



AUDITION NOTICE

A Midsummer Night's Dream
Free Shakespeare in Lower City Park

In-person auditions January 17 & 18 by appointment

Riverside Theatre, Iowa City's resident professional theatre, is seeking local performers for its summer 2026 production of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which will be performed at the Festival Stage in Lower City Park June 12th to 28th.

In-person auditions will be held at the Riverside Theatre (119 E College Street) on Saturday, Jan. 17 from 12:30am-4pm and Sunday, Jan. 18 from 6pm-10pm, by appointment. Actors may sign up for a ten-minute audition slot [HERE](https://forms.gle/nWuw9q7TvERUX2N99):
<https://forms.gle/nWuw9q7TvERUX2N99>

Performers are asked to prepare TWO contrasting monologues of no more than two minutes each. Please bring two hard copies of headshots and resumes (photocopies okay). Callbacks will be held, if needed, in late January.

For more information about the Shakespeare text, please click [this link](#) to the Folger Library's website.

Riverside Theatre encourages actors of all ethnicities and gender identities as well as performers of differing abilities to submit for available roles.

A Midsummer Night's Dream
by William Shakespeare
Directed by Adam Knight
at the Riverside Festival Stage in Iowa City's Lower City Park

Rehearsals May 19 - June 11
(Tuesday-Friday evenings and Saturday/Sunday afternoons and evenings)

Performances June 12 - June 28.
(11 performances total. Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 7:30pm)

Synopsis: Shakespeare's classic comedy intertwines the worlds of the Athenian upper classes, the working-class "mechanicals" who are putting on a play, and the fairy kingdom. The play begins with romantic conflict between the fairy and worldly rulers, as well as four young lovers

who steal off into the woods to achieve their romantic aims. Through magic and mischief, spurred on by an unruly “puck” in service to the fairy king, the lovers find their desires tangled and misdirected, and the fairy queen falls in love with a bafoonish “ass.” When harmony is finally restored, a triple wedding takes place – along with a celebratory play that is hilarious in its discord.

Breakdown:

THESEUS/OBERON – Male-presenting, any ethnicity. 30s-40s. THESEUS is the ruler of Athens, a successful and cunning conqueror who is now longing to become a peace-time ruler and win the love of his bride-to-be Hippolyta. Doubles with OBERON, the ruler of the forest fairies, who along with his servant Puck plots a scheme to sway Titania’s desires and win the Changling boy from her. His sympathy for Helena leads to chaos among the Athenian lovers.

HELENA and **HERMIA** – Female-presenting, any ethnicity, 20s-30s. Young Athenian women who escape to the forest for love. Hermia loves Lysander but is desired by Demetrius, whom Helena loves. The tables are turned when a potion makes both men desire Helena, revealing a hidden rivalry between the lifelong friends.

DEMETRIUS and **LYSANDER** – Male-presenting, any ethnicity, 20s-30s. Young Athenian men who both love Hermia. Demetrius spurns Helena’s advances, but uses her to chase after Hermia and Lysander and thwart their escape. A potion administered by Puck makes both men desire Helena instead, and their rivalry continues.

PUCK/PHILOSTRATE (track) – Any gender, any ethnicity, Late teens-20s, comfortable playing he/him pronouns. A mischevious fairy in service to Oberon, Puck plays tricks on the mechanicals as well as the Athenian lovers, and enjoys the chaos that ensues. Doubles as Philostrate, the master of revels in service to Theseus.

BOTTOM – Male-presenting, any ethnicity, 40s-60s. A weaver by trade and the “star” of the amateur theatrical troupe of tradesperons putting on a play for Theseus’ nuptials. He is the hero of his life story and, if he could, would play all the part in the play. He is turned into a donkey by Puck and is the object of desire to Titania.

PETER QUINCE – Any gender, any ethnicity, 30s-50s, comfortable playing he/him pronouns. A community theatre director with the utmost integrity and belief in creating a piece of art that moves the audience – even if the talent that surrounds Quince is not particularly high. Swallows some frustration with Bottom, who is clearly the great talent in the company.

“MECHANICALS”: **FLUTE**, **SNOUT**, **SNUG**, **STARVELING**. Any gender, any ethnicity, 20s-50s, comfortable playing he/him pronouns. A group of tradespeople whose love of theatre and the community it fosters far outstrips their talent. Their production of “The most lamentable comedy and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisbe” is performed at the wedding of Theseus and Hippolyta.

EGEUS. Any gender, any ethnicity, 40s-50s. The parent of Hermia, who wishes to have her well-matched to Egeus’ preferred suitor, Demetrius – even if it means putting Hermia to death for disobedience.

FAIRIES in service to Titania. Any gender, any ethnicity. Early teens-20s. Sprites that sing and dance and serve their queen Titania in the woods outside of Athens. They are ready to protect Titania at any cost. They serenade and provide treats for Bottom when commanded by her – even if they find the whole thing very strange.

Note: The role of Titania/Hippolyta has been cast.

Stipends: \$350 to \$1,300 depending on roles assigned.

Note: This production will include three AEA actors as part of the company. An Equity casting call is forthcoming. Local AEA actors may sign up for these auditions for consideration if they so wish, but should note AEA status at time of audition.

Riverside Theatre is committed to bringing professional level Shakespeare productions to our community **free of charge** every summer on the Festival Stage in Iowa City's Lower City Park.

Since 2000, Riverside has staged more than 40 classical productions in the Park. This program was made free for all in 2018 and serves more than 4,000 attendees each summer, employing dozens of local and regional artists.

More information at www.riversidetheatre.org/riverside-shakespeare/