



UNIVERSITY OF AGDER

Character Interpretation through Music

Character interpretation of Shakespeare's Fairies in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as exemplified in the compositions of Mendelssohn and Britten

Inga Marie Nesmann

Supervisor

Professor Roy Tommy Eriksen

This Master's Thesis is carried out as a part of the education at the University of Agder and is therefore approved as a part of this education. However, this does not imply that the University answers for the methods that are used or the conclusions that are drawn.

University of Agder, 2011

Faculty of Humanities and Translation

Department of Foreign Languages and Translation

Contents

1. Introduction: the Main Goal of this Thesis. What am I going to Investigate and Why?	3
1.1 <i>Music and Literature</i>	3
2. Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream in Social Context	7
2.1 <i>William Shakespeare, the Playwright and Poet</i>	7
2.2 <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	8
2.3 <i>The Characters of the Play</i>	11
3. A Study of the Fairy Characters, Text Analysis	13
3.1 <i>The Fairies</i>	13
3.2 <i>Oberon and Titania, the Fairy King and Queen</i>	17
3.3 <i>The Attending Puck</i>	19
3.4 <i>The Train of Fairies</i>	20
3.5 <i>Study of Text Selections</i>	22
3.5.1. Act II, scene 2	22
3.5.2. Act V, scene 1	32
4. Mendelssohn's Music: an Analysis of the Coherence between Text and Music	40
4.1 <i>Mendelssohn's A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	40
4.2 <i>Fairies and the Use of Voice</i>	42
4.2.1. Act II, scene 2	44
4.2.2. Act V, scene 1	46
5. Britten's Music: an Analysis of the Coherence between Text and Music	50
5.1 <i>Britten's A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	50
5.2 <i>Fairies and the Use of Voice</i>	52
5.2.1. Act II, scene 2, Act I in the Opera	53
5.2.2 Act V, scene 1, Act 3 in the Opera	57
6. Comparison Between the two Analyses. What Kind of Characters are the Fairies in the Two Musical Works?	62
6.1 <i>Establishing The Fairy Kingdom</i>	62
6.2 <i>Oberon and Titania</i>	64
6.3 <i>Puck</i>	65
6.4 <i>The Fairy Chorus</i>	66
6.5 <i>The Realisation of Shakespeare's Play in Music</i>	67
7. A Performer's Perspective: My Experience in Singing the Music	69
7.1 <i>Describing Performance</i>	69
7.2 <i>Interpretation</i>	69
7.2.1. Mendelssohn's Solo Fairy	71
7.2.2. Britten's Titania	73
8. Character Analysis through Music – a Richer Understanding? Music as a Governing Factor	75
8.1 <i>Creation of the Fairy World through Music</i>	75
8.2 <i>Character through Voice</i>	75
8.3 <i>Character Interpretation through Instrumentation</i>	77
8.4 <i>Structure in Poetry, Architecture, Painting and Music</i>	78
8.5 <i>Forming a Character through Music</i>	80
References	83
Appendix 1: Summary of the Play	87
Appendix 2: Summary of Britten's Opera	89
Appendix 3: Text Used in Britten and Mendelssohn	90
Appendix 4: Britten's Music	96
Appendix 5: Mendelssohn's Music	116

1. Introduction: the Main Goal of this Thesis. What am I going to Investigate and Why?

1.1 Music and Literature

All composers who work with text and set music to literary texts, like poems or plays, must to some extent interpret the literature they are working with. In general, I find it interesting to investigate the literary interpretation made by composers and to what degree this comes through in their music.

The union of poetry and music is older than recorded time. In ancient Greece they were inseparable. All music had words, and all the plays were sung. Nowadays poetry and music live apart. [...] in the world of serious music, on the other hand, it is poems that get music fitted to them. [...] But nobody, literally nobody ever tries to create an oratorio or opera by first composing an instrumental score, in the hope that someone someday will put a libretto under it. (Thomson 1989:1)

In order to limit my field of research, I have chosen to look at the portrayal of characters, preferably from literary sources like a stage play. The representation of a character through music is intricate and I would like to look at methods used to reflect and express the personality of a character through compositional techniques.

In a master thesis, the topic must be further limited, and I have chosen to look at the play *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare and I have selected the characters presented as fairies in this fairytale adventure. Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy¹ composed incidental music to this play in 1842 (Kennedy 2004:471) and Benjamin Britten² composed the opera *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1959-1960. (Kennedy 2004:102)

¹ 1809-1847 German composer, pianist, organist and conductor. (Kennedy 2004: 470)

² 1913-1976 English composer, pianist and conductor. (Kennedy 2004:101)

Britten's opera is based on Shakespeare's play, but the libretto is written by Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears. There are several differences between the two works.

Mendelssohn has written incidental music, whereas Britten has composed an opera. As a result, the music will have different roles in a staging. However, the fairies do sing in Mendelssohn's music as well, so there are some common points of reference there. The original text by Shakespeare is for the most part kept by Pears and Britten, so the opera is a close adaptation of Shakespeare's original play. Some passages have been excluded, but the remaining text is identical or very similar to the play itself. I have chosen a segment of the text where the same passages from Shakespeare's original play is used. I have therefore eliminated the variations as much as possible. In that way, I can analyse Shakespeare's textual patterns separately before looking at the effect the music has on the literature.

The nature of this thesis, a comparative study using close rhetorical and musical analyses, does not allow any extended presentation of literary theory, although structuralism, gender theory and psychoanalysis, could apply at points of my analysis, my main aim is not, however, to present a literary interpretation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Of course, I do not disregard literary theory as an important basis for analysis per se, but the main focus of my thesis is on the character interpretation through music. Before turning to that point, I will have to prepare the ground with situating the author and the work in question.

The compositions are written about 110 years apart, in 1843 and 1960. The development in music history and genre specific references will therefore create a distance between the two. However, it is still possible to investigate and analyse the

music in order to search for patterns and compositional techniques used to portray character in the two different compositions.

I find it natural to give a discussion of the characters based on Shakespeare's text, and then compare this to the portrayal that can be reflected in the music. The musical study and analysis will be done separately before they are compared and related to the literary portrayal of the characters. Aesthetics and music criticism as a method will be relevant when discussing how the music can portray a character. To what extent is this possible and are there any common references that enable audiences to understand the implications made in the music by the composer? Can music be said to be a governing factor in character interpretation? I will have to use specific theories and apply them as models in my investigation and analysis. Music as interpretation of Shakespeare is an adaptation of the written play. In her book *Shakespeare and the Problem of Adaptation*, Kidnie writes: 'Instead of 'the text itself' coming to stand in place of the work, with performance assuming a second-order, adaptive relation as a performance of the text, performance and text are both, in their different ways, instances of the work.' (Kidnie 2009:28) The discussion of whether some texts or performances are more authentic than others is challenging to answer. Kidnie states that a 'provisional definition of the 'truth' of the work' is a result of ongoing debate. 'An individual instance 'counts' as the work if, and so long as, readers and spectators are willing to confer recognition on it as being a legitimate instance of, for instance, *Hamlet* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.' (Kidnie 2009:30)

I will have to pay particular attention to rhetorical detail in my analysis, as the details are all important in forming the whole picture.

We do not respond to dramatic poetry by impatiently twiddling our thumbs while the actor gets through the less impressive but unfortunately necessary words, to arrive at the more magnificent and heaven-storming but less “necessary” ones.

(Lewin 2006:84)

First, however, it is necessary to provide a brief overview of the musical work as a whole before concentrating on the parts where the fairies are involved. Which will receive particular and more detailed later on. Similarly, there are several methods that are required in my research. I will need to contextualize the particular play and the period in order to identify the right cultural references for the characters. One example is

Titania, the fairy queen:

‘In Elizabethan England, no representation of a fairy queen could ever claim *not* to concern the real queen at some levels. The question, as always, is to figure out just what social meanings are encoded in fictive transformations of the real.’

(Paster 1999:9)

A historical approach, together with textual criticism and a theoretical and analytical investigation of both literature and music will be essential in this work. In addition, it is necessary to acquire a thorough understanding of the terminology needed to present my analysis. The way in which the compositions were intended to be performed will also have an impact on the interpretation of the character, so I find it important to find out how the two compositions differ in that aspect.

As I am also a master student in classical music performance, I have found it interesting to attempt a more creative artistic approach to the problem by rehearsing the parts of Titania in Britten’s composition and the soprano fairy part in Mendelssohn and perform them myself. I have thus been able to work with the music from the point of view of a

musician as well as researching it on a more theoretical level. This approach will, I argue, add empirical and experimental layers to my research that I believe the master thesis will benefit from.

2. Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in Social Context

2.1. William Shakespeare, the Playwright and Poet

The romantic comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was written by William Shakespeare at the end of the 16th century. The first performance is recorded to 1596, the same year as the perhaps more famous tragedy *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Merchant of Venice*. (Briggs 1997:304) The play was one of his earliest successes and has been described as the finest comedy written in the sixteenth century. With this play he established himself as the leading dramatist of the mid- 1590s. (Hussey 1971:78)

Shakespeare was a productive playwright and poet. His literary works are varied, wide-ranging and epic. His sonnets also testify for his lyric sensitivity and energy. The dialogues in his plays are overflowing and exuberant and signal a poetic energy inspired by a flowing literary inspiration. (Smidt 2000:33) Shakespeare was also recognised by his contemporaries for his 'natural' writing and lack of scholarly affectation. His show of knowledge was for the most part available in popular representations and translations. He must have read a great deal, and borrowed concepts, ideas and plots without scruples, but he processed his material and let it blend naturally into his literary works. (Smidt 2000:39-40) The use of language as means of distinguishing different character groups is used extensively in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and I will discuss this later on.

Shakespeare's writing reveals that he explored and celebrated the great emotional topics and rites of passage marking the stages of human life. He describes all the great emotions and uses them to reflect on what it is to be vulnerable and human in all aspects. He portrays both destructive and ugly manifestations of emotion with the same persuasiveness and intensity as the attractive, amiable and noble ones. (Bevington in Kastan 1999:16-17)

The comedies that Shakespeare produced in the 1590s go far beyond describing young people falling in love. They give great insight into the dangers and difficulties that faced young people 'in attempting to negotiate the painful transition from adolescent friendship to heterosexual companionship and consummation'. (Bevington in Kastan 1999:17) Shakespeare uses these plays to communicate to his audience as he seeks to gain an understanding of these complex and human experiences so familiar to most human beings. The comedic genre offers an ideal setting for addressing these universal issues.

2.2. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

A Midsummer Night's Dream is a romance comedy. Romances are of a different nature compared to tragedies. In tragedies the themes are explored in credible situations through complex characters. In a romance, the event and the characters are not realistic. Mythical or make-believe worlds are typical settings for romances. The romantic make-believe world of *A Midsummer Night Dream* is an alternative to the real world. The story that unfolds in such a play is unrealistic and incredible. (Peck 1985:124)

The thing about such stories in such settings, however, is that like myths, folk tales, legends and fables, they focus on large questions about human life and

human nature. A realistic play, or even a vaguely realistic play, focuses on particular individuals and their problems; a non-realistic play forces us to think about the whole nature of life and the problems mankind encounters. (Peck 1985: 124)

The very nature of the comedy genre gives the play an overall thematic background. The contrast between an ideal world where there is an order in life and the reality where mankind can experience that life can be disorderly and beyond control. (Peck 1985:124)

The perfectly ordered world is the setting and the characters then experience sudden change of events and 'they are subject both to the disorderly forces of nature and to their own unruly passions'. (Peck 1985:124-125)

The woodland world of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* gives perfect scenery for the comedy to unfold. This general description of romance comedies applies to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The background setting of Athens gives associations to the mythological and classical literature of Antiquity. At the same time, the woods create pastoral scenery where the folklore and fairytale references are plentiful. Together they form, as named previously, an unrealistic setting that a romance comedy requires. In *Shakespeare's Festive World*, Francois Laroque discusses the use of 'the green world' in Shakespearian comedy. The green world in this case, is based on a medieval folk ritual, the Mummers play. The theme is the triumph of life over the waste land. The use of traditional festivity as a part of comedy is also used in other of Shakespeare's plays, like *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It*. (Laroque 1991:193)

The green world is a place of change and metamorphosis, where the reinvigorating contact with nature enables people to free themselves from the constraints and injustices of society and to find fulfilment and, having gone

through a series of trials and tribulations, in most cases also true love. (Laroque 1991:193)

This is absolutely the case in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The forest is nature, and the court represents culture. At the same time, the green world is not a permanent place to be for the visiting human characters. It represents 'an alternative to and a reversal of the normal world' (Laroque 1991:194) When the metamorphosis is completed and love is gained, they return back to normal life.

A Midsummer Night's Dream is structurally a very intricate play. (Hollindale 1992:44) I will not go into the details of the entire plot and all the characters involved, however, an introduction to the play itself is necessary.³ Barber (1972:157) defines the comedy as 'the first that is completely, triumphantly successful; but it has the limitations, as well as the strength of a youthful play. The play is often described as enchanting, lyrical and very funny. It can be characterised by an 'eclectic mingling of lovers, fairies, and artisan actors in an action filled with mythological allusions and moved by the combined power of love, magic and self-conscious theatricality'. (Paster 1999:1) The play is set in Athens, a symbolically fraught city. There is also a clear contrast between the Athenian court and city and the forest in which the main takes place on-site full of supernatural beings.

Shakespeare's plays have a well-balanced structure that supports the play as a whole. 'Given the nature of Shakespeare's art, it is impossible to separate structure and meaning.' (Rose 1972:viii) According to Rose, Shakespeare was the first playwright to have sufficiently control of his plays' overall structure to apply scene design principles to the play as a whole. (Rose 1972:ix) The matter of structural design and harmonious

³ A summary of the play is added as an appendix. Appendix 1

proportion was very important in Renaissance aesthetic. The basis for this structure was the perfect harmony of God's cosmos. The idea was that the discovered mathematical ratios of cosmic beauty could be transferred to art. This is particularly clear in music, painting and architecture. (Rose 1972:16-17) *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has a clear design with a five –part overall structure. Athens frames the play with beginning and end, the workmen are placed in between and the centrepiece of the play is the forest. This balanced design does not coincide completely with the act divisions. The important structure is that of Athens, I,1, workmen I,2, forest II-IV,1, workmen IV,2 and Athens, V,1 again. (Rose 1972:19-21) These divisions into acts and scenes seem to be universal divisions that were more connected to the theatres or playhouses and their performances, than to the design of the playwright. The constructive units from Shakespeare himself are what we call the scene. (Rose 1972:22-23) 'In Shakespeare's time not one of his plays was published with division of any kind.' (Rose 1972:23)

2.3. The Characters of the Play

There are four distinct character groups in the play. One group consists of the Duke of Athens, Theseus and Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons⁴. They are betrothed. Their role in the play is quite special, since they are 'principals without being protagonists. The play happens for them rather than to them. This relation goes with their being stand-ins for the noble couple whose marriage the play originally honored' (Barber 1972:125) The quartet of Lovers; Hermia, Lysander, Demetrius and Helena are a second character group, and in many ways similar to the ducal couple in Athens. The citizens of Athens

⁴ She is a prisoner of war, but is now to be married to Theseus: 'Hippolyta, I wooed thee with my sword And won thy love doing thee injuries, But I will wed thee in another key, With pomp, with triumph, and with reveling.' I,1:16-19.

are also worth mentioning in this context, but they are not distinguished as a separate group of characters here. The troupe of amateur actors, often named as mechanicals in the play, makes up a third group. They are Peter Quince, Nick Bottom, Francis Flute, Tom Snout, Snug and Robin Starveling. The fairies constitute the fourth and final group.

There are several kinds of fairies in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Oberon and Titania are king and queen of the fairies being the two main fairy characters. Puck is another kind of character altogether, but a very central one in the plot as a whole. Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Mote and Mustardseed are four fairies attending Titania. In addition, there are other attendant fairies, without having distinct roles to play.

The many characters and their important share in the comedy as a whole set this play apart from many others. As Huston has pointed out: 'In a sense everyone in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a minor character, whose importance derives from the use to which he is put by the playwright'. (1981:95) All of the characters have their function in the development of the plot. The mentioned groups of characters also form different constellations, which in turn have their position in the turn of events. The fact that there are few, if any, protagonists, but rather groups of characters, gives these ensembles more attention and focus.

In many ways, the supernaturals, namely the fairies, can be said to be the group of characters unifying the plot. They are central to the beginning and the end of the play and they control many of the surprising turn of events in the unrealistic realm of the woodlands. King Oberon and Queen Titania who are involved in a power struggle and both have their own agenda, are surrounded by their attending fairies. Puck aids Oberon while Titania has her quartet of fairies and in addition, the 'fairy choir'. When the fairy

world meets the group of young lovers and the troupe of mechanicals, they intervene, and cause a surprising turn of events. But as it is a romance comedy, all ends well. As Hussey puts it: 'With everybody fulfilling his own purposes and obsessed with his own sphere, man laughs, the cosmos dances and a love-ritual play is complete'.

3. A Study of the Fairy Characters, Text Analysis

3.1. The Fairies

Where do Shakespeare's fairy characters come from? They cannot be said to come from one source alone. Rather, they seem to be influenced by numeral ideas, recollections and fairytales. The shaping process is formed through a myriad of creative inspiration:

There they stand, clearly outlined in the moonlight, shapely, attractive, positive little creatures, but behind them, stretching back and back into the darkness, are innumerable forms, ill-defined, shifting, transitory, northern elves, haunters of burial mounds, Greek nymphs of standing lakes and groves, witches, fates, norns, gnomes, and hobgoblins of the folk, medieval fairy kings and queens, all the thoughts and fancies of generations, crossing and re-crossing, branching off, combining, coalescing. (Welsford in Lerner 1967:108)

This shows that Shakespeare's fairies are his own creation, but that they are strongly influenced by all related mythological characters that were available as inspiration.

Barber (1972:145) explains that Shakespeare's fairies are 'creatures of pastoral, varied by folk superstitions so as to make a new sort of arcadia.' The pastoral life of the shepherd has given inspiration to the life of the fairies with their singing, dancing, 'vexations and pleasures of love', tending of 'nature's fragile beauties' and the freedom of not only 'place and purse, but of space and time'. (Barber 1972:145) Shakespeare's fairies have become established as a fairy type that has been popular since *A Midsummer*

Night's Dream was written. They have ever since influenced nursery as well as literature and the fairies' general form, as designed by Shakespeare, has been a part of the general consciousness. (Welsford in Lerner 1967:109)

The collective term 'fairies' does not give justification to all the immortal characters in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. There are several different fairy characters and all have their traits, abilities and weaknesses. I will discuss these in more detail later on in this section.

The fairies are central characters that all have an impact on the development of the plot throughout the play. They set the tone at the very beginning, establishing the make-believe world of the woods outside of Athens and painting the mythical scenery. The first level of the play is given in the fairy world and the action taking place introduces the characters effectively.

The Athenian court preparing for a marriage is the play's second level. The characters that are introduced here soon become intermingled with the fairy world and the fairies' actions then have an impact on them. After much confusion, comedy and intervention from the fairies, their stay in the woods matures them and when they return they are all ready for marriage.

The third world of the play consists of the company of play-actors. They practice their play *Pyramus and Thisbe*⁵ in the woods. This makes them another tempting target for the

⁵ The play-within-a-play is seen, among other things, as a satire of Shakespeare's own *Romeo and Juliet*. The mechanicals too are portrayed as a parody of an actor troupe. (Hussey 1971:80)

fairies' humorous mischief. Bottom, in particular, becomes a victim of Puck's practical jokes.

As the play draws to a close, all is well and all the happy couples are reunited and married in a festive ceremony. The fairies are also central in this final section of the play. The fairies sing, dance and bless the union. The very last words of the play are spoken by Puck, giving him prominence at the very last minute, letting him address the audience and give them an apology, explanation and a possible interpretation of the turn of events:

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, - and all is mended, -
That you have but slumber'd here
While these visions did appear. V,1: 399-402⁶

It is evident that in Shakespeare's play *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the fairies are diverse and central characters to the play as a whole. They are present throughout the play in some form or other and their supernatural power give them the means to affect the cause of events in a surprising and unrealistic way, thus making them a central force in the plot development.

In classical Athenian tragedy all central characters are of high social status like princes, queens and military heroes. Aristotle's assumption was that it was only the people of rank that would attract empathy, because the superheroes and god's were too unlike us to attract that kind of emotion in the audience. In Shakespeare's plays the characters are

⁶ *A Midsummer Night's Dream* edited by Paster, 1999. This edition is used for reference throughout the thesis to maintain consistency. Other editions are only used as secondary reference.

of a much wider social range. However, the comical characters tend to be of a much lower class. (Wallis 2002:36)

It is often suggested that Renaissance dramatists were thinking, consciously or not, about the whole social fabric because society was changing so rapidly. It is also sometimes suggested that this was a time of increased democratic feeling. (Wallis 2002:36)

We can see this in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The citizens and the mechanicals, and Bottom in particular, are presented as lower class, thus giving the wide social range in contrast with the prominent people of Athens. At the same time, the acting troupe is made up of comical figures. However, I find it interesting to note that because of the magical intervention of the fairies, none of the higher-ranking characters seem to avoid the comical aspect. This is of course to be expected in a romance comedy, but it is interesting that the ridicule is not reserved for the lower ranking parts in the ensemble.

The fairy characters are the main focus of this thesis. In order to analyse the characters in further detail, I find it relevant to look at some important views on character in general. There are three central aspects of dramatic character: character conception, plot function and formal function. (Wallis 2002:16) Character conception deals with the way in which the character is conceived. It spans from stereotype, all the way to psychological complexity. Plot function addresses the question of how the character serves the plot and develops the plot because of his or her function. The third aspect, formal function, deals with the way the play 'speaks' to its audience, namely the rhetorical function. The theatrical communication is the formal function, such as narrators, confidantes and foils. (Wallis 2002:16-18) I will use these main aspects to map out the fairy characters and discuss their role in the play.

3.2 Oberon and Titania, the Fairy King and Queen

Oberon is the fairy king. He is the most powerful character in the fairy world. Titania is the queen of the fairies, and her power and high rank as queen is also apparent. Their authority is established as soon as they enter the stage in act II, scene 1. Oberon enters with his train of fairies, Titania with hers. They enter from separate doors and it is clear that they are in conflict, as Titania speaks:

What, jealous Oberon? Fairies, skip hence.

I have forsworn his bed and company.

Oberon: Tarry, rash, wanton. Am I not thy Lord?

Titania: Then I must be thy lady; II,1:61-64

They are quarrelling over jealousy and power. 'Titania, far from remaining chastely aloof, engages in a struggle of domestic power with Oberon'. (Patterson in Smith 2004:223) The effect of this has created natural disasters. Their power struggle has had an impact on their environment. The quarrel between them continues and Oberon seeks to torment Titania for her insubordination. He uses magic drops to make her fall in love with the first creature she sees when she wakes up from sleeping in the woods. But Titania is not only a victim. She has opposed Oberon and even when she dotes upon Bottom, she attempts to make him a passive object. He is tied in her arms and surrounded by her fairies who can attend him in order to reduce him to inaction. (Huston 1981: 106)

The tyrannous power of love as it is exercised by the fairy queen may be subtle and pleasurable, but its ultimate aim is still destructive: it seeks to obliterate the

identity of the loved one as an other and to make him merely an object. (Huston 1981:107)

Titania's behaviour in this situation can be seen as a result of the way her and Oberon's relationship as King and Queen functions. She seeks dominance and power because that is the way in which Oberon and Titania relate to each other. They seek to dominate over the other in some way or another. It seems to be their little game, but it must also be a part of the very nature of their relationship.

As I see it, Titania and Oberon's quarrel establishes their character conception from the moment they enter the stage. Their psychological power struggle reflects their complexity as characters and gives a basis and reason for their behaviour later in the play. Oberon is obsessed with being the dominant master and seeks to control the cause of action for the other characters involved. 'Oberon conceives and directs two very different romantic comedies in the woods.' (Huston 1981:111) Aided by Puck, Oberon interferes in the relationships of the young lovers and makes Titania dote upon Bottom. His pleasure in being the mastermind behind these comic confusions is evident and supports the notion of him being a complex, but rather selfish and immature character. As the director of the comedies, as Huston calls it, Oberon also serves an important function in furthering the development of the comic plot and placing Titania in the middle of a comic situation without her being aware of the fact.

In *Shakespeare's Early Comedies* (1993:178) Sorelius points out that there is a close link between the Greek gods in the antique fables and the Fairy King and Queen in the play: 'Titania and her King are in fact more god-like than elfish. Like Jupiter (and other gods) Oberon has the power to change the weather (...) The royal fairy couple are also like the

pagan gods proper in sharing their amatory weaknesses with the human kind.' (Sorelius 1993:178-179) This similarity sets them apart from the other fairy characters and it also heightens the impression they give of power and sovereignty.

Oberon uses his words as a means of marking his authority. He seeks to establish himself as the one with the power and control through the way he commands others. The only one who speaks up against him is Titania. The 'gorgeous and exotic-sounding verses of Titania' (Huston 1981:111) show that Titania uses her abundant and elegant language to dominate and overrule both Oberon and Bottom. This can be seen as a more feminine approach to language as power. Both Oberon and Titania act in accordance with their language, which makes them come alive as characters to a greater extent.

3.3. The Attending Puck

Both Titania and Oberon have fairies waiting on them. Their trains are, however, quite different. Puck, who serves Oberon throughout the play, is also named Robin Goodfellow a character with deep roots in folklore. He is a fairy of another type than Oberon, Titania and the other fairies.

Writers have explained Shakespeare's Puck as a deposit of English folklore, but an investigation shows this to be an imperfect understanding of the play. Puck or Robin Goodfellow was a gross creature who danced in magic circles with witches for concubines and not with tiny inch-high spirits called Mustardseed or Cobweb. (Hussey 1971:81)

But Shakespeare's Puck is not an evil character connected to witches. I rather find this to be interesting information concerning the origin of the name of the character without reading too much into the interpretation of Puck in Shakespeare's play. He is a

blundering Cupid, who makes many mistakes, aids Oberon but also creates comedy and mischief. Puck's most important function is to drive the plot forward and being central to the important happy ending of the comedy. (Hussey 1971:81) Sorelius also points out that Puck 'has an obvious affinity with Cupid', but he also focuses on 'Puck's Mercurian quality'. He is a messenger, and acts on the orders of his superior, just like Mercury, the messenger of the gods. Cupid is a character that 'often acted on his own accord.'

(Sorelius 1993:180) Puck is the play's go-between; 'His task is to be the minister for higher powers, to be the immaculate observer's dutiful executant, the profane and comic instrument of an unlikely providence'. (Hollindale 1992:107)

Puck also fulfils a formal function by explaining the action and serving as a narrator, especially in the very end of the play where he comments on the events that have passed during 'the dream'.⁷ Puck's language reflects the nature of his character. The 'swift and skipping rhymes of Puck' (Huston 1981:111) can be seen as a manifestation of his movement and stage appearance. It is natural that the character must live up to the expectations of his oratory skills.

3.4. The Train of Fairies

Titania's four attending fairies; Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Mote and Mustardseed belong to a different category. In addition there are a number of fairies attending, without having distinct named roles to play. They all follow Titania obligingly seeking to protect and support her as much as possible. In act II, scene 2, the fairies sing and dance to protect their queen when she is going to sleep:

⁷ See footnote 7

Never harm

Nor spell nor charm

Come our lovely lady nigh.

So good night, with lullaby. II,2:27-30

But as soon as the train of fairies exit, Oberon enters to drug the sleeping Titania.

‘Titania’s fairies sing her to sleep with promises of a rest uninterrupted by wicked spells or vile creatures, but their incantatory magic fails to keep either Oberon’s love-juice or Bottom’s ass head away from the fairy queen.’ (Huston 1981:120) Their efforts do not seem to go a long way when encountering the forces of Oberon and Puck and are more a display of their characteristics as fairies, rather than a proof of their power and abilities. Contrary to Puck, the minor fairies attending Titania are unrebelling spirits. They are like orderly, responsible and well brought up children. They are also very much alike and act together on every occasion. When they speak they utter as little as possible. Children often play the attending fairies and boys played them at public performances by Shakespeare’s company. (Hollindale 1992:103) Their most important characteristic is their uniformity in form of their physical appearance and cannot be described as complex characters. They do, however, have an important formal and plot function as chorus and their visual presence on stage is important to the play as a whole. Their ceremonial singing and dancing gives the audience and important insight into the world of the fairies.

3.5. Study of Text Selections

The texts that I have selected for further study come from acts II and V⁸ and share in common that they are sung parts in Mendelssohn and Britten's compositions and thus they are very suitable to compare the characters both literally and musically. It has been important to me to find sections with as many common points of reference as possible. I believe that the comparison between the works will benefit greatly from this.

3.5.1. Act II, scene 2

Act II, scene 2 is set in the woods. Titania enters the stage with her train of fairies. Oberon and Puck has just plotted against Titania and decided to use the flower juice to make her fall in love with the first creature she sees. The action begins when Titania commands her fairies to go about their tasks:

Come, now a roundel and a fairy song;
Then, for the third part of a minute, hence;
Some to kill cankers in the muskrose buds;
Some war with rere mice for their leathern wings,
To make my small elves coats; and some keep back
The clamorous owl, that nightly hoots and wonders
At our quaint spirits. Sing me now asleep;
Then to your offices, and let me rest. II, 2: 1-8

These lines show clearly the relationship between the Fairy Queen and her train of elves. She commands them and encourages them. They all have their duties and know their

⁸ See appendix 3

place. There is no end rhyme as it is blank verse. There is an iambic pentameter in this speech that gives it a clear structure.

The very first word, 'come', shows her commanding manner by the use of the imperative form. It is appropriate for them all to dance in a ring and sing. Titania also mentions what kind of song and dance that is required, namely a roundel. It refers to a circular composition and in *The Art of English Poesie* (1589) George Puttenham defines the roundel as a structure that should be similar to the world or the universe, illustrating something without beginning or end. This is a reference to God and eternity. (Eriksen in Cullen 1981:206) This short utterance of song and dance is important in that it reflects some of what the fairies normally do. It can be assumed that they often dance and sing together.

The next sentence describes the fairies' quickness: 'for the third part of a minute'. They move swiftly at their Queen's command. Then she goes on to describe the different tasks. Some are to kill caterpillars, others have to make coats out of bat's wings, and others have to keep the owl away. They all seem to know their duties: 'then to your offices'. This testifies to an orderly rank in the fairy kingdom. The repetition of the word 'some' three times also supports the roundel structure. The speech begins with movement and action: they all dance together; the fairies are on common ground and equal terms. The commands of Titania shows the distinction of rank and at the very last line she is the one who can rest while they have to get on with their duties. The second phrase and the second to last phrase both have something in common; it describes two aspects of the fairies' swift, light and dainty character. As mentioned 'the third part of a minute' refers to their quick movements. 'Quaint spirits' also describes a kind of speedy

character trait. This, too, frames the speech and adds to its prominent balanced structure of five parts.

The mention in the first phrase of fairy song is again repeated towards the end of the speech related to sleep. 'Sing me now asleep', Titania commands. This explains that fairy song is a kind of music that is calming, soothing and suitable as a lullaby. The indefinite nature of the roundel pattern seems very suitable in this context. These indications give our imagination some guidelines. Most people have some idea of what kind of music that can be suitable as a bedtime serenade. Shakespeare establishes some principles related to music that must be followed in incidental music. It is interesting to see, later on, how Mendelssohn and Britten realize this into action.

Then the fairies sing their song:

FIRST FAIRY:

You spotted snakes, with double tongue,

Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;

Newts and blindworms do no wrong;

Come not near our fairy queen:

CHORUS:

Philomel, with melody,

Sing in our sweet lullaby:

Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby:

Never harm, nor spell, nor charm,

Come our lovely lady nigh;

So good night, with lullaby.

FIRST FAIRY:

Weaving spiders, come not here;

Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence!

Beetles black, approach not near;

Worm nor snail do no offence.

CHORUS:

Philomel with melody, &c.

SECOND FAIRY:

Hence away! Now all is well.

One, aloof, stand sentinel. II, 2:9-32

The characters named First Fairy and Second Fairy perform the verses and the train of fairies joins in the chorus. It is clearly structured as a song, with a characteristic chorus that appears twice. It has few words and repetitive phrases. There is a consistency in the rhymes that shows a clear structure. End rhymes are present all through the fairy song. The rhymes are frequent and obvious, illustrating the plain, comforting structure of a lullaby.

The intention of the song is first of all to sing the Fairy Queen to sleep. The lullaby has a calming and comforting purpose. In addition, it is evident that there is some kind of

protective spell present in the lullaby. The fairies wish an undisturbed sleep for their Queen. Hollindale explains that the lullaby is an exorcism, intended to protect Titania. 'But the exorcism is powerless against the intrusive spells of Oberon, who is there as soon as the coast is clear with his love juice' (Hollindale 1992:104) The stated intention is protective and sleep inducing, but the power of the fairies cannot fully protect Titania. The power of Oberon seems to win in this situation, but this is not as a permanent solution. The question of fairy power is thematically important in this scene. In a wider sense, it touches the questions of power in general. What lies within one's own power and what lies beyond the reach of human reason and understanding? The question of power can be seen as a discussion of a universal question, without giving a distinct answer. (Hollindale 1992:104-105)

The way in which the fairy song casts a protective spell is interesting. I find that Shakespeare uses the solo fairy parts in many ways as a contrast to the fairy chorus. There are some interesting aspects that make them distinctly different. First of all, the solo verses of the First Fairy are focused on naming specific creatures that the Queen must be protected from. Poisonous reptiles, insects and other forest creatures are named and described. They are all commanded to stay away and to not harm the Fairy Queen in her sleep.

It is interesting to note that the same imperative form used by Titania in her previous speech is used by the First Fairy to command the vile creatures. Their performative speech acts are similar in many respects. Both the commanding words 'come' and 'hence' are repeated. Rank is again illustrated clearly. The fairies want to be in command over these harmful creatures through the spell of their song. This order seems to be

maintained. It is not these who harm Titania, but a power beyond the command of the attending fairies; namely Oberon and his love juice.

The chorus performed by all the attending fairies is of a different nature. The language is much more positive and affirmative. They invite the nightingale 'philomel'⁹ to join in their lullaby. However, they do utter the phrase 'never harm, nor spell, nor charm, come our lovely lady nigh'. This shows that they wish Titania to be protected not only from vile creatures, but also from magic forces. Their wish is not fulfilled, as Oberon enters right after their song is finished. The wish of the dancing fairy train cannot be granted, but the commanding words of the solo fairy seem to be more powerful.

The distinction between the solo part and the chorus is also shown through other means. I find that the very sound quality of the spoken language differs. The musical and poetic phrasing of Shakespeare's words varies. The solo part is full of sharp consonants, giving them a harsher and more direct sound quality when the words are uttered. Alliteration with consonants can also be found several places, enforcing this effect. Examples like 'long-legged', 'beetles black' and 'not near' illustrated this. In 'spotted snakes' the s is repeated, and the s sound seems to be repeated throughout: 'spiders', 'hence', 'spinners', 'offence'. The hissing quality of the s sound encourages imagery of snake-like creatures. It is easy to perform the two solo verses with spitting of consonants and emphasis on alliteration and rhymes in order to support the incantatory tone of the text itself.

⁹ Philomel is a name for the nightingale. 'Philomela, daughter of King Pandion, was transformed into a nightingale, according to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 6, after she had been raped by her sister Procne's husband Tereus' (Paster 1999:35)

As a clear contrast to this consonant-emphasized solo part, the fairy chorus is full of harmonious vowel sounds. Alliteration with different vowels seems to be the main musical quality of the chorus words. 'Philomel with melody, sing in our sweet lullaby' is a phrase full of soft and changing vowel sounds. The consonants are as soft as possible and the l is repeated throughout the chorus. The liquid quality of the l is essential to the elegant flow of these lines. It is possible to perform these phrases with a soft movement of lips and a round vowel quality that is comforting. Vowels are grateful sounds for singers and support a harmonious and soft sound that adds to the characters interpretation of the attending fairies as a group. They appear to be soft, gentle, harmonious and light creatures with a positive spirit. It is only the named characters that seem to have more power in themselves, but even these clearly know their place and rank in the fairy kingdom. This musical use of words, rhyme and sounds is important in Shakespeare's writing in his presentation of the fairies and their lullaby. I find it interesting to see how Mendelssohn and Britten respond to this in their compositions, later on in my thesis.

When the fairies conclude their second chorus, Titania sleeps. Their task of singing her to sleep being completed, they are off to their duties. The Second Fairy commands them to move on: 'Hence away! Now all is well. One aloof stand sentinel'. It is confirmed that all is well, although, the appearance of Oberon shortly thereafter, proves this not to be the case. All the fairies leave, apart from one sentinel who is supposed to guard Titania while she rests. It is not commented on what happens to this one fairy guard, it probably falls asleep, but it is evident that Oberon has no trouble getting past this fairy on its post. The fact that the Second Fairy states 'now all is well' signifies the fairies' faith in their own protective forces. They seem to be confident that they have done their duties, and

as long as they fulfill their task, all is supposed to be in order. However, since Oberon and Titania are having a dispute and power struggle, all is not in order in the fairy kingdom. The fairies' power cannot protect Titania from the forces of fairy land, in this case, the actions of the fairy King. This 'civil war' illustrates that it is not sufficient to protect oneself from outside forces when the threat comes from within. Shakespeare thus brings this question forward without making it too evident. It adds to the layers of interpretation in the play and gives the inner dynamic of the plot development more depth.

When Oberon enters he speaks to the sleeping Titania while squeezing the flower on Titania's eyelids. His speech serves a clear function. He describes the power of the love juice and explains the effect he wants it to have on Titania. As it can be seen as a spell, aiding the magic of the flower, a clear structure and form of the speech is to be expected. The end rhymes are clear and apparent. The rhythmical pattern is formed with seven syllables in a trochaic verse. Only two different rhymes are used. In the first three lines 'wake', 'take' and 'sake' rhyme. In the last five lines 'bear', 'hair', 'appear', 'dear' and 'near' all rhyme perfectly well. In his book *The Building in the text* Eriksen (2001) presents and discusses in great detail the structure in, among others, Renaissance texts. Shakespeare is used as an example when presenting examples of such structures. Eriksen explains the term topomorphology¹⁰ and uses a topomorphological analysis in order to identify 'spatial relationships' and to single out words and phrases that are placed in the text in order to create structure and place emphasis on certain essential

¹⁰ The analytical method that examines the distribution of rhetorical markers to clarify the structure and plot of a text I have termed *topomorphology*. The method entails studying the design and distribution of topoi (that is "places" and "themes") within the structure (*morphê*) of a text - hence *topomorphology*. (Eriksen, 2001:xiv)

aspects. Words, expressions or parts of the text are distributed to create a form that can be compared to an architectural structure. This kind of harmony is not unusual in Renaissance texts, but is not always noticed and discussed. I find that this kind of analysis can be applied to Oberon's speech on this occasion:

OBERON

What thou seest when thou dost wake,

Do it for thy true-love sake;

Love and languish for his sake;

Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,

Pard, or boar with bristled hair,

In thy eye that shall appear

When thou wak'st, it is thy dear;

Wake when some vile thing is near. II, 2:33-40

I have used coloured text and different coloured markers to identify interesting aspects in Oberon's speech. These eight lines are, as mentioned, grouped 3 plus 5 when it comes to end rhymes. However, I find that the topic itself, the content of the stanza, is grouped differently. The first three and the last three lines are similar in many respects. They are therefore marked with red letters. The fourth and fifth lines both name several different creatures that might be (un)suitable as objects of Titania's spell-ridden love. Wild beasts and creatures that might be found in a deep forest are mentioned. Consonant repetition of labial plosives as 'bear', 'pard', 'boar' and 'bristled' all create a rhythmic feel to these two lines and they are suitable to be spitted out of Oberon's mouth.

As mentioned, the first and last three lines reveal similar content. In the first and sixth line, the words 'thou seest' and 'thy eye' are emphasized with a yellow marker. They have the same place in the phrase and refer to the same thing: Titania's vision. The blue phrases are marked for the same reason. They are in the same positions, end of second line within its unit and refer both to the love that Titania will hold for the creature she first sees. The essential word 'wake' that ends the very first line, is repeated at the beginning of the last line. The word is the seventh word in the speech and is also the seventh to last word. This unifies the speech and creates harmony. The essential action 'wake' is the very thing that frames the text.

In addition, the last two lines contain some interesting oppositions:

When thou wak'st, it is thy dear;

Wake when some vile thing is near. II, 2:39-40

'Wak'st' and 'wake' is again central, and marked in green. This is the essential action that must take place in order for the magic to have its effect. There is also a clear contrast that is marked with turquoise: 'thy dear', which normally signifies something sweet and endearing is paired up with 'vile thing', associated with something repulsive. This is paradoxical and gives a chiaroscuro effect: the light set against the dark, a parallelism with an antithesis. The word 'dear' can also be seen as a pun on the animal, adding another layer of possible interpretation.

The structure of the speech is therefore focused on three central terms: wake, vision and love. These are repeated and frame the text clearly. I find that Shakespeare has used this structure in order to illustrate the core of the stanza by giving it a strict compositional form.

The discussed excerpt from the beginning of the second scene in act II gives a lot of information about the nature of the fairy characters and is well suited as textual reference for the musical analyses.

3.5.2. Act V, scene 1

I have also chosen to look at a passage from the end of the play: the last part of act V, scene 1. Titania and Oberon, King and Queen of Fairies, enter together with their train. They are now reconciled and they stand together as the regents of the fairy kingdom. Their authority over the elves is apparent and each have distinct roles to play. There is no power struggle present, but the responsibility of each is divided. Oberon is in charge and instructs the fairies. He begins by calling forth 'every elf and fairy sprite'. They are to repeat his commands by singing and performing a fairy dance.

OBERON:

Through the house give **glimmering light**,

By the dead and drowsy fire;

Every elf and fairy sprite

Hop as light as bird from brier;

And this ditty, after me,

Sing and dance it **trippingly**. V,1:367-372

The six lines are rhythmical and uncomplicated, with trochaic tetrameter. The end rhymes are in a pattern of ABABCC. The words marked in yellow all signify the 'light' character of the fairies. It is also a pun on the word light, as it means both illumination

and quick, easy movement. This clearly frames the text and gives attention to the nature of the elves and fairies. The use of consonant alliteration is also evident in this section. G, d, and b are repeated in phrases like 'give glimmering', 'dead and drowsy', and 'bird from brier'.

Titania then takes over and she is clearly in charge of fairy dance and singing. She commands them with authority to rehearse and know their song and dance by heart, through repetition:

TITANIA:

First, rehearse your **song** by rote,

To each word a **warbling note**;

Hand in hand, with fairy grace,

Will we **sing**, and bless this place. V,1:373-376

Titania continues in the same verse as Oberon, but her rhymes are AABB. Her four lines are also framed by the repetition of a central action; the singing. 'Song' and 'sing' clearly refers to the same, but 'warbling note' also refers to singing: it means to sing with a trill, a quick tremor of the voice. Thus, the act of singing is framing the speech of Titania. The words 'song' and 'sing' are also placed identically, but opposite: the fifth syllable in the beginning and the fifth to last at the end. This clear symmetry adds to the harmony and control that is demonstrated by Titania in this situation. The fairies are told to 'rehearse their song by rote'. Rote refers to a circular action and can mean 'wheel'. This is again a mention of a roundel pattern, like the previous song Titania requested from the fairies in act II, 2. It seems that this infinite and repetitive style is a trait of fairy song.

Oberon then takes over and uses his power as Fairy King to bless the house in Athens, the couples that have just been married and their fertility:

OBERON:

Now, until the break of day,

Through this house each fairy stray,

To the best bride-bed will we,

Which by us shall blessed be;

And the issue there create

Ever shall be fortunate.

So shall all the couples three

Ever true in loving be;

And the blots of Nature's hand

Shall not in their issue stand:

Never mole, hare-lip, nor scar,

Nor mark prodigious, such as are

Despised in nativity,

Shall upon their children be.

With this field-dew consecrate,

Every fairy take his gate;

And each several chamber bless,

Through this palace, with sweet peace;

E'er shall it in safety rest,

And the owner of it blest.

Trip away: make no stay:

Meet me all by break of day. V,1:377-398

The rest of Oberon's speech consists of 22 lines. It is dominated by trochaic tetrameter with rhyming couplets. It is mostly written in trochaic verse with seven syllables and end rhymes with AABB as consistent pattern, apart from 'trip away: make no stay' which consists of six syllables and has a rhyme between 'away' and 'stay' within the line.¹¹

Different coloured markers illustrate the pairs. 'Break of day' is mentioned in the first and last line. This frames the whole speech and gives the time limit for all the events that must take place during the night. All the tasks of the fairies must be completed within the time limit given: they must finish before the break of day. Shakespeare uses these limitations of time to limit the speech of Oberon. Within this limit several rituals, and tasks must be performed.

The second line and the second to last line also convey the same message: the fairies cannot stay with Oberon, but must spread about the house in order to fulfil their tasks. Oberon begins and ends with this command after stating the time limit, as previously mentioned. Pink and turquoise have been used to mark similar words in the red text parts. The pink ones refer to blessing and the turquoise refer to bed and rest. These occur in the opposite order in the beginning and the end. Through this pattern, it is apparent that the whole speech is framed by repetition of central themes. This gives unity and clear boundaries to the words that are spoken. It also testifies to the power of Oberon.

¹¹ It can be discussed whether this line should be divided into two separate lines with three syllables in each and thus creating end rhyme and giving the speech 23 lines instead of 22. But it is written in one line in Paster's edition as well as in the Oxford edition edited by Holland 1994 and the Cambridge edition edited by Foakes 2003.

I have again used colours to mark interesting connections within the speech. First of all, I have used text colour to connect the different parts. The red text signifies the beginning and the end. The topic of these lines is almost the same, and a lot of terms are repeated to create a pattern. All of these repetitions create connections or 'circles' in the speech. The circular form creates unity and a complete structure, which gives a structural analogy to the world, or universe, in perfect harmony. 'The comparison of the artist's creation of harmony with God's creation of the universe was a commonplace'. (Attridge 1979:115) Shakespeare also uses a harmonious and circular structure in his poem 'The Phoenix and the Turtle'. (Eriksen in Cullen 1981:205-206)

The text written in blue is concerned with love, blessing, fortune and peace. The fairies are to use field dew and spread it in the house in order to secure the bliss. The focus is on stating the positive forces and securing them. The green text is a contrast to this. Here Oberon commands negative and harmful forces of nature to stay away. This is mainly related to fertility and reproduction: their children must be healthy and without 'the blots of Nature's hand'. The fact that these important phrases are placed in the middle of Oberon's speech is in keeping with tradition. 'It is in full agreement with the Renaissance literary convention of placing the thematically most significant *topos* at a textual center'. (Eriksen in Cullen 1981:199)

The style used by Oberon in this speech is also significant. The five part, or 'act', structure is known as 'strong speech', used to emphasize an important message. The centre of this speech is concerned with the blessing and protection of the marriage and the children to come, a noble issue related to high rank.

In mediaeval and Renaissance society, the high style was the language of court diplomacy, the form of speech appropriately used by and to the nobility, and preserving their stylistic monopoly was often seen as a necessary part of maintaining existing social hierarchies. (Adamson 2001:32)

The use of high style was important also in Shakespeare's plays. Cicero's *Orator* was an important reason for this focus and Shakespeare is thought to have read this work in the mid- 1590s. (Adamson 2001:33) there are some linguistic forms that identify the grand style, according to Adamson. (2001:35-44) The use of direct address, called 'apostrophe' is present in Oberon's speech. Another trait is the use of 'periodos', the delaying of the verb to give it maximum impact. This can be seen in the very first sentence: 'Now, until the break of day, through this house each fairy stray.' (V, 1:377-378) It is also repeated as a pattern throughout the speech. The use of amplifications by the use of synonyms to restate important words or phrases is also present, as I have illustrated through the use of colour in the text. The rhetorical figure 'paradiastole' has a similar effect; it restates important phrases in other terms. The use of alliteration is also a trait of grand style. It can be found in this speech, 'best bride-bed', but is not a prominent feature. It is evident that Shakespeare has used these forms to strengthen the authority of Oberon. He addresses nobility and the use of high style is also in keeping with respect of rank order.

The clear structure and harmony within the limitations of Oberon's speech support the order and harmony that is restored at the very end of the play. Unity and happiness is restored and the fairies support this and maintain it through their actions. This harmonious ending is enforced through Oberon, Titania and all the fairies coming forth as one kingdom standing together. They do no longer have opposing agendas and forces within their society and balance is restored.

Puck speaks the last words of the play. Oberon, Titania and their train leave the stage and Puck is left alone. He directs his speech to the audience and takes on the role of the narrator. He breaks the illusion of 'the dream'. The fairy tale world of the play is left behind and Puck seeks to explain and excuse, but also to justify and defend the events that have passed:

PUCK:

If we shadows have offended,

Think but this, - and all is mended, -

That you have but slumber'd here

While these visions did appear.

And this weak and idle theme,

No more yielding but a dream,

Gentles, do not reprehend;

If you pardon, we will mend.

And, as I am an honest Puck,

If we have unearned luck

Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,

We will make amends ere long;

Else the Puck a liar call:

So, good night unto you all.

Give me your hands, if we be friends,

And Robin shall restore amends. V,1:399-414

The speech consists of 16 lines, all with a consistent AABB end rhyme form. The first two and last two lines have eight syllables, the rest are made up of seven syllables in trochaic

verse. The trochaic tetrameter in rhyming couplets is again used in a speech. The last two lines are in iambic verse, separating them from the previous fourteen.

The colours in Puck's speech mark the different topics that are essential to his speech. The red text is the most important part of the speech. All these phrases are concerned with apologising and begging pardon. This is repeated four times in order to emphasize the polite manner in which Puck addresses the audience. He is clear on how the audience can show their appreciation: 'give me your hands'. The applause at the end is an affirmative action stating that all is accepted and forgiven. The manner of address shows that Puck regards the audience as 'gentles'. The audience's position is a place of empowerment. 'Thus is the audience's silent hearing and judging of the play's complex manner of address situated as a speech posture not of unimportance but rather of privilege'. (Adamson 2001:142) The three expressions with yellow marker are closely linked to the same thematic content. The beginning, middle and end of Puck's address are framed with the central topic: offence, pardon and restoration.

The green text is concerned with explaining what has happened on stage. Puck uses 'the dream' as an excuse. It is not the truth; it has only been a dream and therefore, take no offence. The blue text is singled out because Puck refers to himself very openly. He is the one who will make things right, he takes credit for the restored order and uses his own honesty as verification. He calls himself 'honest Puck' and states that he is to be trusted, unless you think of him as a liar. The expressions are marked with pink in the text. This ambiguity can perhaps leave the audience a bit puzzled. What does Puck mean? He has shown his character throughout the play, but what kind of character has he proven himself to be? Is he trustworthy? He is clearly a prankster and delights in comic

confusion, but is he dishonest? I find that this is a question that is left for each individual to answer.

Throughout the play, Puck has often taken on the role of a spectator. He is the play's 'first audience on-stage' He intervenes when he sees it fit, and has a diverse role as intermediary. (Hollindale 1992:108) Because Puck takes on various roles throughout the play, he is accepted as a performer of the epilogue, addressing the audience directly. The various forms and manners of speech that Puck displays, all supports his complexity as a character and this is reflected through the writing of Shakespeare. '...they reflect the very wide range of tones, moods and occasions that the role of Puck must verbally (and physically) encompass.' (Hollindale 1992:109)

Through this presentation and discussion of the fairies I have identified and described some central traits that add to the interpretation of them as characters. The analysis of the selected passages has singled out some important features that I will seek to investigate further in the music of both Mendelssohn and Britten. The patterns in the poetry of Shakespeare set a solid ground for compositional techniques. In the next section I will study to what extent the music will be able to give different perspectives on the fairies or develop the characters further.

4. Mendelssohn's Music: an Analysis of the Coherence between Text and Music

4.1. Mendelssohn's A Midsummer Night's Dream

Mendelssohn's incidental music for Shakespeare's play is widely known, and because of his well renowned Wedding March, this part of the music has taken on a life of its own. The music is arranged as an orchestral suite, and is more often performed today in

concert than as music for the stage. There are, however differences between the two works of music, and I will use the incidental music in my analysis.

Mendelssohn wrote for the stage, but never turned it into an opera. The music is not intended as mainly a musical staging, but as music for the theatrical stage. Adding life, depth and imagination to the play itself. Philip Radcliffe writes about Mendelssohn:

When writing for the stage he was certainly capable of portraying atmosphere with wonderful imaginativeness, as in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* music, and some of *Lorely*¹², but it is doubtful whether he had either the emotional range or the power of character-drawing to become a really great writer of opera.

(Radcliffe 1976:14)

This can perhaps be seen as a possible answer to the question of why Mendelssohn never developed his incidental music into a full-bodied opera.

In 1842, the King of Prussia commissioned music from Mendelssohn for the plays *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Tempest*, Racine's *Athalie* and Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was to be performed in Berlin in September 1843, but the music was not ready. It was first performed in Potsdam at 18th of October and several times subsequently in Berlin. The music was enthusiastically praised on every occasion, even though the play was criticised. People at the time did not appreciate the 'peculiar blend of poetry and humour so characteristic of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.' (Radcliffe 1976:50-51) But Mendelssohn appreciated the layers of action and diversity of characters and was able to express this through his music.

¹² *Lorely* is Mendelssohn's unfinished opera (Radcliffe 1976:149)

4.2 Fairies and the Use of Voice

One of the most interesting aspects of Mendelssohn's incidental music, is that he has chosen to let the fairies be sung characters, not only spoken. Even though it is a theatrical performance, the operatic aspect comes into play when the fairies attending perform both solo parts and sing together as a chorus. Parts of spoken passages by Titania, Oberon and Puck are accompanied by music, giving them a closer relation to the orchestral accompaniment than to the human characters. By linking the music so closely with all the fairies, Mendelssohn gives them a distinct authority on stage that set them apart from the rest of *dramatis personae*.

Mendelssohn begins his overture with 4 ethereal chords in the string section, as shown in example 1.

Example 1 (IMSLP:3)



They mark the beginning of the dream and the entrance into the fairy world. The floating transparency of the chords open up for what is about to unfold on stage. The rapid vivace movements in the strings that follow after the opening chords also suggest the light, fluttering fairies and the uncertainty of their next move is reflected through the surprising elements in the music. Mendelssohn has chosen to repeat the opening chords at the very end of the last movement, thus marking the exit from fairyland, shown in example 2. The difference is here that Puck recites his well-known last words¹³ while the orchestra accompanies him.

¹³ If we shadows have offended, Think but this, - and all is mended, - That you have but slumber'd here While these visions did appear. And this weak and idle theme, No more yielding but a dream, Gentles, do not reprehend; If you pardon, we will mend. And, as I am an honest Puck, If we have unearned luck Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue, We will make amends ere



Example 2 (IMSLP:73)

This compositional effect gives a delicate frame within which the entire drama can unfold. It invites the audience to be a part of the mythical world of the fairies.

Mendelssohn's music is closely connected with the content of the play. Some places in the incidental music the spoken passages are accompanied by the orchestra. This is mainly in connection with larger vocal passages where there are also sung parts. As mentioned previously, the fairies are the only characters that are directly linked to the music in this manner. There are a few short incidents where the human characters speak in relation to music. Theseus speaks between two chords in one situation and in relation to the funeral march in *Pyramus and Thisbe* a few lines are accompanied by or between music. The train of fairies are the only ones who sing on stage. The first and second fairies have solo parts and their voices are first and second soprano. The fairy choir is also made up of bright voices. Mixed voices are not used, only sopranos and altos. This can be sung by either boys or female voices, but no male voices are intended to be sung throughout the composition. This continues the tradition of fairies being played by boys in Shakespeare's days. At the same time, the fair and light voices of altos and sopranos in the fairy choir add to the quality of the fairy characters themselves. The

long; Else the Puck a liar call: So, good night unto you all. Give me your hands, if we be friends, And Robin shall restore amends. V, 1:399-414

sound of the fairies will be associated with young and innocent voices. Adult female singers normally sing the two solo fairy parts, normally, a soprano and a mezzo-soprano.

I find that the voice fach¹⁴ in themselves are an essential part of the character interpretation. The sound qualities of these types of voices give clear associations and expectations in the audience that clearly adds to the perception of character. It is natural that the solo parts are sung by adult singers, as their voices will be better trained, more resonant and have greater volume. This gives them a natural authority over the young fairy choir and sets them apart from the other fairies attending. As discussed earlier, rank is important in the fairy kingdom and the use of different voice types supports this further.

4.2.1. Act II, scene 2

Mendelssohn has chosen to set music to this section of the play. He begins with a few bars of woodwinds playing a light, moving theme with staccato notes. A few strings join in, but the sound quality of flutes, oboes and clarinets are dominant. It begins in major, but ends in a minor chord. Titania then utters her words accompanied by a single note, leading down a semitone to the next chord. The music then moves swiftly with quick semiquaver triplets in the flute part. The minor key and the constant drive suggested by the triplets give a rushed and hurried sensation that adds mystery and drama to the words of the First Fairy that begins to sing. The melody is characterised by staccato quavers, a few times contrasted by long notes. A triad leading up to a major key marks the entrance of the fairy choir.

¹⁴ (Ger.: 'Compartment, division') ...In an operatic context it denotes the classification of parts – the 'voice-category' – for all opera roles in Ger. opera houses. (Kennedy 2004:239-240)

and the First Fairy joins in a few places. The chorus is repeated, much in the same manner as before.

Towards the end, the First Fairy commands the sentinel to stand guard, and all the other fairies exit the stage. The minor chords again appear with long chords creating suspense, but they soon lead on to light music dominated by strings and woodwinds. The music 'dances' away with short staccato movements and disappears at the same time as the fairies.

Oberon then enters the stage and just a few notes accompany his speech: one note at a time, moving chromatically. This creates suspense and when he leaves, the music moves up with short rising chords, suggesting a light and elegant disappearance. The fact that there are few instruments accompanying him makes the action more secret. He must not wake Titania and he is not to be discovered. Although the music is scarce, it has a great effect in that it lingers on with chords that create expectation in the audience. They wonder what his next words or move will be. He is also led off stage by music, thus underlining the importance of him going away. The tempo and motion in the music also increases as he exits.

4.2.2. Act V, scene 1

The music in the final scene of the play is very similar to the overture. The opening chords previously discussed, lead into this final movement. The music of the overture was composed already in 1826, when Mendelssohn was 17 years old. He uses a lot of material from this composition throughout his incidental music:

Schumann¹⁵ questioned Mendelssohn's heavy reliance on the material of the overture, perhaps most conspicuous in the finale, which revives the elves' music and the coda of the overture, and concludes with the four ethereal wind chords. But throughout the course of the incidental music the familiar motifs of the overture are themselves subjected to a series of fanciful metamorphoses (Todd, Grove music online, 2011)

Mendelssohn did not use this music as pure recycling, but he developed it further and processed the musical motifs into new material. The extensive use of the musical patterns of the overture gives the work itself unity and links the movements together.

Oberon begins his speech as the opening chords are repeated as introduction to the finale. Titania's words are also spoken before the elves begin to sing. The elves repeat the words of Oberon and Titania. The character of the music underlines the mysterious events that will unfold. The fairies are to dance, sing and cast their spells and 'field dew' to protect and bless the house. The 'glimmering light by the dead and drowsy fire' is easy to imagine through the music. The minor key is dominant when the fairies sing. The flowing quavers in the orchestra illustrate swift and light movement and the staccato chords in crochets by the elves and the lower orchestration is a well-balanced contrast. All in all, it urges the fairies and moves them on in their song, dance and important tasks in the house.

Even though the fairies sing in minor and not a major key, like in the lullaby, they still have a characteristic harmony and way of singing. Their child-like voices are

¹⁵ 'Schuman, Robert (1810-1856) Ger. composer, pianist, cond. and critic.' (Kennedy 2004:655)

straightforward and the rhythmical patterns are never advanced. They again sing in triadic harmony, which presents them as a unified whole. The crochet breaks between almost every note, signals urgency, high pulse and to some degree; breathlessness. The text is emphasized though the music. The alliterations and end rhymes comes through clearly because of Mendelssohn's abrupt, but harmonious melodic phrasing. This is shown in example 4.

Example 4 (IMSLP:66)

After the fairies have sung and repeated the words of Oberon, the First Fairy has a solo part. The words of Titania are sung by the solo soprano voice. I feel that these words that are so clearly linked to Titania connects her to the First Fairy. Since Mendelssohn wrote incidental music, it cannot be expected that the actors are trained classical singers. For that reason, Titania cannot be a sung part in Mendelssohn's work. He has solved this by using solo soprano to perform some central lines of Titania's speech in both act II, as mentioned before, and here in the finale movement. The First Fairy is the singing voice of the Fairy Queen, representing her authority and vocal brilliance. The soprano is light, but resonant and singing with positive energy in her melody. In the finale, the solo soprano part is in major key, separating it from the fairy chorus. The same technique used in the lullaby, only this time opposite. The orchestra continues with the same rhythmical pattern, but in major key. The melody is a contrast to the fairy chorus because it has an extensive use of legato lines. The legato signals calmness, order,

sustainability and a surplus of breath and energy. The fairies comment briefly by repeating a few lines, while the solo soprano dominates the whole passage. An excerpt from the beginning of this passage is shown in example 5.

1^{er} Elfe. Solo

Wir - belt mir mit zar - ter Kunst

Example 5 (IMSLP:68)

The fairy chorus takes over again after the First Fairy's solo and a densified version of the first chorus is repeated. It ends in a unison repetition in the chorus, thus underlining their role as 'one voice'.

Oberon then takes over with the final part of his speech. Fermata chords in the orchestra accompany him. The chords are in minor key, with added dissonances to emphasize the text. When he speaks of 'the blots of Nature's hand', he is accompanied by a diminished chord, including the tritone interval, known historically as *diabolus in musica*¹⁶. It is frequently used when describing evil with music. The chords turn into major when he talks of the children that are to be born. The last eight lines of his speech are accompanied by an elegant, slow melody led on by the violins. The harmony is re-established and the authority of his commands is further supported. This theme in the strings accompanying Oberon is shown in example 6:

¹⁶ Interval of augmented 4th which comprises three whole tones, e.g. from F up or down to B... in medieval times its use was prohibited. There was a saying, involving the Hexachord names for the notes, *Mi contra fa diabolus est in musica*, 'mi against fa is the devil in music', hence the frequent use of the tritone in comps. to suggest evil. (Kennedy 2004:747)

V A. 146.

Example 6 (IMSLP :72)

The choir of elves repeat the last phrase of Oberon: ‘Trip away; make no stay; meet me all by break of day’. This is sung in unison and almost recited on one note, apart from the stepwise movement accompanying ‘break of day’, signalling the end. All is in order and the elves know what to do. After the harmonious ending, all the elves exit the stage and Puck takes over to give his epilogue to the audience. This is done without music, apart from the very last lines. They are accompanied, as previously mentioned, by the famous ethereal chords, framing the entire play and lulling the entire plot into a dream that disappears into fantasy, imagination and memory as soon as the resonance of the final chord evaporates.

5. Britten’s Music: an Analysis of the Coherence between Text and Music

5.1. Britten’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*

Britten himself referred to the ‘tremendous challenge’ of setting Shakespeare’s ‘heavenly words’. (Ford 1994:196) He used Shakespeare’s own words, but adapted the play into his opera libretto together with Peter Pears. The opera is in three acts, so there are omissions from the original play, but the words themselves are not altered. The opera was written for the Aldenburgh Festival in 1960. (Kennedy 2004:478) There are changes made in the process of turning the play into an opera. As it is expressed in

Howard's presentation of Britten's work: 'Opera is a blunt instrument: opera tends to simplify rather than compress.' (Howard 1969:164)

The opera begins in the wood and the frame of the play set by Theseus and Hippolyta is not present.¹⁷ Theseus is only present at the end of the opera. The different characters do not all have the same emphasis in the opera as in Shakespeare's play. The fairies are the controlling force of the drama in Britten's opera.

'The opera, then, is concerned specifically with power: the benign amorality of faery power. By putting the faeries at the centre of the opera, every other aspect is seen only as touched by them.' (Howard 1969:165)

By giving the fairy characters so much dramatic focus throughout the opera, they will necessarily need extensive musical attention in order to balance them. The music is adding to the characters in that it gives them distinct features and recognisable themes, which links the music with the dramatic action.

I will not go into a detailed analysis of the instrumental music at the beginning of the opera, but I find it necessary to mention the 'mode' in which the woods is presented at the beginning of act I. The music defines the scenery in sounds, rather than space.

Musical imagery can feed the imagination and enable mental images of scenery without any visual aids. It starts off with slow string glissandi from chord to chord in the deeper register of the strings. The tempo, register and intensity increases dramatically within the time scope of one minute and thirty seconds, giving a powerful effect of something approaching rapidly. This 'something' is the fairy world.

¹⁷ A synopsis of the opera is added as an appendix. Appendix 2

At the start the orchestra evokes the mystery and magic of the wood by moving through a succession of all 12 major triads, the string glissandos suggesting the breathing of a dreamer in a deep sleep. (Whittall, Grove music Online)

The musical effects suggest something floating, flying, almost ephemeral and unaccountable. It suggests an 'other-wordliness', as Howard describes it. (Howard 1969:165) This can be seen as the character, signature and power of the fairies and it is established at the very start of the opera.

The stage directions given in the score support the music. The curtain is raised as the music begins and the wood in deepening twilight is to be seen. The fairies enter the stage as harps and light, tingling percussion add to the string orchestra. This musical and dramatic effect combined gives the fairies several signature sounds from the orchestral palette.

5.2. Fairies and the Use of Voice

The fairies' central position and power in this opera is well established through musical effects right from the start. The music accompanying the fairies is layered, but transparent texturally. This is necessary because of the voice types used for all the fairy parts. There are three different categories of voice representing the fairies.

Cobweb, Peaseblossom, Mustardseed and Moth are all trebles, light children's voices.

This can in many ways be seen as following a dramatic tradition of having children play the fairies in Shakespeare's play. The chorus of fairies also consists of trebles or sopranos.

Puck is a spoken role, described as an acrobat in the character list of the opera. He is closely linked to Oberon throughout the opera, and the spoken voice and musical accompaniment of Puck is well balanced together with the counter tenor voice of Oberon. Titania is a coloratura soprano. Her dramatic, bright and rapid voice movement is matched well with the trebles of her attending fairies. The trebles of the attending fairies, the spoken voice of Puck and the bright, dramatic voices of Oberon and Titania give them distinct characteristics, and set them all apart from the human roles in the opera. There is never any doubt whether a fairy character is on stage because of the orchestral accompaniment and the character of voice.

5.2.1. Act II, scene 2, Act I in the Opera

Titania's 'Come, now a roundel and a fairy song' is introduced by a light tone in the glockenspiel and accompanied by glissandi and portamento in the orchestra. It is in the middle register for the strings and they are kept subtly in the background. The gliding motion of the strings are already presented in the opening of the opera, and can be seen as one of the effects assigned to the fairy characters. The text and melodic sensitivity in Titania's singing is brought forward by the subtle accompaniment. Her legato phrases are contrasted by staccato movements, the coloratura signature is woven into the melody as a marker for her character, but it is always used in relation to the text, e.g. when the word 'fairies' appear and when she illustrates their 'quaint spirits' through her melismatic singing in example 7:

The image shows a musical score for a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is marked "lively (lebhaft)" and features a trill on the word "quaint" and a long note on "spirits". The piano accompaniment includes a glockenspiel part with a light "pling" sound and a glissandi effect that increases in intensity and pitch. The lyrics are: "quaint spirits, our quaint spirits: / leich ten El-fen, unsre leich ten El-fen".

Example 7 (Britten 1960:90)

The motion in the orchestra is also clearly shown through this example. The light 'pling' of the glockenspiel is also brought in at some places throughout the passage; this is seen as the top E in the middle bar. The intensity of the orchestral glissandi also increases gradually in both volume and pitch. It is brought down again when she sings: 'then to your offices and let me rest' for the last time.

Some words and phrases are repeated to give them greater emphasis and to support them further with musical effects. 'sing me now asleep' appears three times, with greater intensity and more vocal ornamentation each time. She uses trills and coloratura for the word 'sing', combined with long legato tones and a downward scale for 'me now asleep'. Some elements of the pattern can later on be seen in the fairy lullaby, which means that Titania dictates what kind of musical bedtime accompaniment she requires.

The Fairies' song is marked as lively and rhythmic in the score. They are introduced and accompanied by muted brass and sharp drums, indicating a sort of child-like march. The treble voices balance the march and a slight naivety is established. The solo parts are sung by a few fairies, named the solo fairies in the score, meaning the named fairies of the cast. Rhythm is significant in this section. The staccato moves with short quavers and

98 gently (*gentile*) $\text{♩} = 60$

Solo Fairies Solo Elfen

ppp ALL FAIRIES ALLE ELFEN

rall.

lul - la - by, lul - la - by, lul - la - by, lul - la - by,
 Ei - a - po - pei, ei - a - po - pei, ei - a - po - pei, ei - a - po - pei,

Harps

ppp

All Fairies Alle Elfen

(♩ = ♩) *express.*

lul - la - by, lul - la - by, Ne - ver harm nor spell, nor
 ei - a - po - pei, ei - a - po - pei, Dass kein Spruch, kein Zau - ber -

mf *express. and smooth*

Example 9 (Britten 1960:92)

After the lullaby chorus, the solo fairies recommence. The chorus is again repeated in the same manner at the end, thus following the pattern of Shakespeare's text. The last solo phrase is put in the mouth of Cobweb in Britten's libretto, but the words are identical to Shakespeare's. This is performed in the same manner as the previous two solo fairy parts.

The fairies then disappear, apart from the one sentinel. This is illustrated in the music by woodwinds playing a small motif that is taken over by the celesta, an instrument closely linked to the character of Oberon. This is shown in example 10:

Oberon appears.
 Oberon erscheint.

Example 10 (Britten 1960:96)

Oberon then begins to recite his speech in a lowered, but clear voice. When he names the vile creatures the volume increases and there is more movement in the melody. The legato line is also important in this section, whereas the short quavers and semiquavers were dominant in the first bars. The strings also change from tremolo to pizzicato. The quick movement is thus shifted from Oberon to the orchestra, but the effect maintained. After naming the creatures, the last few bars are in the same manner as the first. The phrase ‘wake when some vile thing is near’ is repeated twice and it is clearly marked musically, see example 11:

The image shows a musical score for a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. It begins with a fermata and then a series of notes. The lyrics are: "Wake when some vile thing is near, / Wa-che auf, wenn's vor dir steht,". The piano accompaniment consists of two staves. The upper staff has a treble clef and contains a melodic line with various ornaments and dynamics. The lower staff has a bass clef and contains a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. There are markings such as "marked (betont)", "Glock.", and "Harp" throughout the score.

Example 11 (Britten 1960:98)

The word ‘vile’ is emphasised by means of the melody. The phrase is dominated by minor thirds and chromatic intervals. Oberon then exits the stage and leaves the sleeping Titania. The orchestra uses elements associated with both Oberon and Titania as it slowly fades away. The gliding portamenti of the strings and the glockenspiel used when Titania sang and the harp used for the fairy chorus are blended with the celesta of Oberon.

5.2.2 Act V, scene 1, Act 3 in the Opera

The final scene in Britten’s opera is marked as a slow march in the score. Oberon and Titania, the King and Queen enter with all the other fairies. Bells, strings in the lower

register and timpani accompany Oberon as he begins his speech. The orchestra plays pianissimo so the recitation of Oberon's almost monotone melody is in the foreground. Rhythm and staccato movement is introduced with emphasised words such as 'glimr'ing', 'elf', 'ditty' and the phrase 'sing and dance it trippingly'.

Titania takes over and is in addition accompanied by harps. She is more elaborate and uses triplets to emphasise important words like 'rehearse' and 'word'. To enforce the power of the words 'hand in hand, with fairy grace' Britten lets Oberon and Titania sing together in a harmonious duet. The volume increases and the bells in the orchestra play triplets in crochets. A light trill in the flute leads on to the fairy chorus. This is marked 'slow and solemn' in the score and one rhythmical figure is repeated in the orchestra throughout, as shown in example 12:

The image shows a musical score for Example 12, featuring Oberon and the Fairy Chorus. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of three staves. The top staff is for Oberon and the Fairy Chorus, with the lyrics: "Now un - til the break of day, Throi / Nun bis Ta - ges Wie - der - kehr, E". The middle staff is for the piano accompaniment, marked "always pp" and "W.W. with voices". The bottom staff shows the piano accompaniment with a 7-measure triplet figure repeated. The score is in G major and 4/4 time.

Example 12 (Britten 1960:308)

The chorus and the orchestra often have the same pattern, but the strings in the orchestra moves up the scale when the singers move down. This counter movement balances the harmony well and the woodwinds double the voices in this section.

In an opera the finale is normally the ensemble ending, so it is to be expected that several voices join in. One by one, the different fairy characters add to the harmony and

Oberon, the fairy chorus, Moth, Cobweb, Peaseblossom, Mustardseed and Titania all sing together in harmony. They do not all sing the same text at the same time; the individual melodies have to some extent different parts of the text. Oberon and the fairy chorus are in charge of the text in its entirety¹⁸ whereas the others sing parts of the text. Britten uses elements of the fugue form when introducing the different fairies. They repeat the same melodic theme. This polyphone counterpoint is effective in adding layers and new voices. When they all have joined in, they sing together in homophone harmony. At this point the movement is at its most elaborate point, both singers and orchestra are marked forte, with contrasting piano passages in between. It then transfers into a pianissimo section where a triadic motif is introduced in one voice at a time, ending in a harmonic chord of F sharp and A sharp in the voices.

Oberon is again alone and sings his last words: 'trip away, make no stay, meet me all by break of day'. The orchestra fades out as it accompanies the fairies off stage with the same repetitive rhythmical pattern that has been the foundation of this entire passage. The sound imagery created by the celesta and the harps give references to an elegant, poised baroque style. Such archaic references in Britten's more modern music adds to the feeling that the fairies are of another world and do not relate to the human world of Athens like the other characters in the play. It is also important to remember that the fairy kingdom is again in perfect harmony with their King and Queen united as regents. The subtle, but royal atmosphere of the music supports this further.

¹⁸ Although Britten has omitted some of Shakespeare's text in order to shorten the libretto and make it denser.

When the fairies have disappeared, the music makes a rapid shift to Puck's signature instruments: drums and trumpet. Throughout the opera he has been assigned these sharp, direct and playful instruments to accompany his creative, playful and entertaining moves. The woodwinds are also a part of this quick, cheeky and cheerful theme. The score is marked 'quick and gay' to describe the nature of the musical accompaniment. When Puck delivers his famous speech, the strings create suspense in the background. This is shown in example 13

101 Quick and gay ♩ = 138
(allegro vivo)

PUCK (♩ = ♩) (No beat) (ohne Takt)

If we sha-dows have of-fen-ded,
Wenn wir Schat-ten euch be-lei-digt,

W.W.
Tpt.
Tamb.
Str.

ppp
sfz

(with Ped.)

Example 13 (Britten 1960:312)

The orchestra give chords before Puck speaks and the quick beat of the drum gives an edge and sets Puck off every time. The contrast from sforzando to pianissimo before he speaks each time prepares the audience and makes them even more attentive to Puck's words. Britten and Pears have abbreviated the speech and left out a few lines, but without changing the overall message. Shakespeare's words as they appear in Britten are as follows:

PUCK

If we shadows have offended,

Think but this, - and all is mended, -

That you have but slumber'd here

While these visions did appear.

Gentles, do not reprehend;

If you pardon, we will mend.

Else the Puck a liar call:

So, good night unto you all.

Give me your hands, if we be friends,

And Robin shall restore amends. V,1:399-414, Act 3 (Britten 1960:312-314)

These ten lines are six lines shorter than Shakespeare's original speech in the play. As I see it, the central message of Puck's epilogue is kept intact, and the pattern with repetition of the essential message is even more apparent. The word 'if' is repeated three times, in the beginning, the middle and at the end, emphasising the conditions for restoration. The rhyming pattern is AABBAACCDD and it forms a unity even though six lines are omitted. The first two and last two lines, as discussed previously, frame the speech and the two middle lines are also concerned with forgiveness and restoration.

In the score, it is written that Puck is to clap his hands after his final word. This act further encourages the audience to applaud and thus approving his beg for pardon. In the play this stage direction is not given, it is only marked 'exit'. The clapping can also be seen as a rhythmical effect and a part of the musical aspect of the opera. Puck is also an acrobat, so his movement and clapping can be seen as a part of his character traits in the opera.

Finally, the music rapidly increases in intensity, pitch and volume. The curtain closes quickly, rather than having Puck exiting the stage. The trumpet and drums are still prominent, but the rest of the orchestra fills in the harmony and adds to the colouring. The semiquavers moving upwards create an expectation of a final grand ending to the opera. The movement in the music is also a contrast to the curtain coming down, creating a counterpoint and underlines

the sensation of ending. The music ends with a simple, sudden and low-pitched final chord.

See the last two bars of the opera in example 14:

QUICK CURTAIN

8

f sf

Aldeburgh

Example 14 (Britten 1960:314)

6. Comparison Between the two Analyses. What Kind of Characters are the Fairies in the Two Musical Works?

6.1. Establishing The Fairy Kingdom

The analysis of the two musical representations of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* brings out some interesting perspectives on how the fairies are portrayed and how the music brings out certain of their character traits. The associations that the music supplies are manifold, and will of course vary for every listener. I do, however, wish to adopt a more general approach to and interpretation of how Mendelssohn and Britten's fairies are brought to 'life' in music and to what extent they can be said to differ from Shakespeare's original and each other.

The fairies evoked by Mendelssohn's incidental music are ethereal right from the overture's very first chord. The music opens the gates to the fairy kingdom itself and brings the audience in touch with the 'other worldliness'. In the play this fairy world is not suggested from the beginning, as the action begins at the Athenian court. The title is the only element that a mystery will unfold on stage. The power of music to set a mood,

suggest future events and describe scenes and characters is of course essential and a play without musical accompaniment cannot seek to compensate fully the lack of it. But the effect of the introduction of the fairy themes in Mendelssohn's overture is central to the audience's understanding and perception of the fairies that appear later on in the play.

Britten's orchestral introduction to the opera is also a musical entrance into the fairy world. He uses the entire string section to develop a musical landscape of another world. The deep, mystical glissandi in the first bars are unsettling and suggest a departure from steady and familiar grounds. Both Mendelssohn and Britten use the music in the beginning to prepare and transfer the audience from the real world and into 'the dream'. The musical imagery of the dream itself varies to some extent. Both use strings extensively, as the quality of sound seems well suited for describing the nature of fairies. Mendelssohn suggests swift, rapid and effective movement of the fairies. The minor key also adds to the mystery, they are not all harmony and produce sweet sensations. Britten's use of colour and pitch in the strings offer a wider perspective. The darkest, gliding passages suggest something unruly and more intimidating than what Mendelssohn's music implies. Just by listening to the two pieces of music, the audience's idea of the fairies' nature is already different. I find that this impression is further supported by the music that follows. However, Britten's constant moving string glissandi can in some ways be seen as parallel to the quick semiquavers in the strings in Mendelssohn's composition. They both suggest that the fairies are swift, light and can appear and disappear rapidly. This is not a quality that is spelled out in Shakespeare's play, but seems to be in keeping with a general impression of fairy nature.

6.2 Oberon and Titania

The king and queen of fairies, Oberon and Titania, differ in many respects in the two compositions. The incidental music supports the actors in their performance of certain important speeches in the play. The main difference is that Mendelssohn has written supporting music for actors in a play, whereas Britten presents the king and queen as major opera characters. Mendelssohn's accompaniment of both Oberon and Titania give emphasis to their elfish nature. Oberon is in general more mysterious and vengeful, particularly when he squeezes the love juice in the eyes of the sleeping Titania. The very simple, but effective chromatic tones creates suspense. In the finale, Oberon is accompanied by harmonious and chords that signal poise, authority and order. Titania, on the other hand, speaks in between quick and short semiquavers that match the light, fluctuant and lively impression of the train of fairies. Titania's independent nature when opposing Oberon is not portrayed in Mendelssohn's music, so her character is not reflected through music to the same extent as Oberon.

The regents of Britten's fairy world is much more elaborate and his music is the essential instrument for portraying their personalities, apart from the voice type, as discussed in the chapter about Britten's music.

Oberon's counter tenor sets him apart from the human characters in the opera. The high tessitura of the male voice could be perceived as a degradation of his masculine authority, but because of the elfish nature, it establishes him as a figure set off from the human males altogether. His counter tenor is resonant and penetrating and his authority as Fairy King is well confirmed by means of his high voice, rather than devaluing it. Titania's bright coloratura soprano can in many ways be linked to Oberon's counter

tenor. The bright, brilliant and playful resonance of the Fairy Queen gives her a distinct voice identity that also separates her from the other female characters in the opera. The quick and light runs in her arias and melismatic embellishment of her speeches gives her certain character traits that support her independent, spoiled and playful nature.

The very nature of both Oberon and Titania in the opera is closely connected to their voice types and the motifs and the instruments accompanying them. Their arias and the melodic presentation of their speeches are also important guidelines for the singers presenting them on stage. Their musical representation is in harmony with their character representation through Shakespeare's words. In addition, the music adds to the complexity of the characters. Britten's king and queen are more authoritative, mysterious and playful compared to the representation they get through Mendelssohn's incidental music. Mendelssohn seems to support what is already present through Shakespeare's text, whereas Britten has developed the potential of the characters further. He uses the powerful effects of music, instrumentation and voice type to delve into the depths of the possibilities that resides in the poetic words.

6.3 Puck

Puck is a fairy of a very different nature than all the others. He is Oberon's attentive servant and executes his will, at least to some degree. He is also a humorous prankster and delights in comic situations. It is quite natural that he is a spoken character in Mendelssohn's incidental music, but it is perhaps more surprising that Britten also has chosen to let Puck be a spoken role. Mendelssohn has chosen to accompany several of Puck's speeches with orchestra. Sometimes with chords creating a certain mood or

suspense, on other occasions the music describes his movement, mischievous actions or playfulness. The music can be seen just as much as a description of his words, as an interpretation of the character itself. As in the case of Oberon and Titania, the music seems to support the theatrical interpretation of Puck, rather than adding new perspectives and layers.

As an acrobat and purely a spoken role in the opera, Puck is a character distinctly different from all the singers per se. The music is, however, closely linked to his stage persona. The trumpet and snare drum is his signature instruments and he is always led onstage by a characteristic sound and tune from these instruments. The casting of an acrobat in this role further develops the physical representation of Puck on stage. His movements and his musical motif underline his unruly personality. He is almost like a fairy court jester in Britten's opera. This is not so apparent in Mendelssohn's music or in Shakespeare's original play.

6.4. The Fairy Chorus

The troupe of fairies is central in both Britten and Mendelssohn's music and in their musical representation of the fairy chorus they sometimes correspond. When the company of attending fairies are onstage, they sing. The two scenes that are discussed in most detail in this thesis are also the two occasions where the fairy chorus perform. Both composers have chosen to use young treble voices to represent the fairy chorus. This is in keeping with the tradition from Shakespeare's own days, with young boys in the roles of the fairies attending. The naïve and bright resonance of the treble voices gives an important interpretation of the fairies' personality. They are represented as a

uniform chorus with one mind and one will, singing in perfect harmony and obedience. The music further supports this impression, when both composers use simple harmonic structures and repetitive rhythmical patterns when the chorus sings.

The solo fairy parts stand out from the uniform chorus structure. Mendelssohn has chosen to use adult female sopranos in the solo fairy passages. He has also used them as an extension of Titania's voice, as she is not a sung part in the incidental music. This signifies a higher rank as they are perceived as 'adult' fairies by the audience and perhaps more closely related to the other actors in the company. Britten has chosen to let his solo fairies remain treble voices. This unites them with the chorus to a greater extent. At the same time, the music and rhythm of their solo passages set them apart from the simpler and more archaic music of the chorus. The imagery that the music of the fairies invites is also different in the two compositions. I find that the fairy chorus in Mendelssohn's music is in general more triadic and harmonious. It gives a fairytale and dreamlike impression. Britten's musical landscape invites the audience into another world, rather than a distinct fairytale world. The fairy kingdom is described through music and the imagery of this fairy world seems more expansive than a fairytale.

6.5. The Realisation of Shakespeare's Play in Music

Mendelssohn displays an understanding and respect for Shakespeare's characters that is well developed in the music. In that time, he was of the few who appreciated the nature of Shakespeare's comedy. In fact, the play was not well received in Mendelssohn's time even though his incidental music was appreciated and praised. The classical romantic music with a poetic elegance of Mendelssohn supports an archetypical understanding of

the fairy nature in the play itself. It seems that Mendelssohn was mainly concerned by giving justice to Shakespeare's characters and the very nature of the comedy rather than developing it further by adding any particularly new perspectives on the roles in the play. At the same time, it is important to keep in mind that incidental music in itself adds to the overall impression the audience gets from a performance of the play. The possibility of framing the action and making the audience expect and associate musical themes with certain characters are dimensions that are important in themselves. Mendelssohn has successfully created a beautiful dream by his music that frames the play, letting words and characters unfold freely on stage.

The opera of Britten has brought the task of framing the dream one step further. The foundation of the fairy world is laid down by combination of voice and instrumentation. By transforming Shakespeare's words into an opera he has developed every character by means of his music. Britten's musical language lets the fairy world materialise on stage and the characters bloom through their particularly assigned melodic motifs and accompaniment. I find that Britten has sought to create more depth and contrast within each character and also balance them against each other. Rhythm and tessitura are important aids in this process. In addition to the discussed instruments and melodic patterns, this creates an even greater variety. By omitting parts of Shakespeare's original play, Britten has also managed to make the fairies more prominent and be the essential element of the dream itself. The whole plot is framed by the fairy world and it is also driven forward by the fairies' actions. The opera *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is essentially about how the fairy power unfolds in a dream. The human characters do not obtain the same position and importance as in the original play. Britten's composition is able to hold all together by means of the musical representation of the fairies, an effect

achieved from the first trembling note of the double bass to the final blow of the trumpet.

7. A Performer's Perspective: My Experience in Singing the Music

7.1. Describing Performance

When writing about any kind of artistic performance, be it music or acting, it is important to take into account the means of describing it. The language used cannot avoid being subjective and imprecise. The inner action of the singer, instrumentalist or actor consists of subtle sensations. (Elliot 2006:3) In the same manner, the ideas and emotions that the audience perceive when witnessing a performance, are individual and a description cannot hope to be objective and precise. '(...)the response a singer can inspire in a listener is equally ephemeral and must be described with a language that is metaphoric and poetic'. (Elliot 2006:3) However, by putting these emotions and sensations into words, it can be possible to develop a wider understanding of the text and the character. To obtain this is a main goal of this thesis.

7.2. Interpretation

A performer's own interpretation is an unavoidable and essential part of performance. Interpretation is defined in music as 'the act of performing with the implication that in it the performer's judgement and personality have a share.' (Kennedy 2004:359) Every singer, instrumentalist or actor will have an impact on the final result in a performance.

Drama is self-evidently a collaborative activity, depending not merely on the dramatist's access to a treasury of linguistic and cultural resources, but, more

materially, on the interactions of the playwright with those other theatre artists and technicians needed to put a play onstage. (Kastan 1999:5)

The collaborative effort that a stage production is, whether it is a play or an opera, is always a result of a lot of artistic sensibility combined through all the individuals involved. It is a matter of style and taste and the interpretation will, to a certain degree, unavoidably vary with every performance. Still, the audience is free to judge whether a performance is out of sympathy of perhaps even a distortion of the dramatist or composer's intentions. (Kennedy 2004:360)

Just as there is no means by which a dramatist can so write his play as to indicate to the actors precisely how they should speak his lines, so there is no means by which a composer can indicate to a performer the precise way in which his music is to be sung or played – so that no two performer will adopt the same slackenings and hastenings of speed, the same degree of emphasis on an accented note, and so forth. (Kennedy 2004:359-360)

When undertaking the task of rehearsing a role, the challenge is to combine respect and understanding for text and music with one's own artistic sensibility. A professional approach must be guided by a stylistic understanding of the repertoire in question. A study of the literature behind the specific text of the aria, for instance, is important in order to get the right context for the character, particularly in relation to period and historical context. To be fully immersed in the symbiosis of text and music gives the opportunity to discover the character in a much deeper sense and it makes it possible to create a character that can be perceived as whole and complex.

To portray fairies can be an additional challenge compared to human characters. The renowned opera singer Renee Fleming writes in her book *The Inner Voice* (2005):

Fantastical characters, such as the water nymph Rusalka or the sorceress Alcina, are generally difficult to flesh out, since the essence of that they need or want must be uncovered and imbued with nuance. (Fleming 2005:186)

As Fleming points out, a character that is not fully human, does not necessarily act, behave and think like a human being would do. To shape the character of the role is an important part of preparing for a performance. Britten's Titania and the solo fairy in Mendelssohn are both interesting characters to bring to life through a performance.

7.2.1. Mendelssohn's Solo Fairy

When singing the solo fairy in Mendelssohn's incidental music I find that one of the central aspects of the character is to identify the fairy's rank in the fairy kingdom. A solo part sung by an adult female soprano automatically requires more authority than the treble voiced fairy choir. At the same time, the respect for Titania as Queen and superior is important. The freedom of the character on stage lies within the range between the choir and Titania. The authority in the performance and voice lies mainly in the task that is at hand. On the first occasion it is to protect the Fairy Queen and keep away all vile creatures that might harm her. The long minor key, swift semiquavers in the accompaniment and staccato quavers in the melodic phrase must all be emphasised in order to support the text and make the character clear in the performance. The legato phrases that occur in some passages are a welcome contrast and the voice can expand in that section. The crescendo is important here, so that the voice will lead on, instead of 'resting' and giving the impression of a momentary standstill.

The textual emphasis is, in my opinion, the key to a successful performance. The consonants are essential, as discussed in the literary analysis of this extract of the play. Clear diction and intention behind every word brings out the necessary power and authority of the words.

In the chorus, the Solo Fairy is the top voice. The elegant, moving, legato melody is the essence of this section. The light phrasing and bright timbre adds the top brilliance in this fairy choir. The voice must blossom, but not dominate totally over the young treble voices. The challenge for the soprano is to keep the voice light and spinning with an elegant legato phrasing all through the chorus. The melody is well phrased and is very comfortable for the soprano voice as long as it is not sung too heavily. I find that it encourages elegance in the performance that, to me, suits the nature of the Solo Fairy perfectly.

In the finale the Solo Fairy has an even more prominent role. She takes on the words of the Fairy Queen herself. This gives her more poise, grace and maturity than before. The melody is a beautiful legato phrase in balance with the moving quavers in the orchestra. The text focuses on blessing and harmony and the melodic structure encourages this. I find that this section can be sung with a warmer tone of voice and a more mature sound. However, the lightness and flexibility of the voice must still be in keeping with the light nature of the fairy.

7.2.2. Britten's Titania

In my opinion, Titania is a complex fantasy character. She has so many aspects of nature that are reflected both through the words of Shakespeare and the music of Britten. The physical realisation of Titania is fascinating to me. Age, size and appearance are not easy to determine. In my imaginative realisation, she is neither young, nor old, because I find that the 'other worldliness' of the fairies sets them apart from at least some of the physical wear of time. Her liveliness, enthusiasm, charm and humour make her seem young, whereas her wilfulness, independence and authority give her maturity.

The same traits that are mentioned in the previous paragraph are represented in her voice. The light, flexible and quick coloratura is balanced with volume, powerful timbre and authoritative brightness through the high tessitura. When performing one of Titania's arias, I find that the phrasing, rhythm and movement in the music of both orchestra and melody encourage a lively presence with extrovert expression and action. Titania is a creative creature with a distinct personality that comes alive through her voice. With a thorough knowledge of text and music and a voice capacity to perform it, the aria can reveal more of the character itself. As the famous soprano Magda Olivero puts it 'Go onstage and think of performing, not singing!' (Hines 1984:210) Renee Fleming also discusses the importance of knowing the part and voice so intimately that the self-conscious and worried thoughts in a performance become redundant.

Reaching that place allows me, in a sense, to step out of the music's way and leave my mind free to discover new shadings in the role that I might have missed in the past. (Fleming: 2005:158)

When knowing a part in such detail, it becomes possible to pay attention to the role itself and let the artistic performance be the ultimate guide. Detailed preparation and study must always be at the basis before this can be successfully put into action.

Singing my way through parts of both Mendelssohn and Britten's music has enabled me to relate to the sensibility of the works in themselves and more particularly some of the characters. It is an ongoing process and rehearsing and singing parts in concert cannot be fully compared to being a part of a stage performance. At the same time, I feel that the close connection it has given me to the music and expression of it has given me a better understanding that is easier to incorporate as a part of my interpretation.

Britten, who was very concerned with the use of voice in a character interpretation, has said: 'The singers must, of course, have good voices, but these should be used to interpret the music, not for self-glorification'. (Britten in Elliot 2006:276) He also found the treatment of text to be very important:

'I have always been interested in the setting of words. ... My interest in the human voice has grown, especially in the relation of sound to sense and colour ... to the English voice in particular, singing our subtle and beautifully inflected language. Also I believe passionately in the intelligibility of the words.' (Britten in Elliot 2006:276)

His passion for text and voice comes through in his music and it is up to the performer to render justice to his compositions when performing them. This can be attempted through hard work, background study, technique, respect and finally artistic sensibility.

8. Character Analysis through Music – a Richer Understanding? Music as a Governing Factor

8.1. Creation of the Fairy World through Music

Through music, the fairy world comes alive. The possibility of establishing a mood on stage before the curtain is raised, is a resource that is tremendously valuable. The audience is invited to enter another reality and the music enables them to imagine what the music suggests. Musical leitmotifs give references that are subtler, yet more powerful than pure textual references. The colours of the woods surround the stage through music and the illustrative and artistic force of the instrumentation paints a mental canvas that produces the scenery where the imagery and action can be revealed.

Thoughts and ideas in the minds of the character can be presented to the audience by means of the music. All these dramatic effects are important in musical character analysis. The impact of such a performance is different from a purely theatrical display, because the music suggests new paths for the imagination to follow, leading both audience and characters further on into the fictional world of the fairy kingdom. A well-established fairy world is a necessary condition for the acceptance of the play itself. The possibilities that music offers in that respect cannot, in my opinion, be fully compensated through by artistic solutions.

8.2 Character through Voice

As discussed in a previous chapter, the casting of voice type is essential. Voice is generally accepted to be a central part of personality and character. The associations that, for instance, a coloratura soprano brings forth in the mind of the audience adds to

the impression that the character gives. The voices must not only suit the character, it must also be balanced against the other voices. The characters that meet in music and dialogue must function together to create the necessary dramatic effect. The weight, range, colour and timbre are all important features that are taken into account when deciding on voice types. All voice types are associated with certain typical features that are closely linked to the personality and abilities of a character. The term *coloratura* is defined as 'the elaborate and agile ornamentation of a melody (...) with runs, cadenzas, trills, roulades and the like' (Kennedy 2004:153) Such characteristic abilities in a voice will be related to the character. This means that Britten's Titania will, just by the nature her voice type, be strongly associated with an intense and elaborate stage presence that demands attention and is perhaps accustomed to be humoured.

The interesting casting of a countertenor as Oberon in the opera will also create a certain aura in the character. He is not perceived as human male. The countertenor voice is identified as a 'high male voice' and described as having a 'strong, almost instrumental purity of tone'. (Kennedy 2004:166) It was popular in the Baroque period, but has been revived in the 20th century. 'Several modern composers, including Britten in his opera *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, have written parts for countertenor.' (Kennedy 2004:166)

The voice type is an important element in the audience's acceptance as Oberon as a male figure distinctly other than the human males in the play. It also adds to the fairies' voice identity. Since all fairies are within the voice range of children and women, the nature of the fairies will be associated with qualities typically associated with adolescents and females. The patriarchal authority in society at the time the play was written will thus not have the same validity in the fairy world. These associations guide the audience in their interpretation and overall impression of the characters through the music. This is

most prominent in Britten's opera, but the soprano and treble voices of the fairies in Mendelssohn's incidental music trigger, to some degree, the same associations.

8.3. Character Interpretation through Instrumentation

Orchestral instrumentation is one of the basic effects of bringing characters to life and giving them distinct traits through music. When Mendelssohn composed his music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* he went further in translating poetic words into a musical composition than ever before. The music encompasses many associations and references that we readily associate with programme music, although it is historically incorrect to apply this term to Mendelssohn's music.¹⁹ However, Mendelssohn's own teacher commented that the music of the overture evoked ideas outside the music, rather than within it. He claimed that the listener should know the play beforehand, not get to know it through the music. (Sørensen 1990:370) It is clear that Mendelssohn has used the orchestra to illustrate the play itself. As discussed in previous chapters, the use of instruments, such as the violins, rhythm, harmony and melody gives life to the characters.

Britten has extensively seized the possibilities that the orchestra offers. His instrumentation is always impressive, precise and inventive, but rarely grand or flashy. (Sørensen 1990:488) He uses the instruments as descriptive of the characters' personality. The distinct sound quality and timbre of the orchestral ensemble is used alone and in several combinations in order to develop the characters through sound imagery. The close relation of Puck to the trumpet and snare drum illustrates this well.

¹⁹ 'Instr. Mus. which tells a story, illustrates literary ideas, or evokes pictorial scenes.' (Kennedy 2004:578)

Britten extends the possibilities of instrumentation by linking it very closely to musical form, rhythm, harmony and melody. This is intricately integrated and refined in the composition as a whole and thus supporting the thematic, dramatic and psychological building of characters. (Sørensen 1990:489)

I find that the use of instrumentation supplies the character with extended descriptive and musical imagery that awakens the senses and prompts associations. This brings life to the character that cannot be displayed fully without the interaction with the instruments and orchestra.

8.4. Structure in Poetry, Architecture, Painting and Music

The close connection between meaning and form is evident in Shakespeare's poetry. The overall design is composed in order to create harmony and bring out meaning. This is shown through the text analysis in chapter 2 and 3.

'...the harmonious patterning of syllables contributed to the beauty of the verse, even though it was not something he (the reader) could point to directly in the sound. An analogy can be found in Renaissance architectural theory'. (Attridge 1979:116)

To enjoy the structure and artificiality of such compositions is referred to as Mannerism, a style popular in the 16th century. Eriksen mentions this as '... that dissociation of the surface from the core that is typical of Mannerism and its imposing stress on surface movement and frontality.' (Eriksen in Kapitaniak 2004:118) The structure cannot be perceived with the eye or the ear, but it is apparent to the mind when it is studied. And it is said that only those who are aware and sensitive of this structure can perceive it.

(Attridge 1979:117-118) The mannerist style was also present in other art forms, such as painting and music, not only poetry and architecture. Clear structures and patterns are indeed a vital part of music composition and the connection between music and poetry is particularly close, also in Shakespeare's time.

As mention of songs, pipes, lutes and harps reveals, in Shakespearean drama and in Renaissance culture, the vocabulary of poetry is deeply connected to the vocabulary of music. (...) often he (Shakespeare) depends on the Elizabethan convention that metaphorizes music as poetry, song as lyric poetry, the musician as a poet. (Cheney 2007:223)

Rose (1972) also discusses the close relation between the arts when he discusses the Renaissance sensibility to 'the pervasive idea of the "sister arts", poetry and painting.' (Rose 1972:7) Through this, it is apparent that in Shakespeare's own time, the arts were closely related. Towards the end of the 16th century, the performance of measured verse and music was, among others, in use by Baïf and his followers in France with the 'Académie de Poésie et de Musique'. (Attridge 1979:122) All of these examples support the argument that the arts should be seen in context and support each other through interrelation and integration. The use of structure to bring out meaning is an overall ideology behind these constructions and compositional techniques. When they are discovered and perceived in one art form, they can be connected to, and used in another. When a composer works with poetry, the elements of the poetical structure can be applied to the musical composition, thus creating meaning to a greater extent. The understanding and interpretation of a character will of course be further supported through a thorough analysis of the form used both in text and music. This analysis should be present in the composer's musical treatment of the text, but also an integral part of preparation for a performer, it be an actor or a singer.

8.5. Forming a Character through Music

Creating a literary character by the means of music is art. The writer, composer and performer are all artists who seek to give justice to the art form and how it is to be expressed. The tenor Paul Sperry explains that he tries to concentrate on the poem and the music. 'Out of my speaking voice and what I hear in the music comes what the singing voice ought to be for the song'. (Sperry in Elliot 2006:301)

There is a vast landscape of interpretative theory that, among its many agendas, seeks to define, describe or illuminate aspects of literature and literary characters. I have chosen to look into what happens to literature, and more specifically literary character, when it faces the musical language. The field of study is massive, so my topic has therefore mostly been concerned with some specific details. I wished to combine literary and musical analysis and express parts of it through a creative artistic approach because an important part of the interpretation also happens in that area.

Characters can be described isolated from other textual elements, but it is through characterisation that they are established as characters. 'Discussions of fictional characters become more convincing if they refer to, and are based on characterization, for it is through such characterization that the characters are introduced, shaped and developed.' (Lothe 2000:81) The character is described directly and indirectly through use of vocabulary, manner of speech and action. (Lothe 2000:81-83) In addition, music and performance is included as a part of characterisation in this thesis. An adaptation of literary fiction into a visual and auditory performance gives the possibility to 'show' the character (Lothe 2000:86) and this is an essential part of the staging of a play. When music is added to this performance, the characterisation becomes even more complex.

When music is applied skilfully to poetry, the characterisation will be extended and benefit from this, but the character has also changed through the adaptation to music. 'To 'transfer' a work of art from one medium to another is in one sense impossible.' (Lothe 2000:86) Lothe discusses this in relation to film and film directors, but it is valid also for musical adaptation. He stresses that the result of the adaptation will be a new creation, another work of art, but it can be closely related to the literary starting point and show an intimate knowledge of the literary text to which the composer responds to as a creative artist. (Lothe 2000:86) In my opinion, this must be the goal for both composer and performer.

The task of applying language to describe aspects of art is an ongoing challenge. The analysis of text and music throughout this thesis has been a journey through words, phrases and expressions that can seek to illuminate some of the sensations, feelings and moods that the literature and music evoke and inspire. Ultimately, the impact of a character lies in the performance, which is an interaction between the performer and the audience. This is the moment that makes art come alive, in my opinion.

Throughout this thesis I have used descriptive and rhetorical analysis to illustrate the value of music in the interpretation of a literary character. To accept music as an interpretive aid and important adaptation of Shakespeare is a necessary condition for this thesis.

In short, to resist the dominant inclination to regard past histories as foundational to editorial labour would be to insist on the realization that textual, no less than theatrical, efforts to recover 'what happened' can only be pursued alongside efforts to shape 'what *is* happening' in terms of work recognition and

the ever-shifting boundaries that separate work from adaptation. (Kidnie 2009:164)

It is precisely these 'ever-shifting boundaries' that makes the performative act and creative artistic approach so challenging, but also rewarding, when facing, in this case, the poetic characters of Shakespeare. An understanding of the playwright and the time the work was written gives a foundation for interpreting the text. The analysis of the text and the music gives a basis for both performer and audience. The analysis of form and structure gives depth to the character and the meaning can be perceived more clearly. I will argue that both composers and performers would benefit greatly from applying such thorough analysis when interpreting literature in music. Finally, artistic sensibility supplies what is needed to reach the ultimate goal; a performance where it all comes to life. My proposition is that this approach can supply a richer understanding of what brings greater life to the character while respecting the literary poetic artistry that it is founded upon.

References

- Adamson, S, L. et. al. (eds.) (2001). *Reading Shakespeare's Dramatic Language, A Guide*, Arden Shakespeare, London
- Attridge, D. (1979). *Well-weighed Syllables, Elizabethan Verse in Classical Metres*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Briggs, J. (1997). *This Stage-Play World, Texts and Contexts, 1580-1625*, Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Britten, B. (1960). *A Midsummer Night's Dream. Opera in three acts, op. 64*, Boosey and Hawkes Music Publishers Limited, London
- Cheney, P. (ed.) (2007). *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's Poetry*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Cullen, P & T. P. Roche, Jr. (ed.)(1981). *Spenser Studies, A Renaissance Poetry Annual II*, University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburg
- Elliot, M. (2006). *Singing in Style, a Guide to Vocal Performance Practices*, Yale University Press, New Haven & London
- Eriksen, R. (2001). *The Building in the Text: Alberti to Shakespeare and Milton*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, Pennsylvania
- Fleming, R. (2005). *The Inner Voice, Notes from a Life on Stage*, Virgin Books Ltd, London
- Foakes, R. A. (2003). *William Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Ford, B. (ed.)(1994). *Benjamin Britten's Poets*, Carcanet Press Limited, Manchester
- Hines, J. (1984). *Great Singers on Great Singing*, Limelight Editinons, New Jersey
- Holland, P. (1994). *William Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Oxford University Press, Oxford

Hollindale, P. (1992). *Penguin Critical Studies, William Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Penguin books, London

Howard, P. (1969). *The Operas of Benjamin Britten, an Introduction*, Barrie and Rockliff
The Cresset Press, London

Hussey, M. (1971). *The World of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries*, Heinemann
Educational Books Ltd., London

Huston, J. D. (1981). *Shakespeare's Comedies of Play*, Columbia University Press, New
York

Kapitaniak, P. et. al. (eds.) (2004). *Shakespeare et l'Europe de la Renaissance*, SFS,
Montpellier

Kastan, D. S. (ed.) (1999). *A Companion to Shakespeare*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd.,
Malden

Kennedy, M. (ed.) (2004). *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Music*, Oxford University Press,
Oxford

Kidnie, M. J. (2009). *Shakespeare and the Problem of Adaptation*, Routledge, New York

Laroque, F. (1991). *Shakespeare's Festive World*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Lerner, L. (ed.) (1967). *Shakespeare's Comedies, an Anthology of Modern Criticism*,
Penguin Books, London

Lewin, D. (2006). *Studies in Music with Text*, Oxford University Press, New York

Lothe, J. (2000). *Narrative in Fiction and Film, an Introduction*, Oxford University Press,
Oxford

Paster, G. K. & S. Howard (1999). *William Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Texts and Contexts*, Bedford/St. Martins, Boston and New York

Peck, J. & M. Coyle (1985). *How to Study a Shakespeare Play*, The Macmillan Press Ltd.,
London

Radcliffe, P. (1976). *The Master Musicians series, Mendelssohn*, J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd, London

Rose, M. (1972). *Shakespearean Design*, The Belknap Press of Harvard University, Massachusetts

Smidt, K. (2000). *Den mangfoldige Shakespeare*, Aschehoug, Oslo

Smith, E. (ed.) (2004). *Shakespeare's Comedies*, Blackwell Publishing, Malden

Sørensen, S. & B. Marschner (eds.) (1990) *Gads Musikhistorie*, Gads forlag, København

Thomson, V. (1989). *Music with Words*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London

Wallis, M. & S. Shepherd (2002). *Studying Plays*, Arnold Publishers, London

Online resources:

Gradesaver.com:

<http://www.gradesaver.com/midsummer-nights-dream/study-guide/short-summary/>

IMSLP: Petrucci Music Library. Free public domain sheet music:

<http://imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/8/8c/IMSLP22335-PMLP18079->

[Mendelssohn op.061 Ein Sommernachtstraum Breitkopf vs.pdf](#)

Todd, R. L.: Mendelssohn, Felix, §12: Operas and other dramatic music, Grove Music

Online. 2.4.2011:

http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/51795pg12?q=a+midsummer+night%27s+dream&hbutton_search.x=0&hbutton_search.y=0&hbutton_search=search&source=omo_epm&source=omo_t237&source=omo_gmo&source=omo_t14&search=quick&pos=7&start=1#firsthit

Whittall, A.: A Midsummer Night's Dream, Grove Music Online. 2.4.2011:

http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/0009094?q=a+midsummer+night%27s+dream&hbutton_search.x=0&hbutton_search.y=0&hbutton_search=search&source=omo_epm&source=omo_t237&source=omo_gmo&source=omo_t114&search=quick&pos=1&start=1#firsthit

Appendix 1: Summary of the Play

A Midsummer Night's Dream Summary

A Midsummer Night's Dream takes place in Athens. Theseus, the Duke of Athens, is planning his marriage with Hippolyta, and as a result he is planning a large festival. Egeus enters, followed by his daughter Hermia, her beloved Lysander, and her suitor Demetrius. Egeus tells Theseus that Hermia refuses to marry Demetrius, wanting instead to marry Lysander. He asks for the right to punish Hermia with death if she refuses to obey.

Theseus agrees that Hermia's duty is to obey her father, and threatens her with either entering a nunnery or marrying the man her father chooses. Lysander protests, but is overruled by the law. He and Hermia then decide to flee by night into the woods surrounding Athens, where they can escape the law and get married. They tell their plan to Helena, a girl who is madly in love with Demetrius. Hoping to gain favor with Demetrius, Helena decides to tell him about the plan.

Some local artisans and workmen have decided to perform a play for Theseus as a way to celebrate his wedding. They choose Pyramus and Thisbe for their play, and meet to assign the roles. Nick Bottom gets the role of Pyramus, and Flute takes the part of Thisbe. They agree to meet the next night in the woods to rehearse the play.

Robin Goodfellow, a puck, meets a fairy who serves Queen Titania. He tells the fairy that his King Oberon is in the woods, and that Titania should avoid Oberon because they will quarrel again. However, Titania and Oberon soon arrive and begin arguing about a young boy Titania has stolen and is caring for. Oberon demands that she give him the boy, but she refuses.

Oberon decides to play a trick on Titania and put some pansy juice on her eyes. The magical juice will make her fall in love with first person she sees upon waking up. Soon after Puck is sent away to fetch the juice, Oberon overhears Demetrius and Helena in the woods.

Demetrius deserts Helena in the forest, leaving her alone. Oberon decides that he will change this situation, and commands Robin to put the juice onto Demetrius's eyes when he is sleeping. He then finds Titania and drops the juice onto her eyelids. Robin goes to find Demetrius, but instead comes across Lysander and accidentally uses the juice on him.

By accident Helena comes across Lysander and wakes him up. He immediately falls in love with her and starts to chase her through the woods. Together they arrive where Oberon is watching, and he realizes the mistake. Oberon then puts the pansy juice onto Demetrius's eyelids, who upon waking up also falls in love with Helena. She thinks that the two men are trying to torment her for being in love with Demetrius, and

becomes furious at their protestations of love.

The workmen arrive in the woods and start to practice their play. They constantly ruin the lines of the play and mispronounce the words. Out of fear of censorship, they decide to make the play less realistic. Therefore the lion is supposed to announce that he is not a lion, but only a common man. Bottom also feels obliged to tell the audience that he is not really going to die, but will only pretend to do so. Puck, watching this silly scene, catches Bottom alone and puts an asses head on him. When Bottom returns to his troupe, they run away out of fear. Bottom then comes across Titania, and succeeds in waking her up. She falls in love with him due to the juice on her eyes, and takes him with her.

Lysander and Demetrius prepare to fight one another for Helena. Puck intervenes and leads them through the woods in circles until they collapse onto the ground in exhaustion. He then brings the two women to same area and puts them to sleep as well.

Oberon finds Titania and releases her from the spell. He then tells the audience that Bottom will think is all a dream when he wakes up. He further releases Lysander from the spell. Theseus arrives with a hunting party and finds the lovers stretched out on the ground. He orders the hunting horns blown in order to wake them up.

The lovers explain why they are in the woods, at which point Egeus demands that he be allowed to exercise the law on Hermia. However, Demetrius intervenes and tells them that he no longer loves Hermia, but rather only loves Helena. Theseus decides to overbear Egeus and let the lovers get married that day with him. Together they return to Athens.

Bottom wakes up and thinks that he has dreamed the entire episode. He swiftly returns to Athens where he meets his friends. Together they head over to Theseus's palace. Theseus looks over the list of possible entertainment for that evening and settles on the play of Pyramus and Thisbe. Bottom and the rest of his company perform the play, after which everyone retires to bed.

Puck arrives and starts to sweep the house clean. Oberon and Titania briefly bless the couples and their future children. After they leave Puck asks the audience to forgive the actors if they were offended. He then tells the audience that if anyone disliked the play, they should imagine that it was only a dream (Gradesaver.com)

Appendix 2: Summary of Britten's Opera

Benjamin Britten: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, synopsis:

Act I: the Wood. Oberon and Tytania quarrel over the Indian boy. Oberon dispatches Puck to find a magic herb the juice of which will 'make man or woman madly dote Upon the next live creature that it sees', in order to plague his Queen and possess the boy. Lysander and Hermia meet and plan their elopement, to avoid Hermia's betrothal to Demetrius. Overlooked by Oberon, Demetrius enters pursued by Helena: Helena is in love with Demetrius, while he loves Hermia.

Puck returns with the magic herb and Oberon now charges him to use it to make Demetrius enamoured of Helena.

The mechanicals set about casting their play, *Pyramus and Thisby*. Puck mistakes Lysander and Hermia, sleeping, for Demetrius and Helena. He anoints Lysander with the magic juice, but it is Helena, abandoned by Demetrius, who wakes him and as a result of the enchantment Lysander is now utterly in love with Helena. Oberon finds the sleeping Tytania and squeezes the juice on her eyes.

Act II: The Wood. The mechanicals' rehearsal goes forward. Puck puts an ass' head upon Bottom: unaware, Bottom scares away his companions and wakes the enchanted Tytania – who falls in love with him.

Hermia is abandoned by Lysander and pursued by Demetrius. Oberon enchants Demetrius, who wakes to find Helena. Now both Lysander and Demetrius are in love with Helena, who can be forgiven for thinking that both of them and the spurned Hermia are mocking her.

Oberon gives Puck another herb to disenchant Lysander.

Act III: the Wood, early next morning. Oberon, satisfied that he has the Indian boy, determines to resolve 'this hateful imperfection', disenchants Tytania, and promises to see the 'pairs of faithful lovers wedded with Theseus all in jollity'.

The lovers awake, now tidily paired - Helena with Demetrius and Hermia with Lysander. Bottom, too, wakes up and, rejoining his crew, makes final preparation for their play.

At Theseus' Palace, Theseus and Hippolyta are joined by the four lovers and a triple wedding is planned.

The mechanicals present the 'lamentable comedy of *Pyramus and Thisby*' for the court's entertainment. Festivities are concluded at midnight, the couples retire, and the fairies return to bless the palace and the nuptials. (Howard 1969:161-162)

Appendix 3: Text Used in Britten and Mendelssohn

Text selections used in Britten and Mendelssohn's music:

Act II, scene 2: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Paster 1999:35-36)

Titania and elves: page 88-98 in Britten, page 27-40 in Mendelssohn:

TITANIA:

Come, now a roundel and a fairy song;

Then, for the third part of a minute, hence;

Some to kill cankers in the muskrose buds;

Some war with rere mice for their leathern wings,

To make my small elves coats; and some keep back

The clamorous owl, that nightly hoots and wonders

At our quaint spirits. Sing me now asleep;

Then to your offices, and let me rest.

SONG.

I.

FIRST FAIRY

You spotted snakes, with double tongue,

Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;

Newts and blind-worms do no wrong;

Come not near our fairy queen:

CHORUS.

Philomel, with melody,

Sing in our sweet lullaby:

Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby:

Never harm, nor spell, nor charm,

Come our lovely lady nigh;

So good-night, with lullaby.

II.

SECOND FAIRY

Weaving spiders, come not here;

Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence;

Beetles black, approach not near;

Worm nor snail do no offence.

CHORUS

Philomel with melody, &c.

FIRST FAIRY

Hence away; now all is well.

One, aloof, stand sentinel.

[Exeunt Fairies. TITANIA sleeps.]

[Enter OBERON.]

OBERON

What thou seest when thou dost wake,

[Squeezes the flower on TITANIA'S eyelids.]

Do it for thy true-love take;

Love and languish for his sake;

Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,

Pard, or boar with bristled hair,

In thy eye that shall appear

When thou wak'st, it is thy dear;

Wake when some vile thing is near.

Act V: Elves, Oberon and Tytania Finale: Britten p. 306-314 Mendelssohn p. 65-73.

[Enter OBERON and TITANIA, with their Train.]

OBERON

Through the house give glimmering light,

(By the dead and drowsy fire:) (not in Britten)

Every elf and fairy sprite

(Hop as light as bird from brier:) not in Britten

('sing' in Britten And this ditty, after me,

Sing and dance it trippingly.

TITANIA

First, rehearse your song by rote,

To each word a warbling note;

Hand in hand, with fairy grace,

Will we sing, and bless this place.

[Song and Dance.]

OBERON

Now, until the break of day,

Through this house each fairy stray,

To the best bride-bed will we,

Which by us shall blessed be;

And the issue there create

Ever shall be fortunate.

So shall all the couples three

Ever true in loving be;

(And the blots of Nature's hand

Shall not in their issue stand:

Never mole, hare-lip, nor scar,

Nor mark prodigious, such as are
Despised in nativity,
Shall upon their children be. -) Not in Britten
With this field-dew consecrate,
Every fairy take his gate;
And each several chamber bless,
Through this palace, with sweet peace;
E'er shall it in safety rest,
And the owner of it blest.
Trip away:
Make no stay:
Meet me all by break of day.

[Exeunt OBERON, TITANIA, and Train.]

PUCK

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, - and all is mended, -
That you have but slumber'd here
While these visions did appear.
(And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,) not in Britten

Gentles, do not reprehend;

If you pardon, we will mend.

(And, as I am an honest Puck,

If we have unearned luck

Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,

We will make amends ere long;) not in Britten

Else the Puck a liar call:

So, good night unto you all.

Give me your hands, if we be friends,

And Robin shall restore amends. (Britten 1960), (IMSLP), (Gradesaver.com) (Paster 1999)

Sources:

Britten, Benjamin: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 1960, Hawkes and Son, London

Online:

Mendelssohn sheet music: http://imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/8/8c/IMSLP22335-PMLP18079-Mendelssohn_op.061_Ein_Sommernachtstraum_Breitkopf_vs.pdf

Shakespeare e-text: <http://www.gradesaver.com/midsummer-nights-dream/e-text/>

Appendix 4: Britten's Music

88

Piano introduction for 'Mysterious' in G major, 6/4 time. The music features a series of chords in the right hand and a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes in the left hand.

94 Mysterious (*misterioso*) ♩ = about 104

TYTANIA
TITANIA

distant (entfernt) *pp freely (frei)*

Come, _____
Kommt! _____

Glock.

ppp

Strs. (with ped.) (portamento)

The vocal entry for Tytania and Titania is in G major, 6/4 time. The vocal line is marked *pp* and *freely*. The piano accompaniment includes a Glockenspiel part and strings marked *ppp* with a portamento effect.

T. come, _____ now a roun - del, _____ and a
Kommt! _____ Ei - nen Rund - tanz, _____ ei - nen

sim.

The vocal entry for Tytania and Titania continues. The vocal line is marked *sim.* (sustained). The piano accompaniment includes a Glockenspiel part and strings marked *ppp* with a portamento effect.

T. fai - ry song; _____ Then _____ for the third part of a minute,
Fe - en - sang! _____ Dann _____ auf ein Drit - tel - chen Mi - nu - te

The vocal entry for Tytania and Titania continues. The vocal line is marked *sim.* (sustained). The piano accompaniment includes a Glockenspiel part and strings marked *ppp* with a portamento effect.

T. hence, fort! Some to kill can - kers in the
Ihr tö - tet Rau - pen auf dem

T. musk - rose buds, Some war with rere mice for their leathern
Ro - sen - blatt! Ihr a - ber führt mit Fle - der - mäu - sen

cresc.

95 entering with Cobweb, Blossom, Mustardseed, Moth and Fairies
tritt ein mit Spinnweb, Bohnenblüte, Senfsamen, Motte und Elfen.

T. wings, To make my small elves coats, and some keep back The clam' - rous
Krieg Und nehmt als Rock den Balg. Ihr scheucht von uns den läst' - gen

T. owl that night - ly hoots, and wonders, won - ders At our
Kauz, Der nächt - lich schreit und nicht ver - stehn kann Uns - re

lively (lebhaft)

T. *quaint spirits, our quaint spirits:*
leich - - ten El-fen, unsre leich - - - - - ten El-fen

96

T. *sing me now asleep, Then to your of-fi-ces, and let me*
Singt mich nun in Schlaf, Dann an den Dienst geschwind und lasst mich

T. *rest. Sing me now a - sleep, sing*
ruhn. Singt mich nun in Schlaf, singt

mf *dim.*

She lies down with the fairies around her.
Sie legt sich nieder und die Elfen umgeben sie.

T. *- me now a-sleep, then to your of-fi - ces, and let me rest.*
- mich nun in Schlaf, Dann an den Dienst geschwind und lasst mich ruhn.

pp dim.

97 Lively and rhythmic ♩ = 108
(vivace e ritmico)

SOLO FAIRIES (SOLO ELFEN) *pp*

You spotted snakes with
Ihr bun-te Schlan - - - gen,

pp

Str. col lg. and perc.

Solo Fairies
Solo Elfen

pp

dou-ble tongue, Thorny hedge - - hogs be not seen,
zwei-ge - züngt,, I - gel, Mol - - - ché, fort von hier,

p

Solo Fairies
Solo Elfen

pp

Newts and blind - - worms do no wrong, Come not near our
Dass ihr eu - - er Gift nicht bringt! In der Kö - - ni -

p

Solo Fairies
Solo Elfen

mf

Fair-y Queen. Phil - o - mel, Phil - o - mel with me - lo - dy, Sing
- - gin Re - vier. Nach - ti - gall, Nach - ti - gall mit Me - lo - dei Sing

p

B. & H. 18707

Solo Fairies Solo Elfen

dim.

in our sweet lul-la, lu-la lul-la by, un-ser Ei-po-pei, Ei-a-po-pei,

dim.

98 *gently (gentile) d. = 60*

Solo Fairies Solo Elfen

rall. *ppp* ALL FAIRIES ALLE ELFEN

lul-la-by, lul-la-by, lul-la-by, lul-la-by, Ei-a-po-pei, Ei-a-po-pei, Ei-a-po-pei, Ei-a-po-pei,

Harp

ppp

All Fairies Alle Elfen

express.

lul-la-by, lul-la-by, Ne-ver harm, nor spell, nor ei-a-po-pei, Dass kein Spruch, kein Zau-ber-

mf *express. and smooth*

All Fairies Alle Elfen

pp

charm, Come our love-ly La-dy nigh. So good night with lul-la-by, lul-la, -fluch Uns-rer Her-rin schäd-lich sei. Gu-te Nacht, ei-a-po-pei, ei-

dim.

99 As before ♩ = 108
(come sopra)

All
Fairies
Alle
Elfen

lul - la, lul - la - by, lul - la, lul - la - by
- a - po - pei, ei - a - po - pei

SOLO FAIRIES
(SOLO ELFEN)

Weav - ing spi - ders come not here, Hence you long - legg'd
Schwar - ze Kä - fer, uns um - gebt Nicht mit Sum - men,

Solo
Fairies
Solo
Elfen

spin - ners, hence. Beet - les black ap - proach not near,
macht euch fort! Spin - nen, die ihr künst - lich webt,

Solo
Fairies
Solo
Elfen

Worm nor snail do no of - fence
Webt an ei - - - nem and - ern Ort.

B. & H. 18707

Solo Fairies Solo Elfen

mf

Phil-o-mel, Phil-o-mel with me-lo-dy, Sing in our sweet
 Nach-ti-gall, Nach-ti-gall, mit Me-lo-dei Sing un-ser Ei-

mf *dim.*

Solo Fairies Solo Elfen

rall.

lul-la, lul-la, lul-la-by
 -a-po-pei, ei-a-po-pei

pp

Harps

100

gently (gentile)
ALL FAIRIES ALLE ELFEN

ppp

Lul-la-by, lul-la-by, lul-la-by, lul-la-by,
 Ei-a-po-pei - a, ei-a-po-pei - a,

ppp

All Fairies Alle Elfen

(d=d) *express.*

lul-la-by, lul-la-by. Ne-ver harm, nor spell, nor
 ei-a, ei-a, ei-a. Dass kein Spruch, kein Zau-ber-

express. *mf*

All Fairies
Alle Elfen

pp

charm, Come our love-ly La- dy nigh. So good- night with lul- la -
- fluch Uns- rer Her- rin schäd- lich sei. Gu- te Nacht, ei- a - po -

dim.

All Fairies
Alle Elfen

dim.

- by, lul- la, lul- la, lul- la - by, lul- la, lul- la - by.
- pei, ei - a - po - pei, ei - a - po - pei.

pp *ppp*

101 As before ♩ = 108
(come sopra)

COBWEB (SPINNWEB) *whispered (flüsternd)*

Hence a-way, now
Al- les gut, nun

ppp *pp*

Cobweb
Spinnweb

all is well;
auf und fort.

One a- loof- stand sen- ti -
Ei- ner steh Schild- wa- che

always pp

The Fairies (except one standing sentry) slip out.
 Die Elfen schlüpfen fort, nur eine bleibt als Wache zurück.

Cobweb
 Spinnweb

- - nel.
 dort.

dim.

Oberon appears.
 Oberon erscheint.

102 He squeezes the juice onto Tytania's eyes.
 Er träufelt Titania den Saft ins Auge.

$\text{♩} = 90$
 OBERON *p* but clearly (deutlich)

What thou se-est when thou dost wake, Do it
 Was, er - wa-chend, du wirst sehn, Wähl' es

Celesta

pp

Str. (trem.)

o. _____ for thy true Love take; Love and lan-guish for his sake;
 _____ dir zum Lieb-sten schön, Sei-net - wil - len schmacht' und stöhn.

sim.

(in canon. sim.)

smooth and express
(gebunden und ausdrucksvoll)

f

O. Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,
Sei es Brumm- bär, Ka- ter, Luchs,

marked

Db.
pizz.

O. Pard, or boar with bri- stled hair,
Pan- ther, borst- ger E- ber, Fuchs,

P distinctly (deutlich)

O. In thine eye that shall ap-pear, When thou wak'st, it is thy dear,
Was dein Aug' zu- erst er-späht, Das sei dir ins Herz ge-sät,

(sim.)

marked (betont)

O. Wake when some vile thing is near,
 Wa - che auf, wenn's vor dir steht,

Glock. Harp. Glock.

103

O. Wake when some vile thing is near.
 Wa - che auf, wenn's vor dir steht.

Glock. Harp.

(portamento)
 Oberon slowly disappears and the lights
 (Oberon verschwindet langsam und

Glock. Harp.

fade on the sleeping Tytania.
 das Licht verlischt über der schlafenden Titania.)

sim. <

Glock. Harp.

pp

CURTAIN

mp

ppp

ppp

B. & H. 18707

and chases the fairies.
Besen und jagt die Elfen.

Musical score for the first system, featuring a piano accompaniment with dynamic markings *sfz*, *f*, and *sfz*.

Musical score for the second system, featuring a piano accompaniment with dynamic markings *f*, *mf*, and *sfz*.

98

Slow march (*marcia, lento*)

Oberon and Tytania and the other Fairies appear.
Oberon, Tytania und die anderen Elfen erscheinen.

(♩ = ♩)

OBERON

Musical score for the third system, including vocal lines for Oberon and piano accompaniment with dynamic markings *p* and *sfz*. The vocal line includes the lyrics: "Through the house / Die - sem Haus".

Musical score for the fourth system, including vocal lines and piano accompaniment with dynamic markings and a "slow cresc." instruction. The vocal line includes the lyrics: "give glim - m'ring light, Ev - 'ry elf and fai - ry sprite, Sing / gebt gold' - nen Schein, Je - de El - fe stell' sich ein. Singl".

— this dit-ty af - ter me, Sing and dance it trip-ping-ly.
 — den Spruch nach mei-ner Art, Singt und tanzt ihn leis' und zart.

TYTANIA
TITANIA

First re-hearse your song by rote, To each word a
 Singt das Lied und singt es frei, Je - des Wort zur

sim.

warb - ling note. Hand in hand, with fai - ry grace, Will we
 Me - lo - dei. Hand in Hand, nach Fe - en - weis; Singt und

OBERON

Hand in hand with fai - ry grace, Will we
 Hand in Hand, nach Fe - en - weis; Singt und

(mf) *(f)*

99 Slow and solemn $\text{♩} = 48$
(lento e solenne)

T.
sing and bless this place.
seg - net die - sen Kreis.

O.
sing and bless this place.
seg - net die - sen Kreis.

8

ff

Strs. pizz.
Brass *pp* (l.h.)

Harp 7 8 7 7 8

MUSTARDSEED SENFSAMEN *pp*

OBERON and FAIRY CHORUS
OBERON und ELFENCHOR

MOTH MOTTE To the
Kommt zum

Now un - til the break of day, Through this house each Fai - ry stray.
Nun bis Ta - ges Wie - der - kehr, El - fen, schwärmt im Haus um - her.

always *pp*

W.W. with voices

7 7 7 7 sim. 7 7 7 7

COBWEB SPINNWEB *pp*

PEASEBLOSSOM
BOHNENBLÜTE Which by us shall bles - sed be:
Dass es Heil durch uns ge - winn!

M. S. Moth Motte
best bride - bed will we, And the
be - sten Braut - bett hin, Das Ge -

O. Fairy Ch. O. Elfench.
To the best bride - bed will we, Which by us shall bles - sed be:
Kommt zum be - sten Braut - bett hin, Dass es Heil durch uns ge - winn!

7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7

TYTANIA
TITANIA

pp >

E - ver shall be
Sei ge - seg - net

E - ver shall be for - tu - nate:
Sei ge - seg - net im - mer - fort.

is - sue there cre - ate, So shall
- schlecht, ent - spros - sen dort, So auch

And the is - sue there cre - ate, E - ver shall be for - tu - nate:
Das Ge - schlecht, ent - spros - sen dort, Sei ge - seg - net im - mer - fort.

for - tu - nate: E - ver true.
im - mer - fort. E - wig treu.

E - ver true in lo - ving be.
E - wig treu die Lie - be sei.

all the cou - ples three.
die - ser Paa - re drei.

So shall all the cou - ples three, E - ver true in lo - ving be.
So auch die - ser Paa - re drei, E - wig treu die Lie - be sei.

100 (with Cobweb ad lib.) (mit Spinnweb ad lib.)

T. *f* With this field-dew con-se - crate, Ev'-ry Fai - ry take his
El - fen, sprengt durchs gan - ze Haus Trop-fen heil'-gen Wie - sen -

C. Sp. P. B. *f* With this field - dew, Ev'-ry Fai - ry take his
Sprengt durch das Haus Trop-fen heil'-gen Wie - sen -

M. S. Moth Motte *f* With this field - dew, Ev'-ry Fai - ry take his
Sprengt durch das Haus Trop-fen heil'-gen Wie - sen -

Fairy Ch. O. Elfench. *f* With this field-dew con-se - crate, Ev'-ry Fai - ry take his
El - fen, sprengt durchs gan - ze Haus Trop-fen heil'-gen Wie - sen -

T. *f* gait, And each se-v'ral chamber bless, Through this
- täus, - taus, Je - des Zim-mer, je - den Saal Weiht und

C. Sp. P. B. *f* gait, And Zim - each cham - ber bless, Through this
- täus, - taus, mer wohl und Saal Weiht und

M. S. Moth Motte *f* gait, And Zim - each cham - ber bless, Through this
- täus, - taus, mer wohl und Saal Weiht und

Fairy Ch. O. Elfench. *f* gait, And Je - each se-v'ral cham-ber bless, Through this
- täus, - taus, Je - des Zim-mer, je - den Saal Weiht und

Pa - lace with sweet peace, ———
 seg - net all - zu - mal!

Pa - lace with sweet peace, ———
 seg - net all - zu - mal!

Pa - lace with sweet peace, ———
 seg - net all - zu - mal!

Pa - lace with sweet peace, ———
 seg - net all - zu - mal!

And the ow - ner
 Und sein Herr

And the ow - ner
 Und sein Herr ein

E - ver shall in safe - ty rest,
 Frie - de sei in die - sem Schloss

pp
dim.
pp

E - ver blest.
 Glücks - ge - noss.

- ner of it blest.
 ein Glücks - ge - noss.

of it blest.
 Glücks - ge - noss.

And the ow - ner of it blest.
 Und sein Herr ein Glücks - ge - noss.

OBERON
mf
 Trip a - way,
 Nun ge - nung,

pp always

make no stay; Meet me all by break of day.
 fort im Sprung, Trefft mich mit der Däm-mer - ung.

Exeunt all but Puck.
 Alle ab ausser Puck.

101 Quick and gay $\text{♩} = 138$
 (allegro vivo)

PUCK (♩ = ♩) (No beat) (ohne Takt)

If we sha-dows have of-fen-ded,
 Wenn wir Schat-ten euch be-lei-digt,

W.W. Str. *f*
ppp *sfpp*
 Tpt. Tamb. (with Ped.)

(No beat)

Think but this (and all is men-ded)
 Denkt nur dies (was uns ver-ter-digt)

Puck *f* *p*
sim. *sfpp* *pp*
 Tpt. *p*

(No beat)

(C)

That you have but slum-ber'd here,
 Dass euch süs-ser Schlaf um-fing,

The first system of music features a vocal line starting with a fermata and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a dynamic marking of *sfz* and a fermata. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4.

(C)

While these visions did ap-pear.
 Da das Spiel hier vor sich ging.

The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The piano part features a dynamic marking of *pp* and a fermata. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4.

(No beat)

Geh-tles, do not re-pre-hend.
 Freun-de, ihr sollt uns nicht schmähn,

The third system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The piano part features a dynamic marking of *pp* and a fermata. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4.

(No beat)

if you par-don, we will mend; Else the Puck a li-ar call.
 Wird's doch näch-stens bes-ser gehn, Sonst soll Puck ein Lüg-ner sein.

The fourth system concludes the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The piano part features a dynamic marking of *pp* and a fermata. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4.

102 (No beat) *p*

Puck

So good night un-to you all.
Nun gut! Nacht euch, Gross und Klein.

pp *sim.* *sfpp*

(No beat)

Puck

Give me your hands, if we be friends, And Robin
Un-ser Spiel froh zu be-en-den, Grusst uns

pp *sim.* *sfpp*

He claps his hands.
Er schlägt in die Hände.

Puck

shall re-store a - mends.
mit ge-wog' - - nen Hän - den.

pp

QUICK CURTAIN

f *sf*

Source: Britten, B. (1960). *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Opera in three acts, op. 64,

Boosey and Hawkes Music Publishers Limited, London

Lied mit Chor.

Nº 3.

Allegro ma non troppo.

Titania.
 Kommt, einen Ringel, einen Feensang,
 Dann auf das Drittel 'ner Minute fort!

Ihr tödtet Raupen in den Rosenknospen!
 Ihr andern führt mit Fledermäusen Krieg,
 Bringt ihrer Flügel Balg als Beute heim,
 Den kleinen Elfen Rücke draus zu machen

Ihr endlich sollt den Fanz, der nächtlich kreischt,
 Und über unsre schmucken Geister staunt,
 Von uns verscheuchen!

Singt mich nun in Schlaf!
 An eure Dienste dann,
 Und lasst mich ruhn!

1ter Elfe. Sopran Solo
leggiero

Bun te Schlan - gen, zwei - ge - zü ngt, I - gel,

Mol - che fort von hier! dass ihr eu - ren Gift nicht bringt in der

Kö - ni - gin Re - vier,

cresc.

dass ihr eu - ren Gift nicht bringt in der

p sopra

Kö - ni - gin Re - vier, in der Kö - ni - gin Re -

dim.

vier. Fort von hier! Fort von

mf

hier! Bun - te Schlan - gen, zwei - ge -

cresc.

zünge, I gel, Mol che fort von hier, fort von

hier! fort von hier!

I^{ter} Elfe Sopr. I. solo.

dolce
Nachtigall, mit Me. lo. dei sing' in unser Ey. a. popey, Ey. a. popey,

II^{ter} Elfe Sopr. II. solo.

dolce
Nachtigall, mit Me. lo. dei sing' in unser Ey. a. popey, Ey. a. popey, — a. po. pey—

Sopr. I.

pp
Nachtigall, mit Me. lo. dei sing' in unser Ey. a. popey, Ey. a. popey, — a. po. pey—

Sopr. II.

pp
Nachtigall, mit Me. lo. dei sing' in unser Ey. a. popey, Ey. a. popey, — a. po. pey—

Alt I.

pp
Nachtigall, mit Me. lo. dei sing' in unser Ey. a. popey, Ey. a. popey, — a. po. pey—

Alt II.

pp
Nachtigall, mit Me. lo. dei sing' in unser Ey. a. popey, Ey. a. popey, — a. po. pey—

Chor der Elfen.

dolce

dass kein Spruch, kein Zauberfluch der holden Her-rin schädlich sei.

— apo-pey apo-pey, dass kein Spruch, kein Zauberfluch der holden Her-rin schädlich sei.

— apo-pey apo-pey, dass kein Spruch der Her-rin schädlich sei.

— apo-pey apo-pey, dass kein Spruch der Her-rin schädlich sei.

Nun gute Nacht, nun gute Nacht, gute

Nun gute Nacht, nun gute Nacht,

Nun gute Nacht, nun gute Nacht

gute Nacht,

Nun gute Nacht, nun gute Nacht

gute Nacht, nun gute Nacht

V. A. 146.

Nacht mit Eya-po-pey. Nun gute Nacht,
 nun gute Nacht,
 mit Eya-po-pey Nun gute Nacht,
 gute Nacht,
 mit Eya-po-pey. Nun gute

gute Nacht, nun gu-te Nacht, gute Nacht mit Eyapo-pey. Gute Nacht,
 nun gu-te Nacht, Gute Nacht,
 nun gu-te Nacht mit Eyapo-pey. Gute Nacht,
 Nacht, nun gu-te Nacht mit Eyapo-pey. Gute Nacht,
 gute Nacht nun gute Nacht

cresc.

gu - te Nacht mit Ey - a - po - pey, gu - te Nacht, nun gu - te Nacht mit Ey - a - po -
 mit Ey - a - po - pey, gu - te Nacht mit Ey - a - po -
 gu - te Nacht,
 gu - te Nacht,

pey a - po - pey!
 pey. Nun gu - te Nacht mit Ey - a - po - pey!
pp Nun gu - te Nacht mit Ey - a - po - pey!
pp Nun gu - te Nacht mit Ey - a - po - pey!
pp Nun gu - te Nacht mit Ey - a - po - pey!
dim. *pp* *cresc.*

II^{ter} Elfe Solo.

Schwarze

Rä - fer, uns um - gebt nicht mit Summen. macht euch fort! Spin - nen,

die ihr künstlich webt, webt an ei - nem an - dern Ort!

Spin - nen, die ihr künstlich webt, webt an

ei - nem an - dern Ort, webt an ei - nem an - dern Ort! Macht euch

I^{ter} Elfe.

II^{ter} Elfe.

Macht euch fort! Macht euch fort!

fort! Macht euch fort!

p *cresc.*

fort!

Schwar - ze Rä - fer, uns um - gebt nicht mit

Macht euch fort!

Sum - men, macht euch fort! Macht euch

Macht euch fort, macht euch fort!

fort, macht euch fort!

dim.

dolce
Nach - ti - gall, mit Me - lodei sing' in un - ser

dolce
Nach - ti - gall, mit Me - lodei sing' in un - ser

Sopr. I. *pp*
Nach - ti - gall, mit Me - lodei sing' in un - ser

Sopr. II. *pp*
Nach - ti - gall, mit Me - lodei sing' in un - ser

Chor der Elfen.
Alt I. *pp*
Nach - ti - gall, mit Me - lodei sing' in un - ser

Alt II. *pp*
Nach - ti - gall, mit Me - lodei sing' in un - ser

The first system of the musical score features five vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are for Soprano I, Soprano II, and two parts of the Elf Chorus (Alt I and Alt II). The lyrics are 'Nach - ti - gall, mit Me - lodei sing' in un - ser'. The piano accompaniment consists of a flowing sixteenth-note melody in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand. The tempo and dynamics are marked 'pp' (pianissimo) and 'dolce'.

Ey - a - popey, Ey - a - po - pey, dass kein

Ey - a - popey, Ey - a - popey — a - po - pey — a - po - pey a - po - pey, dass kein

Ey - a - popey, Ey - a - popey — a - po - pey — a - po - pey a - po - pey,

Ey - a - popey, Ey - a - popey — a - po - pey — a - po - pey a - po - pey,

Ey - a - popey, Ey - a - popey — a - po - pey — a - po - pey a - po - pey,

pp *dim.*

The second system of the musical score continues the vocal parts and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are 'Ey - a - popey, Ey - a - po - pey, dass kein'. The piano accompaniment features a more complex texture with chords and moving lines in both hands. The dynamics are marked 'pp' and 'dim.' (diminuendo).

Spruch, kein Zauber - fluch der holden Her - rin schädlich sei. Nun gute
 Spruch, kein Zauber - fluch der holden Her - rin schädlich sei. Nun gute
 dass kein Spruch der Her - rin schädlich sei. Nun gute
 dass kein Spruch der Her - rin schädlich sei. Nun

Nacht. nun gute Nacht, gute Nacht mit Ey - a - po -
 Nacht, nun gute Nacht mit Ey - a - po -
 Nacht, nun gute Nacht mit Ey - a - po -
 gute Nacht, gute Nacht, nun gute Nacht mit Ey - a - po -
 gute Nacht, nun gute Nacht

pey. Nun gute Nacht.

pey Nun gute Nacht,

pey. Nun gute Nacht,

gute Nacht,

pey. Nun gute

gute Nacht, nun gu - te Nacht, gute Nacht mit Ey - a - po -

nun gu - te Nacht mit Ey - a - po -

nun gu - te Nacht mit Ey - a - po -

Nacht, nun gute Nacht mit Ey - a - po -

gute Nacht,

ad. *

V. A. 446.

pey, gu - te Nacht, — gu - te Nacht mit Ey - a - po - pey, gu - te
 pey, gu - te Nacht, — gu - te Nacht mit Ey - a - po - pey, gu - te
 pey, gu - te Nacht, — gu - te
 pey, gu - te Nacht, — gu - te

Nacht, — nun gu - te Nacht mit Ey - a - po - pey
 Nacht, — nun gu - te Nacht mit Ey - a - po - pey, nun gu - te
 Nacht, — nun gu - te
 Nacht, — nun gu - te

a - po - pey! *p* Alles
 Nacht mit Ey - a - po - pey!
 Nacht mit Ey - a - po - pey!
 Nacht mit Ey - a - po - pey!
 Nacht mit Ey - a - po - pey!
 gut! nun auf und fort! Ei - ner halte Wa - che dort!
dim. *trem.* *pp* *p*
 (Oberon tritt auf.)
attacca

N^o 4

Andante.

(Während Oberon Titania verzaubert.)

Oberon. Was du wirst erwachend sehn, Wähl' es dir zum Liebchen schön, Seinetwegen schmacht' und stöhn! Sei es Brummbar, Rater, Luchs,

una corda

Borstger Eber oder Fuchs. Was sich zeigt an diesem Platz, Wenn du aufwachst, wird dein Schatz; Siehst du gleich die ärgste Fratz.

Allegro molto.

(Oberon verschwindet.)

(Lysander und Hermia kommen.)

Dialog bis: Droll.
Die Arme darf nicht liegen nah Dem Schlagetodt der Liebe da.

Andante.
Droll. Allen Zauber

dieses Thaus, Flegel, giess ich auf dich aus. Wachst du auf, so scheuch den Schlummer

dir vom Aug' der Liebe Kummer! Nun erwach, ich geh' davon, denn ich muss zu Oberon.

Allegro molto

(Droll verschwindet)

(Demetrius und Helena kommen.)

Finale.

65

(Oberon und Titania mit allen Elfen kommen.)

Allegro di molto.

Oberon.
Bei des Feuers matten Flimmern
Geister, Elfen stellt euch ein!

Tanzet in den bunten Zimmern
manchen leichten Ringelreih'n!

Singt nach meiner Lieder Weise
singet, hüpfet lose, leise!

Ad. *

Soprani. (Mit Tanz.)
Bei des

CHOR DER ELFEN. Alti.
Wirbelt mir mit zarter Kunst eine Not auf jedes Wort!
Hand in Hand, mit Feengunst singt und segnet diesen Ort!

pp

p

Ad. *

Feu - ers mat - tem Flim - mern, Gei - ster, El - fen,

stellt euch ein! Tan - zet in den bun - ten

Zim - mern man - chen leich - ten Rin - gel - reih'n!

Singt nach sei - ner Lie - der Wei - se, sin - get.

hü - pfet lo - se, lei - se! Bei des Feu - ers

mat - tem Flim - mern, Gei - ster El - fen, stellt euch

ein! Singt nach sei - ner Lie - der Wei - se,

p

rit. * *rit.*

sin - get, hü - pfet lo - se, lei - sel Bei des

Feu - ers mat - tem Flim - mern, Gei - ster El fen,

stellt euch ein! lei - se, lei - se

p

rit. * *rit.*

1^{er} Elfe. Solo

stellt euch ein! Wir belt mir mit zarter Kunst

sempre pp

ei - ne Not' auf je - des Wort; Hand in Hand, mit

Fe - en - gunst, singt und seg - net die - sen Ort!

Tutti Singt und seg - - net die - sen Ort! **Solo** Hand in Hand, mit

Fe - en - gunst, - singt und seg - net die - sen Ort! Hand in

Hand, mit Fe - en - gunst, singt und seg - net die - sen

Ort! Hand in Hand, mit Fe - en - gunst, singt

staccatissimo

und seg - net die - sen Ort, singt

sopra

und seg - - net, und seg - - net, und seg - net

die - sen Ort!

CHOR. Bei des Feu - ers mat - tem Flim - mern, Gei - ster,

The first system of music consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line with the lyrics 'die - sen Ort!'. The middle staff is a vocal line for the chorus with the lyrics 'CHOR. Bei des Feu - ers mat - tem Flim - mern, Gei - ster,'. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment starting with a *pp* dynamic marking.

El - fen stellt euch ein! Tan - zet in den

The second system of music consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line with the lyrics 'El - fen stellt euch ein! Tan - zet in den'. The middle staff is a vocal line. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment.

bun - ten Zim - mern man - chen leich - ten Rin - gel -

The third system of music consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line with the lyrics 'bun - ten Zim - mern man - chen leich - ten Rin - gel -'. The middle staff is a vocal line. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment.

rein! Singt nach sei - ner Lie - der Wei - se,

The fourth system of music consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line with the lyrics 'rein! Singt nach sei - ner Lie - der Wei - se,'. The middle staff is a vocal line. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment.

sin - get, hü - pfet - lo - se, lei - se, lo - se, lei - se,

sempre pp

lo - se, lei - se!

lo - se, lei - se,

lo - se, lei - se, lo - se, lei - se,

lo - se, lei - se,

se! lo - se, lei - se!

lo - se, lei - se!

p Oberon.
Nun bis Tages Wiederkehr
Elfen, schwärmt im Haus umher!

un poco ritardando

Kommt zum besten Brautbett hin, dass es Heil durch uns gewinn; das Geschlecht, entsprossen dort,

sei gesegnet immerfort; Jedes dieser Paare sei ewiglich im Lieben treu. Ihr Geschlecht

pp

soll nimmer schänden die Natur mit Feindeshänden; und mit Zeichen schlimmer Art,

dolce

Muttermal und Hasenschart, werde durch des Himmels Zorn ihnen nie ein Kind geborn.

dolce

Elfen, sprengt durch's ganze Haus Tropfen heil'gen Wiesenthau's. Jedes Zimmer,

jeden Saal weihet und segnet allzumal! Friede sei in diesem Schloss, und

sein Herr ein Glücksgenosse Nun genung, fort im Sprung, trifft mich in der Dämmerung!

Tempo I. (Allegro di molto.)

Soprani
CHOR. Nun ge-nung, fort im Sprung, trifft ihn in der Däm- me - rung!

Alti

(Oberon, Titania und Gefolge ab.) **Droll.** (tritt vor und spricht während der letzten Fermate zum Publikum:)

Wenn wir Schatten euch beleidigt, Wollt ihr diesen Kindertand
O so glaubt und wohl vertheidigt, Der wie leere Träume schwand,
Sind wir dann!_ ihr Alle schier Liebe Herrn, nicht gar verschmäh'n.
Habet nur geschlummert hier Sollt ihr bald was Bessres sehn,
Und geschaut in Nachtgesichten Wenn wir bösem Schlangenzischen
Eures eignen Hirnes Dichten; Unverdienter Weis' entwischen,
So verheisst auf Ehre

Droll bald euch unsres Dankes Zoll, ist ein Schelm zu heissen willig, wenn dies nicht geschieht wie billig.

Nun gute Nacht! Das Spiel zu enden,
begrüsst uns mit gewognen Händen!

Source:

Mendelssohn sheet music: http://imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/8/8c/IMSLP22335-PMLP18079-Mendelssohn_op.061_Ein_Sommernachtstraum_Breitkopf_vs.pdf