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JOHN BLOW

# Venus & Adonis

Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, René Jacobs

••• Oh51 Digital HMG501684 July 2008

## The blossoming of the English opera.

First performed before the court at Oxford in 1681, *Venus and Adonis* was presented as a "masque for the entertainment of the King" (Charles II). Like Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, it is in fact a true opera, totally successful in concept, original in musical content and moving in the characterisation of the protagonists. Borrowing the notion of the overture, the prologue and the instrumental dances from the French opera and juxtaposing them with the language of Italian music, Blow here created his masterpiece and one of the summits of 17th century English music.

This title was released for the first time in 1999.



## Artists

- Rosemary Joshua
- Gerald Finley
- Robin Blaze
- Clare College Chapel Choir
- The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment
- René Jacobs

## Composers

- John Blow

## Contents

JOHN BLOW [1649-1708]

· Overture (2'40)

### THE PROLOGUE

· Cupid, chorus *Behold my arrows and my bow* (0'49)

· Shepherds, Shepherdess *Come shepherds all* (1'59)

· Cupid *Courtiers there is no faith in you* (0'47)

· Chorus, Shepherds, Shepherdess *In these sweet groves* (2'35)

· Cupid's Entry (1'17)

### ACT I

· The Act tune (1'33)

· Adonis, Venus *Venus! Adonis!* (2'06)

· Hunter's Music, Venus (1'09)

· Adonis, Venus *Adonis will not hunt today* (2'27)

· Huntsman, Adonis, chorus *Come, follow the noblest game* (2'33)

· Entry: A dance by a Huntsman (1'01)

### ACT II

· The Act tune (2'53)

- Cupid, Venus *You place with such delightful care* (1'42)
- Cupids, Little Cupids *The Cupid's Lesson: The insolent, the arrogant* (1'35)
- Cupid *Choose for the formal fool* (1'37)
- A Dance of Cupids (1'35)
- Venus *Call the Graces* (0'52)
- Chorus of the Graces *Mortals below, Cupids above* (1'27)
- The Graces' Dance (1'18)
- Gavatt (0'47)
- Sarabrand for the Graces (1'36)
- A Ground (1'39)
- The Act tune (2'09)

### **ACT III**

- Venus, Adonis *Adonis, uncall'd for sighs* (5'06)
- Venus *With solemn pomp let mourning Cupids bear* (2'26)
- Chorus *Mourn for thy servant* (3'22)