

ACT

# A Midsummer Night's Dream



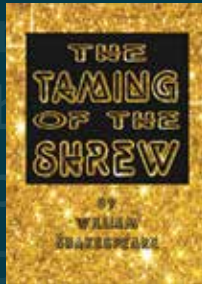
THURSDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> - SATURDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2023

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## ACT History

Actors Community Theatre was formed in 2003 with the aim of contributing to amateur theatre making in Bradford. Our principal production each year is a Shakespeare play performed in the grounds of Bradford Cathedral. We are proud to have done this every year since 2008, with the exception of 2015 when major renovation works rendered the grounds inaccessible, and of course, 2020, due to the pandemic.

We are delighted to continue to perform at the Cathedral, and if anyone would like to join us, front of stage or backstage, we would be delighted to welcome you!

- 2008 LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST
- 2009 MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR
- 2010 AS YOU LIKE IT
- 2011 MEASURE FOR MEASURE
- 2012 THE WINTER'S TALE
- 2013 A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM
- 2014 THE TEMPEST
- 2016 MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING
- 2017 THE TAMING OF THE SHREW
- 2018 TWELFTH NIGHT
- 2019 ROMEO AND JULIET
- 2021 HAMLET
- 2022 MACBETH
- 2023 A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

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# #ACTSHAKESPEARE



# DIRECTOR'S NOTES

PAUL GROWCOOT

ACT is proud to celebrate its 20th anniversary with the timeless masterpiece that is *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In point of fact, ACT put on this show exactly 10 years ago for its tenth anniversary and it also happened to be my first production as an actor with the group. Fitting, then, that 10 years on the same play should be my directorial debut.

A lot has changed over that time, though some of the cast then are here now in different roles. Snug played Theseus, Puck played Titania, Titania played Bottom, and I myself played Philostrate, a part which I eventually edited out this time around. Make of those transitions what you will... However perhaps the most significant change compared to 10 years ago with respect to this play is the #metoo movement. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* deals with the suppression of women by a patriarchal society; Hippolyta is defeated in battle and forced to marry Theseus, Hermia is threatened with death by her father if she refuses to marry someone she does not love. These themes are perhaps more relevant today than ever. Thankfully, Shakespeare shows us that ultimately, through the irrationality of magic, dreams and chaos, love can win the day and sway even the sternest of minds to tenderness and compassion.

*A Midsummer Night's Dream* is an ensemble piece; there is no main protagonist as in *Hamlet* or *Macbeth*, which meant that rehearsals were pretty intense for the entire cast. However,

the play is neatly divided into three groups of people: The Athenian Nobles, The Rude Mechanicals and The Fairies. Shakespeare employed different writing styles for comedic contrast between the groups; the Athenians overly dramatic, the Mechanicals clumsy and oafish, whilst the Fairies are light and lyrical. It has been inspiring to watch how the cast have developed these nuances during rehearsals, and how the three groups of actors have bonded and supported each other.

Although this was my first time directing I found that casting the play was far more onerous. I only had a complete cast towards the end of June. In fact, we've had nearly as many people come in and drop out or move away as there are in the show today. So that has been the most difficult part of the process, but for me this was a labour of love and the Bard's words that its course "never did run smooth" helped me through it. I knew that we had a really talented core of actors and that the final parts would be filled simply by the attraction of all that talent. I would like to thank them all for their perseverance, hard work and insights, and to all those who worked backstage, well done!

So, without further ado, "Away with us to Athens; three and three, We'll hold a feast in great solemnity." Please enjoy the show, which I dedicate to my dear family; mother and father, brother Alex and sons Kai and Dylan.



**PEASEBLOSSOM**

**VANESSA BLACKBURN**



**EGEUS**

**MAURICE CLAYPOLE**



**LYSANDER**

**PAUL COLEMAN**



**DEMETRIUS**

**BRADLEY COOK-PATTISON**



**SNUG**

**PHIL MCGOWEN**



**SNOUT**

**PETER DODD**



**THESEUS**

**JONATHAN GREEN**



**FLUTE**

**TOM HAY**



**HIPPOLYTA / MUSTARDSEED**

**HELEN JEFFREY-BOURNE**



**PUCK**

**ELIZABETH LANCASTER**



**HELENA**

**ALICIA LYNCH**



**BOTTOM**

**ADAM MITULINSKI**



**QUINCE**

**ANN MORGAN**



**STARVELING**

**BRIAN RAFFERTY**



**TITANIA**

**ALISON ROOKS**



**HERMIA**

**EMMA VICTORIA SMITH**



**COBWEB**

**KERRY STANSFIELD**



**OBERON**

**ASAD SYED**

**Director and Script Editor**

**Production Co-ordinator**

**Costume**

**Props Co-ordinator**

**Casting**

**Fight Director**

**Set design and build**

**Sound desk**

Paul Growcoat

Elizabeth Lancaster

Dewsbury Arts Group and the cast

Ann Morgan

Elizabeth Lancaster / Ken Taylor / Paul Growcoat

Jack Stockdale

Gary Walters / Mark King

Matt Bailey

**Original incidental music by Eddie Lawler © 2013**

**Additional musical arrangement and “Spotted Snakes Song”**

**by Paul Growcoat, produced by Mark King © 2023**

**Social media/graphic design**

Alison Rooks / Philip Lickley

**Flyer/ programme production**

Alicia Lynch

**Thanks to:**

- Bradford Cathedral
- Rev. Rosy Fairhurst, St Augustine’s Church, Bradford for rehearsal space
- Donna Stewart from the RLP Threads & Needles craft group for the Wall costume; painted by Gary Walters
- Dionne Hood, Bradford Libraries

**In memoriam: Julian Topping**

ACT wishes to record the sad passing of Julian, partner of Peter Dodd (Snout in the current production). Julian was a long-time supporter of ACT and occasional front of house co-ordinator. We would like to offer our heartfelt condolences to Peter and Julian’s family and friends.



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Letter Project**



The Red Letter Project is a Charity which serves the local community of Bradford 7.

We run and support many activities including: a Pre-school; a Community Library; a lunch club; a Foodsavers pantry; craft sessions; Stay & Play groups; and advice sessions.

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