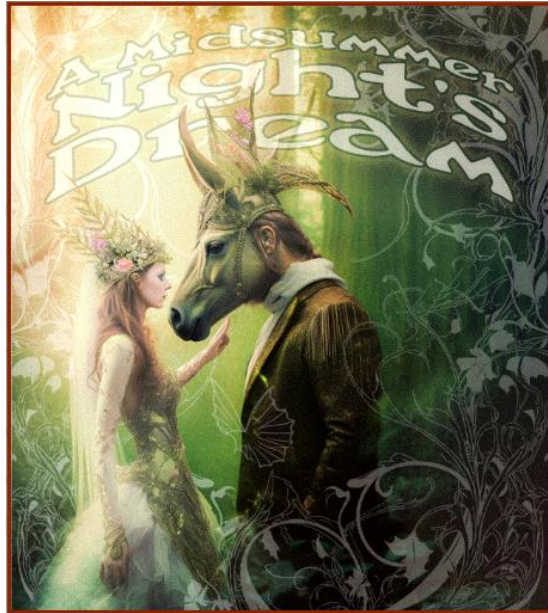


**St. Louis Shakespeare's Production of
A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM:
What to Expect**



BUILDING BASICS

St. Louis Shakespeare's production of *Romeo and Juliet* will be held at the Robert Reim Theatre in Kirkwood Park.



There is ample parking in a lot behind the building. Accessible parking is available near the entrance to the theater.

The box office is to the right, just inside the front door of the theater. If you are purchasing tickets at the door or picking them up from will-call, you will need to check in at the box office. There is limited seating in the lobby; if you cannot stand for a long period of time, consider arriving

either very early or closer to showtime.

The building itself is wheelchair accessible, but wheelchair-accessible seating inside the auditorium is limited. If you use a walker or cane, consider sitting near the back and near or on an aisle, since all but the back row of the auditorium must be accessed by stairs. There is no center aisle in the auditorium, so if you anticipate a need for more frequent or more urgent exits from your seat, consider sitting near the far left or far right of the house.

The box office opens one hour before showtime. If you're not comfortable waiting in a crowded lobby, consider arriving nearer to the house opening time, 30 minutes before the performance.

Restrooms are in the lobby. The men's restroom is near the box office, and the women's restroom is on the opposite side of the lobby from the box office. There is an accessible stall in each.

If you need a sensory break during the show, you're welcome to step out into the lobby or outside if the weather is favorable.

WHAT'S ALLOWED?



You're welcome, and encouraged, to bring quiet fidget or comfort items if you need these to fully enjoy your time with us. These can include ear plugs, noise-cancelling headphones, small fidget items, or weighted vests or blankets. We ask that any items you bring be noiseless and not light up.

During the performance, phones, tablets and other electronic devices must be on silent and put away. Texting is not allowed during the performance.

Photography and recording of any kind during the performance is strictly prohibited.

There may be concessions available during intermission. You are free to enjoy these in the lobby, but are not allowed to bring them back into the auditorium.

SHOW CONTENT

A Midsummer Night's Dream is one of Shakespeare's most beloved comedies. Amid a fanciful setting that features mischievous fairies, magic spells and even a play within a play, the story follows the conflicts and confusion among four young lovers and a fairy king and queen.



The Story:

In Athens, as Duke Theseus and Queen Hippolyta prepare for their wedding, the Duke is interrupted by a quarrel at court. The courtier Egeus has promised his daughter Hermia in marriage to a young man named Demetrius, but Hermia has refused because she is in love with Lysander. Duke Theseus orders Hermia to die or become a nun if she will not obey her father. Hermia and her true love Lysander prepare to elope and share their plan with Hermia's friend Helena... who is madly in love with Demetrius, the same man Egeus has promised to Hermia! Helena tells all to Demetrius, who pursues Hermia and Lysander into the woods. Helena in turn pursues Demetrius, and before long, all four are lost.

Elsewhere, several workers prepare to rehearse a play of the tragic tale of Pyramus and Thisbe, which they will be performing for the Duke at his wedding feast.

Meanwhile, Oberon and Titania, the king and queen of the fairies, are quarreling. Oberon wants to get revenge on Titania, and he brings his mischievous servant Puck (also occasionally called Robin) into the plan, asking Puck to find a flower with juice that causes people to fall in love with the next creature they see. Oberon overhears Helena and Demetrius arguing in the woods and tells Puck to anoint "the Athenian." Puck promptly anoints the *wrong* Athenian – not Demetrius, but Lysander – which causes Lysander to reject Hermia and pursue Helena. Oberon tries to fix Puck's mistake by anointing Demetrius... causing Demetrius to *also* fall in love with Helena.

Puck finds the workers rehearsing their play and transforms their leading man, the self-assured Nick Bottom, into a man with the head of a donkey. Oberon has anointed his sleeping queen Titania with the love potion from Puck's flower, hoping all will be mended in their quarrel when she awakens and sees him... but Titania sees *Bottom* first and is lovestruck!

After much chasing, shouting, and confusion, Puck and Oberon together rectify their wayward magical spells. The fairy king and queen reconcile, the runaway lovers Hermia and Lysander do the same, and Helena finds that Demetrius at last returns her affections for him. The two young couples share the wedding feast of Duke Theseus and Queen Hippolyta, and all of the happy couples are... entertained?... by the workers' play of Pyramus and Thisbe, featuring a once again fully human Nick Bottom.

Approximate Run Time: 2 hours, including intermission.

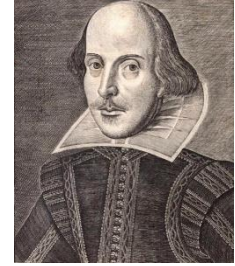
Intermission will last 15 minutes. Just before intermission, the couples are put right again.

GLOSSARY

Anon: soon, shortly. *“Our queen and all our elves come here anon.”*

Bergomask: a traditional dance from northern Italy. *“But come, your Bergomask: let your epilogue alone.”*

Canker-blossom: a worm that destroys a budding flower. *“O me! You juggler! You canker-blossom! You thief of love!”*



Dowager: a widowed woman who inherited riches and property from her late husband. *“I have a widow aunt, a dowager of great revenue, and she hath no child.”*

Ere: before. *“We may effect this business yet ere day.”*

Fancy-sick: lovesick. *“All fancy-sick she is and pale of cheer...”*

Fie: an exclamation of outrage or disgust. *“You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius!”*

Filch: steal. *“With cunning hast thou filch’d my daughter’s heart.”*

Hie: go quickly. *“Hie therefore, Robin, overcast the night...”*

I’faith: a contraction of “in faith;” truly, indeed. *“Fine, i’faith! Have you no modesty, no maiden shame, no touch of bashfulness?”*

Knavery: mischief, such as a practical joke. *“This is a knavery of them to make me afeard.”*

Marry: a contraction of “by Mary,” referring to Mary the mother of Jesus, used as an exclamation. *“Marry, if he that writ it had played Pyramus...”*

Troth: loyalty, faithfulness. *“One heart, one bed, two bosoms and one troth.”*

Wherefore: not “where,” but “why!” *“Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born?”*

Whither: where. *“How now, spirit! Wither wander you?”*

GREEK REFERENCES



Shakespeare sprinkled a variety of Greek mythology references throughout the text of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Here are some of them:

Acheron: a river in Hades – the Greek underworld. “...cover thou anon with drooping fog as black as Acheron...”

Apollo: the Greek god representing masculine beauty and youth.

Bacchanals: worshippers of Bacchus, Greek god of wine and revelry. “*The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals...*”

Cadmus: a legendary hero and monster-slayer – similar to, but before, Hercules. “*I was with Hercules and Cadmus once...*”

Carthage queen: Dido, queen of Carthage, who fell in love with the hero Aeneas (the “false Trojan” of this quote) and killed herself when he left her. “*And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage queen, when the false Trojan under sail was seen...*”

Daphne: a nymph who became a tree in order to escape from the advances of Apollo. “...*the story shall be changed: Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase.*”

Diana: the Roman name for Artemis, the Greek goddess of – among many other things – chastity; this is why one of the choices given to Hermia is to become a nun dedicated to the worship of Diana. “*Or on Diana's altar to protest for aye austerity and single life.*”

Fates: three divine sisters who control mortals' destiny, including the time and manner of their deaths. “*O Fates, come, come, cut thread and thrum; quail, crush, conclude, and quell!*”

Old Hiems: short for Kheimon, the Greek personification of winter. “*And on old Hiems' thin and icy crown an odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds is, as in mockery, set...*”

Phoebe: while the Titaness Phoebe was the grandmother of the twin gods Artemis and Apollo, the name Phoebe also started to be used for *Artemis herself* in her role as goddess of the moon. “*To-morrow night, when Phoebe doth behold her silver visage in the watery glass...*”

SENSORY CONSIDERATIONS



There are plans to use fog at one point in the show, when Demetrius and Lysander go to fight each other in the woods. If the smell of theatrical fog is bothersome for you, consider sitting closer to the back of the house. There are few, if any, other light or sound cues in this show that should present major issues for those with sensory needs.

There is some dance and other choreography, including choreographed fighting (with Nick Bottom wielding a sword that is, by design, quite obviously fake) and intimacy choreography, involved in the show, but none of it will take place very close to the audience. However, the first couple rows of the audience are below stage level and very close to the front of the stage. If you would prefer sightlines that allow you to see more of the stage at once, consider sitting no closer to the front than row D.