

## **Film, Fantasy, and the Bard**

### **Assignment G**

#### Film Review

Write a 1-2-page review of the Reinhart film of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In this review you should take the opposite position of one of the reviews you have read. Make sure you defend your position with specific evidence from the film. You do not need to refute the published review line for line, instead construct and support your own arguments in reference to film and the published reviews.

#### **Assignment G—alternate**

Write a 1-3 page paper in which you explore one of the following topics. Make sure you support your argument with evidence from the film/text and come to a clear conclusion.

1. Because the film was made in the 1930s the special effects were limited. How has the film used other means to represent the magic of the fairies (dance, movement, the tone in which they speak, and the tone of some of the lines)? How does the spectacle of the fairy world and of the court influence your interpretation of the play? Did you find it illuminating or distracting? You may want to consider the songs, dance numbers, pageantry, Titania and Oberon and their entourages, and the lavish setting.
2. Costumes are often used to establish characteristics of setting and characters in a movie. How are we, an audience of 2010, to understand the costumes, particularly the mix of periods (ancient Greek, Elizabethan, and modern-1930s)? Do they add meaning to the plot or distract us? What effects did the change in eras of the costumes have on our perception of the play?
3. This is the only adaptation we have seen where Bottom sees how he looks when he is transformed. How does this affect your understanding of his character? This, coupled with the echoing Bottom hears when he wakes up, references the myth of Narcissus and Echo. What does this add to the story, specifically to the idea of "translation?"
4. Examine how gender roles are portrayed in this film, particularly the relationship of Titania and Oberon to the Indian boy and each other. For instance, it is apparent that Oberon is associated with black and Titania white. (The reverse of how Hippolyta and Theseus are costumed in the opening scenes.) Does this make one bad and the other good? What other ways does the magic of these two characters affect how the audience perceives them? What does it say about gender roles? What are acceptable and unacceptable behaviors /roles for a woman? Do the same rules apply to Hippolyta and Theseus? Are these roles imposed on the movie or are they inherent in the text?