



★★ *William Shakespeare's*  
a MIDSUMMER  
NIGHT'S ★  
dream

*28th February – 28th March*

## Director's Note

Shakespeare's plays endure because they tell unique stories and introduce complex characters which transcend time, location and cultural context. The plays have as much to say today, as they did in the Elizabethan era. They draw upon themes like the role of women, the conflicts between the social classes, the power of love and the part that fate or luck (or magic) can play in our lives.

There will always be a place for Shakespeare to be presented in a traditional way: as we all love to see the beautiful *Dream* fairies: wearing flower crowns and gossamer wings. However, since I'd only be directing this play once in my life, I wanted to do something different from how I'd always seen or imagined the play. But at the same time, giving homage to traditional versions - but not taking it too seriously. Over the course of a year my concept evolved - and luckily for me - I found a supportive cast and crew to help. Special thanks to Cassady, Macushla, Susan and Michael for the tireless enthusiasm from the start.

I love the 'Australian' sense of humour: especially our ability to laugh at ourselves, our teasing nature, the mateship and our passion for slapstick visual humour. With these in mind, I looked at Shakespeare's amazing script with 'Australian' eyes to pull out new meanings for a new audience. The fact that the play has no stage directions, except for marked 'entrances' and 'exits', also meant that anything could happen. And it does.

Please put aside your 'preconceptions' of what *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is all about. Join me as we travel to 'Athens Beach', NSW, Australia in the mid 1960s. It is Summer and wealthy celebrity Theseus, aka 'The Duke', is about to wed his love Hippolyta. We find them at their pre-wedding beach party...

*Debbie Smith*  
Director

**DEBBIE SMITH - Director & Set Design** *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is Debbie's eighth production for the GTC. Previous productions include *Journey's End*, *And Then There Were None*, *Enchanted April*, *Coward at Christmas* and *Frankenstein*. Debbie has also directed for Hunters Hill and Lane Cove Theatres, Riverside's RLE, New Theatre, Twin Town Players, Short and Sweet Sydney and for her own company Female Actors Theatre (FAT Productions). Apart from directing, she also designs sets and does choreography. Debbie is currently on the Board.

**CASSADY MADDOX - Assistant Director** Cassady was Music Director on *Book of Days* (New Theatre, 2014), and *In Between Days* (SydFringe, 2013) which she also co-directed and co-starred in. She played Elizabeth in *Frankenstein* (Genesians, 2014), Rita in *Educating Rita* (Riverside, 2013) and next appears as Ellie Greenwich in CTG's *Leader of the Pack* (June 2015).

**SUSAN CARVETH - Costume Design** Susan has costumed numerous productions for the GTC in her long association with the company. Recent productions include *Daisy Pulls It Off*, *Murder on the Nile*, and *Richard III*.

**MICHAEL SCHELL - Lighting & Sound Design** Michael has been a member of the Genesian Theatre for over 35 years. A professional sound and lighting designer his Genesian credits include *Great Expectations*, *St Joan*, *The 39 Steps*, *Terra Nova*, *Frankenstein*, and *Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure*. Other recent Genesian sound design credits include *Pride and Prejudice*, *The Mousetrap*, *Crown Matrimonial*, and *Spider's Web*.

**MACUSHLA MCGOWN - Stage Manager** Macushla has worked as Stage Manager and in the biobox operating sound and lighting on numerous shows for the GTC. her more recent productions include *Richard III*, *Murder on the Nile*, *Sherlock Holmes* and *Amadeus*. This is her second production working with Debbie Smith, as she was Stage Manager on *Frankenstein* last year.



**DERECK CAMERON** - Dereck is an actor and musician of no little skill, yet no great renown. For the GTC he performed in *Frankenstein*. Recently, he provided live music for New Theatre's *Vernon God Little*. A *Midsummer Night's Dream* is his first Shakespeare, Flute is his first role playing ukulele and Thisbe is far from his first time on stage in a dress.

**SUSAN CARVETH** - Susan's last appearance at the Genesian Theatre was as Clegg in *Witness for the Prosecution*. For the GTC, Susan has also appeared in *Pygmalion*, *Hay Fever*, *Shadowlands*, *Morning Sacrifice*, *Pride & Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, *Away*, *Dinkum Assorted* and *The Women*, and *Steaming* at Macquarie University.



**ALEX CREAGH** - Alex is a new member of the GTC. He developed an interest for the performing arts while learning to tap dance as a solicitor in the local court. He has since begun acting classes and is making his second appearance on the stage, after featuring briefly in the Genesian Theatre's 70th Anniversary Member's Festival in December.

**VICTORIA COTMAN** - Victoria first appeared on the Genesian stage in *Hay Fever*. She's a trained actor and self-confessed Shakespeare obsessive. Victoria is happy to be back at the Genesian Theatre a second time for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.



**CATHERINE DAVIES** - Catherine studied at The Actor's Centre, Sydney and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, London. She holds a Certificate IV in Performing Arts (Dance Major). Her theatre credits include *The Merchant of Venice Chapter Two* (RADA, London), *Rise n Shine* (London) and the Australian Premier of *Just So*.

**SONJA DONOHOE** - Sonja trained at The Actors Centre and The Hub, Sydney and has performed in several productions including *The Matilda Waltz* (New Theatre, 2014) and *The Three Sisters* (ACA). She is also an accomplished singer and musician.



**MARLEY ERUETI** - This is Marley's third production with the GTC. In 2014, he was in *Frankenstein* and *Sherlock Holmes*. He enjoys Shakespeare and hopes this modern adaptation will be popular with audiences and finally give Shakespeare the recognition he deserves.

**JAMES GRAHAM** - James has a Diploma in Theatre and Screen Performance. He's appeared on TV and films including *Akuma*, *Feet of Clay*, *Underbelly Razor*, *Isabelle* and *the Pattiser* (IMBD). He's produced *The Dream* and directed *Maid of Conviction*. Theatre credits include *Twelve Angry Men*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Department* and *Macbeth*.



**JAMES HARTLEY** - James is an award winning director, writer, and actor. This is his second production with the Genesian Theatre, his first being *Coward at Christmas* (2012). He won Best Director at Short+Sweet Sydney 2013 with the short play *The Fox and the Hunter*, where he also played the hunter, Mr. Albright.



**JAMES HUGHES** - James trained at the Canberra Academy of Dramatic Art, making his professional debut last year in David Atfield's *Scandalous Boy* (Canberra's Street Theatre). His theatre credits include: *Ishmael and the Return of The Dugongs* (ATYP), *The Iceman Cometh* (DRAMAC) and *The Polyphonic Bard* (CADA).

**KAT JOHNSON** - Kat has completed a Bachelor of Communications (theatre/media). During her degree she worked on several productions in different roles. One of her most memorable was the study tour to Makhampom (2014) a theatre company in Thailand, where she engaged in rural community theatre.



**PIP MACLACHLAN** - Pip has long had an love for the theatre and is delighted to be involved in her first role at Genesian Theatre. Previous stage appearances include Miranda Musical Society's *No No Nanette*, as Richard III in Sydney University Dramatic Society's *Women in Shakespeare* and in Pete Malicki's *Exodus* for Short+Sweet.

**JACK MCMAHON** - Jack attended The Actors Studio Australia and has a long held passion for theatre and television. His past screen credits include *Chandon Pictures* and the upcoming *Wyrnwood*. He is reprising his role as Demetrius after taking some time to focus on more contemporary theatre.



**DANNY NERCESSIAN** - Danny studied Musical Theatre at NIDA in 2012 and is a cabaret and boylesque performer. This is his second show for the GTC. His first role was in Agatha Christie's *Spider's Web* as the snotty Romanian butler Elgin. This is his first foray into Shakespeare.

**ELENI PYRETZIS** - After completing part-time studies at Actors Centre Australia, Eleni became a member with the Genesian Theatre in October 2014. Her debut performance with the theatre was a role in *Speed Dating* during the Members' Festival. Eleni is thrilled to be a part of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and aspires to further theatrical pursuits.



**MELANIE ROBINSON** - Melanie's acting credits include *Hotel Sorrento*, *Blithe Spirit*, *Noises Off*, *Hay Fever* and *An Ideal Husband* for the Genesian theatre, *Calendar Girls*, *Daylight Saving* and *Harbour* for Epicentre Theatre Company, and *God of Carnage* and *The Blonde, the Brunette and the Vengeful Redhead* at the Theatre on Chester.

**BENJAMIN SMITH** - As an avid lover of Shakespeare, Benny is enjoying his debut production in the world of theatre. Originally from London, England, he moved to Sydney in 2010. He is an accomplished musician who plays several instruments. His biggest success came from being the front man in his own Indie-Pop band and he spent three years touring.



## **Production**

Director  
Assistant Director  
Set Design  
Costume Design  
Lighting & Sound Design  
Production Manager  
Set Construction  
Photography  
Graphic Design  
Audition Assistants

Debbie Smith  
Cassady Maddox  
Debbie Smith  
Susan Carveth, Debbie Smith  
Michael Schell  
Debbie Smith, Roger Gimblett  
Grant Fraser  
Mark Banks  
Matt Roden, Tom Massey  
Melanie Robinson, Dearbhla Hannigan,  
Rob Drew, Sahn Millington, Jennie Bazell,  
Wunndonna Hughes, Amy Roberts,  
Jane Thorpe,

## **Crew**

Stage Manager  
Lighting & Sound Operation

Macushla McGown  
Mehran Mortezaei, Jessica Williams

## **Cast**

### **Theseus' House**

Theseus  
Hippolyta  
Helena  
Hermia  
Demetrius  
Lysander  
Egeus  
Philostrate

James Hartley  
Pip Maclachlan  
Catherine Davies  
Sonja Donohoe  
Jack McMahon  
James Hughes  
Victoria Cotman  
Susan Carveth

### **The Beach Bums**

Nick Bottom  
Peter Quince  
Francis Flute  
Robin Starveling  
Tom Snout  
'Snug'

James Graham  
Marley Erueti  
Dereck Cameron  
Ben Smith  
Alex Creagh  
Victoria Cotman

### **The Hippies**

Oberon  
Titania  
Puck  
Moth  
Mustardseed  
Cobweb  
Peaseblossom

James Hartley  
Melanie Robinson  
Danny Nercessian  
Kat Johnson  
Pip Maclachlan  
Susan Carveth  
Eleni Pyretzis

# About the Genesian Theatre

Celebrating our 70th year as a company in 2014, The Genesian Theatre Company has been operating for 60 years from an historic church in Kent Street, in the heart of the Sydney CBD. We boast among our alumni numerous household names in Australian theatre and film such as Bryan Brown, Baz Luhrmann, Judi Farr, and John Bell. We are, however, just as proud of the hundreds of talented amateur actors, directors, designers, lighting and sound specialists who have contributed to Sydney's unique little theatre over the years.

Over the years the company has developed into a theatre providing a training ground for young actors and a place where those who love the theatre can meet, share and extend their knowledge of the performing arts. The Genesian Theatre is one of Sydney's most active theatre companies. In addition to six main stage productions each year we run classes, workshops and many other activities.

The building which houses The Genesian Theatre Company was originally St John's Church, and dates from 1868. It has served as both a church and a poor school until 1932 when it became the Kursaal Theatre, housing the Sydney Repertory Company. In 1938 it became the first Matthew Talbot Hostel. Since 1954 it has been the home of The Genesian Theatre Company which was formed in 1944.

## Membership

If your interest is in acting, directing, stage management, sound, lights, publicity, admin, etc, or if you just want to experience being a member of the group, we would welcome you as a member. You don't need to be experienced, we can provide training and can cater to different levels of involvement. Please see our web site for further information.

Coming next to the Genesian Theatre...

Simpson, J. 202

Subscriptions are available  
[www.genesiantheatre.com.au](http://www.genesiantheatre.com.au)