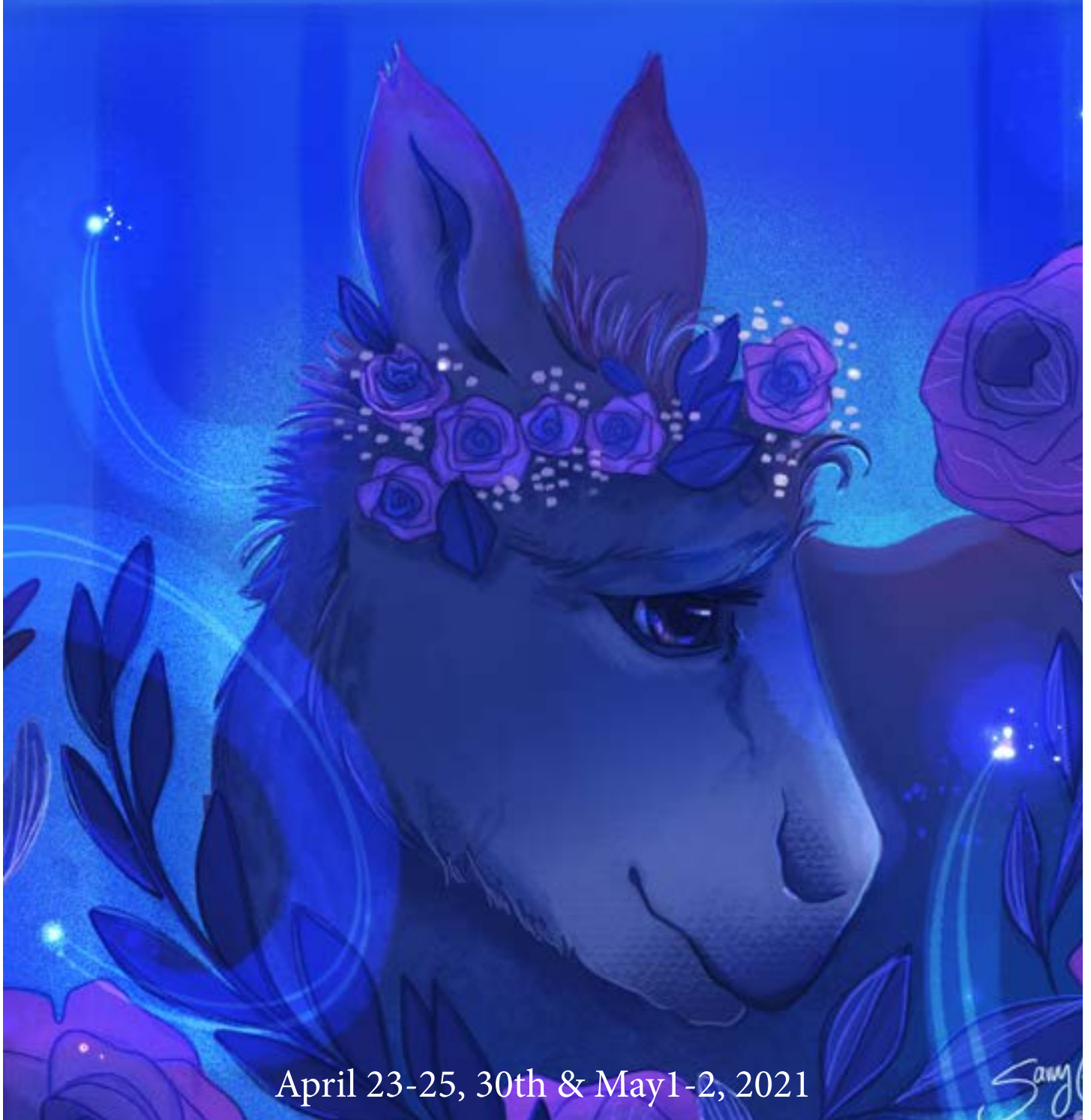


Alpha Psi Omega in partnership with The Shakespeare Project presents....

# *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

By: William Shakespeare    Co-Directed by: Micahel Boynton and Gregory Heathcock



April 23-25, 30th & May 1-2, 2021

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## CAST

THESEUS/OBERON..... MICHAEL BOYNTON  
HIPPOLITA/TITANIA..... CAROLYN CONOVER  
PUCK/EGEUS/PHILOSTRATE..... KENLI DOSS  
QUINCE/FAIRY/COBWEB/PEASEBLOSSOM/MUSTARDSEED....BRIDGETT RAYBURN  
LYSANDER/BOTTOM..... TREY GRESHAM  
DEMETRIUS/FLUTE..... TREVOR MCWILLIAMS  
HELENA/SNUG..... CARLEY CAREY  
HERMIA/SNOUT..... KEELEY TIBBITS

## ARTISTIC TEAM

CO-DIRECTOR ..... GREGORY HEATHCOCK  
CO-DIRECTOR ..... MICHAEL BOYNTON  
STAGE MANAGER..... CHEYENNE OLIVER  
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER ..... GRAYSON SINGLETON  
SCENIC DESIGNER..... JESSICA COLLIER  
COSTUME DESIGNER..... ELLIE BOOZER  
DRAMATURG..... REBECCA WEAVER  
DRAMATURG..... CARMINE DI BIASE

## Alpha Psi Omega would like to thank our sponsors!

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## A NOTE FROM THE DRAMATURG

By: REBECCA WEAVER, DRAMATURG

“More strange than true: I never may believe  
These antique fables, nor these fairy toys.  
Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,  
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend  
More than cool reason ever comprehends.  
The lunatic, the lover and the poet  
Are of imagination all compact.”  
(Midsummer, 5.1.2-9)

Our imagination allows us to fight monsters on the raging seas, hunt for hidden treasures on lost islands, or travel through space – the final frontier. Fairies, monsters, and magical potions were part of our reality as children. Where does that sense of imagination, of play, disappear to when we begin to grow up? When does fantasy dissolve into reality, where our sole focus is on work and responsibilities? Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* invites us to relive our childhood, to remember those days when we could run off into the forest and be caught up in the affairs of fairy creatures. As today’s society does, Shakespeare’s relied heavily on imagination, which was necessary in understanding, creating, and inventing. However, as Theseus suggests, imagination combined with passion, more often than not, overrules reason and can lead to misplaced love and mistaken identity. Such erring, however, can also make way for new possibilities.

In the midst of COVID-19, we have faced an onslaught of trauma and grief, often with no way of softening the blow. This global pandemic has forced children to grow up quicker than they should, and the pleasures of childhood have been replaced with grim statistics and mask mandates. *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* pits the real against the imagined and reason against passion. Our co-directors, Dr. Michael Boynton and Gregory Heathcock, have based their concept for our performance of this play on the idea that Shakespeare’s characters are searching for their childhoods again. The uptight, reason driven Athenians have forgotten what love, passion, and child-like wonder feels like. The lovers, led by passion, are forbidden – by law – from marrying anyone other than a spouse approved of by a father. The fairies, however, in order to get what they want – and to have a little fun – exercise their imagination and sense of playful chaos as they cause mischief and play pranks. In the end, it is the fairies who are responsible for fixing the turmoil in which the lovers begin this story. Their ability to apply child-like wonder, imagination, and play to the situations they are faced with allows them, and their victims, to examine things from a new perspective. In fact, it is Oberon’s passion (combined with Puck’s mischievousness) that allows Demetrius to fall in love with Helena, and thereby the lovers’ quarrel is righted.

## A NOTE FROM THE DRAMATURG CONT'D...

Nevertheless, the question remains: what is the point of imagination if at the end of the day you find yourself facing, again, the reality of the world around you? On our first day of rehearsal, one of the first questions that we went around the room asking one another was, “what was your favorite childhood toy?” It sparked a sense of play, of nostalgia, and started conversations among us about the role which imagination played in our childhood. Even though some of us are well into our adulthood, we still remember our favorite childhood toy. We remember that sense of creativity and playfulness that toy gave us, despite the adult realities that now weigh down on us every day. This escape through memory, this ability to imagine, helps us through the hard times. Much like Theseus and Hippolyta, we sometimes need reminding of that child-like sense in order to make us see the bigger picture. After all, if we refuse to accept imagination and passion, reality may leave us resentful and alone – much like Egeus. In the end, one could argue that Shakespeare is fighting for society to recognize the importance of child-like curiosity because of its ability to see beyond reason and tragedy. So, friends, let us lend our eyes and ears to the playfulness we have constructed here. For if we have some earned luck, perhaps this experience will show us a new perspective, a way to find happiness, when facing the often tragic realities of our so-called adult world.

### JSU FOUNDATION

The JSU Foundation is dedicated to linking university supporters with opportunities that benefit our students, faculty, facilities and athletics to add the measure of excellence to the educational experience at JSU. Through the support of our donors, the Foundation allocates dollars to priority programs, which will ensure that the University continues to foster success for generations to come. For 2020 and beyond, the JSU Foundation established a Shakespeare Project account accepting donations to further and continue this arts programming to all, free of charge. We invite you to play a part in helping us provide opportunity for our students through a contribution. All gifts are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law. ([www.jsu.edu/givejsu](http://www.jsu.edu/givejsu))

### THE SHAKESPEARE PROJECT

The Shakespeare Project was founded in 2017 to enhance the understanding of performing arts and literature curriculum by presenting free programming and professional productions of the works of William Shakespeare. Join TSP in January 2022 for William Shakespeare's Twelfth Night.

## Acting Company



Dr. Michael Boynton (Co-Director & Theseus/Oberon) holds an MFA from Wayne State University in Acting; an MFA from New York University in Musical Theatre Writing; and a PhD from the University of Maryland, College Park in Theatre and Performance Studies. He has worked professionally as an actor with various national companies such as the Hilberry Repertory Theatre in Detroit and the Chesapeake Shakespeare Company in Baltimore. Recent professional roles include Denis from Tartuffe, Don Armado from Love's Labour's Lost, and Caesar in the recent Shakespeare Project production of Julius Caesar.



Carolyn Conover (Hippolyta/Titania) is Assistant Professor of Acting and Directing at Jacksonville State University, where she recently directed the spring production of Boy Gets Girl. She has been a professional actor and dramaturg for almost 20 years and is a long-standing company member with Crossroads Repertory Theatre in Indiana. She is also the host of Investigate the History, a monthly podcast exploring the mythology, folklore, and history of The Crit-show RPG podcast. Her first book, The Introverted Actor, came out in 2020. Carolyn received her MA in Drama from Indiana State University and her MFA in Acting from Michigan State University.



Kenli Doss (Puck/Egeus/Philostrate) is an actress and writer from Alabama. She is a senior at Jacksonville State University majoring in English and Drama. Kenli can't decide whether she enjoys playing a mischievous little fairy or a grumpy old man better. She will let the audience decide for her!



Bridgett Rayburn (Quince/Fairy/Cobweb/Peaseblossom/Mustardseed)- is currently a junior at Jacksonville State studying Theater with a couple concentration in Performance! Bridgett has been in over 10 shows but this is the first Shakespeare show!



Trey Gresham (Lysander/Bottom) has been performing in musicals and plays since he was twelve and is thrilled to finally be able to perform in a Shakespeare piece. Some of his favorite prior roles are Mr. Trevor Graydon (Thoroughly Modern Millie, Carrollton Cultural Arts Center), and Prince Charming and The Animated Snowman (Game of Tiaras, Oak Mountain Academy). Trey is a senior at Jacksonville State University majoring Special Education. This performance is dedicated to Kari Manuel, who made him learn his first Shakespeare monologue, and Andy Denny, who taught him how to really read Shakespeare. To God be the glory.



Trevor McWilliams (Demetrius/Flute) is a junior Theatre Major at JSU with a performance concentration. He has been in many shows, such as playing a knight in JSU's production of Once Upon a Mattress. He has also been in the Theatre of Gadsden's production of The Miracle Worker where he played James Keller.



Carley Carey (Helena/Snug) is a second year, studying to be a physical therapist with a clinical concentration at Jacksonville State University (JSU). This is her second show, first being Once Upon A Mattress (Lady Beatrice) at JSU. She also has gained experience in carpentry while working on Boys Gets Girl, Once Upon A Mattress, and The Imaginary Invalid. She would like to thank the director and fellow cast members for an amazing learning experience and hopes you enjoy the show.



Keeley Tibbitts (Hermia/Snout) is a senior at Jacksonville State University, majoring in mass communication broadcasting and minoring in theatre. This is Keeley's first ever production after high school, after spending the first years of college in the Marching Southerners. Keeley says, "I wanted to finally try something I was afraid of which was acting. This has been an amazing experience after all of the hardships of the pandemic times."



Ashlee Cheyenne Oliver (Stage Manager) is ecstatic to be Stage Managing again for The Shakespeare Project. He is a recent graduate from JSU with a BA in Theatre: Production with a concentration in Stage/Production Management. He has Stage Managed many shows for JSU Drama such as These Shining Lives, The Tempest, Shackles of Liberty, An Enemy Of The People, and The Giver. Professional credit include working for North Dakota Shakespeare, Highlands Playhouse, The Shakespeare Project, and Jacksonville Opera Theatre. He is a private contractor who has technical experience in over 115 shows ranging from concerts to musicals. Cheyenne is currently working with CAST Kids as their Technical Teacher and Director for Kids Scenery.

## Artistic Team



Grayson Singleton (Assistant Stage Manager) is grateful to be working with Alpha Psi Omega and The Shakespeare Project on A Midsummer Nights Dream, considering this is her first production with them. She is a freshman at Jacksonville State University pursuing a degree in Theatre Production. She had previously been the Assistant Stage manager on JSU's show Boy Gets Girl.



Gregory Heathcock (Co-Director) is euphoric to be working on another production for The Shakespeare Project. Gregory is a graduating senior at JSU pursuing a double major in Theatre Production and Biology. His most previous shows include Boy Gets Girl as Scenic Designer, The Diary of Anne Frank as Scenic Designer, Once Upon a Mattress as Assistant Stage Manager, and The Imaginary Invalid as Assistant Scenic Designer. Gregory is currently President of Alpha Psi Omega and is the Ambassador to the School of Arts and Humanities.



Jessica Collier (Scenic Designer) is ecstatic to be working on another production! Jessica is a sophomore at JSU pursuing a major in Theatre Production. Her most previous shows include The Diary of Anne Frank as Sound Designer, Once Upon a Mattress as Sound Assistant, The Laramie Project as Sound Designer, and Boy Gets Girl as an AV Technician.



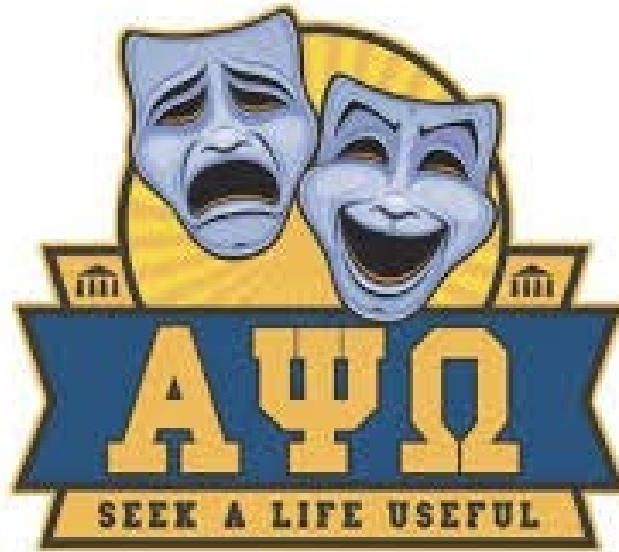
Ellie Boozer (Costume Designer) is over the moon to be designing for the first time with The Shakespeare Project! She was previously the costume designer for JSU's production of Boy Gets Girl, the assistant costume designer for JSU's Once Upon a Mattress and wardrobe head for JSU's She Kills Monsters. She was also an assistant stage manager for JSU's Company. Ellie is currently an intern assisting with choreography, costumes, and stage management at CAST Kidz. She wants to thank her family and friends for their continuous support. Relax and enjoy the show!



Rebecca Weaver (Dramaturg) is currently in the Master's English program at Jacksonville State University where she recently graduated with a Bachelor's in both English and Drama. This is her first time working as a professional dramaturg and she is very thankful for the opportunity to work alongside Dr. Boynton and Dr. Di Biase. Her previous work as dramaturg at JSU include She Kills Monsters, An Enemy of the People, The Imaginary Invalid, and The Giver. She is constantly learning and is grateful to both the cast and her mentors for guiding her along and reminding her that the theatre is a home. She hopes you enjoy the show!



Carmine Di Biase (Dramaturg) has served as dramaturg for The Shakespeare Project since its first season. He is Distinguished Professor of English at Jacksonville State University and writes on Shakespeare and modern English and Italian literature. Di Biase's most recent article, a study of how Henry James used Macbeth in The Aspern Papers, will appear this summer. Di Biase writes reviews for the Times Literary Supplement. His poems have appeared in the South Florida Poetry Journal, The Road Not Taken, and several other journals. A chapbook of his poems will appear in the coming months from Finishing Line Press.



ALPHA PSI OMEGA was organized as a theatre honor society for the purpose of providing acknowledgement to those demonstrating a high standard of accomplishment in theatre and, through the expansion of ALPHA PSI OMEGA among colleges and universities, providing a wider fellowship for those interested in theatre. The members of ALPHA PSI OMEGA strive to develop talents in all aspects of theatre, to foster the cultural values we believe theatre develops, and to encourage cooperation and collaboration among member chapters.