



A Midsummer Night's Dream

Hillbark Players Audition Pack 2018

Hillbark Players

Hillbark Players is the longest running presenter of open-air Shakespeare in the North West. The Company was founded in 1964 to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's birth and apart from a short break in the early 1970's, Hillbark Players has presented a production every other year since.

2019's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* will be our 27th major production.

Our major productions are always of the highest quality and the best local talent is sought, both to perform and to provide technical support. A purpose-built 490-seat theatre is created in Royden Park, Frankby - a public park just outside West Kirby on the Wirral. Theatre quality lighting is installed and all seats are under cover - it is only the actors who get wet - occasionally!

On alternate years we sometimes present a smaller scale revue-style production where the audience need to bring a seat, a picnic and maybe an umbrella.

The most frequently used adjective to describe the full Hillbark experience is 'magical' and we look forward to June 2019 to share this magic with you again.

The Directorial Team

Ruth Stenhouse has been a Hillbarker since appearing as a fairy in 2001's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. She is often found working backstage and has worked as both a producer and assistant director on several major and interim productions. A Modern Languages teacher by day, Ruth is committed to making our productions accessible to younger audiences. Ruth has served on the Hillbark committee since 2011 and has been Vice-Chair since 2017.

Stuart Rathe is well known to Hillbark audiences, having appeared in all major productions since 2013's *The Merchant of Venice*. He was Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing* and Horatio in *Hamlet* playing both roles to critical and audience acclaim. Stuart teaches locally and has spent two years as Education Manager for *Shakespeare Schools Foundation*, where he produced resources for teaching Shakespeare to children of all ages; trained teachers, and worked with children to encourage their love of the bard. Stuart serves on the Hillbark committee.

The Concept

In something of a break with Hillbark tradition, we are setting the production in the 1950s in rural England. Hillbark village will become a garden party, complete with Girl Guides who make the tea! From the minute you arrive on site, everything will reflect the era – costume, music, and hairstyles. The feeling of a younger generation pulling away from the tradition of their elders fits this tale beautifully. We aren't choosing a particular year, but an overall feeling of that time that bridged the austerity of wartime Britain and the wildness of the Swinging Sixties. Props and costumes are already being sourced and probably our favourite find is an authentic jukebox to use.

Audition Dates and Details

Auditions are to be held in the church hall of St John the Divine in Frankby on the following dates: Tuesday 27th November, Thursday 29th November and Thursday 6th December from 7.30pm until 10pm. Each night will focus on one set of characters from a different world in the play.

Tuesday 27th November	Thursday 29th November	Thursday 6th December
Mortals	Fairies	Mechanicals

Auditions will take the format of a 1 hour workshop, followed by the chance to perform an audition piece.

The Workshop

The workshop will consist of some warm up activities, and some script based and devised group work. There is no need to prepare anything for this part of the audition process.

We will be looking for group interaction, creativity, flexibility and an understanding of the themes of AMND. While the directorial team will run the workshop, we will have observers in the room who will feed back on the work that they see.

Audition Pieces

Following the workshop, there will be an opportunity to perform a piece from the play that you can prepare in advance. The audition pieces are contained in this pack. If you choose to audition for more than one part, you will need to prepare audition pieces for each character. There is no need to come to more than one evening of auditions.

You do not need to learn the piece, but we expect an understanding of the text and we will be interested to see how you interpret your chosen character.

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT WE MAY ASK YOU TO STAY AT THE AUDITION UNTIL THE END OF THE EVENING, APPROXIMATELY 9:45PM.

Booking your audition slot

You must book your audition slot by emailing hillbarkplayers@gmail.com. Please specify in the email which date you will be attending and which part you intend to read for. If you cannot make the specified date for your character, then please let us know in the email and we will see what we can do to accommodate you.

Please book before 20th November.

Key dates and venue

First Meeting of Team – Sunday 24th February 2019

Rehearsals begin – Sunday March 3rd 2019

Rehearsals will take place on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Sunday afternoons at the church hall of St John the Divine in Frankby. A rehearsal schedule will be provided on Sunday 24th February. At audition, you will be asked to give details of any commitments you have that will impact your availability to rehearse. We will do our best to ensure that you are only called to rehearsal when you are needed.

Production week – 24th June to 29th June 2019

Schools Matinee – we hope to hold a matinee for local schools on Wednesday 26th June and would expect cast to be available all day for this performance.

A Midsummer Night's Dream – A Synopsis

Theseus, the Duke of Athens, is preparing to marry Hippolyta, the Queen of the Amazons. As he finalises arrangements, he is interrupted by Egeus, the father of Hermia. Egeus will not agree to Hermia's decision to marry Lysander, because he wants her to marry Demetrius

The Duke tells Hermia to obey her father, or she must either die or live as a nun.

Lysander and Hermia plan to elope, and they tell Helena, who is in love with Demetrius. Helena tells Demetrius of the plan and all four lovers soon find themselves lost in the Athenian woods

Elsewhere in the woods, Oberon, the king of the fairies, is quarrelling with his queen, Titania, over a changeling boy she refuses to give him. Oberon overhears Helena and Demetrius arguing and sends his mischievous servant, Puck, to get a flower whose juice has the power to make people fall in love with the first creature they see when they wake. He instructs Puck to put some drops on Demetrius' eyes.

Puck mistakenly puts the flower juice on the eyes of the sleeping Lysander so that when he is woken by Helena he falls in love with her and rejects Hermia.

In another part of the woods, a group of workmen are rehearsing a play for Theseus's wedding day: the tragic love-story of Pyramus and Thisbe. Bottom, the weaver, is to play the lover, Pyramus.

Puck overhears their rehearsals in the wood and he plays a trick on them by giving Bottom an ass's head which frightens the others away. Bottom's singing awakes Queen Titania who Oberon has anointed with the magical flower juice. On waking, Titania falls in love with Bottom and insists that her fairy servants wait on him.

Meanwhile, both the male lovers are enamoured of Helena, which causes a huge fight between Helena and Hermia. As the foursome chase through the woods, Puck leads them to a resting place where they are anointed with the juice. When the lovers wake up, Lysander sees Hermia, and Demetrius sees Helena. They meet the Duke and Egeus, and agree to be married during Theseus and Hippolyta's wedding day.

Meanwhile, Oberon restores Titania's sight and wakes her. She is appalled at the sight of Bottom the Ass, and returns to Oberon. The fairy world is at peace again.

The Mechanicals perform their dreadful rendition of Pyramus and Thisbe before the wedding guests.

Principal characters

The principal characters listed below are those that we are providing audition pieces for.

We have colour coded the character descriptions to help you see which world they belong to and which audition date you should attend.

Other roles (listed below the principal character descriptions) will be cast from our pool of auditionees.

If you are interested in one of these roles, we have suggested which principal role you might read for.

Mortals

Lysander - A young man of Athens, in love with Hermia. Lysander's relationship with Hermia is difficult: he cannot marry her because her father wishes her to marry Demetrius. In the woods, Lysander falls victim to the love potion and falls in love with Helena.

Helena - A young woman of Athens, in love with Demetrius. But Demetrius is in love with Hermia. Helena is eventually the object of both Demetrius and Lysander's affections, when the love potion makes them both fall in love with her.

Demetrius – A young man of Athens, in love with Hermia but engaged to Helena. He follows Lysander and Hermia into the woods, but soon succumbs to Puck's magic and finds himself hopelessly in love with Helena.

Hermia – a young woman of Athens, in love with Lysander. Her father, Egeus, disapproves of the match and wants her to marry Demetrius. Hermia and Lysander elope to the magical Athenian woods and soon get caught up in Puck's magical mayhem.

Theseus – The Duke of Athens. His planned marriage frames the play. This role is sometimes doubled with Oberon in some productions.

Hippolyta – the Amazonian Queen. She has been won as Theseus's bride in war. This role is sometimes doubled with Titania in some productions

Fairies

Puck - Puck is Oberon's jester, a mischievous fairy who delights in playing pranks on mortals. His antics are responsible for many of the complications in the various threads of the play: he applies the love potion to the wrong Athenian gentleman, causing chaos amongst the lovers. He transforms Bottom into a donkey.

Oberon - The king of the fairies, Oberon has a passionate relationship with Titania, his queen. They are initially at war because she refuses to give him a young changeling boy.

Oberon's other principal relationship is with his servant Puck. Puck's involvement in the love potion plot is what drives much of the comedy and confusion in the play.

Titania - The queen of the fairies, Titania argues fiercely with Oberon over the changeling boy. Her potion induced love for Nick Bottom is one of the most comical aspects of the play

Mechanicals

Nick Bottom - The comically overconfident weaver chosen to play Pyramus in the Mechanical's play for Theseus's marriage celebration. Bottom is full of advice and self-confidence but is a hammy actor and makes frequent linguistic errors. He is the object of Titania's drug induced affections.

Peter Quince – the Director of the Mechanicals' play. He has the exasperating job of keeping the actors (and especially the overconfident Nick Bottom) under control.

Other characters

Character	Suggested audition piece
Philostrate – Master of the Revels (on the court staff at Theseus's palace).	Theseus or Peter Quince
Egeus	Theseus
Snug	Bottom or Peter Quince
Snout	Bottom or Peter Quince
Starveling	Bottom or Peter Quince
Flute	Bottom or Peter Quince
Cobweb, Moth, Mustard Seed, Peaseblossom (fairies)	Puck, Oberon or Titania

LYSANDER AND HERMIA

LYSANDER

Fair love, you faint with wandering in the wood;
And to speak troth, I have forgot our way:
We'll rest us, Hermia, if you think it good,
And tarry for the comfort of the day.

HERMIA

Be it so, Lysander: find you out a bed;
For I upon this bank will rest my head.

LYSANDER

One turf shall serve as pillow for us both;
One heart, one bed, two bosoms and one troth.

HERMIA

Nay, good Lysander; for my sake, my dear,
Lie further off yet, do not lie so near.

LYSANDER

O, take the sense, sweet, of my innocence!
Love takes the meaning in love's conference.
I mean, that my heart unto yours is knit
So that but one heart we can make of it;
Two bosoms interchained with an oath;
So then two bosoms and a single troth.
Then by your side no bed-room me deny;
For lying so, Hermia, I do not lie.

HERMIA

Lysander riddles very prettily:
Now much beshrew my manners and my pride,
If Hermia meant to say Lysander lied.
But, gentle friend, for love and courtesy
Lie further off; in human modesty,
Such separation as may well be said
Becomes a virtuous bachelor and a maid,
So far be distant; and, good night, sweet friend:
Thy love ne'er alter till thy sweet life end!

LYSANDER

Amen, amen, to that fair prayer, say I;
And then end life when I end loyalty!
Here is my bed: sleep give thee all his rest!

HERMIA

With half that wish the wisher's eyes be press'd!

HELENA

How happy some o'er other some can be!
Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.
But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;
He will not know what all but he do know:
And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,
So I, admiring of his qualities:
Things base and vile, folding no quantity,
Love can transpose to form and dignity:
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind;
And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind:
For ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's eye,
He hail'd down oaths that he was only mine;
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,
So he dissolved, and showers of oaths did melt.
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight:
Then to the wood will he to-morrow night
Pursue her; and for this intelligence
If I have thanks, it is a dear expense:
But herein mean I to enrich my pain,
To have his sight thither and back again.

HELENA AND HERMIA

HERMIA

God speed fair Helena! whither away?

HELENA

Call you me fair? that fair again unsay.
Demetrius loves your fair: O happy fair!
Your eyes are lode-stars; and your tongue's sweet air
More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,
When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear.
Sickness is catching: O, were favour so,
Yours would I catch, fair Hermia, ere I go;
My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,
My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.
Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,
The rest I'd give to be to you translated.
O, teach me how you look, and with what art
You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.

HERMIA

I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.

HELENA

O that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill!

HERMIA

The more I hate, the more he follows me.

HELENA

The more I love, the more he hateth me.

HERMIA

Take comfort: he no more shall see my face;
Lysander and myself will fly this place.
Before the time I did Lysander see,
Seem'd Athens as a paradise to me:
O, then, what graces in my love do dwell,
That he hath turn'd a heaven unto a hell!
So in the wood, where often you and I
Upon faint primrose-beds were wont to lie,
Emptying our bosoms of their counsel sweet,
There my Lysander and myself shall meet;
And thence from Athens turn away our eyes,
To seek new friends and stranger companies.

DEMETRIUS

DEMETRIUS

I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander and fair Hermia?
The one I'll slay, the other slayeth me.
Thou told'st me they were stolen unto this wood;
And here am I, and wode within this wood,
Because I cannot meet my Hermia.
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

HELENA

You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant;
But yet you draw not iron, for my heart
Is true as steel: leave you your power to draw,
And I shall have no power to follow you.

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:

DEMETRIUS

Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit;
For I am sick when I do look on thee.

HELENA

And I am sick when I look not on you.

DEMETRIUS

You do impeach your modesty too much,
To leave the city and commit yourself
Into the hands of one that loves you not;
To trust the opportunity of night
And the ill counsel of a desert place
With the rich worth of your virginity.

I'll run from thee and hide me in the brakes,
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.

THESEUS AND HIPPOLYTA

THESEUS

Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
Draws on apace; four happy days bring in
Another moon: but, O, methinks, how slow
This old moon wanes! she lingers my desires,
Like to a step-dame or a dowager
Long withering out a young man revenue.

HIPPOLYTA

Four days will quickly steep themselves in night;
Four nights will quickly dream away the time;
And then the moon, like to a silver bow
New-bent in heaven, shall behold the night
Of our solemnities.

THESEUS

Go, Philostrate,
Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments;
Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth;
Turn melancholy forth to funerals;
The pale companion is not for our pomp.

PUCK

The king doth keep his revels here to-night:
Take heed the queen come not within his sight;
For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,
Because that she as her attendant hath
A lovely boy, stolen from an Indian king;
She never had so sweet a changeling;
And jealous Oberon would have the child
Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild;
But she perforce withholds the loved boy,
Crowns him with flowers and makes him all her joy:
And now they never meet in grove or green,
By fountain clear, or spangled starlight sheen,
But, they do square, that all their elves for fear
Creep into acorn-cups and hide them there.

Fairy

Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
Call'd Robin Goodfellow
Are not you he?

PUCK

Thou speak'st aright;
I am that merry wanderer of the night.
I jest to Oberon and make him smile
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal:
And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,
In very likeness of a roasted crab,
And when she drinks, against her lips I bob
And on her wither'd dewlap pour the ale.
The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,
Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;
Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,
And 'tailor' cries, and falls into a cough;
And then the whole quire hold their hips and laugh,
And waxen in their mirth and neeze and swear
A merrier hour was never wasted there.
But, room, fairy! here comes Oberon.

OBERON

I pray thee, give it me.
I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine:
There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,
Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight;
And there the snake throws her enamell'd skin,
Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in:
And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes,
And make her full of hateful fantasies.
Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove:
A sweet Athenian lady is in love
With a disdainful youth: anoint his eyes;
But do it when the next thing he espies
May be the lady: thou shalt know the man
By the Athenian garments he hath on.
Effect it with some care, that he may prove
More fond on her than she upon her love:
And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.

TITANIA

Set your heart at rest:

The fairy land buys not the child of me.

His mother was a votaress of my order:

And, in the spiced Indian air, by night,

Full often hath she gossip'd by my side,

And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,

Marking the embarked traders on the flood,

When we have laugh'd to see the sails conceive

And grow big-bellied with the wanton wind;

Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait

Following, -- her womb then rich with my young squire, --

Would imitate, and sail upon the land,

To fetch me trifles, and return again,

As from a voyage, rich with merchandise.

But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;

And for her sake do I rear up her boy,

And for her sake I will not part with him.

OBERON AND TITANIA

TITANIA

My Oberon! what visions have I seen!
Methought I was enamour'd of an ass.

OBERON

There lies your love.

TITANIA

How came these things to pass?
O, how mine eyes do loathe his visage now!

OBERON

Silence awhile. Robin, take off this head.
Come, my queen, take hands with me,
And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be.
Now thou and I are new in amity,
And will to-morrow midnight solemnly
Dance in Duke Theseus' house triumphantly,
And bless it to all fair prosperity:
There shall the pairs of faithful lovers be
Wedded, with Theseus, all in jollity.

TITANIA

Come, my lord, and in our flight
Tell me how it came this night
That I sleeping here was found
With these mortals on the ground.

QUINCE AND BOTTOM – Audition Piece One

QUINCE

Answer as I call you. Nick Bottom, the weaver.

BOTTOM

Ready. Name what part I am for, and proceed.

QUINCE

You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

BOTTOM

What is Pyramus? a lover, or a tyrant?

QUINCE

A lover, that kills himself most gallant for love.

BOTTOM

That will ask some tears in the true performing of it: if I do it, let the audience look to their eyes; I will move storms, I will condole in some measure. To the rest: yet my chief humour is for a tyrant: I could play Ercles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.

The raging rocks

And shivering shocks

Shall break the locks

Of prison gates;

And Phibbus' car

Shall shine from far

And make and mar

The foolish Fates.

This was lofty! Now name the rest of the players.

This is Ercles' vein, a tyrant's vein; a lover is more condoling.

QUINCE

Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.

FLUTE

Here, Peter Quince.

QUINCE

Flute, you must take Thisby on you.

FLUTE

What is Thisby? a wandering knight?

QUINCE

It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

FLUTE

Nay, faith, let me not play a woman; I have a beard coming.

QUINCE

That's all one: you shall play it in a mask, and you may speak as small as you will.

BOTTOM

An I may hide my face, let me play Thisby too, I'll speak in a monstrous little voice. 'Thisne, Thisne;' 'Ah, Pyramus, lover dear! thy Thisby dear, and lady dear!'

QUINCE

No, no; you must play Pyramus: and, Flute, you Thisby.

BOTTOM

Well, proceed.

QUINCE AND BOTTOM – Audition Piece Two

QUINCE

Here's a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal. This green plot shall be our stage, this hawthorn-brake our tiring-house; and we will do it in action as we will do it before the duke.

BOTTOM

Peter Quince,--

QUINCE

What sayest thou, bully Bottom?

BOTTOM

There are things in this comedy of Pyramus and Thisby that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself; which the ladies cannot abide. How answer you that? Write me a prologue; and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; and, for the more better assurance, tell them that I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver: this will put them out of fear.

QUINCE

Well, we will have such a prologue; and it shall be written in eight and six.

BOTTOM

No, make it two more; let it be written in eight and eight.

QUINCE

Well it shall be so. But there is two hard things; that is, to bring the moonlight into a chamber; for, you know, Pyramus and Thisby meet by moonlight.

SNOUT

Doth the moon shine that night we play our play?

BOTTOM

A calendar, a calendar! look in the almanac; find out moonshine, find out moonshine.

QUINCE

Yes, it doth shine that night.

BOTTOM

Why, then may you leave a casement of the great chamber window, where we play, open, and the moon may shine in at the casement.

QUINCE

Ay; or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lanthorn, and say he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of Moonshine. Then, there is another thing: we must have a wall in the great chamber; for Pyramus and Thisby says the story, did talk through the chink of a wall.

BOTTOM

Some man or other must present Wall: and let him have some plaster, or some loam, or some rough-cast about him, to signify wall; and let him hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisby whisper.

QUINCE

If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin: when you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake: and so every one according to his cue.