

5th Annual Will'n in Weslaco Shakespeare Festival



FRIDAY
APRIL 12th
7 PM

SATURDAY
APRIL 13th
7 PM

FRIDAY
APRIL 19th
7 PM

SATURDAY
APRIL 20th
3 PM

SHAKESBEER
APRIL 20th
6 PM

This comedy consists of five interconnected plots, framed by the marriage of Theseus, the founder of Athens, and the Amazonian Queen, Hippolyta. Set in Ancient Athens, the subplots divert into its surrounding forest and the realm of Fairyland under moonlight, magic, amusement, and amore.



120 S. Kansas Ave
Weslaco, TX 78596

Buy Tickets Online: tower.booktix.com

GENERAL ADMISSION \$12

SENIORS / STUDENTS \$8

SHAKESBEER \$35 online (\$40 at the door)

WWW.WILLNINWESLACO.ORG

Director's Notes: My goal for this production was to show the audience that the works of Shakespeare can be approached through comedy. So often is Shakespeare seen as something serious when the reality is that he brought all emotions to every play he wrote. He always managed to include comedy in his tragedies, but he also shows us that there are tragic moments in comedy, as seen in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

One of the main themes of this play is love. It shows us different levels of emotions and scenarios that people encounter when they love another person or, as in some cases, a donkey. Love is one the greatest emotions a person encounters in life; it sometimes leads to marriage, lust, fear, jealousy... These are some of the struggles the characters encounter throughout this story. Comically, all this happens while avoiding mischief in an enchanted wood.

Theatre is magical itself. It brings stories to life for the sake of entertaining and educating you, the audience. Beautifully, this play shows us all the magic of theatre (providing a play within the play), using fairy magic to help you explore and understand the magical feeling of love. We really hope to provide you with a magical, theatrical experience that you can remember for years to come. We truly appreciate you choosing to be with us today!

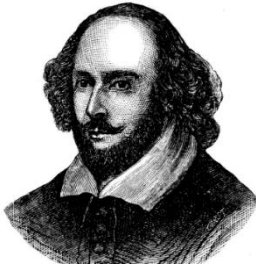
With much appreciation,

Rolando Martinez



About the Director: Our wonderful director, Rolando Martinez, joined *Will'n in Wes/aco* in 2022 when he portrayed "Mercutio" in *Romeo and Juliet*. Last year, he made his directorial debut leading a fantastic cast for *Macbeth*.

While most of his career experience has been in acting, he is grateful for the opportunities that the festival has given him and looks forward to working with an amazing cast on one of the best-known Shakespearean comedies.



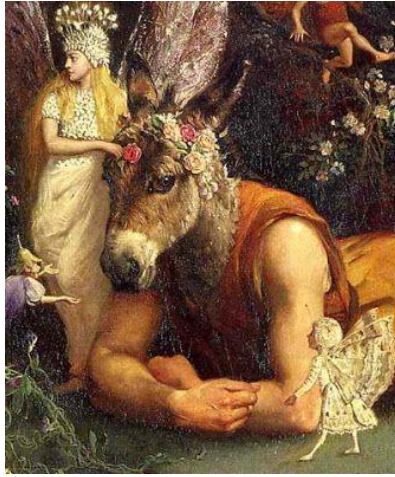
About “The Bard” :

William Shakespeare is a renowned English poet and playwright. Thought to be born in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, Shakespeare’s birthday is most commonly celebrated on April 23rd. This is also believed to be the date he died in 1616.

Shakespeare was a prolific writer during the Elizabethan and Jacobean ages (sometimes called the English Renaissance or the Early Modern Period). His plays are perhaps his most enduring legacy, but the Bard’s poems also remain popular with high academic acclaim.

Altogether, Shakespeare's works include 38 plays, 2 narrative poems, 154 sonnets, and a variety of other poems. No original manuscripts of Shakespeare's plays are known to exist. Apparently, it is thanks to a group of actors from Shakespeare's company that most of his plays exist at all. Collected for publication after Shakespeare died, 36 plays were preserved and published in what is known as the “First Folio” (referring to the size of the paper used).

Shakespeare’s legacy is as rich and diverse as his work. His plays are regularly performed around the world holding an enduring presence on film and television. Translated into every language of consequence, his work has spawned countless adaptations across cultures and artistic genres. Standardized in education, Shakespeare is meticulously studied throughout the academy. He is lavishly praised and referenced by a variety of distinguished authors and is a favorite among the reading public. He has shaped the history, culture, and language of the English-speaking peoples and beyond. Shakespeare’s merit, popularity, and cultural significance speak to his beloved iconic status.



About the Play:

A Midsummer Night's Dream is a play about love. It proposes that love is a dream, or perhaps a vision; that it is absurd, irrational, a delusion, or, perhaps, on the other hand, a transfiguration; that it is doomed to be momentary, and that it constitutes at the same time the proper foundation for lifelong marriage.

The play does not always do exactly what we might expect, and in this way, it keeps its audience guessing, continually reoffering itself in the process as an object of our desire. The plot leads up to the marriages of the Lovers, but it does not quite confirm the distinction we might expect it to identify between true love, on the one hand, and arbitrary passion induced by magic on the other.

If the story leads up to marriage, however, it does not quite end there. By handing over the conclusion to the fairies, the play displaces the apparent closure, the celebration of restored identity and the return to community it has duly delivered.

In this way, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* offers to leave its audience in a state of mind that bears some resemblance to Bottom's when he wakes up from his dream: exalted, perhaps, but a little less assured, less confident, and altogether less knowing than before.

From an essay by Catherine Belsey, *Folger Shakespeare Library Editions*

∞ *Dramatis Personae* ∞

👑 ♦ 👑 ROYALTY 👑 ♦ 👑



Antonio Salazar – “Theseus, Duke of Athens” Antonio Salazar (he/him) is proud to be a part of this amazing production. Antonio is a lecturer in the Department of History at UT-RGV and an Instructor of Record and doctoral candidate in the Department of History at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. This is Antonio's second production on the Tower Theatre stage. Some of his favorite roles were in *Deathtrap* (Sidney Bruhl), *The Crucible* (Governor Danforth), and *The Hobbit* (Smaug). As always, he is forever thankful for the love and support of his family.



Amanda Adams – “Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons” Amanda Adams hails from McAllen but started her theatre adventures at EHS in 1996, which led her theatre interests into secondary education as she attended the University of Texas-Pan American. This is her second involvement with the Tower Theatre. She would like to thank the cast for being freaking amazing!



Jalen Portillo – “Egeus, father to Hermia” Jalen has been acting since he was a kid, going so far as to even get a degree in it. He is honored to play a part in

bringing the legendary Bard's work to the RGV. He'd like to thank his fiancée, family, and Godzilla for keeping him going.



Zackary Viegas – “Philostrate” Zackary Viegas has only participated in plays via middle school to high school and had a role in his high school One Act Play production of *W.I.T.* as he was part of the first company to make state for the first time in 67 years for Harlingen High School history. This is his first time working with a company outside of school-related productions.

♡ ♡ ♡ THE LOVERS ♡ ♡ ♡



Brittany Gruhot – “Hermia” Hark! Fie! Beware of the lady nameth Brittany Gruhot! She hath acted with the Shakespeare Festival once afore, during the 2023 production of *Macbeth* yesteryear, and it is the second timeth she hath dared perform *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. She is a mistress of numerous faces, but The Bard utters to her in paths numerous canst't. Brittany desires thee enjoyest the show, and she wouldst like to thanketh her wond'rful fiancée and family for supp'rting h'r on h'r journey. Anon! We perform!



Anthony Abeldaño – “Lysander” This is Anthony's second time performing a Shakespeare show at The Tower, and they are very grateful to be welcomed back to the stage with such a wonderful cast by their side. They have received a BA from Texas A&M Corpus Christi in Acting and Directing and has recently

performed in *The Invasion of Earth as It Began in Grover's Mill, New Jersey* at the Tower Theatre. They would like to thank their Dad and family for supporting their love for the arts and hope you enjoy the show.



Belinda Martinez – “Helena” This is Belinda's first performance in a Shakespearean play, and she hopes to be a part of the Shakespeare experience for years to come. Belinda acted throughout middle school and high school but took a hiatus from the stage for 18 years to have kids and start a career. She returned to acting in 2022 as “The Lechuza” in *The Border Zone* presented at the Weslaco Tower Theater. She was a contestant in RGV's Got Talent (singing competition) and has slowly made a comeback to the stage and acting world since. She believes meeting talented individuals with every production she is in is the true experience.



David Daniel Hernandez – “Demetrius” David received his MA in Theatre at the University of Houston, and teaches theatre in Mission. He's excited to act again in the Valley! The last shows he did were "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," *A Seussified Christmas Carol*, and *Pinocchio Commedia: A Commedia Dell' Arte Adaptation of Carlo Collodi's Classic* with The Company OnStage in Houston where he also served as a board member. He wishes best of broken legs to his fellow cast and crew!

• ✂ • THE MECHANICALS • ✂ •

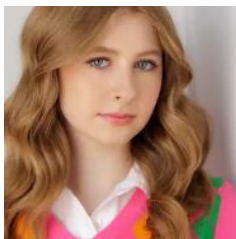


Pedro Mendoza – “Nick Bottom, the weaver” Pedro Mendoza is from Roma, TX, and graduated from The American Musical and Dramatic Academy (AMDA) in Los Angeles. Pedro is an actor of both stage and film. He made a guest

appearance on NBC's hit police drama *Chicago PD* (S10E17) and has recently done commercial work for Ford and Whataburger. Pedro enjoys performing Shakespeare because it challenges him in better honing his craft as an actor. The Bard's plays are a whetstone for his artistic soul. He has proudly performed for *Will'n in Weslaco* every year, beginning with Mark Antony in *Julius Caesar*, Benedict in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Tybalt in *Romeo & Juliet*, and the titular character in *Macbeth*.



Janette Hooton – “Petra’ Quince, the carpenter” Janette Hooton is a local commercial actress and is excited to perform as “Petra” Quince, the carpenter, a humble, passionate, and relatable character who will direct the play within the play. Janette's second, theatrical, Shakespeare experience, the role of “Quince” is an extreme shift from her role as one of the Witches in *Macbeth*, where she possessed small but mighty strength, confidence, and power.



Scarlett Hooton – “Francis Flute, the bellows-mender” Scarlett Hooton is a local teen actress known for the role of “Clair” in the *Halloween Night* film series and as “Melissa Parker” in *Find Me*. She is widely recognized in the RGV for her recurring role as “Junior Reporter” for the *City of McAllen* (2019-2022) and can be seen in numerous commercials locally and nationwide. Scarlett is a well-established actress in the performing arts community and has been performing on stage since 2018.



Jonathan Gonzalez – “Tom Snout, the tinker” Jonathan has been acting since high school, doing theatre and also a PSA for drunk driving. He has also been involved in community theatre and has been involved with *Will'n in Weslaco* since

the first show. He would like to thank his friends and most of his family for believing in him and helping him get to where he is despite the hiccups. He graduated high school and is currently a pharmacy tech at Walgreens. He is very friendly, creative, and always willing to lend a helping hand.



Juven Sanchez - “Snug, the joiner” Juven Sanchez is an aspiring Actor, Writer, and Director.



Kyle Castillo – “Robin Starveling, the taylor” Kyle is an actor at the Weslaco Tower Theatre and a film actor. He has performed in *The Border Zone* (2017), *The Election* (2018), *That's Not How I Remember It* (2019), *The Border Zone* (2023), and *Macbeth* (2023). He loves to play guitar, sing and write songs, and dreams of becoming a professional musician. He's loved acting since the age of 14 and still loves it 'til this day. He looks forward to doing more plays and films.

* ✧ * THE FAIRIES * ✧ *



Neil Shuford – “Oberon, King of Fairies” Neil has been doing theatre for over 30 years. His first big break was the role of a munchkin in a local production of *The Wizard of Oz* when he was 4. Ever since that fateful performance, Neil has immersed himself in anything theatrical that he can weasel his way into. Aside from theatre, his favorite hobby is loving his amazing and supportive fiancée Erica who is incredible at lowering his blood pressure when it's the highest.



Jodie Salazar – “Titania, Queen of Fairies” Jodie is thrilled to make her official Shakespeare debut as Titania with *Will’n in Weslaco!* She loves working both onstage and offstage to bring live theatre to audiences. Favorite roles include Sonia in *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* and Jessie in *’night, Mother*. Jodie recently graduated with a Master’s Degree in Black History. She also spent the last two years singing with the soul and funk band, The Phonics, in her native Southern Illinois. Jodie is thankful for the opportunity to make theatre magic with such an amazing group of people. She is, as always, thankful for the loving support of her family.



Orlando Campa – “Robin Goodfellow (Puck)” Orlando, “Orly”, is a writer, actor, producer, and director who has been blessed enough to participate in multiple film and theatre productions in the RGV. This is Orly’s third participation with *Will’n in Weslaco*, including *Romeo & Juliet* and *Macbeth*. He appreciates the opportunity Rollie and Bryan have given him to bring Robin Goodfellow to life. And we fairies now are frolic!



Erin Adame – “Peaseblossom” Erin Adame is originally from the DFW area and moved to the RGV in 2003. She has been an active participant in Tower Theater productions since 2018 including *Boeing Boeing*, *Playing Doctor*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *The Trail to Oregon!*, and several improv shows. In many ways, Tower is her second home. She is supported by her amazing husband Jay and her three crazy children Bella, Brady, and JJ, as well as her mom Mary and her brothers Brink and Grant.



Miranda Mendoza – “Cobweb” Miranda Mendoza is from Rio Grande City, TX. She made her introduction to the Tower Theatre through their improv show and soon after joined the troupe. She’s been seen onstage as “Calpurnia” in *Julius Caesar*, and this will be her second performance with the Shakespeare festival.



Carter Copeland – “Mustardseed” Carter Copeland has a Bachelor’s Degree in Theatre Performance. He has performed in several dinner theaters at St. Paul Lutheran Church. During the last season of the Pan American Summer Stock, he played Howard in the University of Texas Pan American’s production of *Moon Over Buffalo*. He lives in Weslaco, Texas with his lovely wife, Lauren. This is his second performance with.



Assistant Director
Alysha L. Gonzalez

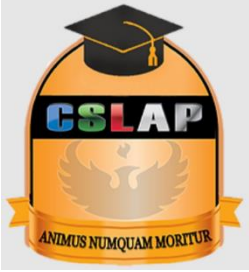


Stage Manager
Jando Elizondo

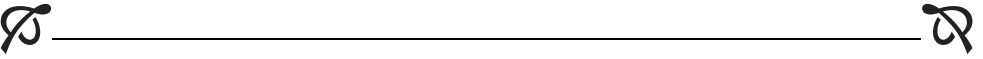
Costume Head – Jodie Salazar



Will'n in Weslaco would like to thank the following sponsors:



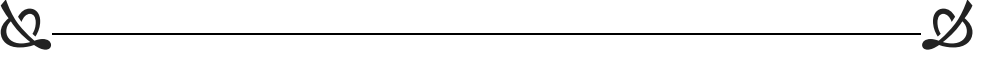
Special thanks to: Weslaco Museum, Weslaco Mayor Joe V. Sanchez Public Library, STC Mid-Valley Campus, iTheatre at the Water Tower, UTRGV Theatre Department, Gisselle Ingan, and Amparo and Ken Hughes



Will'n in Weslaco

The South Texas Shakespeare Festival

06 - 20 April 2024 - A Midsummer Night's Dream



We thank you for your support in making *Will'n in Weslaco* a success for the fifth year in a row.

We are happy to be sharing Shakespeare's works with our community, whether you're from the City of Weslaco, the Rio Grande Valley, Texas, or even beyond.

The festival ends with our "ShakesBeer" craft beer competition on April 20th.

SHAKESBEER



APRIL 20TH - 6 PM

