

## Document Citation

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## WEDNESDAY

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Voice  
Sarris + Allen  
Ingmar Bergman's **SMILES OF A SUMMER NIGHT** (1955), from his screenplay, with Ulla Jacobsson, Eva Dahlbeck, Margit Carlquist, Harriet Andersson, Gunnar Björnstrand, and Jarl Kulle, formally began Bergman's classic period and a string of expansive, well-made humanist dramas. This sardonic comedy of manners and desires is made buoyant and enchanting by the remarkable cast, especially in the sensuality radiated by the four lead actresses as they explore partners in a midsummer masquerade with echoes of Shakespeare, Mozart, Renoir, and Strindberg. Although Bergman's characters walk on the edge of

mortality, they have not yet plunged into an abyss of morbidity. The 19th century costumes and conceits enable them to perform with more plausible grace under pressure than would have been possible in a contemporary setting. Bergman also established a multiplicity of perspectives from which to tell his story of interlocking intrigues. Although Dahlbeck and Björnstrand advance on the high level of sophisticated merriment established in their previous films, Bergman doesn't highlight their characters above the others, a pitfall of the Broadway musical adaptation *A Little Night Music*. (Co-feature: Bergman's *The Magic Flute*) **Theater 80 Saints Marks: 3:35, 7:50**