



## The Soul of Athens: Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'

By Jan H. Blits

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The Soul of Athens: Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" studies Shakespeare's portrayal of the founding of Athens through a close reading of one of the Bard's most memorable comedies. Through a painstakingly close reading of the play, author Jan H. Blits shows how Shakespeare's portrayal of this legendary first democracy illuminates the natural doubleness of the human soul by emphasizing the lure of both beauty and wisdom. A Midsummer Night's Dream is thus Shakespeare's examination not only of a particular city at a particular time, but of the essential duality of the human soul. Coupling careful attention to detail with interpretive breadth, The Soul of Athens examines the nature of love, the natural doubleness of human thinking and the ambiguous relation of image and reality, as well as patriarchy and democracy, and heroic and moral virtue.

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### **Editorial Review**

#### Review

Jan Blit's *The Soul of Athens* is a provocative and insightful contribution to our understanding of this singular and important play. (*The Review of Politics*)

#### About the Author

Jan H. Blits is a Professor of the University Honor Faculty at the University of Delaware, and author of several books on Shakespeare's plays including *Deadly Thought: Hamlet and the Human Soul* (Lexington Books, 2000).

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