

Purcell (1)

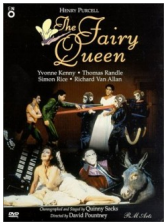
Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 28 February 2012 17:42 - Last Updated Sunday, 28 April 2013 09:52

Purcell

1. The Fairy Queen (mp4)

490 MB



Titania - Yvonne Kenny Oberon - Thomas Randle Puck - Simon Rice Theseus/Hymen - Richard Van Allan The Indian Boy - Arthur Pita Orchestra and Chorus of the English National Opera Nicholas Kok - conductor Recorded live at English National Opera in 1995

The Fairy Queen is one of Henry Purcell's most popular operas. Full of memorable orchestral music and arias, this work, based on Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, is very accessible and a real pleasure to listen to again and again. The opera's music has a wide variety of orchestrations, showing Purcell's talent in many registers. This DVD, recorded in 1995, features the English National Opera's production of this work, timed to celebrate the tercentenary of the composer's death, in a fine presentation with excellent singers and dancers.

This is one of those faux-modern productions, with the players wearing costumes ranging from old-fashioned to modern, from lace to leather, in various states of dress and undress, with the obligatory modern choreography, sometimes cryptic, sometimes ridiculous. Apparently, this performance incited the ire of some critics when it was given in London. The daring costumes, cross-dressing, sexual ambiguity, camp and innovative staging are not to the taste of all, far from it. But Purcell's music, like Shakespeare's play, is ludic and brash, so the choices made in the staging cannot be truly criticized for going in that direction. It should be noted that that use of dancers goes beyond what is usual for such a production, and the choreography is indeed interesting. --- Kirk McElhearn, musicweb-international.com

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