

## **A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM**

### **ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S NOTES**

Welcome to “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”! When we first embarked on this journey to adapt this play to a dance/theatre production (almost 3 years ago) we knew we wanted to do two things. Firstly to tell the complete story as outlined in the original play and secondly, to include dance as an integral part of the narrative story. For some scenes we have chosen to use script for some dance and others we involve both. But for all we have endeavoured to endue a sense of wonder, surprise, laughter and magic that exists in the original work and still entertains audiences worldwide. But for those who may be unfamiliar with the story let us start at the beginning.

The play is about love and therefore about lovers. Theseus (Duke of Athens) will wed Hippolyta after conquering her Amazonian warriors in battle. Hermia for love of Lysander defies her father Egeus, and the Athenian law. Egeus comes before Theseus and asks that the Athenian law be enforced; that she either dies or enters a nunnery if she does not obey her father. Hermia wants to marry Lysander and Egeus wants her to marry Demetrius. We learn that Demetrius, her father’s choice, has abandoned Helena. Helena still loves her unfaithful Demetrius. (Are you still with us?). Lysander and Hermia plan to elope. All four lovers end up in the woods the following night: Hermia and Lysander to elope; Demetrius to prevent this and Helena herself to be with Demetrius (and you thought T.V. soap operas were a modern invention). To complicate matters a group of Athenian workmen have come together to prepare a play as entertainment after the Duke’s wedding. They also agree to meet in the woods the following night. In the woods we also meet the fairy world. Oberon and Titania, the King and Queen of the fairies are quarrelling over a changeling boy. Their conflict is causing catastrophic results on earth. Even the seasons are turned around. Oberon decides to enchant his beloved Queen with a love juice that will cause her to fall madly in love with anything she sees. While she is diverted he will get the changeling boy. The plot thickens when the enchanted love juice is put in the hands of mischievous Puck, Oberon’s helpmate. You will just have to witness the havoc that occurs.

So the play is about love...and lunacy. The passionate head strong love of youth, the mature love of older people with responsibilities, in whom passion is subordinated to duty and the ephemeral love of the fairies. If things are not complicated enough, throw into the mix the mischievous fairy Puck, a flower with magical powers, flying fairies and a dancing Ass. All under the spell of the full moon, that “Mistress of Love” and set in the woods on a summer night. So join us, as warriors become lovers, lovers become dreamers and dreams become a reality.