermia confides in her best friend Helena, However, Helena has recently been rejected by Demetrius, and wishes to win back his favour by revealing the plan to him. So Demetrius, followed by Helena, pursues Hermia, who, in turn, seeks Lysander, from whom she becomes separated.

Act 2

As this is happening, Oberon, king of the fairies, and his queen, Titania, have arrived in the same forest to attend Theseus and Hippolyta's wedding. Oberon and Titania have become estranged because Titania refuses to give her Indian page-boy to him. Oberon desires to punish Titania's disobedience and recruits the mischievous Puck (also called Robin Goodfellow) to find him a magical flower, whose juice makes the victim infatuated with the first living thing seen when they wake. Oberon applies the juice to Titania in order to distract her so that she will give up her page-boy.

The plot becomes more entangled when Oberon comes across the troubled Athenian lovers and through compassion for poor Helena directs Puck to use the magic to harmonise their relationships. Puck mistakenly applies the juice to Lysander rather than Demetrius and Hermia's two suitors are turned against her in and are now both in love with the bewildered Helena. The four pursue and quarrel with one another, and Puck is given the task of bringing them into harmony.

Act 3

Meanwhile in the forest a band of craftsmen have arranged to rehearse an amateurish play for Theseus's wedding. Puck gives Bottom, the painfully enthusiastic would-be actor, the head of a donkey. Sleeping Titania wakes to Bottom's singing, and immediately becomes infatuated with him, overwhelming him with devotion. Puck frees Lysander from enchantment but not Demetrius, so that both Helena and Hermia may unite with their loves.

Act 4

Oberon meets Titania 'behind the wood' where he persuades her to give him the Indian boy and then releases her from her infatuation. Puck removes the ass's head from Bottom and the fairies disappear. Theseus and Hippolyta come across the sleeping lovers during an early morning hunt. Strangely they cannot recall any of their transforming experiences since they entered the forest. Now that Demetrius no longer wishes to pursue Hermia, Theseus permits the two couples to marry despite Egeus's protests. After they exit, Bottom awakes, realizing that he has experienced a dream "past the wit of man to say what dream it was."

Act 5

After the triple wedding, in the palace Theseus, Hippolyta, and the lovers watch the craftsmen perform the farcical play "Pyramus and Thisbe." It is ridiculous but the Athenians view the over-acted efforts of the 'craftsmen' in the same spirit of affectionate tolerance that Oberon and Puck observed the lovers' ineptitude in the forest. Finally, as the couples retire for the night, Oberon and Titania bless the occupants, and the future children of the newlyweds, and Puck delivers an epilogue to the audience asking for acceptance. The humans are ultimately unaware of the services the unseen fairies have done for them 'working from behind the veil of the visible world'!

Crew

DIRECTOR - Dan Maslen

PRODUCER - Sophia Montefiore

BACKDROPS - Sophia Montefiore

COSTUME DESIGN - Sophia Montefiore

COMPOSER - Dan Maslen

MUSICIANS - Dan Maslen, Nick Jamieson, Mark McDougall,
Sophia Guenther, Laura Zeller, Yemaya Kiriakidis

LIGHTS - Heidi Prichard, Alethea Graham, Mark McDougall

MAKEUP - Deanna Williams, Alethea Graham

BACKSTAGE MANAGER - David Morley

BACKSTAGE CREW - Vali Graham, Griffin Armstrong,
Mason Armstrong, Callum Reynolds, Ronan Pirozzi

PHOTOGRAPHY - Jack Dalton

FILMING - Felix Ferguson

BAND - Sara Jevo and the Balkan String Kings - Stephen McDonald,
Dean De Wit, Tony De Wit, Bruce Donaldson

CATERING - Craig Gardiner

CAST & CREW



Evan Graham



Emma Viana



David Morley



William Dyer Culhane



Jack Dalton



Sarah Kendall



Lisa Corser



Kirsty McCrudden



Anissa Thomas



Tracey Ashton



Nick Jamieson



Phoebe Kiriakidis



Jacqueline Chapman



Mike Peters



Emma Crowther



Mia Peters



Sunni West



Deanna Williams



Laura Zeller



Sophia Guenther



Matthew Webster



Mark McDougall



Heidi Prichard



Callum Reynolds



Vali Graham



Ronan Pirozzi



Sophia Montifiore



Alethea Graham



Mason Armstrong



Yemaya Kiriakidis



Dan Maslen











Notes on the Director Daniel Maslen

Born in The Cotswolds, South West England, he attended Wynstones Rudolf Steiner School as a child.

After studying music in Oslo he travelled and worked in the USA and Mexico (touring with some well known Rock Bands) then he returned to Emerson College England for the Teacher Training Course and Eurythmy Training at Eurythmeum Stuttgart, Germany.

As a young man Dan spent many years touring with various eurythmy/theatre groups (incl. Eurythmeum Stuttgart – the Peer Gynt Program, Novalis Stage Group – Rudolf Steiner’s Four Mystery Dramas, and Ashdown Eurythmy), visiting many Steiner/Waldorf schools in Europe. After two years in a Camphill Community in southern Austria, Liebenfels where he met his wife, he returned to England, had 3 children and taught eurythmy, along with some class teaching at Michael Hall and Kings Langley Steiner Schools (London area). Now, after 34 years teaching he has retired and when he’s not composing music at his lakeside retreat in Austria. He travels to faraway places like India (where he met Sophia when she was working for Dr Lakshmi Prassana) to help out in the schools and the new Eurythmy Training venture in Hyderabad.

“It has been a great honour for me to work with the excellent award winning Prospero Players and I would like to thank all members of the cast, stage and lightning crew, set and costume design, and musicians. I have enjoyed working with this very talented group who are able to present theatre at a highly professional level.

A very special thanks to Sophia Montefiore and Evan Graham and Keitha Montefiore for inviting me to direct the play and for looking after me so well during my stay here in Australia.

I hope you enjoy our Play!” - Dan Maslen

About the music

“I composed most of the music for the Midsummer Night’s Dream play in the wonderful theatre of Newcastle Waldorf School. When lost for inspirations I only needed to look up at the stained glass window, a piece of art in memory of Caleb, a former pupil of the school who sadly passed away at the age of 12. When the sun shines through the coloured glass – music is in the air! The main theme running through all the music comes from the Fairy Song. Other elements come from Elizabethan lute tunes from Shakespeare time. I am grateful to Laura, Sophia, Mark, Nick and Yemaya who formed the band with me.” - Dan Maslen

Notes on the Costume & Set Design by Sophia Montefiore



This is Prospero Players third production of a Shakespeare play after ***A Winter's Tale*** and ***The Tempest***. I have enjoyed exploring a visually rich, but free flowing costume interpretation of the Renaissance style. The cast had some wonderful input into how they would look and feel effective on stage.

For the set I hoped to create an artistic and enticing environment in which the characters can come alive. Backdrops are large scale works of art and I always enjoy the process of creation on this scale.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all our wonderful supporters for their various contributions which have helped this year's production get off the ground.

Special thanks to Kerry-Anne Evans, Rachel Prest, Grit Kaeding, Jodi Vial, Zsafia Kennedy, Ines Ullmann, Keitha Montefiore, Totally Fab Makeup, Broadley Signs, Viatek, Evan Graham Master Builder, and the patient support of the beautiful families of our cast and crew, and to

Newcastle Waldorf School

for kindly allowing us to use the School Hall.

PROSPERO: ‘...We are such stuff as dreams are made on...’ Shakespeare

Prospero Players was established in the year 2000 by an enthusiastic young group of thespians, artists and musicians connected to the Newcastle Waldorf School who aimed to produce quality interpretations of classics, incorporating original music and stage and costume design. They have self-directed some of their productions as well as invited in some distinguished and talented Australian and international directors and eurythmists with links to the Waldorf Movement such as Graham Dixon, Ian Bevan, Michael Burton, Jess Dixon and Dan Maslen. Their major public productions have been: Wilde’s *Importance of Being Earnest*, Sophocle’s *Oedipus*, Shakespeare’s *A Winter’s Tale*, Penman’s *Nexus*, Prospero Players’ own dramatisations of Longfellow’s *Hiawatha* (2010), C.J. Dennis’ *The Glugs of Gosh* (2011), and Michael Ende’s *Momo* (2013), Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* (2015), and this year Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (2017).

Prospero Players is a non-profit organisation and has still some long-standing members of the original ensemble as well as welcoming numerous new faces to the group over the years. They aim to share a commitment where each individual can be flexible and creative in a range of areas; whether it is sweeping a stage floor, mending a costume or sharing in the responsibility of creating a work of dramatic art that is enlivened and united.

Prospero Players has had many kind friends and helpers in areas such as producing our award winning costumes, sets and lighting, preparing the stage and theatre environment, producing programs, taking photographs and film footage, creating music, catering and promoting the productions. Together they all strive towards offering audiences a production that shines with beauty and integrity.

If you would like to support Prospero Players in our current and future productions please do not hesitate to contact us at

info@prosperoplayers.com



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evan graham

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