



## Shakespeare's Midsummer Night's Dream Goes Psychedelic

October 20, 2011



Fairies in Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" surround Nick Bottom, portrayed by junior David Vitale of Elk Grove Village, whose head has been turned into a donkey's head by the mischievous Puck, upper right, played by junior Rachel Lee of Buffalo Grove.

One of William Shakespeare's most famous plays comes to life this month when Saint Viator students star in "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

Though it was written in the late 16th Century, it hardly looks Elizabethan --- or stuffy. Director Kate Costello has adapted and shortened the version to a 90-minute production and placed it in a more modern era: namely the hip 1960s.

"We've set the play in the 1960s, complete with hippie costumes and psychedelic music," Costello says. "It fits with the themes of love and magic and the generation gap."

Consequently, its characters sport tie-dyed T-shirts, flowery headbands and retro shoulder bags. Even the set features vintage stencils and bright colors, looking nothing like Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London.

While Costello adds that most student cringe at the thought of reading a Shakespeare

play, they came out in force for this one, including nearly 40 percent first time participants.

"'A Midsummer Night's Dream' provides a perfect gateway for students," she says. "It is a remarkably entertaining comedy made even more accessible through my adaptation."

For Rachel Lee, a junior from Buffalo Grove, who shares the role of Puck with classmate Katie Cascino of Arlington Heights, this is her first time on the Saint Viator stage. Both she and Cascino are enjoying hamming it up as the mischievous trickster who sets much of the play's action in motion with his magic.

"I just love hearing the sound of Shakespeare's words," Lee says. "They sound so beautiful, and when you understand them, you realize why he's such a genius."

Senior Danny Wolfe of Arlington Heights shares the role of Oberon with junior Ryan Sevilla of Mt. Prospect. As one of the leading parts, they figure they say nearly 100 lines, which, when filled with Shakespeare's wording, can be difficult to master.

"I tried to repeat them as rhymes and come up with patterns to make the memorizing easier," Wolfe says. "It's my first time doing Shakespeare, and I'm enjoying the challenge."

Performances take place at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 27, 28 and 29 and at 1 p.m. Oct. 30. Tickets at the door are \$5. For more information, call 847-392-4050, ext. 255.