COMING TO YOU LIVE
A short play by Donnetta Lavinia Grays

A Baltimore Center Stage / Play at Home Commission

© 2020 Donnetta Lavinia Grays
If you’ve watched Soul Train, then you know what you’re about to get into. This is all about celebrating Funk, Soul and R&B Music. 1970s and 1980s style. So, get down. Get funky. Get loose! Oh! This show is loosely imagined as if the characters of Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream were to assemble as various Funk/Soul bands. Do you need to read or know that play? Not really. But hopefully some of you will find the subtle hints charming.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- THE INTERNET. Some of you may not know who the artists referenced in this play are and that’s okay. Part of the hope here is that you go down a rabbit hole of funk, soul and R&B classics and have a good time doing it. For others, it will be a trip down Memory Lane. Look up what you don’t know and fill in the rest. Trust me, your playlists are about to get better!
- DRESS THE PART. Everyone should dress as foxy or as fly as they can. Lots of feathers and sequins if possible.
- NOISE MAKERS. Bands of this era had a bass, drums/high hat, a synthesizer (optional) and, of course, a solid horns section. Use anything around the house to fill it out (i.e. pots and pans or seat cushions for drums).
- TO HAVE FUN. This script is meant to be a guide for play. Get elaborate with it or keep it simple. It’s up to you. You are allowed to divide the play into sections, just do the songs or create your own styles. Whatever moves you. Break it up and have a ball.

CASTING
Depending on the size of your household, you will have to double or even triple cast parts. You may even have to turn two characters into one. Don’t worry about genders in this piece. Cast anyone and everyone. We all get to play. It’s wild and it should be wild. Also, whenever you see “ALL” that mean everyone joins in the singing at that point regardless of if they are a member of a particular band or not.

SONGS
The lyrics are provided. Hints to the style or “groove” and kind of band each of these fictionalized bands should try to emulate are in italics and parenthesis directly under that acts’ name. But, making the music and setting the rhythm...that’s all up to you. Best advice is to work out the music in groups/pairs beforehand or simply improvise on the spot! Either way.

POSTING
If you think your show is ready for primetime, then upload a performance of any part (or all of it) to broadcast to the world on Instagram. Use hashtags #PlayAtHome and #ComingToYouLive Tag the playwright/lyricist @DonnettaLavinia and we can get this party started!
THE PLAYERS

- HOST/DJ PHIL O. STRATE: A Don Cornelius type.

THE BANDS:

- THE FAIRY QUEENS: Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Mote, and Mustardseed
- THE MECHANICALS: Peter Quince, Tom Snout, Snug, Francis Flute, Robin Starveling, and Nick Bottom
- AFTERNOON STAR: Lysander, Hermia, Demetrius, and Helena
- FLOWER AND POWER: Titania and Oberon
- PUCK: Puck
- ALL: That’s everyone in your household. Ya’ll ALL singing, baby!! Even if you’re not in the assigned band.

SETTING: We are on the set of the greatest weekly televised dance party in history. Club (Add your address/family name here)! A party delivering all aspects of Soul, R&B and Funk culture straight into your living room. A cultural moment, in fact. And, if you tune in each week, you are part of that culture and part of that history. Dancers are dressed in the latest fashions. Hair is perfectly afroed or perfectly pressed. Bands wait in the wings in anticipation of being discovered or solidifying their place on the Soul music throne.

Lights up. Cameras on. Dancers groove, everyone sings and the show begins!
ALL
(This song should groove like “TSOP: The Sound of Philadelphia” by MFSB and Three Degrees)

(THEME SONG)

HEY HEY HEY
WHAT YOU SAY
GONNA GET FUNKY

MOVE YOUR FEET
AS YOU RIDE THAT BEAT
GONNA GET FUNKY

HANDS IN THE AIR
OH, WHO’S OVER THERE?
SHE GONNA GET FUNKY

WIND YOUR WAIST
SAY, LOOK AT THAT FACE
HE GONNA GET FUNKY

YOU AND ME
IN THE PLACE TO BE
WE GONNA GET FUNKY!!

HOST
(Speaks to the camera/studio audience)

Ahhhhh yes! We are indeed gonna get FUNKY! Coming to you live straight from Club (add your address/family name here)!

You are about to take a ride on a psychedelic spaceship
And just who’s your captain on this interplanetary trip?
Well, that’s me of course!
Yes, I am your host with the most. Your DJ. Real Deal Phil O. Strate.

Thank you for welcoming this weekly soul celebration into your home.
‘Cause like a wise man once said, “If music be the food of love, brothers and sisters...
If music be the food of LOVE? Ain’t but the one thing to do. And that’s play aaaalllll the way ON!”

You dig? Alright!

Now, we have a special show for you today.
Some of your favorite acts from over the years
HOST (CONT’D)

Have come to sing all your blues away.
Snatch back all your earthy fears.

So, let’s get hip to these cosmic delights
‘Cause this first act is sure ‘nuff out of sight
Here comes Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Mote, and Mustardseed
The Fairy Queens singing “Give Me What I Need”

THE FAIRY QUEENS

(This song might have a groove like “You Know How to Love Me” by Phyllis Hyman. Or “All American Girls” by Sister Sledge” This group should be in the vein of Sister Sledge/Labelle/Pointer Sisters)

(INTRO)

OH! HOW CAN YOU JUST LEAVE?
I NEED YOU TO GIVE ME WHAT I NEED

OH! HOW CAN YOU JUST GO AWAY?
GIVE ME WHAT I NEED, BABY PEASE STAY

OH! HOW CAN YOU JUST LEAVE?
I NEED YOU TO GIVE ME WHAT I NEED

OH! HOW CAN YOU JUST GO AWAY?
GIVE ME WHAT I NEED, BABY PEASE STAY

(VERSE)

LOOK AT WHAT YOU DID TO MY HEART
YOU HAD IT BEATING FROM THE VERY START

LOOK AT WHAT YOU DID TO MY LOVE
LIKE YOU WERE SENT FROM HIGH UP ABOVE

BUT, NOW YOU’RE GONE. YOU LEFT ME ALONE
SO, TELL ME, BABY
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO MOVE ON?

(CHORUS)

OH! HOW CAN YOU JUST LEAVE?
I NEED YOU TO GIVE ME WHAT I NEED

OH! HOW CAN YOU JUST GO AWAY?
GIVE ME WHAT I NEED, BABY PEASE STAY
THE FAIRY QUEENS (CONT’D)

OH! HOW CAN YOU JUST LEAVE?
I NEED YOU TO GIVE ME WHAT I NEED

OH! HOW CAN YOU JUST GO AWAY?
GIVE ME WHAT I NEED, BABY PEASE STAY

(BIG FINISH)
GIVE ME WHAT I NEED
GIVE ME WHAT I NEED
GIVE ME WHAT I NEED
YEAH

GIVE ME WHAT I NEED
GIVE ME WHAT I NEED
GIVE ME WHAT I NEED
YEAH

GIVE ME WHAT I NEED
GIVE ME WHAT I NEED
GIVE ME WHAT I NEED!
YEAH!

HOST
Give it up for The Fairy Queens! Yes.  
(Pulls them in for an interview)
Now, Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Mote, and Mustardseed, this is your what...fifth studio album?

PEASEBLOOM
Number five, Phil. That’s right.

HOST
Now, what I wanna know is...how did one family get all of this talent? And so foxy too!

COBWEB
You are too much, Phil! Mom and Dad. They had us singing since we were kids. Well, most of us...

HOST
Right! Yes, this may be your 5th album, but this is the first one with you, Mote? Am I right?

MOTE
Sure ‘nuff, Phil. I am just so blessed that I finally get to join my sisters on this one! I can finally 
(She tries to sing an impromptu run. It is off-key and terrible.) GIVE YOU WHAT YOU 
NEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEED!
(The other Fairy Queens know Mote can’t sing to save her soul. But they are encouraging.)

MUSTARDSEED
And, you know what, we are so blessed that Mote scarified sharing her amazing voice on this particular album. Saving it for our...um...next project.

PEASEBLOSSOM
Yeah. We got her on tambourine ministry for this one, Phil. Amen?

ALL
Amen!

HOST
Yes! Outta sight, ladies!
(Speaks to the camera/studio audience)
We are gonna keep this party going
With a major act you all should be knowing.
They came from a planet just beyond the milky way.
Here is Peter Quince, Tom Snout, Snug, Francis Flute, Robin Starveling and of course
The man with the master plan, Nick Bottom
Here are The Mighty Mighty Mechanicals singing “Break It On Down”
To brighten your day!

THE MECHANICALS
(This song might have a groove like “Ain’t Gonna Hurt Nobody” by Brick or slow it down a bit and it’s in the groove of “Get Down on It” By Kool and the Gang. This group should be in the vein of Brick/Parliament/Earth Wind and Fire/Kool and the Gang)

(THE “HORNS” SECTION GIVE A FOUR COUNT)

PETER QUINCE

(INTRO)
THERE AIN’T NOTHING
ABOUT THIS GROOVE
THAT CAN’T GET ON DOWN
SO, JUST BREAK IT ON DOWN

SNUG

OW
BREAK IT ON DOWN
OW
THERE AIN’T NOTHING
ABOUT THIS GROOVE
THAT CAN’T GET ON DOWN
SO, JUST BREAK IT ON DOWN

CHECK IT OUT

I’M A MOONBEAM
THAT WANTS TO DANCE
SO, I GET ON DOWN
I JUST BREAK IT ON DOWN

I’M WALL
BUT YOU CAN SEE RIGHT THROUGH ME
SO, I GET ON DOWN
I JUST BREAK IT ON DOWN

GIVE THE DRUMMER SOME!

AND THE LADIES SAY!

GET GET GET
GET DOWN
JUST GET ON DOWN
BREAK IT ON DOWN

SAY, GET GET GET
GET DOWN
JUST GET ON DOWN
BREAK IT ON DOWN

OH BABY
THERE AIN’T NOTHING
ABOVE THIS GROOVE
THAT CAN’T GET ON DOWN
SO, JUST BREAK IT ON DOWN

DO YOU HEAR ME!

THERE AIN’T NOTHING
ABOUT THIS GROOVE
THAT CAN’T GET ON DOWN
SO, JUST BREAK IT ON DOWN

(BIG FINISH)
JUST GET ON DOWN!

(THE “HORNS” SECTION GIVE A FOUR COUNT)

HOST
Didn’t I tell you. The BADGEST group around!
(Pulls them in for an interview)
Now, you all are about to get on the road?

PETER QUINCE
Yes, in about a week we start our “Hot Sauce at Any Cost Tour.”

NICK BOTTOM
Ahhh... In addition to debuting tracks from my new solo album: “Funk in the Trunk: What You
Hiding, Girl?” So, we want to see all of your beautiful-

PETER / SNUG
Solo?

FRANCIS/TOM
What?

ROBIN
What you talkin’ bout, man?

NICK BOTTOM
I’m trying a new sound. One that incorporates funk and traditional 19th Century Czech folk
music. AKA, Polka, Phil.
Man, you crazy!

What?

Did this man just say “Polka?”

It’s Polka Funk, Phil.

Artistic vision!
And maybe a little artistic division?
We’re gonna let ya’ll work that on out while we slow it down a little bit.

(Speaks to the camera/studio audience)

Friends, if men are from Venus and women are from Mars
Then, this next group teaches us to look up at the stars
And imagine the possibilities of love.
Here’s Lysander, Hermia, Demetrius and Helena.
Together they are Afternoon Star here with “Running to Your Arms”

(This song might have a groove like “Curious” by Midnight Star or “When Love Calls” by Atlantic Star. This group should be in the vein of Atlantic Star/Midnight Star/The S.O.S Band)

JUST THE OTHER DAY
I KNEW THE RIGHT WORDS TO SAY
AND YOU
WERE BY MY SIDE

YOU WOULD HOLD MY HAND
BECAUSE YOU WERE MY MAN
AND YOU
MADE ME FEEL SO ALIVE

BUT WE
CAN FIND LOVE AGAIN
YES, WE
KNOW WE’RE GONNA WIN

(HELENA)

ALL

(CHORUS)
RUNNING TO YOUR ARMS
RUNNING TO YOUR ARMS

(HELENA)

WILL YOU PLEASE CATCH ME?

(ALL)

RUNNING TO YOUR ARMS
RUNNING TO YOUR ARMS

(DEMETRIUS)

CAUSE I DON’T WANT TO BE

(ALL)

WITHOUT YOU

(DEMETRIUS)

(VERSE)
I THOUGHT I WAS SO CLEVER
THOUGHT YOU’D BE MINE FOREVER
BUT, YOU
HAD A DIFFERENT PLAN

(HELENA)

I TOOK YOU FOR GRANTED
A RAW DEAL YOU WERE HANDED
AND NOW
BABY, I UNDERSTAND

(SAXAPHONE SOLO)

(LYSANDER)

BUT WE
CAN FIND LOVE AGAIN

(HERMIA)

YES, WE
KNOW WE’RE GONNA WIN
ALL

(CHOIRUS)
RUNNING TO YOUR ARMS
RUNNING TO YOUR ARMS

HELENA/HERMIA

WILL YOU PLEASE CATCH ME?

ALL

RUNNING TO YOUR ARMS
RUNNING TO YOUR ARMS

DEMOTRIUS/LYSANDER

(BIG FINISH)
CAUSE I DON’T WANT TO BE

ALL

WITHOUT YOU

Running to your arms!

HOST

(Pulls them in for an interview)
You all are phenomenal. Your energy and your voices. How they work together. Just heavenly.

LYSANDAR

Therapy works, Phil.

HERMIA

It sure does.

DEMOTRIUS

It was rough going at the start.

HELENA

But, you know, we just had to realize that we were all chasing the same thing.

LYSANDAR/HERMIA/DEMOTRIUS/HELENA

(Into the camera)

Love.

HOST

Okay.

(Speaks to the camera/studio audience)
And now, stars and starlettes, it’s time for our favorite part of the day
When we make way
For The Club (add your address/family name here) Dancers!

(This is a Soul Train line. Play your favorite funk song and boogie. Once the song has ended our Host picks up again)

HOST
Solid!
For our penultimate set
Here’s a legendary duo that we won’t soon forget.
The Godparents to all these groovy kiddos
Blessing us with their soulful sound straight from the cosmos.
Here’s Titania and Oberon. The legendary Flower and Power, ladies and gentlemen!
Here with their hit “We Did it Again.”

FLOWER AND POWER
(This song might have a groove like “Solid” by Ashford and Simpson, “You Don’t Have to Be a Star” by Marylin McCoo and Billy Davis Jr., or speed it up and it’s “We’ve Got Love” by Peaches and Herb. This group should be in the vein of Ashford and Simpson/Peaches and Herb)

ALL
AND WE DID IT AGAIN
YES, WE DID IT AGAIN
THAT’S WHAT WE DO, BABE

AND WE DID IT AGAIN
YES, WE DID IT AGAIN
THAT’S ME AND YOU, BABE

AND WE DID IT AGAIN
YES, WE DID IT AGAIN
THAT’S WHAT WE DO, BABE

AND WE DID IT AGAIN
YES, WE DID IT AGAIN
THAT’S ME AND YOU, BABE

TITANIA
IT AIN’T NO SECRET
WE’VE HAD OUR UPS AND DOWNS
BUT, THROUGH IT ALL
I’M GLAD WE STUCK IT OUT

CAUSE IN THE END
THERE’S ONLY ME AND YOU

AND AIN’T THAT SOMETHING
TO HOLD ON TOO

AND WE DID IT AGAIN
YES, WE DID IT AGAIN
THAT’S WHAT WE DO, BABE

AND WE DID IT AGAIN
YES, WE DID IT AGAIN
THAT’S ME AND YOU, BABE

I LOOK AT YOU
YOU LOOK AT ME

I SEE THE GOOD TIMES
AND OUR DESTINY
YEAH!

AND WE DID IT AGAIN
YES, WE DID IT AGAIN
THAT’S WHAT WE DO, BABE

AND WE DID IT AGAIN
YES, WE DID IT AGAIN
THAT’S ME AND YOU, BABE

WHAT THESE YOUNG FOLKS DON’T QUITE UNDERSTAND
THAT IT TAKES LOVE AND PATIENCE
TO WITHSTAND

YEAH!
AND WE DID IT AGAIN
YES, WE DID IT AGAIN
THAT’S WHAT WE DO, BABE

(BIG FINISH – FADE OUT)
AND WE DID IT AGAIN
YES, WE DID IT AGAIN
THAT’S ME AND YOU, BABE

HOST
(Pulls them in for an interview)
Oh, man. Words to live by. Thank you so much.

TITANIA
Thank you, Phil. We are living proof.

OBERON
Sure ‘nuff.

TITANIA
And also, we want to thank you for supporting us all of these years at Club (add your address/family name here). Can we give it up for Phil, ya’ll?

HOST
Thank you, Queen! Yes. I’m humbled. Thank you. So, what’s on the horizon for the two of you? What’s next?

OBERON
Take our love international, brother. There are billions of souls that Soul music has yet to touch. So, we’re heading out overseas on a 25th Anniversary Tour.

TITANIA
Starting in India. And all of Asia.

OBERON
Call it Bollywood Soul, baby!

HOST
Hey hey now! I can’t wait to see you legends on the big screen.
(Speaks to the camera/studio audience)
Well, that gives us a thing to look forward to. Music connects the world, baby. And that’s just what we do. Right here. Every week.
HOST (CONT’D)

Sometimes we come at you easy.
But, sometimes it calls for a freak!
Here to close us out
Is that very freak I’m talking about.
Puck! With “Freaky Shadows.”

PUCK

(This song might have a groove like “Cold Blooded” by Rick James or “Give it to Me Baby” by Rick James. Puck should be in the vein of Rick James.)

(FUNKY TIGHT GUITAR INTRO)

(VERSE)

CALL US SHADOWS
DANCING IN THE DARK

HERE TO SERVE YOU
AN EXOTIC TIME FOR ALL

IF YOU DREAM IT
WE CAN MAKE THAT DREAM COME TRUE

ONLY IF YOU BELIEVE IT
AND, GIRL, I HOPE YOU DO
BUT

(Chorus)

IF WE SHADOWS HAVE OFFENDED
THINK BUT THIS AND ALL IS MENDED

THAT WE DID BUT SHAKE IT DOWN
ON THE FREAKY SIDE OF TOWN

IF WE SHADOWS HAVE OFFENDED
THINK BUT THIS AND ALL IS MENDED

THAT WE DID BUT SHAKE IT DOWN
ON THE FREAKY SIDE OF TOWN

(FUNKY BREAKDOWN)

NOW GET DOWN
AH GET UP
I SAID GET UP
I SAID GET UP

NOW GET DOWN
AH GET UP

I SAID GET UP
I SAID GET UP

(VERSE)
FREAKY SHADOWS
HERE TO BRING YOU JOY

CALLING OUT
EVERY GIRL AND BOY

WANT TO BOOGIE
THEN JUST TAKE A CHANCE

SHADOW DANCING
IN A FREAKY TRANCE
BUT

(chorus)
IF WE SHADOWS HAVE OFFENDED
THINK BUT THIS AND ALL IS MENDED

THAT WE DID BUT SHAKE IT DOWN
ON THE FREAKY SIDE OF TOWN

IF WE SHADOWS HAVE OFFENDED
THINK BUT THIS AND ALL IS MENDED

THAT WE DID BUT SHAKE IT DOWN
ON THE FREAKY SIDE OF TOWN

(funky breakdown)
NOW GET DOWN
AH GET UP
ALL (CONT’D)

I SAID GET UP
I SAID GET UP

NOW GET DOWN
AH GET UP

I SAID GET UP
I SAID GET UP

HEY

(BIG FINISH – JAM)
IF WE SHADOWS HAVE OFFENDED
THINK BUT THIS AND ALL IS MENDED

THAT WE DID BUT SHAKE IT DOWN
ON THE FREAKY SIDE OF TOWN

IF WE SHADOWS HAVE OFFENDED
THINK BUT THIS AND ALL IS MENDED

THAT WE DID BUT SHAKE IT DOWN
ON THE FREAKY SIDE OF TOWN

IF WE SHADOWS HAVE OFFENDED
THINK BUT THIS AND ALL IS MENDED

THAT WE DID BUT SHAKE IT DOWN
ON THE FREAKY SIDE OF TOWN

IF WE SHADOWS HAVE OFFENDED
THINK BUT THIS AND ALL IS MENDED

THAT WE DID BUT SHAKE IT DOWN
ON THE FREAKY SIDE OF TOWN

HOST

What better way
To end our stay at Club
(Add your address/family name here)!

We want to thank The Fairy Queens, The Mechanicals, Afternoon Star, the legendary Flower and Power and, of course, Puck for sending us on this intergalactic journey.
HOST (CONT’D)

I hope you enjoyed it
Because we sure enjoyed having you

Until next time
Here’s wishing you...

ALL
A Happy Heart, A Happy Mind, And a Funky Good Time!

THEME SONG

HEY HEY HEY
WHAT YOU SAY
GONNA GET FUNKY

MOVE YOUR FEET
AS YOU RIDE THAT BEAT
GONNA GET FUNKY

HANDS IN THE AIR
OH, WHO’S OVER THERE?
SHE GONNA GET FUNKY

WIND YOUR WAIST
SAY, LOOK AT THAT FACE
HE GONNA GET FUNKY

YOU AND ME
IN THE PLACE TO BE
WE GONNA GET FUNKY!!

END OF PLAY