



Fejro Marino as Bottom and Orezime Mmarino as Quince. Photo by John Dearing

## One Night of Shakespeare

By John Dearing

**Pupils from East Finchley's Bishop Douglass School performed an abridged version of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at The Ryan Theatre in Harrow on Sunday 3 July, as part of "One Night of Shakespeare", which was produced by the BBC and The Shakespeare Schools Festival.**

This involved 10,000 young performers from 400 schools performing 30-minute productions of Shakespeare's plays in 100 theatres across the UK. They performed their own interpretations of adaptations by the author Leon Garfield.

### Talent-spotting

The purpose of the Festival, now in its sixth year, is to provide an opportunity to introduce Shakespeare to youngsters who might otherwise never read the Bard's plays or see them performed. It also serves to identify talented individuals for the future.

The Bishop Douglass School production was directed by Alan Spence, a teacher at the school. The

cast, whose production was the second of four performances that evening, performed to a full house and clearly had lots of support from friends and relatives.

### Farce in the forest

*A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a romantic comedy of manipulation, subterfuge and mistakes, almost a farce in the theatrical sense. It involves elopement, jealousy, fairy potions, last-minute adjustments and everyone living happily ever after.

The young cast went about their performances with enthusiasm, and clearly enjoyed appearing on stage. Fejro Marino was outstanding as Bottom, and generated much

laughter and applause. While space precludes a full cast list, other performers of note included Orezime Mmarino as Quince, Robert Uwusu-Anning as Thisbe, Joseph Asciak as Lysander, Liridona Ahmeti as Hermia, and Bianca Francis as Helena.

If there was a criticism to be made, it was that the theatre was rather large for young voices to fill without any amplification, and it was occasionally difficult to hear the dialogue. Full marks, nevertheless, for how well rehearsed the cast was, and how confidently and fluently they moved around the stage.

## Playground swings into photo shoot

By John Lawrence

**An East Finchley playground was the backdrop to a photo shoot for a national advertising campaign.**

A photographer, lighting staff and stylists took shots of six models in the playground in The Walks just as the children of nearby Holy Trinity School turned out from school on Thursday 7 July.

The set-up was an office boardroom table where three people in business attire were having a heated meeting while three onlookers watched in the background.

Most of the Holy Trinity children were too eager to play on the slides and swings to bother with the visitors.

The finished photo will be used to illustrate a nationwide campaign by the Charity Commission to get more people involved in community improvement projects. Expect to see it appear in the press and magazines from August onwards.

## Scrub the decks!

**East Finchley resident Judith Platts signed up to join the crew of a tall ship on a sailing trip in the Mediterranean. Describing herself as at the top end of the 18-75 age group on the vessel, here she reveals what life is like on the ocean wave.**

It is 4am of day two on board the 60-metre square rig Stavros S Niarchos of the Tall Ships Youth Trust. We are on watch until 8am, sailing from Majorca to Minorca.

Yesterday was busy, busy. A 7am flight from the UK, followed by joining the ship, signing on, getting lectures on safety, watching a video on hygiene, then an introduction to lines (ropes) with the emphasis always on safety and replacing everything exactly as found. We were issued with safety harnesses and fully protective wet clothes (ominous!), then shown where to collect life jackets, should they be needed.

There are 60 people on board of whom 48 are volunteer crew who work in watches of 16. We were still finding our way round when we were called to climb the rigging and experience up and over. This was not compulsory but ...! After that, the duty roster was put up and, finding we have a 3.30 am call, most of the watch decided to retire to our bunks early.

### Learning curves

As the days begin to form a pattern many other curves have to be scaled: understand-

ing exactly what instructions mean, learning the names of the lines and different areas of the mast, scrubbing the decks, cleaning the heads (toilets) and cleaning and polishing the brass. The day in the galley (kitchen) is fun; although you start at 6.15am, you are free after the last of the washing up at 6.15 pm. The food is excellent. There have been very few free periods as we have been busy trying to catch the wind, requiring constant changing of the sail settings.

In total we travelled over 300 miles of which 180 were under full sail. You cannot believe the silence when the sun has gone down and you are proceeding under sail. Dolphins played in the wake of the ship, the sea alive with jelly fish.

Each day was constantly taken up with jobs. This may sound like hard work rather than a holiday but the people you meet and the philosophical discussions in the middle of the night all make for a tremendous experience. The age group ranged from 18 to 75 years. This crew member was well into the latter category and loved every minute of it.

## Brookland arts week draws a crowd

By Jane Pendry

**During Arts Week, which began on 13 June, children at Brookland Junior School in Hampstead Garden Suburb were given the opportunity to enjoy a variety of artistic pursuits such as painting, modelling and creating textile pictures.**

Visiting artists included textile artist Claire Beaton working on textile renditions of fairy stories in Year 5; Polly Rockberger helping Year 3 pupils create dramatic textured collages in Year 3; Sue Rosenberg teaching pupils in Year 4 to create layered lino-cut prints; Tony Gotlop teaching water-colour techniques and Ricky Grimes showing children how to make clay totem poles in Year 6.

The event was supported by the Borough, with Barnet art advisory teacher Jill Whittard providing her expertise and supporting pupils on a variety of artwork projects.

There were drama and music activities, too. Years 3 and 5 visited St. Jude's Church for the children's lunchtime concert, and professional musicians ran percussion and song-writing workshops to help pupils write lyrics and develop their own musical

masterpieces. The school's peripatetic woodwind teacher, Stuart Curtis, accompanied by a classical guitarist, delivered a stunning performance of jazz and classical music to the whole school.

Head teacher Heather Blackmore said: "Arts Week enables pupils to discover gifts they never knew they had. Some are inspired to play an instrument while others learn that they can express themselves through painting, collage or textiles. The dramatists among them have the opportunity to explore their talents. A special thank you must go to event organiser Rob Verrill, our music co-ordinator, Tania Lloyd, Andrew Craze for his drama workshops, all the visiting professionals and parent helpers and, of course, the pupils themselves for making the event such a resounding success."

## KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

### Deferring Success

**In the weird and wonderful world of The Great British Summer, failure has been banned. Instead of failing, some members of the Professional Association of Teachers want us to think of it as 'deferred success' and that means you have the best cop-out clause since British Rail got away with blaming the wrong sort of snow.**

Just think of the wonderful possibilities that the future holds. A predictably dire display by Becks 'n' Co on the football field will not be a defeat, but a success deferred. Failing to beat the Aussies at cricket will not be a disaster, it will just be deferring the victory until the next time, or the time after. It is what we have all been waiting for, the perfect excuse.

Wouldn't the collapse of Rover have sounded better if they'd announced they were deferring success? Would Michael Howard have quit as Tory leader if he'd proudly announced that he had not lost the election, but just deferred the success until next time? Now Virgin Trains can describe the breakdown of your train outside Milton Keynes as deferring its successful arrival at Euston. Brilliant, isn't it?

It's not just sport or politics or the railways that have been waiting for years for this opportunity to present incompetence and failure as success. In future when you find yourself in Paris and your luggage in Moscow the airline can say it is merely deferring the successful delivery of your stuff. The double-booked, half-built hotel is just a minor matter of them deferring the successful completion until after your holiday.

If only they'd deferred success in the past, Napoleon would never have been defeated at Waterloo, Francis Drake wouldn't have defeated the Armada, and Admiral Villeneuve would not have had to admit defeat at Trafalgar.

Wow, the future is bright, the future ain't pear-shaped, the future holds no fear of failure as long as you've got deferred success. It's just that, like deferred gratification, I want it now.

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