

TIS ALMOST FAIRY TIME



# THE DREAM

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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## LOOK NOT TO THE STARS

Inspired by the words that have influenced generations, it was clear to John Bell that his destiny lay not in the stars but within himself. He pursued his vision of bringing the words of Shakespeare to life by founding Bell Shakespeare, one of Australia's leading theatre companies dedicated to celebrating the human capacity for imagination, transformation and creation.

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# WE ARE BELL SHAKESPEARE

Shakespeare's work explores human experience at its limits. It was never just meant to be read. We believe the only way to truly appreciate his work is to see it brought to life through live performance.

We believe Shakespeare and other great works are not stuck in the past, but that they are the key to exploring our present and imagining our future. We value the beauty of Shakespeare's ideas, language and imagery. His work becomes our lens, helping us find modern perspectives on timeless truths.

These plays are not static. They're constantly adapting, helping us make sense of who we are, where we've been, and where we're going. And we're not static either. We've been travelling the country for 24 years, bringing classic theatre to Australia, looking for new ways to educate, collaborate and recreate.

Shakespeare and the other classic plays we present challenge our beliefs and urge us to see ourselves in a new light. Their ability to discover the things that make us human inspires us to make work that challenges preconceptions and encourages new interpretations and contemporary parallels — work that speaks to every age.

# FROM OUR CO-ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

Some Shakespeare plays are not aired often enough. Others could be said to suffer from over-exposure.

Repetition by no means dulls their brilliance but does lull the general public into a sense of familiarity, even if they've never actually sat through a performance of the play in question.

Surely there is no Shakespeare play performed more frequently than *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. It seems to be always on somewhere — in the park, on the beach, by the pool; and if you miss the play itself you can always catch up with the ballet version, the opera or one of the many T.V. and movie treatments. Despite all this, it still remains one of the best-loved plays of all time, unmatched for its fantasy, its lyrical beauty and robust comedy.

Our production takes a fresh look at this perennial favourite, concentrating our attention on the magical power of theatrical transformation.

One of Shakespeare's favourite books was Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, that entertaining catalogue of transformations with gods and nymphs perpetually changing themselves into trees, fish, bulls, rocks and flowers.

There is a strong dash of Ovid in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Puck is an adept. He tells us he is able to turn himself into a crab apple, a filly foal or a three-legged stool. He is also able to transform Bottom into an ass.

Actors all need something of Puck's protean talent, doubling roles in plays, sometimes taking on three or four different characters. This tradition goes all the way back to the theatre of ancient Greece, where actors went backstage to switch masks to portray different characters. The great charm of Italy's commedia dell'arte was to witness actors taking on several masked roles in the one performance.



We have embraced this tradition with our production of *The Dream*. Eight actors play all the roles and undergo various metamorphoses before your very eyes. Hopefully this heightened theatricality emphasises the mythical, the magical and supernatural elements that are so intrinsic to this play.

For actors it's a joy: Why settle for one good role when you could have two or three?

Shakespeare's own company on the road, touring the provinces, sometimes consisted of eleven actors — pulling the wagons, mending the costumes, making the props.... The "rough magic" that they were able to create has an appeal that often outweighs the polished, honed piece of theatre reliant on elaborate sets, effects and technology.

We sincerely hope we can tap into that rough magic to delight and enthrall you with *The Dream*.

**John Bell AO**  
Co-Artistic Director

**Peter Evans**  
Co-Artistic Director

# SYNOPSIS

Hermia and Lysander are in love, but Hermia's father insists she marry Demetrius. The lovers plan to elope instead, revealing their plot to Hermia's best friend, Helena.

Helena is Demetrius' former paramour and still in love with him. Hoping to win back his affection, Helena tells Demetrius of the plan. That night, Hermia and Lysander steal away to the forest, with Demetrius and Helena close behind.

In the forest Oberon and Titania, the rulers of the fairy kingdom, are quarreling over Titania's refusal to give her foster child to Oberon. Plotting his revenge, Oberon orders his fairy servant Puck to seek out the magic flower whose juice, dropped on the eyes of anyone who sleeps, causes them to fall in love with the first creature they see on waking. Oberon sneakily drops the flower potion in the eye of sleeping Titania.

Taking pity on Helena's lovelorn plight, Oberon instructs Puck to use the flower's nectar on Demetrius so he'll fall in love with her. But Puck, mistaking the two young Athenian men in the forest, uses it on Lysander instead. Lysander

promptly falls in love with Helena and rejects Hermia. Puck creates more mayhem by also giving a dose of the love juice to Demetrius, who falls in love with Helena as well.

Meanwhile, Bottom the Weaver and a group of mechanicals are planning to perform a play in celebration of Duke Theseus' wedding. They rehearse in the forest to keep their performance a surprise.

Puck sees Bottom and the others rehearsing and decides to have some fun. He casts a spell, changing Bottom's head into that of an ass. When the other mechanicals see Bottom transformed, they run away, leaving him alone in the forest. At that moment Titania wakes up, sees Bottom, and falls rapturously in love with him.

Eventually, all the enchantments are lifted, the human lovers are happily paired, Titania and Oberon are reconciled, and Bottom is returned to normal. The three couples are married and Bottom's acting troupe performs the play at the wedding celebration.



## CAST

Theseus/Oberon/Flute **Ray Chong Nee**  
Hippolyta/Titania/Quince **Janine Watson**  
Helena/Starveling **Nikki Shields**  
Demetrius/Snout **Johnny Carr**  
Hermia/Snug **Lucy Honigman**  
Lysander/Mechanical **Gareth Reeves**  
Bottom/Egeus **Richard Piper**  
Puck **Julie Forsyth**

## CREATIVE TEAM

Director **Peter Evans**  
Designer **Teresa Negroponte**  
Lighting Designer **Rachel Burke**  
Sound Designer **Caitlin Porter**  
Movement Director **Nigel Poulton**  
Dramaturg **James Evans**  
Directing Secondment **Bridget Balodis**

*This performance will run for approximately 90 minutes, with no interval.*



## CREW

Stage Manager **Julia Smith**  
Assistant Stage Manager **Stephen Moore**  
Head Electrician **Tom Warneke**  
Head Mechanist **Darren Cooper**  
Head of Audio **Chris Leary**  
Costume Supervisor **Amanda Carr**  
Costume Supervisor **Chloe Greaves**  
Set Built by **MNR Constructions**





# A VERY TRAGICAL MIRTH

By Andy McLean

Popular consensus has it that William Shakespeare lived in a golden age. A gilded epoch of enlightenment and discovery. The Renaissance was having a renaissance; Britannia ruled the waves; then James of Scotland became King of England and took it upon himself to promote the arts. Poets and writers across the British Isles could fleet the time carelessly as they did in the golden world.

Of course, popular consensus is a donkey's bottom. (Or Bottom's ass, if you will.)

Because Shakespeare's era was one of plagues. It was a time of bad harvests, food riots, poverty and malnutrition. It was a time of religious persecution, war and of chronic unemployment. Successful playwrights were not necessarily wealthy (Ben Jonson died in squalor). Child mortality was perilously high (Shakespeare's only son, Hamnet, perished at the age of 11) and the average life expectancy was only mid-forties. England was a paranoid police state where all sorts of imaginative forms of torture and execution were dished out. And

thespians were most definitely exposed to violence (playwright Christopher Marlowe was both a perpetrator and a victim who wound up murdered at just 29 years old).

Shakespeare lived in one of the most precarious periods in English history and to think otherwise is madness. Midsummer madness.

Similarly, it is often assumed that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a light and fluffy comedy, sprinkled liberally with gags and fairy dust. A whimsical romantic romp where lovers bicker, make up and then marry. (Or hate, expiate, and then fornicate.) It's a world where:

*Jack shall have Jill;  
Nought shall go ill;  
The man shall have his mare again, and all  
shall be well...*

if Puck is to be believed.

Which all appears pretty golden until you rub the love juice from your eyes and take a closer look. In fact, for two-thirds of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* most of the lead characters are unhappy. There's paternal wrath, bitter jealousy,

unrequited love, and betrayal. (And that's just in the first five minutes.)

True, there's no shortage of laughs amid the sorrow, but these laughs are cleverly placed to heighten the dramatic impact. Shakespeare toys with the dichotomies of light and dark to allow the light to illuminate the dark, and the shadows to give depth to the light. And the overall effect gives a whole new meaning to the phrase "painfully funny". Make no mistake, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is more a black comedy than a golden idyll.

Peter Evans' 2014 production of *The Dream* teases out this darkness in subtle ways. He's kept the cast down to eight players and switched the opening scenes. To begin with, we are softened up with the hilarious capers of Bottom and the Mechanicals, then the actors switch personas before our very eyes and plunge us into the intense scene in Theseus's court. The contrast could not be starker.

Suddenly we're presented with Egeus, who wants his daughter Hermia to marry Demetrius against her wishes. So determined is he to impose his will that he's prepared to have Hermia executed if she disobeys. We hear desperate pleas from a powerless Hermia (who is given a choice of submission, death or life in a convent) before hostilities escalate with Demetrius and Lysander at each other's throats. Yet within the space of two lines, the tension is pierced by Lysander's witty rejoinder:

*You have her father's love, Demetrius;  
Let me have Hermia's – do you marry him.*

In order to deliver up the laughs in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Shakespeare's characters endure a torrid time and poor Helena suffers more than most. She repeatedly describes her unrequited love for Demetrius as a kind of sickness. And it is. She's afflicted with a love from which she can extract no joy, only pain. It's adversely affecting her lifelong friendship

with Hermia, who she envies:

*Call you me fair? That fair again unsay.  
Demetrius loves your fair: O happy fair!  
O, teach me how you look, and with what art  
You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.*

By midway through the play Helena's self esteem has sunk so low that she refuses to believe it when Demetrius and Lysander (thanks to fairy magic) declare their love for her. She's livid with the boys (assuming it's all a wind up) and lashes out at Hermia, accusing her of masterminding the ruse. It's funny for us to watch, but it's a brutal situation for poor, wretched Helena. Before we know it, and in a scene of pure slapstick, Helena is coming to blows with Hermia, then making a groveling apology of sorts and regretting she ever came.

Mind you, she has plenty to be sorry for. Earlier in the play, Helena betrays Hermia's trust and tells Demetrius of her friend's plan to elope. That's a pretty lousy thing to do, considering Hermia is under threat of death because of her love for Lysander. This begins the sequence of events that eventually leads to Hermia finding herself alone in the forest at night and rejected by a spellbound Lysander.

Here, it's worth pausing to remember that Shakespeare's audience would have experienced nighttime in a completely different way to me and you in 2014. Once the sun went down in Elizabethan England the outside world was very black indeed. Without electric street lamps, darkness was something that could truly cover a multitude of sins. So when the lovers decide to escape and cross 30 miles of forest at night, Puck is right to think: Lord, what fools these mortals be!

Simultaneously, Shakespeare uses the darkness as a device to exacerbate the suffering of the lovers; and to poke fun at them too. When Lysander admits to Hermia that they are lost in the forest, it's a funny moment



because she's getting pretty fed up trudging about in the dark. Conversely, the more our characters express their discomfort, the funnier it becomes for us.

Nobody escapes this treatment. Even the heroic Lysander shows his dark side when fairy magic prompts him to fall for Helena, before deserting and rejecting Hermia in the cruelest fashion:

*Why seek'st thou me? Could not this make thee know  
The hate I bear thee made me leave thee so?*

By now, the audience is in stitches at this turn of events. Unlike the lovers, and in a deft use of dramatic irony by the Bard, we're in on the joke. The four-hander scene from which that quote comes is arguably one of the finest comic set-ups in theatrical history. And it succeeds precisely because of the dark depths to which Shakespeare allows his characters to sink.

Perhaps the darkest of all the lovers is Demetrius, who is prepared to coerce Hermia into marrying him. Such is his sense of entitlement, that he's willing for her to be executed if she refuses. During the courtroom scene, we also learn that he previously seduced Helena, before casting her aside to set his sights on Hermia. Then he treats Helena in the most appalling manner ("I am sick when I look on thee,"

he says, before hinting that he may rape her or leave her "to the mercy of wild beasts" in the wood).

Yet even the cruelty of Demetrius provides comic moments. Infuriatingly for him, the more despicably he behaves, the more desperately Helena dotes on him.

**DEMETRIUS:**  
*Do I entice you? Do I speak you fair?  
Or rather do I not in plainest truth  
Tell you I do not, nor I cannot love you?*

**HELENA:**  
*And even for that do I love you the more.  
I am your spaniel; and, Demetrius,  
The more you beat me I will fawn on you.  
Use me but as your spaniel: spurn me, strike me,  
Neglect me, lose me; only give me leave,  
Unworthy as I am, to follow you.*

In fact, the only redeeming behavior we ever really see from Demetrius is when the fairies intervene towards the end and he finally falls in love with Helena.

Speaking of the fairies, all is far from golden for the fairy folk, too. Titania and Oberon make their entrance bickering over the custody of a child (the latter appears to want the boy for no other reason than to score points against the fairy queen). Such is the scale and bitterness

of their dispute that it's affecting the weather around them.

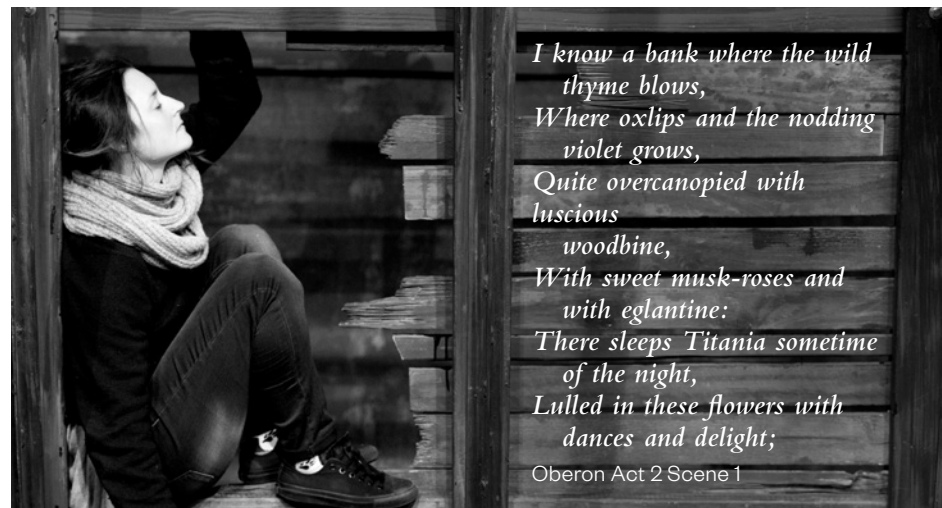
Oberon's solution to this dispute is to play a cruel prank on Titania, making her fall randomly in love (and lust) with whichever "vile thing" she next encounters in the forest. Enter the hapless Bottom, who Puck has transformed into half-man/half-donkey. The poor fellow is alone in the forest, having been deserted by his terrified friends, and now becomes a helpless pawn in the power play between the fairies.

It's all hilarious of course. But there's something about the games that the fairies play and the fun they have which points to the potential for danger. One suspects that Puck would do far worse (and certainly not bother to put things right) were he not bound by the will of Oberon. Yet it's precisely because of this danger that we laugh so much.

And laugh we do. Because despite its dark depths – or more accurately, because of them – *A Midsummer Night's Dream* will leave you LOL'ing in the aisles. In this, his most famous

comedy, Shakespeare proves yet again that he is incapable of writing a play that doesn't illuminate. And at the same time, his spot lit stage is nothing without a darkened audience to enjoy it. So sit back and enjoy. It's black (it's often blue), but it's comedy gold.

**Andy McLean is a journalist and magazine publisher who grew up in Stratford-upon-Avon, before following the Bard to London. Unlike the Bard, he now lives in Sydney.**







*A strange new force overwhelms my will; desire and reason pull in different directions. I see the right way and approve it, but follow the wrong.*

Ovid, *Metamorphoses*



*My hair did turn into ruggedness and my tender skin waxed tough and hard; my fingers and toes losing the number of five, changed into hooves, and out of mine arse grew a great tail. Viewing every part of my poor body, I perceived that I was a plain ass.*

Apuleius, *The Golden Ass*

*Are you sure  
That we are awake?  
It seems to me  
That yet we sleep, we dream.*

Demetrius Act 4 Scene 1



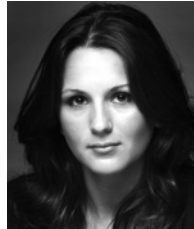


# CREATIVE TEAM



**Peter Evans**  
Director

Peter Evans is Bell Shakespeare's Co-Artistic Director with John Bell. For Bell Shakespeare he has directed *Tartuffe*, *Phèdre*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth*, *Julius Caesar*, *The Two Gentlemen Of Verona*, *The Tempest* and *Intimate Letters* with the Australian Chamber Orchestra. He worked as Associate Director with the Company in 2005. Peter was Associate Director at Melbourne Theatre Company from 2007–2010, directing *Clybourne Park*, *A Behanding In Spokane*, *Life Without Me*, *Dead Man's Cell Phone*, *The Ugly One*, *The Grenade*, *God Of Carnage*, *Savage River* (co-production with Griffin Theatre Company), *Realism*, *The Hypocrite*, *Blackbird*, *Don Juan In Soho*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *The History Boys*, *Don's Party*, *The Give And Take*, *Dumbshow* and *The Daylight Atheist*. His other **theatre** credits include *Pygmalion*, *The Great*, *Fat Pig* and *The Give and Take* for Sydney Theatre Company; *Hamlet*, *Rosencrantz And Guildenstern are Dead*, *King Lear*, *Copenhagen*, *Proof*, *Muldoon* and *The Christian Brothers* for New Zealand's Court Theatre; *The Daylight Atheist* for Queensland Theatre Company; *The Yellow Wallpaper* and *A Poor Student* for the Store Room at the Malthouse Theatre; *Jesus Hopped The A Train* for Red Stitch Actors Theatre; *Sexual Perversity in Chicago* for Theatre Jamb at the Bondi Pavilion; *Kiss Of The Spiderwoman* for Theatre Adami at the SBW Stables; and *The Dumb Waiter* for the Studio Company at Belvoir St Theatre. In 2014, Peter will also direct *Intimate Letters* for Bell Shakespeare and the Australian Chamber Orchestra.



**Teresa Negroponte**  
Designer

Teresa is a graduate of the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA). For Bell Shakespeare she has designed *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Her other **theatre** credits as costume and/or set designer include *Tosca* for Opera Australia; *Dreams In White* for Griffin Theatre Company; *Boundary Street* for Brisbane Festival/Black Swan Theatre Company; *Kiss Of The Spiderwoman* and *Catholic School Girls* for Darlinghurst Theatre Company; *Dirty Butterfly* for Belvoir B-Sharp; and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Importance Of Being Earnest*, *Songs For A New World*, *The Producers*, *In The Solitude Of Cotton Fields* and *Women Beware Women* for NIDA. Her **musical theatre** credits include *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* for James Anthony Productions; and *Dr. Zhivago* for the Gordon Frost Organisation. Her **dance** credits include *Go!* for Sydney Dance Company. Her **event** credits include the Opening Ceremony of the Kuwait World Men's Squash Championships. Her **film** credits include *Spine*, *Faceless* and *The Last Shift*. Her **television** credits include *The Hamster Wheel*, *The Hamster Decides*, *The Checkout* and *The Unbelievable Truth*. Teresa was the recipient of the 2010 NIDA/Sydney Grammar School Fellowship.



**Rachel Burke**  
Lighting Designer

Rachel is a lighting designer of 25 years experience in theatrical and architectural lighting design. She is a graduate of Victoria University. For Bell Shakespeare she has designed lighting for *Romeo And Juliet* with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. Selected **theatre** credits include *Cock*, *Solomon And Marion*, *True Minds*, *Constellations*, *True West*, *Coup D'Etat* and *The Man From Mukinupin* for Melbourne Theatre Company; *Walking Into The Bigness*, *Cargo* and *Woman Bomb* for Malthouse Theatre; *Black Medea* and *Parramatta Girls* for Malthouse Theatre/Belvoir;

*Moth* for Malthouse Theatre/Arena Theatre Company; *Wolf*, *Glass Mermaid*, *Good Works*, *The Incorruptible*, *Night Fall* and *Rapture* for Playbox Theatre; *Save For Crying*, *Chapters From The Pandemic* and *Saving Henry V5* for Angus Cerini/Douletap; and *Look Right Through Me* for KAGE. Selected **dance** credits include *Art To Sky*, *Cinderella*, *Swan Lake*, *Dark Lullaby*, *Ballet Imperial*, *Intersect*, *El Tango*, *Imaginary Masque*, *Unspoken Dialogues* and *Molto Vivace* for Australian Ballet. Rachel won the Green Room Award for Outstanding Theatre Lighting Design in 1994, 1998, 2001, 2003, 2007, and 2010; won the 2005 IES Victorian and National Awards of Excellence in Lighting Design for Hamer Hall; has won numerous architectural and urban design awards; and was nominated for a Helpmann Award and a Sydney Theatre Award for *Black Medea*.



**Caitlin Porter**  
Sound Designer

Caitlin is a graduate of the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA). For Bell Shakespeare she has designed sound for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Romeo And Juliet*. Her other theatre credits include; as sound designer: *Orphans* for Red Stitch Actors Theatre; *Fool For Love* for Belvoir B-Sharp; *Titus Andronicus* and *Three Sisters* for ATYP Under The Wharf/Cry Havoc; *The Ugly One* for Griffin Independent/Arts Radar; *The Brothers Size* for Griffin Independent/Michael Sieders Presents; and *KIJE* for Tamarama Rock Surfers; as associate sound designer: *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof* for Belvoir; as head of sound: *The Wild Duck* (Europe tours) and *Death Of A Salesman* (Sydney and Melbourne seasons) for Belvoir. Caitlin is Senior Theatre Technician at Belvoir, and looks forward to touring again with *The Wild Duck* to London as Head of Sound in October this year.



**Nigel Poulton**  
Movement Director

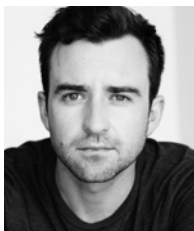
Nigel is an award-winning fight director, weapons and movement specialist, and actor. For Bell Shakespeare his credits as movement director or fight director include *Macbeth*, *Julius Caesar*, *King Lear*, *Hamlet*, *The Servant Of Two Masters*, *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, *Wars Of The Roses*, *Romeo And Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. His other **theatre** credits include Metropolitan Opera (2009–2013), the New York City Ballet (2007, 2009–2012), Washington Opera Company (Japan tour, 2002), Opera Australia, Circus Oz, Melbourne Theatre Company, Sydney Theatre Company, Queensland Theatre Company, Belvoir, La Boite Theatre, Playbox Theatre and Kooemba Jdarra. His **film** credits include *The Water Diviner*, *Winter's Tale*, *The Bourne Legacy*, and *Vikings*. His **television** credits include *Deadline Gallipoli*, *The Good Wife*, *Person Of Interest*, *Boardwalk Empire*, *The Sopranos*, *30 Rock* and *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*. Nigel is a practitioner of Vsevelod Meyerhold's Theatrical Biomechanics system and is a registered instructor, fight director and past president of the Society of Australian Fight Directors Inc. and a certified teacher with the Society of American Fight Directors. Nigel is a classically trained fencer and student of the Martinez Academy of Arms (Maestri Ramon and Jeanette Martinez) in New York City and since 2007, has been part of the Weapons Specialist Ltd creative team (New York). Nigel won a Green Room Award for outstanding contribution to the Melbourne stage, was a recipient of an Australia Council for the Arts grant and Queensland Arts Council grants to undertake continuing professional development with leading theatre practitioners throughout the world.



**James Evans**  
Dramaturg

James Evans is Bell Shakespeare's Associate Artist and Resident Artist in Education. He is an Acting graduate of the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) and has an MA (English) from the University of Sydney. James has worked extensively as an actor, director, dramaturg and arts educator. For Bell Shakespeare he directed *Macbeth*, and *Actors At Work* shows for schools; co-directed *Shakespeare Unbound* for ABC Splash; co-wrote and presented the Company's acclaimed iPad app, *Starting Shakespeare*; and appeared in *Romeo And Juliet*. His other **theatre** credits include *Babies Proms: The Little Drummer Boy* and *Space Symphony* for Sydney Opera House/CDP Theatre Producers. James has conducted hundreds of student masterclasses and teacher professional learning sessions in schools, universities, theatres and juvenile detention centres from Darwin to Hobart and everywhere in between. He recently presented a talk, 'Dreaming, Power, Shame: Shakespeare of the Margins of Australian Society', at the Royal Shakespeare Company's international conference in London. James is the director of Bell Shakespeare's Professional Actor Training programme, and a visiting teacher in the full-time Acting courses at NIDA and the Aboriginal Centre for Performing Arts, Brisbane.

## CAST



**Johnny Carr**  
Demetrius/Snout

Johnny is a graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA). This is his first production for Bell Shakespeare. His other **theatre** credits include *M+M* for Daniel Schlusser Ensemble; *The Boys* for Griffin Theatre Company; *Charcoal Creek* for Merrigong Theatre Company; *Leaves Of Glass* and *The Rites Of Evil* for Red Stitch

Actors Theatre; *The Suicide* for Belvoir B-Sharp/Hayloft Project; *Dad And Dave* for Q Theatre; and *Life Is A Dream* for The Storeroom. His **film** and **television** credits include *Sex: An Unnatural History*, *Rush*, *City Homicide* and *Suburban Mayhem*. Johnny received the Marten Bequest Travel Scholarship for Acting in 2013. He is also a member of the production company, Crystal Pomphlet and co-wrote, directed, produced and starred in the web series, *The Greatest Love Of All*. Johnny has been a proud member of Actor's Equity since 2008.



**Ray Chong Nee**  
Theseus/Oberon/Flute

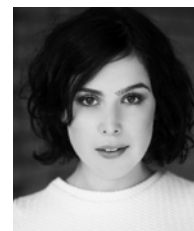
Ray is a graduate of the University of Southern Queensland (USQ). For Bell Shakespeare he was a member of The Players, touring to schools with *Macbeth: Undone, Such Sweet Sorrow* and *Double Trouble*, and appearing on stage in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. His other **theatre** credits include *The Motion Of Light In Water* for HotHouse Theatre/Theatre Works/Elbow Room; *Bare Witness* for Performing Lines/Queensland Theatre Company/Merrigong Theatre Company; *Eight* for Exhibit A: Theatre; *After All This* for Elbow Room/Melbourne Fringe Festival; *Peer Gynt* for Four Larks Theatre; *Angels In America* for Theatre Ink/Parramatta Riverside/Mardi Gras; *The God Botherers* for Darlinghurst Theatre Company/Under The Table; *Cabaret* for New Theatre; and *Andy X* for NIDA. His **film** credits include *The Bench*. His **television** credits *Party Tricks*, *Offspring*, *Rescue Special Ops*, *Magical Tales* and *Dance Academy*. His **voice** credits include *Bulap Tribal Documentary*, *Azazel's Feast* and *Will.I.Am* for Rosemount Wineries. Ray has been a proud member of Actor's Equity since 2004.



**Julie Forsyth**  
Puck

For Bell Shakespeare Julie has appeared in *Phèdre*. Her other **theatre** credits include *Private Lives*, *Return to Earth*, *The Visit*, *Great Expectations*, *The Tempest*, *The Chairs*, *The Comedy Of Errors*, *A Cheery Soul*, *After Magritte*, *The Real Inspector Hound* and *Man The Balloon* for Melbourne Theatre Company; *Night*

*On Bald Mountain*; *Elizabeth: Almost By Chance A Woman*, *Moving Target*, *Babes In The Wood* and *The Ham Funeral*/Journal Of A Plague Year for Malthouse Theatre; *Happy Days* and *Exit The King* for Malthouse Theatre/Belvoir; *The Book Of Everything*, *The Small Poppies*, *The Ham Funeral*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* and *Cloudstreet* for Belvoir; and *Romeo And Juliet*, *The Metamorphosis*, *The Miser* and *Old Masters* for Sydney Theatre Company. Julie was a core member of Anthill Theatre, Melbourne and performed in over thirty productions including *Mother Courage And Her Children*, *Life Is A Dream*, *The Force Of Habit*, *The School For Wives*, *Endgame*, *Happy Days*, *The Imaginary Invalid*, *The Three Sisters*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Macbeth*, *The Misanthrope*, *Tartuffe*, *The Hamletmachine*, *Don Juan*, *Kids' Stuff*, *The Summer Of The Seventeenth Doll*, *Artaud and Cruelty*. Her **film** credits include *Feathers*, *Stan And George's New Life*, *Harvey Krumpet* (voices), *Mary And Max* (voices), *Three Dollars* and *Kath And Kimderella*. Her **television** credits include *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries*, *Dead Gorgeous*, *The Brush Off*, *MDA* and *Mercury*. Julie's awards include Helpmann Awards for Best Female Actor in a Play for *Happy Days* and for Best Female Actor in a Supporting Role for *Exit The King*, a Green Room Award for Best Actress for *Kids' Stuff*; and the Individual Prize for the Sidney Myer Performing Arts Awards (2009). Julie has been a proud member of Actor's Equity since 1983.



**Lucy Honigman**  
Hermia/Snug

Lucy is a graduate of the University of Melbourne. This is her first production for Bell Shakespeare. Her other **theatre** credits include *That Face* and *Farragut North* for Red Stitch Actors Theatre; *Shedding*, *The Campaign* and *Trial Of Adolf Eichmann* for La Mama Theatre; *Ghosts* for Edgemar Theatre, Los Angeles; *The Hat Box* for Melbourne Fringe Festival; and *Islands Of The Good And Bad* for Short & Sweet. Her **film** credits include the recently completed *Aaahh!*, *Charlotte's Web*, *Deeper Than Blue*, *Vigilant!* *Healthy! Wholesome!*, *Bracelet* and *Together Again*. Her **television** credits include *Mr & Mrs Murder*, *Offspring* and *Rush*. Lucy has been a proud member of Actor's Equity since 2000.



**Richard Piper**  
Bottom/Egeus

Richard is a graduate of the Central School of Speech and Drama in London. For Bell Shakespeare he has appeared in *Wars Of The Roses*, *Henry IV* and *Henry V*. His other **theatre** credits include *As You Like It*, *Romeo And Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *The Comedy Of Errors*, *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me*, *Music*, *The Gift*, *Great Expectations*, *The Importance Of Being Earnest*, *Life After George* and over twenty-five others for Melbourne Theatre Company; *Big And Small* (Australian season and European tour) for Sydney Theatre Company; *'Tis Pity She's A Whore* for Malthouse Theatre; *12 Angry Men* for Arts Projects/Adrian Bohm; *Moby Dick* for State Theatre Company of South Australia; *Competitive Tenderness* for Playbox Theatre Company. His **music theatre** credits include *King Kong* for Global Creatures; *Billy Elliot the Musical* for Working Title Films/Old Vic Productions; *The Drowsy Chaperone* for Melbourne Theatre Company; *The New Rocky Horror Show* for Paul Dainty Consolidated (Australian seasons); and *Elvis* for Ray Cooney Productions. His **film** credits include *Salvation*. His **television** credits include *Australia On Trial: Myall Creek*, *Tangle*, *Underbelly Files: Infiltration*, *Satisfaction*, *City Homicide*, *Crashburn*, *Blue Heelers*, *MDA*, *Something In The Air*, *Coronation Street*, *Juliet Bravo*, *Minder*, *Me And My Girl* and *C.A.T.S. Eyes*. He also toured for five years with the band The Bouncing Czecks before moving to Australia in 1987. Richard won a Green Room Award for Best Male Actor and was nominated for a Helpmann Award for Best Male Actor in a Play for *The Daylight Atheist*. Richard has been a member of Actor's Equity in the UK and Australia since 1975.





**Gareth Reeves**  
Lysander/Mechanical

Gareth is a graduate of Te Kura Toi Whakaari O Aotearoa: The New Zealand Drama School. For Bell Shakespeare he has appeared in *Macbeth* and *Julius Caesar*. His

other **theatre** credits include *Orphans* for Q44 Theatre Company; *War Horse* for the National Theatre of Great Britain/Global Creatures; *Arden V Arden* for The Hayloft Project; August: *Osage County*, *Romeo And Juliet*, *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof*, *The Pillowman*, *The Crucible* and *Who's Afraid Of Virginia Woolf?* for Auckland Theatre Company; *Angels In America* and *Plenty* for Silo Theatre; *360: Theatre Of Recollections* for Nightsong; *Cyrano De Bergerac* for Clinic Theatre Company; *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Three Days Of Rain*, *Great Expectations*, *Othello* and *Proof* for The Court Theatre; and *Much Ado About Nothing* for Downstage Theatre. His **film** credits include *I'm Not Harry Jensen*, *A Song Of Good*, *Under The Mountain*, *Tracker* and *Ice*. His **television** credits include *Underbelly: A Tale Of Two Cities*, *The Cult*, *Go Girls*, *Legend Of The Seeker* and *The Insiders Guide To Love*. Gareth is a proud member of Actor's Equity.



**Nikki Shiels**  
Helena/Starveling

Nikki is a graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA). This is her first production for Bell Shakespeare. Her other **theatre** credits include *The Cherry Orchard*, *Top Girls*, *True Minds* and *Don Parties On* for Melbourne Theatre Company; *Night On Bald Mountain*, *The Dragon* and *Elizabeth: Almost By Chance A Woman* for Malthouse Theatre; *M+M*, *The Dollhouse* and *Peer Gynt* for Daniel Schlusser Ensemble; *The Unspoken Word Is Joe* for MKA; and *Madeleine* for Black Sequin Productions. Her **film** credits include *The Eye Of The Storm*. Her **television** credits include *Rush*. Her **radio** credits include *Cassandra Is A Waitress* for ABC Radio National. Nikki was nominated for Green Room Awards for Best Actress for *Madeleine* and *The Unspoken Word Is Joe*, and in 2013 was a recipient of the Mike Walsh Fellowship. Nikki has been a proud member of Actor's Equity since 2009.



**Janine Watson**  
Hippolyta/Titania/Quince

Janine is a graduate of the National Theatre Drama School and has trained with Zen Zen Zo Physical Theatre and SITI Company in New York. For Bell Shakespeare she was a member of The Players, touring to schools with *Macbeth: Undone*, *Such Sweet Sorrow* and *Double Trouble*, and appearing on stage in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Her other **theatre** credits include *Dangerous Liaisons* for MTC Neon/Little Ones Theatre; *Triangle* and *J.A.T.O.* for MKA: Theatre Of New Writing; *The Sea Project* for Mudlark Theatre/Arthur; *Cordelia* for Little Dove/The Street Theatre; and *Agatha* for Melbourne Fringe Festival. Her **film** credits include *The Outside Light* and *Picking Up At Auschwitz*. Her **television** credits include *Neighbours*, *Crash Burn* and *The Secret Life Of Us*. Janine was nominated for a Green Room Award for Best Actress for *Triangle*. Janine has been a proud member of Actor's Equity since 2002.

*I have had a most rare vision.  
I have had a dream, past the wit  
of man to say what dream it was:  
man is but an ass, if he go about  
to expound this dream.*

Bottom Act 4 Scene 1

# YOUR SUPPORT AT EVERY STAGE IS OUR FUTURE ON EVERY STAGE

## *Bell Shakespeare Learning and the community*



**Something magical happens when young minds meet Shakespeare. The language fascinates, the characters thrill. That's why education has always been at the core of our activities, hand in hand with everything we do.**

Bell Shakespeare presents Australian theatre's most extensive, wide-reaching and comprehensive education programme, providing many students with their first experience of Shakespeare – and sometimes even live performance – via workshops, masterclasses, residencies and schools-only in-theatre productions. When we share Shakespeare's stories with students and teachers alike, they see their own lives and experiences reflected and realise that his work is as relevant today as ever.

Here is just some of what we do each year, thanks to your support.

## IN SCHOOLS

**Actors At Work**, our flagship national programme, sees our dedicated group of eight actors, The Players, split into two teams, travelling the country with only four banners and two road cases of props, to deliver 50-minute performance adaptations of some of Shakespeare's greatest plays into school halls and gyms around Australia. Demonstrating great imagination, the original dialogue is complemented by modern commentary and references to increase students' understanding and engagement. In 2013, we launched our **Primary Programme** – ensuring that our youngest audiences can also share the magic of Shakespeare's stories and characters.

**It costs approximately \$3,000 to deliver each Actors At Work performance, though we subsidise this and charge schools much less to participate.**



## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Our **Regional and Remote Residency Programme** allows us to send arts educators into remote and Indigenous communities around Australia for up to two weeks at a time, building trust, appreciation and deeper learning. Designed with the school's input, these bespoke residencies have seen everything from entire schools being introduced to Shakespeare, through to staging an adaptation of *Romeo And Juliet* on an AFL field in Tennant Creek, NT, blending Shakespeare's text with Indigenous language. We have also extended this work to schools with a high intake of refugee and new migrant students – using Shakespeare's stories, which so often tell of displaced people, to build literacy skills and self-confidence.

**A residency costs us approximately \$30,000, but the more remote the region, the more we must invest to get there.**

Our workshops with young people at Juvenile Justice centres – including Frank Baxter Centre (Kariong, NSW) for boys and Juniperina (Lidcombe, NSW) for girls – have had a powerful impact. Following an Actors At Work performance, young offenders participate in five weeks of workshops with our arts

educators, culminating in a performance in front of their peers and families. Through games, storytelling, stage combat training, scene work and character development, these young people can relate to Shakespeare's stories as reflected in their own experiences, improving self-confidence, social behaviour, academic and cognitive skills – enabling them to reflect on their decision-making processes.

Since 2006, **Hearts In A Row** has directly supported our national Learning initiatives and shared once-in-a-lifetime theatre experiences with individuals and groups who would otherwise never have such an opportunity. Following a special introductory talk from an arts educator, each guest receives a ticket and programme to one of our productions. For many of the recipients – from groups such as Barnardos, The Big Issue, Wayside Chapel and Liverpool Boys High School – this programme has enabled their first visit to some of Australia's greatest cultural spaces, such as Sydney Opera House.

**A donation of \$10,000, enables a group of 30 to participate in Hearts In A Row as well as supporting our broader Learning Programme.**

## TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

We are proud to offer a number of opportunities for teachers – enabling them to benefit from our skills and knowledge, and assisting them to teach Shakespeare effectively in their own classrooms. This includes the annual **Regional Teacher Scholarship** for 12 teachers from across Australia. The recipients spend four days working with us in Sydney, participating in specialised workshops, seeing live theatre, designing units of work, and connecting with their peers. A select number of teachers are then chosen to receive a residency at their school, extending the learning experience and providing longer lasting impact in their school community.

## BELL SHAKESPEARE SCHOOLS FESTIVAL

**Bell Shakespeare Schools Festival** will be piloted in Canberra this year, in partnership with Canberra Theatre Centre, destined for towns and cities around the country. Designed to celebrate diversity, collaboration, and encourage creative expression, the premise is that one of Shakespeare's plays is edited into three separate 30-minute sections and high schools are chosen to rehearse their interpretation of their section of the play, with both students and teachers receiving professional guidance from Bell Shakespeare artists throughout the year. The festival culminates with a final performance of the entire play from the three schools on the stage of their local theatre.

For more information on supporting our initiatives please contact Zoë Cobden-Jewitt, Head of Development, on 02 8298 9070 or [zoecj@bellshakespeare.com.au](mailto:zoecj@bellshakespeare.com.au).

## STARTING SHAKESPEARE

We have also launched our first iPad app – **Starting Shakespeare** – an exciting and accessible new curriculum-aligned learning resource for primary students focusing on two of Shakespeare's best-loved plays – *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Macbeth*.

**This is only some of what we do. To learn more about our Learning Programme visit [bellshakespeare.com.au/learning](http://bellshakespeare.com.au/learning)**

## YOUR SUPPORT MEANS THE WORLD'S A STAGE

In 2013 Bell Shakespeare, supported by the Macquarie Group Foundation, commissioned the Educational Transformations report proving that Bell Shakespeare's Learning programme, which reaches an average of 80,000 students per year, with another 70,000+ online, delivers tangible education results.

At a growing cost of \$3 million a year, and as a not-for-profit organisation built on a foundation of giving, every donation makes a significant difference to the breadth and extent of what we are able to achieve.

**Help us continue to change lives by making a donation.**

**Visit [bellshakespeare.com.au/support](http://bellshakespeare.com.au/support)**



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*Each year, your gift helps us make a difference*

## SUPPORTING CAST

We are extremely grateful for the generous support of our annual Supporting Cast donors, who enable us to direct funds to where they are needed most to ensure that we are able to remain dedicated to making an impact through our performances, our creative development programme, Mind's Eye, and our unparalleled national education, training and outreach programmes, including our Creative Artists Programme.

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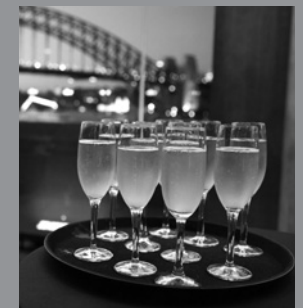
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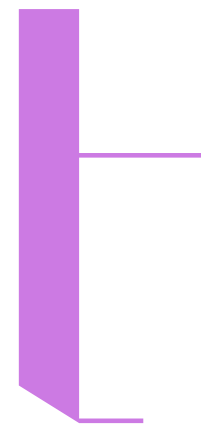
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