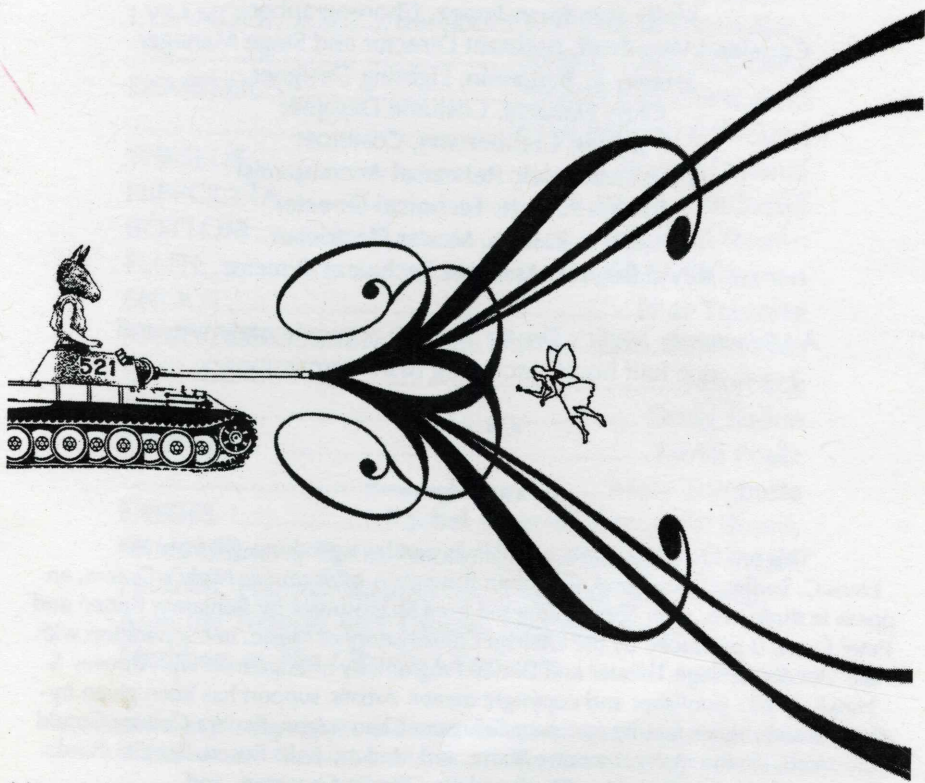


# Oberlin Opera Theater Presents: A Midsummer Night's Dream

An opera in three acts by Benjamin Britten with a  
libretto adapted from Shakespeare by Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears



November 14, 16, 17 & 18, 2007 Hall Auditorium / Oberlin College

# A Midsummer Night's Dream



An opera in three acts, sung in English  
Music by Benjamin Britten  
Libretto adapted from Shakespeare by Benjamin Britten  
and Peter Pears  
Premiere: Aldeburgh, England, June 11, 1960

**Bridget-Michaele Reischl**, Conductor    **Jonathon Field**, Director  
**Alan Montgomery**, Assistant Music Director  
**Howard Lubin**, Musical Preparation  
**Katherine Plank**, Choir Director  
**Michael Louis Grube**, Managing Director/Set Designer  
**Holly Handman-Lopez**, Choreographer  
**Copeland Woodruff**, Assistant Director and Stage Manager  
**Jeremy K. Benjamin**, Lighting Designer  
**Chris Flaharty**, Costume Designer  
**JoEllen Cuthbertson**, Costumer  
**Daniel Michalak**, Rehearsal Accompanist  
**Joseph P. Natt**, Technical Director  
**Andrew Kaletta**, Master Electrician  
**David Bugher**, Assistant Technical Director

*A Midsummer Night's Dream* will run approximately two and  
one half hours, including two intermissions.

□ □ □ □ □

## Acknowledgements

This production is made possible in part by a generous gift from the  
Louis C. Sudler Opera Fund. Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, an  
opera in three acts, with libretto adapted from Shakespeare by Benjamin Britten and  
Peter Pears, is produced by the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, in cooperation with  
the Oberlin College Theater and Dance Program, by arrangement with Boosey &  
Hawkes, Inc., publisher and copyright owner. Artistic support has been given by  
Conservatory voice faculty members Salvatore Champagne, Kendra Colton, Gerald  
Crawford, Daune Mahy, Lorraine Manz, and Marlene Ralis Rosen. Special thanks  
go to Katherine Plank and the Oberlin Choristers, and  
American Commodore Tuxedo.

## Cast of Characters

OBERON ..... Nathan Medley  
TYTANIA..... Olivia Savage (Wed./Sat.)  
..... Jenna Hall (Fri./Sun.)  
PUCK..... Amy O'Callaghan  
COBWEB ..... Caitlin Bell  
PEASEBLOSSOM ..... Laura Estrada  
MUSTARDSEED ..... Melanie Emig  
MOTH ..... Meris Gadaletto  
HELENA..... Sophie Wingland (Wed./Sat.)  
..... Tiffany Marx (Fri./Sun.)  
HERMIA ..... Kimiko Glynn (Wed./Sat.)  
..... Jordan Roberts (Fri./Sun.)  
LYSANDER..... Benjamin von Reiche (Wed./Sat.)  
..... Joseph Turro (Fri./Sun.)  
DEMETRIUS ..... Jeffrey Hill (Wed./Sat.)  
..... Evan Bennett (Fri./Sun.)  
THESEUS..... Joseph Lattanzi  
HIPPOLYTA ..... Maureen Sutliff  
BOTTOM..... Joseph Barron  
FLUTE ..... Chad Grossman  
SNOUT ..... Elias Traverse  
STARVELING..... Colin Levin  
QUINCE..... Jason Eck  
SNUG ..... Doug Balkin  
SERVANTS ..... Kjirsti Foutz  
..... Mark Tempesta  
FAIRIES ..... Rachel Bennett, Benjamin Board,  
Brianna Board, Dalin Frantz, Coleen Gilfether, Angela  
Hudnell, Hannah Rasmussen, Christina Schmittgen,  
Anthony Teague, and Theresa Van Keuren —  
*Members of The Oberlin Choristers*

Please note that photography and the use of recording devices are not permitted in  
Hall Auditorium. Remember to turn off all cellular phones, watch alarms,  
and pagers before the performance begins.

Oberlin Chamber Orchestra  
Bridget-Michaele Reischl, Conductor

VIOLIN I

Eliza Krivo, *concertmaster*  
Lisha Gu  
Garrett Openshaw  
Robin Su

VIOLIN II

Nina Söderberg, *principal*  
Jihee Hong

VIOLA

Sonia Oram, *principal*  
Barbara Vanté  
Caitlin Murphy

VIOLONCELLO

Shigeko Landin, *principal*,  
*Shane Foundation*  
*Endowed Chair*  
Erik Haasler

BASS

Gerald Torres, *principal*  
Nishana Gunaratne

FLUTE

Bona Chung  
Laura Cocks

OBOE

Mingjia Liu

CLARINET

James Sandberg  
Hana Jo

BASSOON

Andrew Pattison

HORN

Wallace Easter  
Elizabeth Upton

TRUMPET

Donald McEwan

TROMBONE

Berk Schneider

TIMPANI

Matthew Hoselton

PERCUSSION

Jake Harkins  
Matthew Hoselton

HARP

Xiao Du  
Yue Guo

HARPSICHORD/CELESTA

Mark Shuldiner

MANAGER

Wallace Easter

MANAGER/LIBRARIAN

Christine Haff-Paluck

## Synopsis

### Act One

A group of fairies who serve Tytania, Queen of the Fairies, is being chased by Puck, a nature spirit who serves Oberon, King of the Fairies. Tytania and Oberon are quarreling, which has caused disruptions in the weather all over the world. Oberon plans revenge and tells Puck to fetch an herb with a magical juice. When sprinkled on Tytania's eyes, the juice will cause her to fall madly in love with the first creature she sees upon awakening.

Lysander and Hermia, lovers from Athens, are fleeing a law that compels Hermia to marry Demetrius. They go off together in the forest. Helena, in love with Demetrius, warns him that Hermia has escaped from Athens. Demetrius is not in love with Helena and scorns her. He heads toward the forest in pursuit of Hermia.

Witnessing the argument between Demetrius and Helena, Oberon tells Puck to also put the magical juice in Demetrius's eyes so that he will fall in love with Helena.

Workmen arrive to discuss a play that they plan to perform at the wedding of Theseus, Duke of Athens. The play, *Pyramus and Thisby*, is a lamentable comedy about lovers who are literally separated by a wall between their parents' homes. Peter Quince, author of the play, hands out scripts and tells them all to return to the woods that evening to rehearse.

Tired of wandering in the woods, Lysander and Hermia decide to rest. Puck mistakenly pours the magic potion onto Lysander's eyes, not Demetrius's, as Oberon has told him to do. Helena continues to pursue Demetrius and searches for help; she finds and awakens Lysander. Under the spell of the potion, Lysander falls passionately in love with Helena. She, in turn, believes he is mocking her and runs away, with Lysander in hot pursuit. Hermia awakens completely alone and sets off in search of Lysander.

Tytania asks her fairies to sing her to sleep. Oberon seizes the opportunity and pours the love potion on Tytania's eyes, then vanishes.

Intermission: 12 Minutes

### Act Two

In the woods that evening, Peter Quince and the workmen-actors rehearse *Pyramus and Thisby*. Bottom manages to mangle several words, then goes off to effect a better entrance. Amusing himself, Puck decides to transform Bottom into an ass. Seeing Bottom with the head of a donkey, the workmen run off terrified. All alone in the woods now, Bottom tries to leave, but wakes up Tytania, who immediately falls in love with him. Tytania offers him royal treatment, and eventually her bed, as well.

Oberon is delighted when he sees that Tytania has fallen in love with a donkey; however, after seeing that Demetrius is still pursuing Hermia, and that Lysander is in love with Helena, he realizes that Puck has put the magic juice in the wrong eyes. Rejected by Hermia, Demetrius falls asleep. Oberon now puts the love juice in Demetrius's eyes.

Lysander is still pursuing Helena. When she returns, Demetrius awakens and falls madly in love with her. Now, both men are in love with Helena, who is convinced that they are mocking her. Hermia re-enters and cannot understand why the two men love Helena and no one loves her.

Oberon is furious with Puck for fouling everything up, and gives Puck an herb that will serve as an antidote for Lysander. Puck makes sure that the sleeping lovers are paired properly so that when they awaken, they will fall in love with the appropriate person.

### Act Three

Intermission: 12 Minutes

It is dawn. With the new potion in Tytania's eyes, Oberon awakens his queen. The reunited couple makes plans to attend the marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta that night, and calls forth music to guide them. As the lovers awaken, they are amazed at their cure, and go off to tell the royalty in Athens about their strange dream. Now restored, Bottom awakens and tries to remember his dream. He is joined by his colleagues, and they run off to prepare their play for that evening.

In Athens, Theseus and Hippolyta are enjoying their nuptial celebrations. Amidst the pomp, the four lovers come to ask Theseus' forgiveness for their disobedience to the law. Theseus forgives them and overrules the law, saying that the two couples also shall be married that evening. As part of the wedding celebration, they view the performance of *Pyramus and Thisby*. After the play, Theseus sends everyone off to their wedding beds, as the fairies slowly appear and bless all of the wedding couples and the audience.

(Note: Copeland Woodruff, Assistant Director, directs *Pyramus and Thisby*, the "play within the play," in Act Three.)

□ □ □ □

**Benjamin Britten** (Composer, 1913-1976), born in Suffolk, England, began composing prolifically from the age of seven. Studying at the Royal College of Music in London, he wrote the first two compositions to receive acclaim, the *Sinfonietta*, Op. 1, and *A Boy was Born*, in 1934. The following year he met poet W.H. Auden, with whom he collaborated on *Our Hunting Fathers*, a song-cycle for soprano and orchestra. In 1936, Britten met tenor Peter Pears, with whom he began a musical collaboration and personal partnership that would last his entire life.

In 1939, Britten and Pears followed W.H. Auden to America, where Britten composed *Paul Bunyan*, his first opera. He also wrote other important works, such as the orchestral *Sinfonia da Requiem*. Conscientious objectors during World War

II, Britten and Pears returned to England in 1942, and Britten began an opera, *Peter Grimes*, which would catapult him as the pre-eminent composer of his generation. The duo increasingly became an important part of post-War Britain's cultural life when they helped to found the English Opera Group in 1946. Britten was not only celebrated as a composer, but also as an accompanist and an authoritative conductor. His interpretations of Mozart were highly esteemed.

Following *Grimes*, Britten created other operas, including *Billy Budd* and *Turn of the Screw*. He later became interested in the music of the East and Japanese Noh plays. Then, in 1959, Britten began to compose a full-evening opera for the re-opening of the Jubilee Hall in Aldeburgh. With little time to create a new libretto, he and Pears adapted *A Midsummer Night's Dream* from Shakespeare. What resulted was one of the most successful and faithful operatic adaptations to a Shakespearean play that had ever been produced. With dynamic action between the different groups of characters — and the richly woven tapestry of bright percussive harps, keyboards and percussion representing the fairy world and warm strings for the lovers — *A Midsummer Night's Dream* became the most beguiling of Britten's operas. Its timeless humor and fairy enchantment make it a spellbinding masterpiece. Note: This biographical information was gathered from *The Britten-Pears Foundation* ([www.brittenpears.org](http://www.brittenpears.org)).

**Bridget-Michaele Reischl** is Music Director of the Oberlin Orchestras and Associate Professor of Conducting at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. In 2005-06, she led the Oberlin Conservatory Symphony Orchestra on a concert tour of China. Since becoming the first American to win Italy's Antonio Pedrotti International Conducting Competition in 1995, she has been an active guest conductor throughout the United States and internationally, appearing with such orchestras as the Atlanta and Milwaukee symphonies and the Brooklyn Philharmonic. Reischl is also music director of the Green Bay Symphony Orchestra in Green Bay, Wisconsin, a position she has held since 2001. From 1992 to 2004, she was Music Director of the Lawrence Symphony Orchestra and Associate Professor of Conducting at the Lawrence University Conservatory of Music in Appleton, Wisconsin. She is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music. As a student of Robert Spano (a 1983 Oberlin graduate), she continued her studies as a conducting fellow at both the Aspen and the Tanglewood music festivals, where she worked with Seiji Ozawa, Murray Sidlin, and David Zinman (also an Oberlin graduate, Class of 1958). She has recorded on the Velut Luna, CRI, and Sea Breeze Record Company labels. Reischl is scheduled to record a new release of Debussy and Takemitsu on the Telarc label with the internationally acclaimed harpist, Yolanda Kondonassis (Oberlin Assistant Professor of Harp), in January 2008. She will return to Italy in the summer of 2008 to conduct Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* as part of the Oberlin-in-Italy program.

**Jonathon Field** is one of America's more versatile and popular stage directors, having directed more than 100 productions in all four corners of the United States. He served as Artistic Director of Lyric Opera Cleveland for six seasons, where he presented the operas of Mozart, Rossini, and Donizetti as well as the Ohio premieres of works by John Adams, Mark Adamo, and Philip Glass. Field's productions for the Lyric Opera of Chicago, among them *Trouble in Tahiti*, *Gianni*

*Schicchi, The Old Maid and the Thief and The Spanish Hour*, were so successful that they were repeated at the Illinois Humanities Festival.

Field's production of *La Cenerentola* and *Die Fledermaus* for San Francisco Opera's Western Opera Theatre played more than 20 states, as has an updated version of *La Bohème* for Seattle Opera. In addition to the standard Italian and German repertoire, he also has worked in the Russian, directing Eugene Onegin and Boris Godunov in the original Russian in San Francisco. He had a great critical success there as well as with Prokofiev's *The Love for Three Oranges*. Over the past eight years Field has directed 10 productions with the Arizona Opera, and was deemed by the press to be "their most perceptive stage director." He worked there with such esteemed artists as Teresa Zylis-Gara, Jerome Hines, Pablo Elvira, Giorgio Tozzi, and Angelina Reux.

Field successfully introduced computer-generated scenery to the world of opera in a recent San Francisco production of *Candide* that the press called "virtual Voltaire — the backgrounds are as varied as the story." His pioneering use of video-projected scenery in productions of *The Turn of the Screw, Tales of Hoffman*, and *Der Freischütz* has elicited praise from audiences and critics alike. Field's versatility extends from the avant garde to musical comedies. In the realm of operetta and musicals he has staged *H.M.S. Pinafore* for Opera Omaha, *Trial by Jury* for Lake George Opera, Bernstein's *Wonderful Town* in Chicago, and *Merry Widow* and *Countess Maritza* in San Francisco. For the Oakland Symphony he translated and choreographed Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* using members of the Oakland Ballet. He has worked on several world premieres, most notably assisting Robert Altman with Bolcom's *McTeague* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, David Alden with Susa's *The Love of Don Perlimplin* with San Francisco Opera. He has also worked as assistant director for several of Seattle Opera's Wagner Ring cycles, and has served in an administrative capacity with many opera companies and festivals. In February 2007, Field directed — at Oberlin and at Miller Theatre in New York City — the U.S. premier of *Lost Highway*, the dramatic music theater work by noted Austrian composer Olga Neuwirth, which is based on the David Lynch film. The opera received acclaim from numerous critics, including those at *The New York Times* and *musicalamerica.com*, which made special reference to Field's direction.

#### OBERLIN OPERA THEATER PRODUCTION STAFF

**Jonathon Field**, Stage Director  
**Alan Montgomery**, Assistant Music Director  
**Howard Lubin**, Musical Preparation  
**Michael Louis Grube**, Managing Director/Set Designer  
**Copeland Woodruff**, Assistant Director and Stage Manager  
**Jeremy K. Benjamin**, Lighting Designer  
**Chris Flaharty**, Costume Designer  
**JoEllen Cuthbertson**, Costumer  
**JoEllen Cuthbertson**, Fairy Costume Constructors  
**Diana Fries and Naima Leone Hadden**, Fairy Costume Constructors  
**Daniel Michalak**, Rehearsal Pianist  
**Joseph P. Natt**, Technical Director

**Andrew Kaletta**, Master Electrician  
**David Bugher**, Assistant Technical Director  
**Robert Katkowsky**, Properties Master  
**Marci Janas**, Director of Conservatory Media Relations  
**Margaret Swendseid**, Conservatory Public Relations  
**Gabriel Cohen**, Graphic Design  
**Barbara Kessler**, Central Ticket Service Manager  
**Marj Abraham**, Bookkeeper  
**Janice Sanborn**, Program Secretary

#### STUDENT PRODUCTION STAFF

Jayson Greenberg, Assistant Stage Manager

#### SCENERY

**Construction\***: Justin Manalad, Lam La, Sophie Wingland, Elizabeth Woodbury,  
The Students of Theater 172: Production Scenery

**Run Crew**: Joseph P. Natt, David Bugher, Andrew Kaletta, Evan White, Peter Weiss

#### LIGHTING

##### **Theater 174: Lighting Technology & Design Class Crew:**

Benjamin Baker-Smith, Derrick Bean, Matthew Castleman, Sarah Degni, Nina Fisher, Alyse Frosch, Elizabeth Galuardi, Sarah Gasser, Alex Huntsberger, Margaret Lindsey, Lisa Maley, Rafael Martinez, Andrew Mooney, Maria Quinn, Lucinda Segar, Christopher Sherwood, Addie Ulrey, Amir Weg, Elizabeth Woodbury

**Lighting Technical Assistants\***: Cindhura Reddy, Rebecca Caine,  
Maureen Sutliff, Evan White

#### COSTUMES

**Construction\***: Alexandra Bishop, Elizabeth Harper, Laura Kanter, Jenna Lindeke,  
Kelly Orita, Monica Volk

**Run Crew**: Maria Bell, Sarah Gasser, Justin Manalad\*, Jennifer Noel

**Supertitle Operator**: Miranda McLean

#### CENTRAL TICKET SERVICE & PUBLICITY

Emily Tinawi, Alex Birnie, Taylor Soderborg, Nick Wirtz, Hannah Epstein, Emily Miranker, Abigail Haren, David Perlman, Maura Dwyer, Sam Newhouse, Alexander Wollverton, Stephanie Lowenthal-Savy, Katrina Forman

\*Student Technical Assistants

UPCOMING OPERA THEATER EVENTS  
*All events are free unless otherwise indicated (\$\$)*

**OPERA THEATER PROJECT**  
***The Old Maid and the Thief***

by Gian Carlo Menotti  
Friday, December 7 at 8 pm in Warner Concert Hall

**Daniel Michalak, Music Director** **Copeland Woodruff, Director**

**OPERA SCENES PROGRAM**

Saturday, December 15 at 4 pm in Kulas Recital Hall

*Featuring works by:*

Benjamin Britten Leonard Bernstein Lee Hoiby  
Amadeus Mozart Giacomo Puccini  
Johann Strauss Conrad Susa

Saturday, December 15 at 8 pm in Kulas Recital Hall

*Featuring works by:*

Benjamin Britten Gaetano Donizetti Charles Guonod  
Jules Massenet Amadeus Mozart Richard Strauss

**WINTER TERM OPERA 2008**

***Transformations***

by Conrad Susa

Thursday, January 31 and Saturday, February 2, 2008 at 8 pm  
at The Cat in the Cream Coffeehouse, Oberlin

**Yun Le Feng '09, Conductor**

**Daniel Michalak, Music Director** **Copeland Woodruff, Director**

Central Ticket Service: 440-775-8169 or 1 800-371-0178

24-Hour Concert Hotline: 440-775-6933

Business Hours: Monday through Friday, 12 to 5 pm

Central Ticket Service, Oberlin College, Hall Auditorium, 67 North Main Street,  
Oberlin, OH 44074-1191

**SPRING OPERA**

***The Coronation of Poppea***

An opera in two acts by Claudio Monteverdi,  
with an Italian libretto by Giovanni Francesco Busenello  
8 pm on Wednesday, March 12, Friday, March 14,  
and Saturday, March 15  
2 pm on Sunday, March 16, 2008  
in Hall Auditorium

**Stephen Stubbs, Guest Conductor of the**  
**Oberlin Chamber Orchestra**

**Jonathon Field, Director**

\$\$

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

**ADDITIONAL EVENTS**

**The Cleveland Orchestra**

Artist Recital Series

Tuesday, November 20, 8 pm, Finney Chapel

\$\$

**Faculty Composers Concert**

Tuesday, November 27, 8 pm, Warner Concert Hall

**Danenberg Student Honors Recital**

Wednesday, November 28, 8 pm, Finney Chapel

**Oberlin Jazz Ensemble**

Saturday, December 1, 8 pm, Finney Chapel

**Measure for Measure**

Thursday, December 6, through Saturday, December 8, 8 pm,  
Hall Auditorium

\$\$

**Contemporary Music Ensemble**

Saturday, December 8, 8 pm, Warner Concert Hall

**Musical Union/Oberlin Orchestra**

Sunday, December 9, 8 pm, Finney Chapel

**Oberlin Women's Chorale**

Tuesday, December 11, 8 pm, Warner Concert Hall

**Oberlin Chamber Orchestra**

Wednesday, December 12, 8 pm, Finney Chapel

**Community Winds**

Thursday, December 13, 8 pm, Finney Chapel

**Alumni Outreach Benefit Concert**

**with Spencer Myer, Piano**

Saturday, January 19, 2008, 3 pm, Warner Concert Hall

**Vieux Carré**

Thursday, February 7, through Saturday, February 9, 8 pm,  
Hall Auditorium

\$\$

**Keri Alkema, Mezzo-soprano**

Artist Recital Series

Saturday, February 16, 8 pm, Warner Concert Hall

\$\$

**Faculty Chamber Series**

Sunday, February 24, 4 pm, Warner Concert Hall

**Oberlin Wind Ensemble**

Thursday, February 28, 8 pm, Warner Concert Hall

**Oberlin Chamber Orchestra**

Friday, February 29, 8 pm, Finney Chapel

Central Ticket Service: 440-775-8169 or 1 800-371-0178

24-Hour Concert Hotline: 440-775-6933

Business Hours: Monday through Friday, 12 to 5 pm

Central Ticket Service, Oberlin College, Hall Auditorium, 67 North Main Street,  
Oberlin, OH 44074-1191