

Footsbarn Theatre

A Midsummer Night's Dream

by William Shakespeare

Synopsis

Theseus, Duke of Athens, and Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons, are preparing for their marriage and the celebrations planned to mark the occasion. Egeus comes before Theseus with his daughter Hermia who, despite her father's wish that she should marry Demetrius, is in love with Lysander. The Duke orders Hermia to obey her father or, according to Athenian law, she must face death or enter a convent. Instead, Hermia and Lysander decide to elope that night. They confide their plan to Helena, who is in love with Demetrius and, hoping to win his affection, she tells him of her plan. All four lovers steal into the night.

Bottom the weaver and a group of local workmen are planning to perform a play "The Tragedy of Pyramus and Thisbe" – in celebration of the Duke's wedding. Oberon, King of the Fairies, has quarrelled with Titania, his Queen. He orders Puck to find a magic plant whose juice, squeezed on the eyes of someone asleep, will cause them to fall in love with the first creature they see on waking. Oberon uses the juice on Titania and tells Puck to use it on Demetrius, so that he may fall in love with Helena, but Puck mistaking the two Athenian youths uses it on Lysander instead, who promptly falls in love with Helena.

Bottom and his friends meet in the forest to rehearse their play. Puck transforms Bottom's head into that of an ass and Titania, on waking, falls rapturously in love with him. Demetrius, touched with the juice, declares his love for Helena but she thinks both men are taunting her. Eventually all the enchantments are lifted, the human lovers are happily paired off and Oberon and Titania reconciled. The three couples are married, and Bottom's troupe perform their play.



Cast & Crew

Directed by: **Patrick Hayter**

Original music composed by:

Steve Johnston

Set & Masks designed by:

Fredericka Hayter

Costumes designed by: **Hanna Sjodin**

Lighting designed by: **Bruno Hocquard**

Actors

Joey Cunningham

Vincent Gracieux

Paddy Hayter

Caroline Piette

Muriel Piquart

Mas Soegeng

Akemi Yamauchi

Musicians

Chandran Veyattummal

Pawel Paluch

Technicians

Brahim Arar

Jon Streetc

Matthieu Bertault

Eavan Brennan

Technical Director

Pascal Ritchie Perot

Administration

Tim Pearce

Fabien Granier

Sylvie Flazone

Footsbarn Theatre – A Brief History

Footsbarn Travelling Theatre is a leading international touring company performing for the most part in one of its circus tents but also in theatres all over the world. Renowned for its exciting adaptations of classics such as Shakespeare and Moliere which transcend the barrier of language as well as its unique blend of popular theatre and magical music, masks, costumes and sets.

Founded by Oliver Foot and Jean Paul Cook in 1971, at first everyone lived and rehearsed in a barn owned by the Foot family, hence its name “Footsbarn”. From the very start, its inimitable trade mark has been to produce theatre that breaks barriers and traditions, not performing in theatres, but reaching out and creating shows that appeal to all.

Initially Footsbarn’s stages were the market places and streets where, with modest means, it evolved a totally new approach to theatre using found materials to create visually rich sets, masks and costumes. The company’s reputation grew fast and within a couple of years was a fully equipped travelling theatre company, and its pioneering and fiercely autonomous journey truly began.

From continent to continent Footsbarn has travelled, each place visited has not only enriched and inspired the company but influenced many others, not only through performances and workshops but also through chance encounters. On the way actors have left, new ones have joined, but Footsbarn remains Footsbarn and today is a truly international company with eight different nationalities including French, Japanese, Indonesian, Dutch, Swedish, American and English.

It is now over 35 years since it all began in Cornwall and for the last 20 years Footsbarn’s home and base has been in the centre of France in the Auvergne close to a village called Hérisson. Based at its farm, La Chaussée, it is there that the shows are rehearsed and produced and from there that the convoy of caravans and trucks with their unmistakable livery depart on tour. Times change, new shows are rehearsed, sometimes in English, sometimes in French and sometimes in five different languages, but one thing stays the same, Footsbarn’s unique brand of theatre, where we are invited to dream and enter a world which is both a portal and synthesis of all that Footsbarn has lived and experienced over the last 35 years.

