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Thursday 26 November, 7.30pm  
Friday 27 November, 2pm & 7.30pm  
Saturday 28 November, 7.30pm

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# A Midsummer Night's Dream

By **William Shakespeare**

**Suba Das** director



**GUILDHALL**  
SCHOOL

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Photographs of the final year acting company are by:

**David Buttle** (Charlie Beck, Lily Hardy, Hope Kenna, Isla Lee, Noah Marullo, Umi Myers, Felix Newman, Jidé Okunola, Sonny Pilgrim, Alyth Ross), **Samuel Black** (Dan Wolff), **Harry Livingstone** (Nia Towle), **Wolf Marloh** (Zachary Nachbar-Seckel), **Clare Park** (Grace Cooper Milton), **Phil Sharp** (Kitty Hawthorne, Sam Thorpe-Spinks), **Michael Shelford** (Levi Brown, Sheyi Cole, Aoife Gaston, Brandon Grace, Conor McLeod, Hassan Najib, Millie Smith, Tara Tijani, Dolly LeVack), **David Stone** (Justice Ritchie), **Faye Thomas** (Caitlin Ffion Griffiths, Genevieve Lewis)

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# A Midsummer Night's Dream

by **William Shakespeare**

**Suba Das** director

**Grace Smart** designer

**Ed Lewis** composer

**Lucy Cullingford** movement director

**Jack Stevens** lighting designer

**Thomas Dixon** sound designer

Thursday 26, Friday 27, Saturday 28  
November 2020

Live performances broadcast from  
Milton Court Theatre

Recording of this performance by any  
means whatsoever is strictly prohibited.

This production contains adult content,  
including depictions of drug use, violence  
and scenes of a sexual nature.

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# The Play

*A Midsummer Night's Dream* has been explored for hundreds of years and in every imaginable way. In 2016, YouGov ran a poll in Britain and found that nearly half of the UK population had either read or seen the play. In the past few years, splitting the British population 50/50 has only served to stoke division and mistrust between Leavers and Remainers but, in this case, it's pretty astonishing. According to the same poll (and countless others) *Midsummer* is also the most performed Shakespearean play the world over. As a result of this adulation, it has been imagined six ways to Sunday. Despite this phenomenal supply of productions, the demand never seems to let up. The play is rich for re-investigation and reassessment at every turn.

However, recently, *Midsummer* has been investigated to the point that its title starts to look a little ironic.

Firstly, the time of year. Modern theatre has seemingly rejected Shakespeare's most obvious stage direction and embraced the idea of bringing the summer firmly into the winter. To be fair, Titania does reference the topsy-turvy nature of the environment early on in the play but you wouldn't know it the way either traditionalists have presented it (village fête and morris dancing) nor in new productions that properly go for ice and mud. In multiple high profile productions of this most famous play, the winter has been the setting for this dark and twisted tale of metamorphosis; questionable 'romantic' gestures and environmental destruction. Directors have seemingly decided that the darker, wetter, more miserable winter

nights are more appropriate. Is this the midsummer night our world deserves?

Secondly, the time of day. The action of the play supposedly takes place over just the one night, a night of frivolity and light-hearted hijinks. However, modern productions have recast this light and frothy (practically sunny) night as an ugly, dastardly old bastard of a night that provides the cover of darkness for all sorts. In these new productions, what the characters in the play get up to under cover of night is very much in line with the urban jungle of our contemporary world. Backroom deals, shadowy conversations, specific and pointed acts of malice and, perhaps most true to life, a group of unemployed actors finding somewhere free to rehearse at a ridiculous time of day (after they've all finished their shifts in the hospitality industry, no doubt.) Has *Midsummer* unwittingly been re-appropriated as the Shakespearean play that best mirrors the world as it is today?

Finally, is this really a dream? Feels more like a nightmare at times. Productions have gone out of their way to emphasise Oberon and Titania's autocratic control over this world, presided over by a magic secret police (embodied by Puck) who, despite clear instructions, still seems to be able to get it all wrong and effectively poison the wrong person on a regular basis. Oberon and Puck, not satisfied with meddling in the business of the tourists who are only passing through, go one step further manipulating Titania into engaging in sexual activity with a half man, half donkey who, himself, is unaware that he has been the victim

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of some nefarious magic meant only to humiliate him and debase his humanity. Bottom, however, is also true to our world – he believes himself beautiful despite all evidence to the contrary. Presumably, the Daily Mail and The Sun have repeatedly told him he should reject the evidence of his own eyes in favour of some comforting propaganda. He is, it seems, quite happy to be a pawn in a game.

The whole play has been hijacked and reframed as a bastion of filth, deception and misery.

*Is that really where it deserves to be?*

*Is it as sinister as all that?*

*Does the play need to be so mercilessly dissected?*

In the past, *Midsummer* has been the archetypal harmless Shakespeare play, staged in village gardens across the country. The narrative is familiar, the characters familiar, the setting familiar. It would be easy to argue that this familiarity is exactly what has made it so popular. People like what they already know and have a seemingly unending appetite to keep things the same.

Having said that, maybe keeping things the same isn't such a good idea. Look at the state of the world today: keeping things the same has led to a sharp rise in ugly nationalism around the world. Keeping things the same and insisting on exclusive individualism that favours no one but yourself has led to a pandemic forcing continents to a standstill. Keeping things the same has led to a situation

where enormous and powerful institutions, after so many hidden transgressions, have had to be publically called out for historic abuses of power. And this has only happened because of the bravery of courageous individuals.

So maybe the dark version of *Midsummer* is what we all need?

At the very least, *Midsummer*, despite its obvious colossal appeal, needs re-imaginings like the one you will watch this evening. Versions where we consider the sinister nature of these characters, where we question the relationship humans have with the wild natural habitat on their doorstep, where we challenge the power structures that keep us all in line.

*Midsummer* is, and always has been, a universal play. That couldn't be truer than today. But maybe that universality is not what we thought it was. Maybe the universality in the play is the ugly side of life and, despite a balmy summer night, maybe we have to accept that people are getting up to all sorts of no good under cover of darkness.

*Programme notes by Andy McNamee*

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# Cast

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<b>Puck</b>	Charlie Beck
<b>Lysander</b>	Levi Brown
<b>Egeus/Philostrate</b>	David Buttle*
<b>Helena</b>	Grace Cooper Milton
<b>Quince/Peaseblossom</b>	Caitlin Ffion Griffiths
<b>Titania/Snout</b>	Kitty Hawthorne
<b>Hippolyta/Cobweb</b>	Genevieve Lewis
<b>Oberon/Starveling</b>	Hassan Najib
<b>Theseus/Moth</b>	Felix Newman
<b>Demetrius</b>	Sonny Pilgrim
<b>Snug/Mustardseed</b>	Millie Smith
<b>Bottom</b>	Sam Thorpe-Spinks
<b>Hermia</b>	Tara Tijani
<b>Flute</b>	Nia Towle

Other parts played by the ensemble

\* Guildhall Acting Graduate 2020

A listing of CVs for Guildhall School Final Year Actors may be viewed on the School's website: [gsmd.ac.uk/finalyearactors](https://gsmd.ac.uk/finalyearactors)

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# Production Team

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**Scenic Carpenter**

Zoe Bridger

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**Assistant Carpenters**

Charlotte Cross  
Robbie Lynch  
India Mills

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**Costume Supervisor**

Tara Boland

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**Wardrobe Manager**

Livvy Meeks

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**Costume Assistants**

Amy Hill  
Livvy Meeks  
Kate Stockwell

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**Production Electrician**

Molly Barron

---

**Chief Electrician**

Aled Roberts

---

**Lighting Programmer**

Jonathan Chan

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**Production Manager**

Natalya Scase

---

**Technical Manager**

Sami Barqawi

---

**Technical Assistant**

Rosie Roberts

---

**Prop Maker**

Max Rodriguez-Thorp

---

**Assistant Prop Makers**

Mary Deakes  
Chloe Rushbrook

---

**Scenic Artist**

Rose Bailey

---

**Assistant Scenic Artists**

Dani Diego  
Allegra Totaro-Wainwright

---

**Production Sound Engineer**

Anja Urban

---

**Sound Operator**

Em Dethick-Jones

---

**Video Designer**

Emma Horne

---

**Stage Manager**

Samantha Liquorish

---

**Deputy Stage Manager**

Laura Alexander-Smith

---

**Assistant Stage Managers**

Olivia Hilton-Foster  
Emily Robertson  
Matthew Servant

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**Book Cover**

Samuel Dawson

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**Additional Production Staff**

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**Assistant Director**

Helena Snider

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**Production Managers**

Michael Cunningham  
Bob Holmes



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# Final year actors 2020/21



**Charlie  
Beck**



**Levi  
Brown**



**Sheyi  
Cole**



**Grace  
Cooper Milton**



**Aoife  
Gaston**



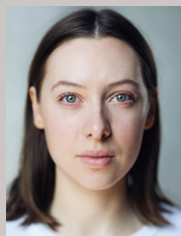
**Brandon  
Grace**



**Caitlin Ffion  
Griffiths**



**Lily  
Hardy**



**Kitty  
Hawthorne**



**Hope  
Kenna**



**Isla  
Lee**



**Dolly  
LeVack**



**Genevieve  
Lewis**

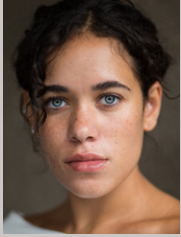


**Noah  
Marullo**



**Conor  
McLeod**





**Umi  
Myers**



**Zachary  
Nachbar-Seckel**



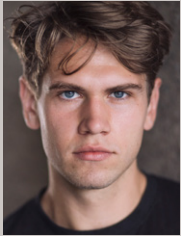
**Hassan  
Najib**



**Felix  
Newman**



**Jidé  
Okunola**



**Sonny  
Pilgrem**



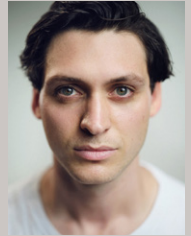
**Justice  
Ritchie**



**Alyth  
Ross**



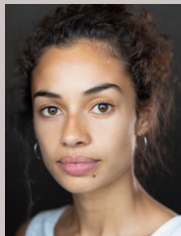
**Millie  
Smith**



**Sam  
Thorpe-Spinks**



**Tara  
Tijani**



**Nia  
Towle**



**Dan  
Wolff**

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# Biographies

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## Suba Das director

Suba Das is an award-winning theatre director, producer and dramaturg. He is Artistic Director and Chief Executive of HighTide, one of the UK's leading new writing theatre companies; and a trustee of the North Music Trust, which operates the iconic Sage Gateshead building and the Royal Northern Sinfonia.

From 2012 to 2018, Suba was Associate Director at Leicester Curve, one of the UK's major producing theatres. Directing credits at Curve included: the world premieres of *Wipers* by Ishy Din and *Pink Sari Revolution* by Purva Naresh, the European premiere of *Shiv* by Aditi Brennan Kapil, and new productions of *Abigail's Party* and *The Cat In The Hat* (with Rose Theatre Kingston and the National Centre for Circus Arts).

At Curve, Suba also established the prestigious Inside Out Festival, developing new drama, dance and spoken word by artists in the East Midlands, raising over £1.5M for new work seen in Leicester and internationally by over 500,000 people.

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## Grace Smart designer

Grace studied at the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts, gaining a First Class BA in Theatre Performance Design. Her set and costume designs include: *Susanna* (Royal Opera House); *My Beautiful Laundrette/Memoirs of an Asian Football Casual* (Curve Theatre); *The End of History...* (Royal Court); *Killer Joe* (Trafalgar Studios); *One Night in Miami* (Nottingham Playhouse); *Shebeen* (Nottingham Playhouse/Theatre Royal Stratford East); *Crocodile Fever* (Traverse Theatre); *Good Vibrations/The Colleen Bawn and St Joan* (Lyric, Belfast); *Postcards from the Ledge* (Gaiety Theatre and Irish national tour); *The World's Wife* (Welsh National Opera); *East is East* (Northern Stage); *Normal and Blasted* (90 Season, Styx Bar); *Bar Mitzvah Boy* (The Gatehouse, London); *The Pier* (Oxford Playhouse).

She has been set designer for *Here Comes the Night* (Lyric, Belfast) and costume designer for *Wonderland* (UK tour) and *Shopping and Fucking* (Lyric Hammersmith). She has assisted designers including Peter McKintosh, David Farley, Christopher Oram and Chloe Mashiter; at venues including the National Theatre, St James Theatre, Regent's Park Open Air Theatre and Donmar Theatre, and worked as a puppeteer for productions for the Royal Shakespeare Company. Grace was the overall winner of the Linbury Prize in 2015.

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**Ed Lewis** composer

Edward studied Music at Oxford University and subsequently trained as a composer and sound designer at the Bournemouth Media School. He works in theatre, film, television and radio. He has been nominated for several Off West End Theatre Awards, and films he has worked on have won several awards at the LA International Film Festival and Filmstock International Film Festival.

Recent theatre includes: *A Christmas Carol* (Wilton's Music Hall); *The Canterville Ghost* (Unicorn Theatre); *Two Trains Running* (Royal & Derngate); *Cash Cow, Everyday I Make Greatness Happen* (Hampstead Theatre); *Killer Joe* (Trafalgar Studios); *Table* (New Vic Theatre); *The War Has Not Yet Started* (Theatre Royal Plymouth); *The Best Man* (West End); *Box Of Delights* (Wilton's); *Broken Glass* (Watford Palace); *Remarkable Invisible* (Theatre By The Lake); *Alligators* (Hampstead Theatre); *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* (Donmar Warehouse); *Platinum* (Hampstead Theatre); *Unfaithful* (Found 111); *The Vertical Hour* (Theatre by the Lake); *Bug* (Found 111); *The Dazzle* (Found 111); *Baddies the Musical* (Unicorn Theatre); *Breaking the Ice* (Unicorn Theatre); *Chef* (Soho Theatre); *Abigail's Party* (Leicester Curve); *Hannah* (Unicorn Theatre); *The Cement Garden* (VAULT Festival); *The Speed Twins* (Riverside Studios); *Eugenie Grandet* (Hartshorn-Hook Productions); *Cuddles* (Oval House Theatre); *Molly Sweeney* (The Print Room/Lyric); *Ignorance* (Hampstead Theatre); *Gravity* (Birmingham Rep Theatre).

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**Lucy Cullingford** movement director

Lucy is a Choreographer and Movement Director working in Theatre, Opera, Dance, and Film. She trained at Northern School of Contemporary Dance and Bretton Hall University. She has an MA in Movement Studies from The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.

Lucy was Movement Practitioner in the inaugural Movement Department at the Royal Shakespeare Company 2008 – 2010. Then Dance Repetiteur on the Royal Shakespeare Company's original production of *Matilda The Musical* into the West End. She continues to work regularly with the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Recent Theatre productions include: *Death of England, All of Us* (National Theatre); *The Wizard of Oz* (Leeds Playhouse) and the Royal Shakespeare Company's acclaimed productions of *The Taming of The Shrew*; *Measure for Measure*; *Coriolanus*; *The Jew of Malta* and *Snow In Midsummer*, the motion capture production of *The Tempest* and *Don Quixote* (Royal Shakespeare Company/West End); *King Lear* with Ian McKellen (Chichester Theatre/West End) and *Constellations* (Royal Court/West End/UK National tour and Broadway).

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**Jack Stevens** lighting designer

Jack is currently in his third year of the BA (Hons) Technical Theatre Arts (Theatre Technology) programme at Guildhall School. He is working towards a career in Lighting Design and Theatre. He has worked between events and theatre, both in London and the North-west and has worked in many different varieties of shows over the years, from Installations to outdoor promenade theatre shows.

Lighting credits at Guildhall include: Lighting Programmer *Autumn Opera Scenes* (dir. Martin Lloyd Evans); Lighting Programmer *Dido and Aeneas* and *La Bella dormente nel bosco* (dir. Olivia Fuchs).

Other Credits at Guildhall include: Video Operator *Summer Opera Makers* (dir. John Ramster); Head of Sound Production Engineer *Antigone* (dir. Orla O'Loughlin); Head of Sound Production Engineer *Spring Opera Scenes* (dir. Stephen Medcalf); Production Assistant *The Royale* (dir. Ameera Conrad); Assistant Carpenter *La Fedeltà Premiata* (dir. Stephen Barlow).

His other credits include: Technical Assistant *The Three Musketeers* Dukes Williamson Park (dir. Sarah Punshon); Technical Assistant *Treasure Island* Dukes Williamson Park (dir. Joe Sumsion); Technical Assistant *The Hobbit*, Dukes Williamson Park (dir. Joe Sumsion) which was awarded for Best Show For Children And Young People (UK theatre awards).

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**Thomas Dixon** sound designer

Thomas is currently in his third year of the BA (Hons) Technical Theatre Arts (Theatre Technology) programme at Guildhall School.

Credits in sound design include: *Creatures of the light Blackpool* (Guildhall Live Events); *Blackpool Brilliance* (Guildhall Live Events); *Living without star* (Guildhall Live Events); *Somewhere In* (dir. Sam Thorpe-Spinks – Guildhall CoLAB); *Ravan* (dir. Chirag Benedict Lobo – Guildhall CoLAB).

Other sound credits include: Sound #1 *Sballis Fest* (The Other Palace); Sound #2 *A West End Christmas* (MAD Trust); Sound #2 *West End Bars, Stripped to our Birthday Suits* (MAD Trust); Sound #2 *The Other Songs* (The Other Palace, Really Useful Group); Sound Technician *Prides Got Talent* (London Pride); Sound #2 *West End Bares – Top off the tops* (MAD Trust).

Professional Credits include: Casual Technician (The Other Palace); Lighting & Video Deputy *Be More Chill* (The Other Palace); Lighting Deputy *Magic Mike Live* (Hippodrome Casino); Stage Showman *Amélie the Musical* (The Other Palace); Casual LX Technician (Lyric Hammersmith); LX Technician *Honest Amy* (Edinburgh Fringe); Technical ASM *London Pride Parade* (Pride in London); Stage Showman *The Messiah* (The Other Palace); Rehearsal ASM *American Idiot UK Tour* (Selladoor Worldwide).

Guildhall credits include: Production Assistant *Antigone* (dir. Orla O'Loughlin); Production Assistant *The Angel Esmerelda* (dir Martin Lloyd Evans); Wardrobe Assistant *Provok'd* (dir. Jamie Bradley); Video Programmer & Operator *The Wheel* (dir. Caroline Byrne).

September — December 2020

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Jidé Okunola  
Alyth Ross  
Sam Thorpe-Spinks  
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Edward Jackson  
Devon James-Bowen  
Sammy Lacey  
Samantha Liquorish  
Eilidh Mackenzie  
Rylee McDaniel

Livvy Meeks  
Stanley Olden  
Sophie Presswell  
Benedict Rattray  
Maisie Roberts  
Rosie Roberts  
Daniel Robinson  
Natalya Scase  
Matt Shraga  
Ema Soares Da Cunha  
Andrea Støier  
Andersen  
Qian Yan Tan  
Katherine Verberne  
Ophir Westman  
Adam Woodhouse

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Dani Diego  
Reuben Cohen  
Sam Levy

### Leathersellers' Scholar

Kate Stockwell

### Tallow Chandlers' Scholar

Finlay Anderson

### Skinner's' Lawrence

**Atwell Scholar**  
Fiona Newton

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### Leverhulme Arts Scholars

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Amy Hill  
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Emily Nellis  
Pete Reavey  
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Zwierzcowska

### Carpenters' Company Production Arts Scholarship

Emylly Ombok

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Abu Mensah

### The Jane Ades Ingenuity Scholar

Rin Akiyama





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## Guildhall School Scholarships Fund

*“My goal for my first year was to soak up everything the School has to offer, and thanks to my scholarship I was able to do that. For that, I thank you all so much”*

Tara Tijani, BA Acting

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