



A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM Bristol Old Vic with Handspring Puppet Company

Thursday, April 10, 2014
The Broad Stage, Santa Monica

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

Written at the end of the 16th century, this comedic play is one of Shakespeare's most popular stage works. The plot, like many of Shakespeare's plots, is far too complicated to summarize here. It tells of the events surrounding the marriage of Hippolyta to Theseus, duke of Athens. These include the adventures of four young Athenian lovers and a group of six amateur actors, all of whom are controlled and manipulated by the fairies who inhabit the forest in which most of the play is set. See the USC Libraries resource guide for a detailed plot synopsis.

HANDSPRING PUPPET COMPANY

Handspring Puppet Company was founded in 1981 and has grown under the leadership of artistic director Adrian Kohler and executive producer Basil Jones for more than 30 years. Based in Cape Town, South Africa, the company provides an artistic home and professional base for a core group of performers, designers, theatre artists and technicians. Handspring's work has been presented in more than 30 countries around the world.

The company received critical acclaim with the 2007 London premiere of *War Horse*, for which they created life-size horse puppets, controlled by three performers each.

South Africa has a long and rich puppetry history. Puppetry was present in traditional cultures but introduced as a form of entertainment, mainly for children, during the colonial era. It is now a thriving contemporary art form. Puppetry is widely used to entertain and educate children and adults. It is used in theatre and television, in artistic work, in therapy and in commercial production. South Africa is host to the largest international puppetry and visual-performance festival on the continent, Out The Box.

BRISTOL OLD VIC

Bristol Old Vic is the longest continuously running theatre in the UK. They are publicly funded by Arts Council England and Bristol City Council, using that investment to support experiment and innovation, and to allow access to their programs for people who would not otherwise encounter or be able to afford them.

THE BROAD STAGE

The Eli and Edythe Broad (pronounced bröhd) Stage at the Santa Monica College Performing Arts Center opened in 2008. It seats 499, but manages to feel intimate at the same time. The venue hosts all types of events, including concerts, plays and dance performances.