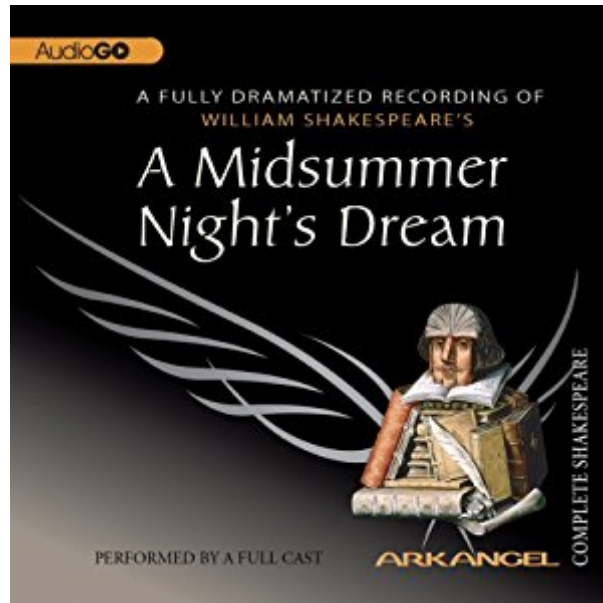


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A Midsummer Night's Dream: Arkangel Shakespeare



Synopsis

Shakespeare's most imaginative and merry play is set in an enchanted wood amidst fairies and sprites. When Oberon, King of the Fairies, uses his magic upon four runaway lovers in a midsummer wood outside Athens, chaos ensues. Who really loves whom? Meanwhile, a band of well-meaning but bungling local actors have their rehearsal sabotaged by the mischievous Puck, who bewitches their leader, Bottom, and Titania, the Fairy Queen. The result is a lively and anarchic comedy which can only be resolved by an elaborate disentangling of spells. Hermia is played by Amanda Root, Oberon by David Harewood, and Bottom by Roy Hudd.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 2 hours and 18 minutes

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Customer Reviews

There are many reasons for the popularity of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream", not the least among them is the almost unique joining of the humorous misuse of language (by the tradesman actors) and the utter beauty of language and expression (by Puck, Oberon, and Titania). One usually gets a farce of language or an attempt at the sublime. Here the music of the two enriches both. How can one put together these four disparate plotlines into such a wonderful whole? The quartet of lovers and their mixed and varied attentions forms the basis of the plot in the comedy and it is a delightful enough farce. The squabble of Demetrius and Lysander over Hermia while Helena pines over Demetrius, Oberon and Titania's argument over one of her servants and Oberon's use of Puck to manipulate Titania's affections including Puck's mistaken application of Oberon's potion to Lysander's eyes, the pending marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta, and the wonderfully, magically awful play being put on by the tradesman for the nobles. Putting all this into a wonderful

whole is an achievement that I believe is unmatched. I do want to say that this play has suffered a great deal in our sex obsessed age. We have foisted on this play an eroticism that it does not claim for itself nor display. While the "adult" couples (Thesus & Hippolyta, Oberon & Titania) interact and talk in ways that include that aspect of their lives, the youthful couples always talk and act in ways that are concerned with propriety and modesty. Bottom is hardly the lust blinded brute depicted in modern productions. He is much more interested in eating and chatting with his Fairy friends than Titania.

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