

Shakespeare's Use of Magic

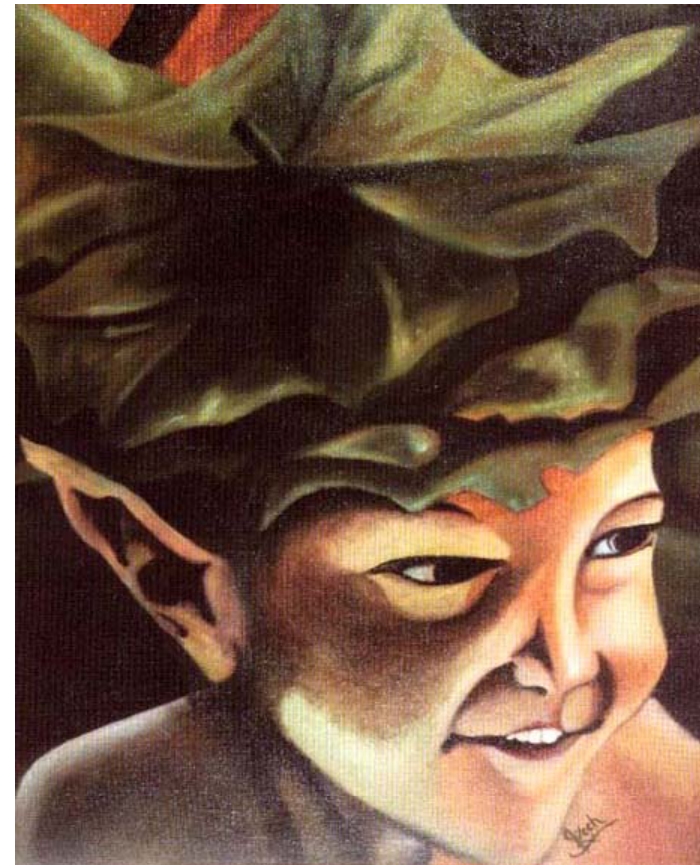


A Midsummer Night's Dream

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Act II scene I

- in mind:
 - What do we learn about Puck?
 - Who are Titania and Oberon?
 - Why are Titania and Oberon fighting?
 - What happens when they fight?



The Elizabethan Notion of Fairies

- Household nymphs
 - Punishing sloth and rewarding cleanliness
 - Good favor can be won
 - Have a penchant for mischief
 - Dairy tricks
 - Putting spells on animals
 - Leading travelers astray
 - Changelings

They are nocturnal beings who don't like humans seeing them.



Characteristics of Magical Characters

- Robin Good-fellow: aka-Puck, Robin-Hood, Hobgoblin
 - Puck: generic term applied to class of demons
 - Origin: old English Folklore
 - Special guardian of hearth and home
 - Shakespeare uses Puck in service to Oberon



Magical Characters Cont...

- Titania: Queen of the Fairies
 - Origin: Diana
 - Sometimes referred to as Titania because of descent from Titas Coeus
 - Is Worshipped by Vot'resses



Titania Cont..

- Shakespeare uses Titania in a different way.
 - Controls the elements
 - Ex: Fights with Oberon
 - Has elements of royalty
 - Court

Possible
Elizabethan
Costuming
Concept for
Titania



Modern perception
of Titania





Magical Characters Cont....

- Oberon: King of the fairies
 - Controls the elements
 - Keeps things in order
 - Fixes the mess the lovers are in
 - Blesses humanity
 - Has elements of the Greek and Roman Gods
 - Infidelities with mortals
 - Natural powers

Magical Characters Cont...



- Shakespeare's Fairies
 - Unique interpretation of the fairies
 - Instruments of nature
 - Ex: fairy duties for the fairy queen

The Forest and Nature



What does the city represent?

What does the forest represent?

- Shakespeare and his contemporary Elizabethans explained nature through magic
- Imagery of the forest

Discussion: What is the significance of Hermia and Lysander running away from the city and into the forest?