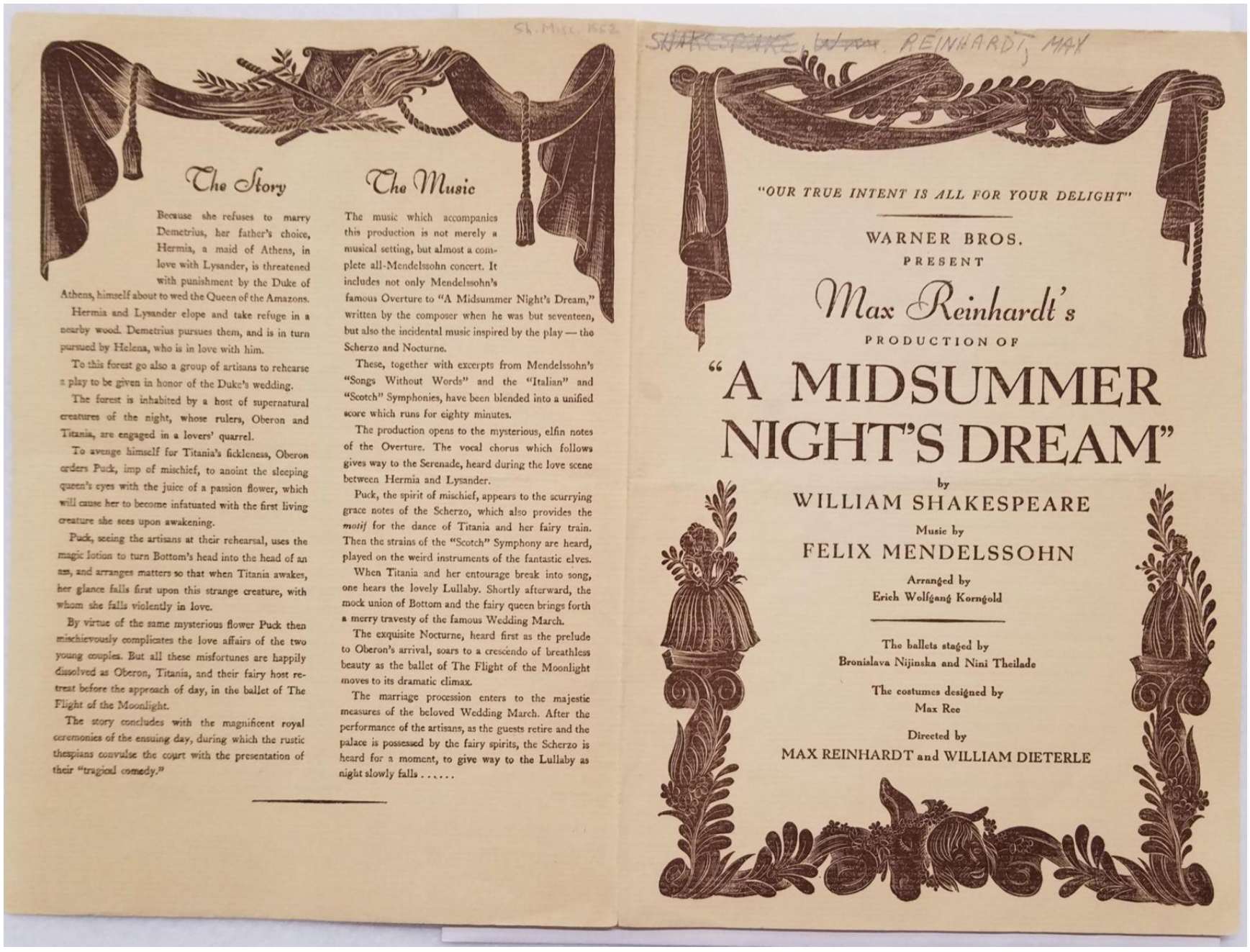
Back and front of film program:



The Story

Because she refuses to marry Demetrius, her father's choice, Hermia, a maid of Athens, in love with Lysander, is threatened with punishment by the Duke of Athens, himself about to wed the Queen of the Amazons.

Hermia and Lysander elope and take refuge in a nearby wood. Demetrius pursues them, and is in turn pursued by Helena, who is in love with him.

To this forest go also a group of artisans to rehearse a play to be given in honor of the Duke's wedding.

The forest is inhabited by a host of supernatural creatures of the night, whose rulers, Oberon and Titania, are engaged in a lovers' quarrel.

To avenge himself for Titania's fickleness, Oberon orders Puck, imp of mischief, to anoint the sleeping queen's eyes with the juice of a passion flower, which will cause her to become infatuated with the first living creature she sees upon awakening.

Puck, seeing the artisans at their rehearsal, uses the magic lotion to turn Bottom's head into the head of an ass, and arranges matters so that when Titania awakes, her glance falls first upon this strange creature, with whom she falls violently in love.

By virtue of the same mysterious flower Puck then mischievously complicates the love affairs of the two young couples. But all these misfortunes are happily dissolved as Oberon, Titania, and their fairy host retreat before the approach of day, in the ballet of The Flight of the Moonlight.

The story concludes with the magnificent royal ceremonies of the ensuing day, during which the rustic thespians convulse the court with the presentation of their "tragical comedy."

The Music

The music which accompanies this production is not merely a musical setting, but almost a complete all-Mendelssohn concert. It includes not only Mendelssohn's famous Overture to "A Midsummer Night's Dream," written by the composer when he was but seventeen, but also the incidental music inspired by the play — the Scherzo and Nocturne.

These, together with excerpts from Mendelssohn's "Songs Without Words" and the "Italian" and "Scotch" Symphonies, have been blended into a unified score which runs for eighty minutes.

The production opens to the mysterious, elfin notes of the Overture. The vocal chorus which follows gives way to the Serenade, heard during the love scene between Hermia and Lysander.

Puck, the spirit of mischief, appears to the scurrying grace notes of the Scherzo, which also provides the *motif* for the dance of Titania and her fairy train. Then the strains of the "Scotch" Symphony are heard, played on the weird instruments of the fantastic elves.

When Titania and her entourage break into song, one hears the lovely Lullaby. Shortly afterward, the mock union of Bottom and the fairy queen brings forth a merry travesty of the famous Wedding March.

The exquisite Nocturne, heard first as the prelude to Oberon's arrival, soars to a crescendo of breathless beauty as the ballet of The Flight of the Moonlight moves to its dramatic climax.

The marriage procession enters to the majestic measures of the beloved Wedding March. After the performance of the artisans, as the guests retire and the palace is possessed by the fairy spirits, the Scherzo is heard for a moment, to give way to the Lullaby as night slowly falls . . . . . .

"OUR TRUE INTENT IS ALL FOR YOUR DELIGHT"

WARNER BROS.
PRESENT

Max Reinhardt's
PRODUCTION OF

"A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM"

by
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Music by
FELIX MENDELSSOHN

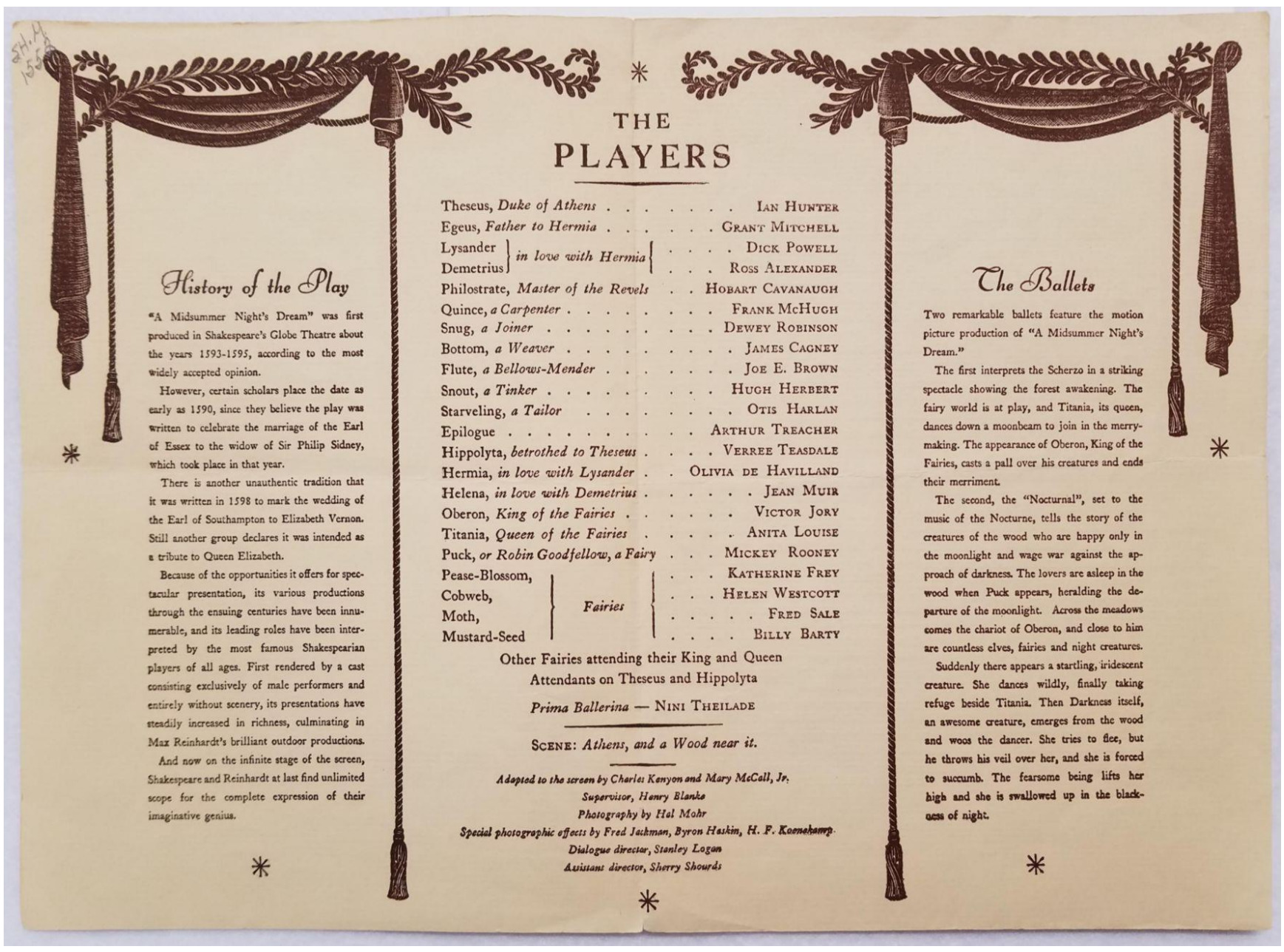
Arranged by
Erich Wolfgang Korngold

The ballets staged by
Bronislava Nijinska and Nini Theilade

The costumes designed by
Max Ree

Directed by
MAX REINHARDT and WILLIAM DIETERLE

Inside of film program:



History of the Play

"A Midsummer Night's Dream" was first produced in Shakespeare's Globe Theatre about the years 1593-1595, according to the most widely accepted opinion.

However, certain scholars place the date as early as 1590, since they believe the play was written to celebrate the marriage of the Earl of Essex to the widow of Sir Philip Sidney, which took place in that year.

There is another unauthentic tradition that it was written in 1598 to mark the wedding of the Earl of Southampton to Elizabeth Vernon. Still another group declares it was intended as a tribute to Queen Elizabeth.

Because of the opportunities it offers for spectacular presentation, its various productions through the ensuing centuries have been innumerable, and its leading roles have been interpreted by the most famous Shakespearian players of all ages. First rendered by a cast consisting exclusively of male performers and entirely without scenery, its presentations have steadily increased in richness, culminating in Max Reinhardt's brilliant outdoor productions.

And now on the infinite stage of the screen, Shakespeare and Reinhardt at last find unlimited scope for the complete expression of their imaginative genius.

THE PLAYERS

Theseus, *Duke of Athens*	Ian Hunter
Egeus, *Father to Hermia*	Grant Mitchell
Lysander, *in love with Hermia*	Dick Powell
Demetrius, *in love with Hermia*	Ross Alexander
Philostrate, *Master of the Revels*	Hobart Cavanaugh
Quince, *a Carpenter*	Frank McHugh
Snug, *a Joiner*	Dewey Robinson
Bottom, *a Weaver*	James Cagney
Flute, *a Bellows-Mender*	Joe E. Brown
Snout, *a Tinker*	Hugh Herbert
Starveling, *a Tailor*	Otis Harlan
Epilogue	Arthur Treacher
Hippolyta, *betrothed to Theseus*	Verree Teasdale
Hermia, *in love with Lysander*	Olivia de Havilland
Helena, *in love with Demetrius*	Jean Muir
Oberon, *King of the Fairies*	Victor Jory
Titania, *Queen of the Fairies*	Anita Louise
Puck, *or Robin Goodfellow, a Fairy*	Mickey Rooney
Pease-Blossom, *Fairy*	Katherine Frey
Cobweb, *Fairy*	Helen Westcott
Moth, *Fairy*	Fred Sale
Mustard-Seed, *Fairy*	Billy Barty

Other Fairies attending their King and Queen
Attendants on Theseus and Hippolyta

Prima Ballerina — Nini Theilade

Scene: *Athens, and a Wood near it.*

Adapted to the screen by Charles Kenyon and Mary McCall, Jr.
Supervisor, Henry Blanke
Photography by Hal Mohr
Special photographic effects by Fred Jackman, Byron Haskin, H. F. Koenekamp
Dialogue director, Stanley Logan
Assistant director, Sherry Shourds

The Ballets

Two remarkable ballets feature the motion picture production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

The first interprets the Scherzo in a striking spectacle showing the forest awakening. The fairy world is at play, and Titania, its queen, dances down a moonbeam to join in the merry-making. The appearance of Oberon, King of the Fairies, casts a pall over his creatures and ends their merriment.

The second, the "Nocturnal", set to the music of the Nocturne, tells the story of the creatures of the wood who are happy only in the moonlight and wage war against the approach of darkness. The lovers are asleep in the wood when Puck appears, heralding the departure of the moonlight. Across the meadows comes the chariot of Oberon, and close to him are countless elves, fairies and night creatures.

Suddenly there appears a startling, iridescent creature. She dances wildly, finally taking refuge beside Titania. Then Darkness itself, an awesome creature, emerges from the wood and woos the dancer. She tries to flee, but he throws his veil over her, and she is forced to succumb. The fearsome being lifts her high and she is swallowed up in the blackness of night.