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1973-1974 Season

Productions 1971-1980

10-10-1973

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Otterbein University Theatre and Dance Department

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otterbein college theatre

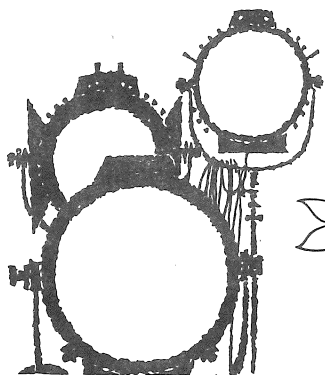
presents



by William Shakespeare

OCTOBER 10-11-12-13, 1973

DIRECTOR – CHARLES W. DODRILL
DESIGNER-TECHNICAL DIRECTOR – FRED J. THAYER
COSTUME DESIGNER – PETIE DODRILL



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CAST

in order of appearance

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| THESEUS-OBERON | RICHARD MILLER* |
| HIPPOLYTA-TITANIA | BETH MACHLAN** |
| PHILOSTRATE-PUCK | JON MORELLI |
| EGEUS-PETER QUINCE | ROBERT PETTIGREW |
| HERMIA | BARBARA KOSCIUK** |
| DEMETRIUS | JERRY CONFER* |
| LYSANDER | BILL BREWER** |
| HELENA | DEE HOTY** |
| BOTTOM | TONY DEL VALLE* |
| SNUG | RANDY ADAMS* |
| SNOUT | JOHN CAIN* |
| FLUTE | JIM WEST* |
| STARVELING | KEVIN FOLLRATH |
| | JOHN HICKS |
| FAIRIES, LORDS and LADIES | SUE KOCKS* |
| | ROBYN PRUETT |
| | JON TURNER |
| GUITAR | MIKE EMLER |

SCENE: Athens, and a wood near it.

There will be one intermission.

- * Indicates membership in Cap and Dagger Dramatics Club
- ** Indicates membership in Theta Alpha Phi National Dramatics Honorary

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NICOLE SHEMAS, DORIS SILER, ROCKY STONE, BETH TITUS

HOUSE MANAGER: TONY MANGIA**

LIGHTS: JUDE JACOBS**, CHM.; MARK CRUM, SUE HALL, DORIS SILER, DAN
HAWK, JAMES ST. CLAIR

MAKE-UP: ANNEMARIE SOIU**, CHM.; DEBORAH BANWART, DAWN BOSH, CONNIE
GRAPPO, JOHN WOOLLAND, LESLIE YOUNG

PROGRAMS: BILL BREWER**, CHM.; CONNIE GRAPPO, MARTY JOHNSON, COLLEEN
McNALLY, JEFF STOCKER, LESLIE YOUNG

PUBLICITY: ROBYN PRUETT. CHM.; JIM DOOLEY, ANNEMARIE SOIU**

PROPERTIES: DEE MILLER**, CHM.; DEBORAH BANWART, TERESA HAMILTON,
JANET JAMES, JEFF STOCKER

SOUND: JOE HUMPHREYS*, CHM.; RUSSELL SCULL

TICKETS: PAM HILL**, SUPERVISOR: VICKY KOROSEI, CHM.; BETH KEPPLER,
LESLIE YOUNG, CONNIE GRAPPO

PROGRAM COVER DESIGN: JOHN BLACK

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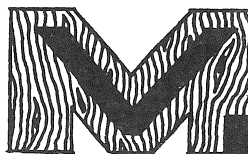
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DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Why do a Shakespearean comedy mod-style? The most immediate response that comes to mind is "Why not?" Recognizing this response is at best (or perhaps worst) a very flip evasion, I could respond by simply saying that somewhere in the middle of July the reason(s) seemed very clear to me.

For a number of years we have included at least one Shakespearean play in our annual production schedule (*Love's Labor's Lost*, *As You Like It*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Twelfth Night*, *Othello*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Much Ado About Nothing*). This year we considered not including Shakespeare but encountered student opposition – they like the challenge of the language, ideas, the most difficult and rewarding roles in the theatre, as well as the physical and vocal demands that Shakespeare makes upon them – and they requested that we include another Shakespearean play in our schedule. (Incidentally, recent professionals have been amazed at the ease and facility of our students in coping with these extremely demanding problems.)

Thus, in the middle of the summer we began reading plays and selecting the season. First, we settled upon *Kiss Me Kate* for the musical and at least one choice disappeared (*The Taming of the Shrew*). Secondly, we settled upon a professional guest star production of *Desire Under the Elms*, a great play by one of America's greatest playwrights, Eugene O'Neill. At that time we were semi-settled upon another drama for the winter term so it appeared that we needed to open the season with a comedy. During this period I had been studiously avoiding one of Shakespeare's great comedies, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, probably because of the profound effect the Peter Brook production at the Royal Shakespeare Company had had upon me in 1971. His theatrical circus image was so strong that I was afraid I could not avoid it and I did not wish to be a simple imitator of a production that had affected the entire theatrical world. On the other hand, I have no sympathy for the traditional concept utilized for this play, probably best exemplified in the 1955 RSC production that toured this country featuring 24 tons of scenery, the complete Mendelssohn music and what looked to me like a corp of 50 ballet fairies featuring Merle Oberon as Titania.

Walking across campus one day during the Summer Theatre, inspiration struck in the most unusual of places. Towers Hall was surrounded by scaffolding for the roof repair and general painting of the structure. Thus, on a beautiful July afternoon as I passed under the structure I heard several working men shouting at each other, I stopped and listened for a few minutes – there were carpenters, roof men, painters, a foreman and a couple of laborers, working and laughing – suddenly I realized these people were the modern version of Shakespeare's "rude Mechanicals" or working men in *Dream*. Why couldn't the entire play be done mod-style with people and music out of the current world? At the same time it hit me like a thunderbolt – Shakespeare's audience believed in fairies and while today's audience might not, we all believe in dreams because we have them. Thus, why couldn't the triple-plotted play be done in such a manner as to combine the royal wedding, young lovers and working men preparing a simple play in a kind of giddy love-madness that would permit an entire group of people to have a dream in which their fantasies were enacted in a dream world peopled with fairies as well as themselves. In this way perhaps we could find some method of making the old meaningful currently, could provide comedic insight into the love madness we all experience at one time or another, could explore the comedic possibilities of an old and well-known play (previously produced at Otterbein in 1910, 1922, 1934, 1946) so as to bring new pleasure and excitement to all concerned.

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As I quickly read the script the joy of discovering new things in a familiar play surmounted all doubts about the approach, so we selected the play to open the season. As I met and discussed theatrical image and theme with designers all were mutually excited in working with the mod-style concept. As we cast the play and held the first rehearsal everybody seemed to be singularly excited by real people totally in love and giddy in their joy at finding it, at finding modern day workmen comparable to Shakespeare's concept, by mod-rock music and improvised guitar music and at the thought of making Shakespeare *happen* for an audience *now*.

Late in the play Theseus states: "The best in this kind are but shadows; and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them." This theatrical image serves as a basis for the production. Now, 10 days before opening night when we are surrounded by the chaos of rehearsal, half finished set and costumes, new music, unfinished characterizations, unrealized and not very funny moments, one begins to doubt the veracity of his artistic vision. But, renewed by each new moment at rehearsal, a developing characterization, the challenge of fulfilling vision, the increasing incidence of laughter newly born – somehow we believe we know why a Shakespearean comedy mod-style! The production may not fully succeed – it may not be the way everybody would like it – but it will have been an honest attempt to weld old and new in an exciting theatrical venture designed to challenge and bring joy to creators and participators. If art is life interpreted by and thru the personality of the artists – then this production may be one collective vision for the moment. If one of the purposes of theatrical art is to laugh at ourselves and thus better understand ourselves, perhaps this current vision will succeed if some small portion of the production achieves such results.

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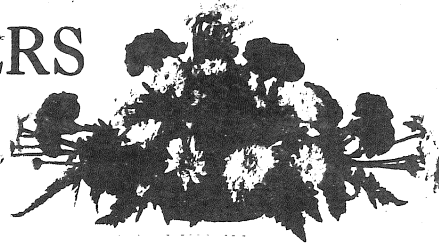
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OCT. 25 – Artist Series: ENGLISH SINFONIA, 8:15 p.m.

OCT. 28 – MARCHING BAND CONCERT, 3:00 p.m.

NOV. 2 – OTTERBEIN ORCHESTRA CONCERT, 8:15 p.m.

NOV. 16-17-18 – Otterbein Children's Theatre, "THE STORY THEATRE OF HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSON"

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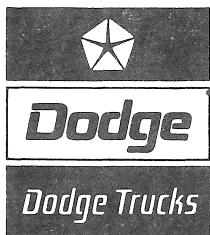


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