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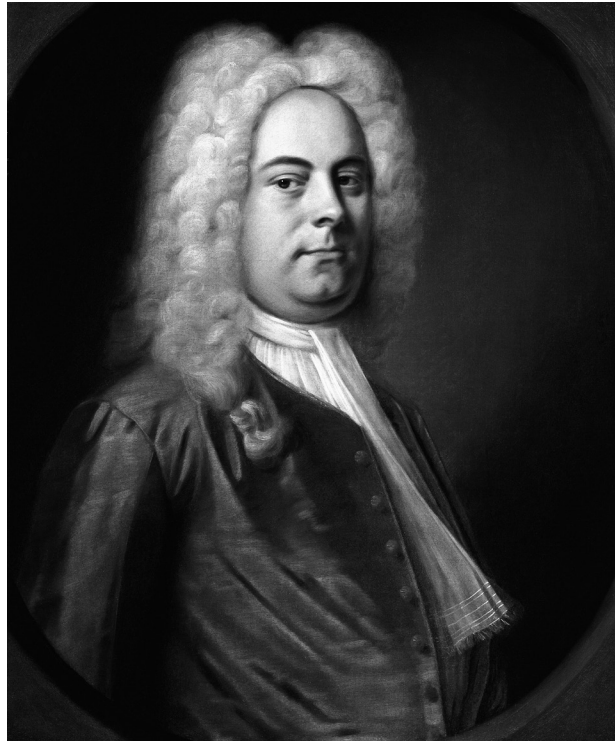
SUPER AUDIO CD

HANDEL ACIS AND GALATEA

Lucy Crowe · Allan Clayton · Benjamin Hulett
Neal Davies · Jeremy Budd

CHANDOS early music

Early Opera Company
CHRISTIAN CURNYN



Portrait attributed to Balthasar Denner (1685–1749)
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GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL, c. 1726

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685–1759)

Acis and Galatea, HWV 49a

(1718)

Pastoral entertainment in one act

Libretto probably co-authored by John Gay, Alexander Pope, and John Hughes

Galatea.....	Lucy Crowe soprano
Acis.....	Allan Clayton tenor
Damon.....	Benjamin Hulett tenor
Polyphemus.....	Neal Davies bass-baritone
Coridon.....	Jeremy Budd tenor
Soprano in choruses.....	Rowan Pierce soprano

Early Opera Company
Christian Curnyn

COMPACT DISC ONE

1	1 Sinfonia. Presto	3:02
2	2 Chorus: 'Oh, the pleasure of the plains!'	5:07
3	3 Recitative, accompanied. Galatea: 'Ye verdant plains and woody mountains'	0:41
4	4 Air. Galatea: 'Hush, ye pretty warbling choir!'. Andante	5:57
5	5 [Air.] Acis: 'Where shall I seek the charming fair?'. Larghetto	2:50
6	6 Recitative. Damon: 'Stay, shepherd, stay!'	0:21
7	7 Air. Damon: 'Shepherd, what art thou pursuing?'. Andante	4:05
8	8 Recitative. Acis: 'Lo, here my love, turn, Galatea, hither turn thy eyes!'	0:21
9	9 Air. Acis: 'Love in her eyes sits playing'. Larghetto	6:15
10	10 Recitative. Galatea: 'Oh, didst thou know the pains of absent love'	0:13
11	11 Air. Galatea: 'As when the dove'. Andante	5:53
12	12 Duet. Acis and Galatea: 'Happy we!'. Presto	2:48
		TT 37:38

COMPACT DISC TWO

[1]	14	Chorus: 'Wretched lovers! Fate has past'. A tempo ordinario	3:55
[2]	15	Recitative, accompany'd. Polyphemus: 'I rage – I melt – I burn!'. Furioso – Adag[io] Furi[oso] – Adagio e piano	1:11
[3]	16	[Air.] Polyphemus: 'O ruddier than the cherry'. Allegro	2:51
[4]	17	Recitative. Polyphemus: 'Whither, fairest, art thou running' with Galatea	1:01
[5]	18	Air. Polyphemus: 'Cease to beauty to be suing'. Allegro e staccato	4:55
[6]	19	Air. Coridon: 'Would you gain the tender creature'. Allegro	5:10
[7]	20	Recitative. Acis: 'His hideous love provokes my rage'	0:19
[8]	21	Air. Acis: 'Love sounds th' alarm'. Allegro	4:15
[9]	22	Air. Damon: 'Consider, fond shepherd'. Larghetto	6:53
[10]	23	Recitative. Galatea: 'Cease, oh cease, thou gentle youth'	0:26
[11]	24	[Trio.] Acis and Galatea: 'The flocks shall leave the mountains'. Andante e staccato with Polyphemus	2:13
[12]	25	Recitative, accompany'd. Acis: 'Help, Galatea! Help, ye parent gods!'	1:17

¹³	26	Chorus: 'Mourn, all ye muses! Weep, all ye swains!'. Adagio ma non troppo	3:01
¹⁴	27	Solo and Chorus. Galatea: 'Must I my Acis still bemoan'. Adagio with Chorus	4:25
¹⁵	28	Recitative. Galatea: "'Tis done! Thus I exert my pow'r Divine'	0:25
¹⁶	29	Air. Galatea: 'Heart, the seat of soft delight'. Larghetto	3:42
¹⁷	30	Chorus: 'Galatea, dry thy tears'	3:04
			TT 49:10



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LUCY CROWE



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ALLAN CLAYTON

EARLY OPERA COMPANY

Christian Curnyn conductor
(supported by Charlie Laing)

SOLOISTS

Lucy Crowe
(supported by an anonymous donor)

Allan Clayton
(supported by Edward Dolan-Abrahams)

Benjamin Hulett
(supported by an anonymous donor)

Neal Davies
(supported by Mary and Martin Bailey)

Jeremy Budd

ORCHESTRA OF EARLY OPERA COMPANY

violin I

(supported by Mindy Green)

Alida Schat

Persephone Gibbs

Hannah Tibell

violin II

(supported by Marilyn Stock)

Emilia Benjamin

Liz MacCarthy

Dominika Feher

cello

(supported by Alan Sainer)

Joseph Crouch

Andrew Skidmore

double-bass

Judith Evans

theorbo

(supported by Vivienne Monk)

David Miller

oboe I

(supported by Joe Smouha)

Katharina Spreckelsen

oboe II
(supported by Jane Ridley)
Hannah McLaughlin

recorder I
Ian Wilson

recorder II
Katharina Spreckelsen

bassoon
Zoe Shevlin

harpsichord
Christopher Bucknall

The string players use historically accurate equal tension stringing
and the majority use no metal wound strings.

Double-manual Flemish harpsichord
by Keith McGowan and Malcolm Greenhalgh,
Paris and London 2017

Temperament: Vallotti
Pitch: A = 415 Hz

THANK YOU

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Thank you all!

OTHER THANKS

Early Opera Company is also grateful to Jo Gipps for his typically generous ingenuity, Jonathan Crane for creative film-making, Marcus Gipps and Clare Norburn for crowdfunding advice, and most of all to its talented musicians for their commitment and boundless abilities.

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BENJAMIN HULETT



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NEAL DAVIES

HANDEL: ACIS AND GALATEA

The topsy-turvy management of Italian opera at the King's Theatre on the Haymarket reached another impasse at the end of the 1716 / 17 season. Finishing on 29 June 1717 with a performance of Ariosti's *Tito Manlio*, the season had included revivals of *Rinaldo* and *Amadigi*, but Handel had not composed any new operas for the London stage for two years. A few weeks later, on 17 July 1717, he provided the *Water Music* for a royal barge party along the River Thames from Whitehall to Chelsea (and back again). Other than the immediate approval by George I of Handel's new orchestral suite, not much else at the court was harmonious: toxic squabbling between the king and the Prince of Wales (something of a Hanoverian tradition) divided the loyalties of opera patrons to the extent that it was impossible to plan new productions without either party taking offence – and these political tensions coincided with the perennial blights of financial insecurity and irregularities at the King's Theatre. It is little wonder that some musicians found alternative patronage outside the capital city from James Brydges, the Earl of Carnarvon (1674 – 1744).

Educated at Westminster School, New College, Oxford, and Wolfenbüttel, Brydges profited from cannily making short-term investments using the wages of unpaid soldiers when he held public office as paymaster of Queen Anne's army on the continent during the War of the Spanish Succession; between his appointment in 1705 and the Peace of Utrecht in 1713 he amassed a fortune of £600,000. In 1714 he purchased and redeveloped Cannons – a country estate near Edgware, about ten miles north-west of London, which had belonged to the family of his deceased first wife. The architect, James Gibbs (whose later buildings would include St Martin-in-the-Fields and the Radcliffe Camera), designed a square courtyard mansion in the Palladian style to replace an old Tudor manor house; surrounded by formal gardens, avenues of trees, an ornamental lake, and an elaborate water garden, the house was set diagonally so that approaching visitors would see two sides of the house, and a gilt lead equestrian statue of George I was accorded a prominent position. An avid patron of the arts and sciences,

Brydges cultivated an impressive library, collected paintings by old masters, and rebuilt the nearby parish church of St Lawrence, Little Stanmore, in a continental baroque style replete with frescoes by Louis Laguerre. Such fondness for books, architecture, and music was shared by many British noblemen (for example, Lord Burlington), but, more unusually, the earl recruited musicians for his own private 'Cannons Concert'. The cellist and composer Nicola Francesco Haym (1678 – 1729) was the first to be hired by the end of 1715, and over the next year Brydges added a few more string players, an oboist, a flautist, and at least a couple of singers. These musicians were a mixture of household servants and professionals seeking employment whilst the opera orchestra was on an indefinite hiatus; additional performers visited from time to time but were not added officially to the payroll. In about August 1717 Handel started composing a series of anthems for Sunday services in St Lawrence's. Although it is unlikely that he resided at Cannons for long continuous periods, he proceeded to write more than a dozen works, in several different genres, for Brydges. By mid-June 1718 the household musicians had grown to at least five singers (an odd combination of treble, three tenors, and bass),

and a small band of strings (four violins, two cellos, and one double-bass, but not yet viola) and woodwinds (two oboists, who also played recorders, and a bassoonist) – precisely the peculiar constitution of voices and instruments required for *Acis and Galatea*.

The date and circumstances of the composition and performance of this masque are enigmatic. Among several folios that are missing is the last page of the autograph score, on which the composer upon its completion would have signed and dated the work. However, an early manuscript, made for Elizabeth Legh (now part of Lord Malmesbury's collection), was probably copied from the (now lost) performing score of the original Cannons version; dated by its owner to suggest that the work was composed in 1718, the manuscript contains several essential clarifications about the content, rubrics, instrumentation, and performing forces of the masque, and calls it 'an English opera'. This tallies with a letter from Sir David Dalrymple (1st Baronet of Hailes and Lord Advocate of Scotland) to Hugh Campbell (3rd Earl of Loudoun), dated 27 May 1718:

I have been at Canons with E[arl] of Carnarvan who lives en Prince & to boot is a worthy beneficent man, I heard sermon at his parish church which

for painting and ornament exceeds
 every thing in this Country[:] he has a
 Chorus of his own, the Musick is made
 for himself and sung by his own servants,
 besides which there is a little opera now
 a making for his diversion whereof the
 Musick will not be made publick. The
 words are to be furnished by M[ess]rs
 Pope & Gay, the musick to be composed
 by Hendell, It is as good as finished,
 and I am promised some of the Songs
 by Dr Arbuthnot who is one of the club
 of composers which your Lo[rd]s[hip]
 shall have as soon as I get it.

Acis and Galatea was probably first
 performed at Cannons in mid-summer 1718.
 There is no evidence to support legends that
 it was enacted on the terrace overlooking the
 gardens, and that an actual fountain was used
 as a timely stage prop towards the end – it
 is an intriguing coincidence that the Revd
 John Theophilus Desaguliers, appointed as
 Brydges's personal chaplain and minister
 at St Lawrence's in 1716, was a disciple of
 Newton and an expert on hydraulic water
 works. It is plausible that the 'little opera'
 was performed outdoors after the manner
 of an Italian serenata – such as Handel's
 own previous treatment of the same story,
Aci, Galatea e Polifemo (Naples, 1708). In

its varied dramatic tone, structure, balance
 of characters, and musical content, the
 English masque is entirely different from
 the Neapolitan serenata but each distinctive
 work is an astute and charming retelling of a
 myth versified by Ovid (43 BC – 17 AD) in
 Book XIII of *Metamorphoses*. The sea nymph
 Galatea (daughter of the marine gods Nereus
 and Doris) and the shepherd Acis (son of the
 Arcadian forest god Faunus and the river
 nymph Simaethis) are blissfully in love, but
 the monstrous Polyphemus (the same Cyclops
 as was outwitted by Homer's Odysseus) burns
 with amorous desire for Galatea and tries
 to lure her away from his rival by singing
 a grotesque serenade. When this fails, the
 frustrated Polyphemus resorts to violence;
 whilst Mount Etna shakes, he hurls an
 enormous boulder at Acis, who is crushed to
 death. But by godly intervention his gushing
 blood metamorphoses into a bubbling spring
 that becomes the source of the River Aci –
 thereby, in a metaphysical sense, the tragic
 lovers are united eternally in the Sicilian sea.

The Neapolitan libretto by Nicola Giuvo
 represented only the three protagonists,
 whereas the English reinvention of the story
 added two confidant shepherds: the cynical
 Damon cautions Acis to be pragmatic about
 love when faced with life-threatening danger;

in contrast, the optimistic Coridon counsels Polyphemus that his ill-tempered bullying is less likely to impress Galatea than softer, gentler, and kinder methods of seduction. The English libretto seems to have been co-authored by John Gay, Alexander Pope, and John Hughes – members of the Scriblerus Club of writers who had assembled in the circle of Lord Burlington at his home in Piccadilly. (Burlington was also a patron of Handel; the writers and the composer would all have been acquainted long before their visits to Cannons.) The exact nature of their collaboration is unclear: Gay's contributions are difficult to identify with certainty and perhaps form the majority of the text, but Pope may have been responsible for the chorus 'Wretched lovers!' (which is similar to a description of the enraged Neptune in his translation of the *Iliad*, published in 1718) and the trio 'The flocks shall leave the mountains' (adapted from 'Autumn', in the youthful *Pastorals*, published in 1709 but written five years earlier). Hughes provided the words for Coridon's 'Would you gain the tender creature', which Handel added after having completed the rest of the music (it is absent from the autograph, but the Malmesbury manuscript confirms its position and the identity of the third tenor

character). A few lines were taken from John Dryden's translation of Ovid, published by Jacob Tonson in 1717 as part of a complete English version of *Metamorphoses* prepared 'by the Most Eminent Hands' (besides Dryden, some of the contributors were Pope, Gay, Joseph Addison, William Congreve, and Nahum Tate); these included Dryden's witty description of the clumsy attempt by the infatuated Polyphemus to play music to serenade Galatea, and the last words of the dying Acis.

A concise entertainment designed to be played straight through without an interval, the Cannons masque is incontrovertibly Handel's first English masterpiece. It conjures a journey through pastoral, affectionate, poetic, ardent, sentimental, ominous, hilarious, tragic, cathartic, and magical elements that was unprecedented in his settings of the English language and which Handel never replicated afterwards in a comparable idiom. The lively Sinfonia, featuring a pair of chuckling oboes and playfully scampering strings, establishes the Arcadian paradise depicted in the chorus 'Oh, the pleasure of the plains!' – an idyllic pastoral romp in which the five singers 'dance and sport the hours away'. A languid accompanied recitative for Galatea segues into

‘Hush, ye pretty warbling choir!’; notated in the unusual time signature of 9 / 16, its flauto piccolo obbligato providing the birdsong to which the sea nymph responds as she searches for her beloved Acis; some elements of the instrumental parts are similar to passages in ‘S’agitata in mezzo all’onde’, sung by her earlier Neapolitan alto incarnation – the only musical kinship between Handel’s two settings of the story. The dotted rhythms of Acis’s ‘Where shall I seek the charming fair?’ have an elegant dance-like French gait. Damon interjects that Acis should share the carefree pleasures of the shepherds rather than pursue a love affair destined to prove ruinous (‘Shepherd, what art thou pursuing?’), but Acis replies with an exquisite siciliano, ‘Love in her eyes sits playing’ (with both oboes doubling the first violins), a sublime portrait of the paeon of the ardent lover to the beauty of his beloved. Galatea affirms that she adores Acis (‘As when the dove’), her words conveyed with extraordinary delicacy in a limpid triple-time *Andante* in which graceful violins adorn the close synthesis between the voice and oboe parts.

The happiness of the lovers peaks in their exultant fast duet, ‘Happy we!’ (based on a gigue from Harpsichord Suite No. 6 in F sharp minor), but their innocent bliss

cannot last – the ominous five-part madrigal ‘Wretched lovers!’ is the closest Handel ever gets to Monteverdian mannerism. Its gorgeous contrapuntal opening section is essentially a vanitas lament that mortal love is inevitably transitory; impending tragedy is insinuated by astonishing harmonic modulations and the juxtaposition of the melancholic theme to the introduction of rapid warnings about the arrival of Polyphemus (Handel using ideas borrowed from Reinhard Keiser’s chamber duet *Caro autor di mia doglia*). But there is also overt humour, in the spacious illustration of the Cyclops’s giant footsteps (‘See what ample strides he takes!’) and in the scurrying description of the forest’s shaking and waves that ‘run frighten’d to the shores’. The comedy increases in the furious accompanied recitative of Polyphemus, ‘I rage – I melt – I burn!’, packed full of amusing contrasts and characterisation, such as the long low F held by the bass singer, in a sudden *Adagio* passage for soft strings, when Polyphemus mentions his ‘capacious mouth’. Moreover, the use of a high-pitched sopranino recorder (sounding an octave higher than written pitch) and deliberately clumsy word stresses in ‘O ruddier than the cherry’ show Handel taking an obvious delight in the hilarity of

the monster's absurd attempt to serenade Galatea with 'a hundred reeds of decent growth'. After Galatea's horrified rejection, the mood darkens as Polyphemus sings 'Cease to beauty to be suing', its D minor tonality and staccato rhetoric conveying the Cyclops's cruel sarcasm. Recognising that Polyphemus is unlikely to win over Galatea with impetuous threats, Coridon advises the brutish Cyclops to treat the nymph 'softly, gently, kindly' in the courtly 'Would you gain the tender creature'.

Chivalrously, Acis intends to defend Galatea's honour in the heroic miniature 'Love sounds th' alarm'; the lilting triple-time music nonchalantly insinuates combative fanfare motifs whilst the melismatic voice part is in concert with the oboes. The hot-headed youth is deflected from certain disaster by Damon's wisdom that pleasure and life are fleeting ('Consider, fond shepherd', a gorgeous *Larghetto* in which mellifluous high tenor passages form a rapturous dialogue with solo oboe). Reassured by each other's constancy, Acis and Galatea exchange sincere vows in 'The flocks shall leave the mountains' while watched from afar by the violently jealous Polyphemus, who disturbs the texture of a love duet with menacing interruptions ('Torture! fury! rage!');

whilst the lovers continue, oblivious to their peril, the murderous resolve of the Cyclops progressively dominates and concludes the trio. Acis dies in the course of a brief yet perfect F minor *accompagnato*, the falling chromaticism of its string parts preparing the way for the anguished madrigalian chorus 'Mourn, all ye muses!'; its unaccompanied five-voice refrain, 'the gentle Acis is no more!', and short *pianissimo* coda for three-part strings represent Handel at his most Purcellian – although in fact its musical substance was reshaped from a trio in the Brookes Passion (c. 1716), which responds poignantly to Christ's final words, 'Es ist vollbracht'. The sparsest texture in the masque is reserved for the grief-stricken lament of Galatea, 'Must I my Acis still bemoan', the soprano joined only by a doleful solo oboe and reduced bass line until the other four voices encourage her to use her divine powers to return Acis to their kindred gods (i.e. the rulers of the sea). Accordingly, Galatea brings about the metamorphic miracle in the cathartic 'Heart, the seat of soft delight'; pastoral recorders bubbling in thirds, doubled by violins, serenely describe the newly created river god living forever as the source of fresh water that shall run from the slopes of Etna to the sea. Galatea's closing

lines are echoed at the end of the final chorus, 'Galatea, dry thy tears' – its unfurling melismatic cadences observing that the stream is 'murm'ring still his gentle love".

Annotations in Handel's autograph reveal that the part of Acis was sung by the tenor James Blackley, and that Damon was played by Francis Rowe, but otherwise the cast of the 1718 performance is unknown – although the Malmesbury manuscript confirms that each character was assigned to specific lines in the five-part choruses. Handel's public performances of *Acis and Galatea* between 1732 and 1742 never preserved the scheme and content of the original Cannons masque, but a reasonably coherent subscription edition published by the London music seller John Walsh in 1743 provided the basis for later re-orchestrated arrangements by Mozart (Vienna, 1788) and Mendelssohn (Berlin, 1828). Posterity was less benevolent to James Brydges and his palatial country house. Notwithstanding his elevation to the title of 1st Duke of Chandos in 1719, and sponsorship of Handel's first English oratorio, *Esther*, in about 1720, he lost a lot of money in the collapse of the South Sea Company. By the time he died, in 1744, his irresponsible son and heir, Henry Brydges, had already squandered what was

left of the family fortune. Cannons was unceremoniously pulled down in 1747–48, and the building materials, library, and art collection were auctioned and dispersed. To paraphrase Damon's words, it turned out that the pleasure of the plains was fleeting indeed.

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Born in Staffordshire, the soprano **Lucy Crowe** studied at the Royal Academy of Music, where she was recently appointed Fellow. Her repertoire ranging from Purcell, Handel, and Mozart to Donizetti's Adina and Verdi's Gilda, she has sung at major houses including The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, English National Opera, Teatro Real, Madrid, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Bayerische Staatsoper, and The Metropolitan Opera. In concert, she has performed with many of the world's finest orchestras and conductors, including the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Gustavo Dudamel, Boston Symphony Orchestra under Andris Nelsons, Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia under Sir Antonio Pappano, Berliner Philharmoniker under Sir Simon Rattle, Orchestre national de France under Daniele Gatti, Philharmonia

Orchestra under Esa-Pekka Salonen, London Symphony Orchestra under Daniel Harding and Sir Mark Elder, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra under Edward Gardner, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment under Sir Charles Mackerras, and Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra under Sir John Eliot Gardiner, at venues such as the Wigmore Hall, Carnegie Hall, and Concertgebouw, as well as the BBC Proms and the Aldeburgh, Edinburgh, Mostly Mozart, and Salzburg festivals. On disc, Lucy Crowe has recorded Handel's *Il pastor fido* and works by Handel and Vivaldi with La Nuova Musica under David Bates, a solo Handel disc, *Il Caro Sassone*, with Harry Bicket and The English Concert, and, for Chandos, works by Lutosławski with the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Edward Gardner, and Handel's *Alceste* and Eccles's *The Judgment of Paris* with Christian Curnyn and the Early Opera Company.

Established as one of the most exciting and sought-after singers of his generation, the tenor **Allan Clayton** studied at St John's College, Cambridge and the Royal Academy of Music in London. An Associate of the Royal Academy of Music and, from 2007 to 2009, a BBC New Generation Artist, he has won The Queen's Commendation

for Excellence and a Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship, among other awards. He has appeared at the world's great opera houses, including The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, Komische Oper Berlin, Théâtre national de l'Opéra-Comique, De Nationale Opera, and Bayerische Staatsoper. He is a regular visitor at Glyndebourne Festival Opera, where he originated the title role in the world premiere production of Brett Dean's *Hamlet*. His other major operatic roles include David (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), Cassio (*Otello*), Castor (*Castor et Pollux*), Lysander (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Male Chorus (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*), and Angel (*Written on Skin*). His concert appearances include performances of *The Dream of Gerontius* with the London Symphony Orchestra and Sir Mark Elder, Britten's *War Requiem* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Semyon Bychkov, and *Das Rheingold* with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Vladimir Jurowski. He also appears regularly at the BBC Proms. A consummate recitalist, Allan Clayton has given lieder recitals at the Cheltenham, Perth, and Aldeburgh festivals. He performs regularly at the Wigmore Hall, London with such artists as Sophie Bevan, Chris Glynn, Paul Lewis, and James Baillieu.

A graduate of New College, Oxford and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, the tenor **Benjamin Hulett** studies with David Pollard. He has appeared in concert with Sir Jeffrey Tate, Sir Andrew Davis, Peter Oundjian, Frans Brüggen, Thomas Zehetmair, Christopher Hogwood, Harry Bicket, at the Wiener Musikverein and Salzburg Mozartwoche with Ivor Bolton, BBC Proms and Edinburgh International Festival with Sir Roger Norrington, and on tour with Emmanuelle Haïm. He has sung Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*) with the Berliner Philharmoniker and Sir Simon Rattle, performed at The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, Bayerische Staatsoper, Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin, Opera North, Theater an der Wien, and Welsh National Opera, and appeared at the Salzburg, Glyndebourne, and Baden-Baden festivals. He sang his first Tom Rakewell (*The Rake's Progress*) in Caen, Limoges, Reims, Rouen, and Luxembourg. Elsewhere, he has performed Gonzalve (*L'Heure espagnole*) with the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Charles Dutoit, Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*) at Welsh National Opera, Arbace (*Idomeneo*) at Teatro Real, Madrid, and Tamino at The Royal Opera. His many roles at Staatsoper Hamburg have included Tamino, Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*),

and Narraboth (*Salome*). The recordings of Benjamin Hulett have been singled out for nominations and awards by *BBC Music*, *Gramophone*, the Grammys, L'Orfée d'Or, and *Diapason*.

The bass-baritone **Neal Davies** studied at King's College, London and the Royal Academy of Music and in 1991 won the Lieder Prize at the Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. He has appeared in concert with the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Hallé, Cleveland Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta Nacional de España, and Wiener Philharmoniker, with Sir Andrew Davis, Sir Mark Elder, Paul McCreeh, Ivor Bolton, René Jacobs, Mariss Jansons, William Christie, Edward Gardner, David Afkham, Pierre Boulez, Christoph von Dohnányi, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Frans Brüggen, and Daniel Harding. He is a regular guest at the Edinburgh International Festival, BBC Proms, and with Les Violons du Roy under Bernard Labadie and Jonathan Cohen. He has sung Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Alaska Wolf Joe (*Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt*

Mahagonny), and in *Giulio Cesare* at The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, and Zebul (*Jephtha*), Publio (*La clemenza di Tito*), Ariodates (*Xerxes*), Dr Kolenatý (*The Makropulos Case*), Garibaldo (*Rodelinda*), and in *L'Allegro* and Ryan Wigglesworth's *A Winter's Tale* at English National Opera; he also performs with Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera, Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin, Opera di Roma, and Lyric Opera of Chicago. Neal Davies appeared in performances of Charpentier's *David et Jonathas* at Aix-en-Provence, available on DVD.

Born in Hertfordshire, the tenor **Jeremy Budd** started out as a Chorister at St Paul's Cathedral in London before going on to study at the Royal Academy of Music. Since then he has been much in demand on the concert platform, predominantly in baroque repertoire. He has worked with many of the foremost conductors in this field, including Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Harry Christophers, Masaaki Suzuki, Sir Simon Rattle, Sir Roger Norrington, Sir Charles Mackerras, Paul McCreesh, John Butt, Bernard Labadie, Jeffrey Skidmore, and Christian Curnyn. Operatic engagements have included appearances in a fully staged St John Passion in Paris and *Orfeo* in Lille, both under Emmanuelle Haïm, Purcell's *Dido and*

Aeneas with English Country Garden Opera Company and Chabrier's *L'Étoile* at Théâtre national de l'Opéra-Comique in Paris, both under Sir John Eliot Gardiner, and the role of Pilade (Handel's *Oreste*) at the Linbury Studio Theatre. In concert Jeremy Budd has appeared on a tour of Monteverdi's Vespers with Harry Christophers and the Sixteen, as Evangelist (St Matthew Passion) in Symphony Hall with Jeffrey Skidmore and Ex Cathedra, in Britten's *Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings* with Harry Christophers, madrigals by Monteverdi with Jonathan Cohen and Arcangelo at the Wigmore Hall, Purcell's *King Arthur* with Paul McCreesh, odes by Purcell at the Wigmore Hall, *Acis and Galatea* with Harry Christophers at Kings Place, and J.S. Bach's Christmas Oratorio with Masaaki Suzuki and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

The Yorkshire-born soprano **Rowan Pierce** is a Samling Artist who has performed at the BBC Proms, Wigmore Hall, Sage Gateshead, and Cheltenham, Ludlow, Bath, and Ryedale festivals with ensembles such as the Gabrieli Consort and Players, Florilegium, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. Among others she has

won the Van Someren-Godfrey Memorial Prize, Schubert Society Singer Prize, and President's Award of the Royal College of Music. On the operatic stage she has sung Galatea (*Acis and Galatea*) with the Academy of Ancient Music, as well as Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*), and Miss Wordsworth, Emmie, and Cis (*Albert Herring*). Rowan Pierce also performed in the production of Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* by the Academy of Ancient Music at The Barbican.

The vision of **Early Opera Company**, founded by its Music Director, Christian Curnyn, is to celebrate baroque music in ways that delight and inspire. It collaborates with world-class artists and venues, impress audiences with outstanding productions, recordings, and broadcasts of baroque opera and early music, and invests in the professional development of the next generation of musicians specialising in the baroque. The Company is proud to work closely with The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, with which it was nominated for an Olivier Award (Outstanding Achievement in Opera) for a production of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* at the Roundhouse and of Cavalli's *L'Ormindo* at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse. The association continued with five-star reviews of Rossi's *Orpheus* at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse

and Monteverdi's *The Return of Ulysses* at the Roundhouse. The company has a strong reputation for its performances of works by Handel, including *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*, *Acis and Galatea*, *Serse*, *Alceste*, and *La resurrezione* at the Wigmore Hall and St John's Smith Square, London. It also regularly features works of the French baroque, such as Charpentier's *Actéon* and Rameau's *Platée* and *Castor et Pollux*. Frequently broadcast on BBC, it appeared on #OperaPassion Day on BBC Radio 3's *In Tune* from the Victoria and Albert Museum, BBC4's TV series *Rule Britannia: Music, Mischief and Morals in the 18th Century*, BBC Radio 3's *Opera on 3* (Monteverdi's *The Return of Ulysses*), and at the BBC Proms. Its discography on Chandos, earning accolades from *BBC Music* and *Gramophone*, includes recordings of *Serse*, *Alceste*, *Partenope*, *Semele*, and *Flavio*. Partnerships with festivals and venues have led Early Opera Company to create numerous operas with Iford Arts, explore Monteverdi's music with zero-to-four-year-olds in Spitalfields Music's Musical Rumpus, stage J.S. Bach's witty 'Coffee' Cantata in a Hoxton art gallery, perform Alasdair Nicolson's *Reimagining King Arthur* for young audiences with Wigmore Learning, and duet with East

London Dance and their choreographers.
www.earlyopera.com

Christian Curnyn founded Early Opera Company in 1994 and subsequent years have seen notable performances throughout the UK, along with award-winning recordings. For English National Opera, he has conducted Handel's *Partenope*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Rodelinda*, *After Dido* (Katie Mitchell's realisation of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*), Rameau's *Castor and Pollux*, and Charpentier's *Medée*. Elsewhere, he has conducted Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* at Aldeburgh, *Partenope* for Opera Australia, Vivaldi's *Farnace* and Handel's *Ariodante* at the Salzburger Landestheater, Handel's *Alcina*, Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*, and Rameau's *Platée* for Oper Stuttgart, Rameau's *Zoroastre* at Komische Oper Berlin, Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* at Garsington Opera, Handel's *Semele* at Scottish Opera, Handel's *Saul* at Opera North, Britten's realisation of *The Beggar's Opera*, Cavalli's *L'Ormindo*, Rossi's *Orpheus*, and Monteverdi's *The Return of Ulysses* for The Royal Opera,

Covent Garden, Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, Handel's *Semele*, and Cavalli's *Eliogabalo* at Grange Park Opera, Handel's *Jephtha* at the Händel-Festspiele, Halle, *Partenope* and Mozart's *Così fan tutte* at New York City Opera, Cavalli's *Giasone* and Charpentier's *Medée* at Chicago Opera Theater, Cavalli's *La Calisto* and Gluck's *Ezio* at Oper Frankfurt, and Mozart's *Idomeneo* in Kilkenny and Lisbon. His engagements on the concert platform have included performances with the Academy of Ancient Music, The English Concert, Hallé, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Essener Philharmoniker, Swedish Chamber Orchestra, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Stavanger Symphony Orchestra, and Ulster Orchestra, as well as, further afield, the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, West Australian Symphony Orchestra, and Adelaide Symphony Orchestra. Alongside works with Early Opera Company, Christian Curnyn has recorded Britten's *The Beggar's Opera* with the City of London Sinfonia and a disc of Italian repertoire with Nicola Benedetti and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.



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JEREMY BUDD



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ROWAN PIERCE



EARLY OPERA COMPANY

ACIS AND GALATEA

COMPACT DISC ONE

1 1. Sinfonia

2 2. Chorus

Oh, the pleasure of the plains!
Happy nymphs and happy swains,
Harmless, merry, free and gay,
Dance and sport the hours away.

For us the zephyr blows,
For us distills the dew,
For us unfolds the rose,
And flow'rs display their hue.
For us the winters rain,
For us the summers shine,
Spring swells for us the grain,
And autumn bleeds the wine.

Oh, the pleasure... *da capo*

3 3. Recitative, accompanied

Galatea

Ye verdant plains and woody mountains,
Purling streams and bubbling fountains,
Ye painted glories of the field,
Vain are the pleasures which ye yield;
Too thin the shadow of the grove,
Too faint the gales, to cool my love.

4 4. Air

Galatea

Hush, ye pretty warbling choir!
Your thrilling strains
Awake my pains,
And kindle fierce desire.

Cease your song, and take your flight,
Bring back my Acis to my sight!

Hush... *da capo*

5 5. [Air]

Acis

Where shall I seek the charming fair?
Direct the way, kind genius of the mountains!
O tell me, if you saw my dear!
Seeks she the grove, or bathes in crystal
fountains?

Where... *da capo*

6 6. Recitative

Damon

Stay, shepherd, stay!
See, how thy flocks in yonder valley stray!
What means this melancholy air?
No more thy tuneful pipe we hear.

7. Air

Damon

Shepherd, what art thou pursuing?
Heedless running to thy ruin;
Share our joy, our pleasure share,

Leave thy passion till tomorrow,
Let the day be free from sorrow,
Free from love, and free from care!

Shepherd... *da capo*

8. Recitative

Acis

Lo, here my love, turn, Galatea, hither turn thy
eyes!
See, at thy feet the longing Acis lies.

9. Air

Acis

Love in her eyes sits playing,
And sheds delicious death;
Love in her lips is straying,
And warbling in her breath!

Love on her breast sits panting
And swells with soft desire;
No grace, no charm is wanting,
To set the heart on fire.

Love in her eyes... *da capo*

10. Recitative

Galatea

Oh, didst thou know the pains of absent love,
Acis would ne'er from Galatea rove.

11. Air

Galatea

As when the dove
Laments her love,
All on the naked spray;
When he returns,
No more she mourns,
But loves the live-long day.

Billing, cooing,
Panting, wooing,
Melting murmurs fill the grove,
Melting murmurs, lasting love.

As when... *da capo*

12. Duet

Acis and Galatea

Happy we!

What joys I feel!
What charms I see
Of all youths / nymphs thou dearest boy /
brightest fair!
Thou all my bliss, thou all my joy!

Happy... *da capo*

[13. Chorus
Happy we! *etc.*]

COMPACT DISC TWO

[1] 14. Chorus
Wretched lovers! Fate has past
This sad decree: no joy shall last.
Wretched lovers, quit your dream!
Behold the monster Polypheme!
See what ample strides he takes!
The mountain nods, the forest shakes;
The waves run frighten'd to the shores:
Hark, how the thund'ring giant roars!

[2] 15. Recitative, accompany'd
Polyphemus
I rage – I melt – I burn!
The feeble god has stabb'd me to the heart.
Thou trusty pine,
Prop of my godlike steps, I lay thee by!
Bring me a hundred reeds of decent growth
To make a pipe for my capacious mouth;
In soft enchanting accents let me breathe
Sweet Galatea's beauty, and my love.

[3] 16. [Air]
Polyphemus
O ruddier than the cherry,
O sweeter than the berry,
O nymph more bright
Than moonshine night,
Like kidlings blithe and merry.

Ripe as the melting cluster,
No lily has such lustre;
Yet hard to tame
As raging flame,
And fierce as storms that bluster!

O ruddier... *da capo*

[4] 17. Recitative
Polyphemus
Whither, fairest, art thou running,
Still my warm embraces shunning?

Galatea
The lion calls not to his prey,
Nor bids the wolf the lambkin stay.

Polyphemus
Thee, Polyphemus, great as Jove,
Calls to empire and to love,
To his palace in the rock,
To his dairy, to his flock,

To the grape of purple hue,
To the plum of glossy blue,
Wildings, which expecting stand,
Proud to be gather'd by thy hand.

Galatea

Of infant limbs to make my food,
And swill full draughts of human blood!
Go, monster, bid some other guest!
I loathe the host, I loathe the feast.

5 18. Air

Polyphemus

Cease to beauty to be suing,
Ever whining love disdaining,

Let the brave their aims pursuing,
Still be conqu'ring not complaining,

Cease... *da capo*

6 19. Air

Coridon

Would you gain the tender creature,
Softly, gently, kindly treat her:
Suff'ring is the lover's part.

Beauty by constraint possessing
You enjoy but half the blessing,
Lifeless charms without the heart.

Would you... *da capo*

7 20. Recitative

Acis

His hideous love provokes my rage.
Weak as I am, I must engage!
Inspir'd with thy victorious charms,
The god of love will lend his arms.

8 21. Air

Acis

Love sounds th' alarm,
And fear is a-flying!
When beauty's the prize,
What mortal fears dying?

In defence of my treasure,
I'd bleed at each vein;
Without her no pleasure,
For life is a pain.

Love sounds... *da capo*

9 22. Air

Damon

Consider, fond shepherd,
How fleeting's the pleasure,
That flatters our hope
In pursuit of the fair!

The joys that attend it,
By moments we measure,
But life is too little
To measure our care.

Consider... *da capo*

[10] 23. Recitative

Galatea

Cease, oh cease, thou gentle youth,
Trust my constancy and truth,
Trust my truth and pow'rs above,
The pow'rs propitious still to love!

[11] 24. [Trio]

Acis and Galatea

The flocks shall leave the mountains,
The woods the turtle dove,
The nymphs forsake the fountains,
Ere I forsake my love!

Polyphemus

Torture! fury! rage! despair!
I cannot, cannot bear!

Acis and Galatea

Not show'rs to larks so pleasing,
Nor sunshine to the bee,
Not sleep to toil so easing,
As these dear smiles to me.

Polyphemus

Fly swift, thou massy ruin, fly!
Die, presumptuous Acis, die!

[12] 25. Recitative, accompany'd

Acis

Help, Galatea! Help, ye parent gods!
And take me dying to your deep abode.

[13] 26. Chorus

Mourn, all ye muses! Weep, all ye swains!
Tune, tune your reeds to doleful strains!
Groans, cries and howlings fill the neighb'ring
shore:
Ah, the gentle Acis is no more!

[14] 27. Solo and Chorus

Galatea

Must I my Acis still bemoan,
Inglorious crush'd beneath that stone?

Chorus

Cease, Galatea, cease to grieve!
Bewail not whom thou canst relieve.

Galatea

Must the lovely charming youth
Die for his constancy and truth?

Chorus

Cease, Galatea, cease to grieve!
Bewail not whom thou canst relieve;
Call forth thy pow'r, employ thy art,
The goddess soon can heal thy smart.

Galatea

Say what comfort can you find?
For dark despair o'er clouds my mind.

Chorus

To kindred gods the youth return,
Through verdant plains to roll his urn.

15 28. Recitative

Galatea

'Tis done! Thus I exert my pow'r divine;
Be thou immortal, though thou art not mine!

16 29. Air

Galatea

Heart, the seat of soft delight,
Be thou now a fountain bright!
Purple be no more thy blood,
Glide thou like a crystal flood.
Rock, thy hollow womb disclose!
The bubbling fountain, lo! it flows;
Through the plains he joys to rove,
Murm'ring still his gentle love.

17 30. Chorus

Galatea, dry thy tears,
Acis now a god appears!
See how he rears him from his bed,
See the wreath that binds his head.
Hail! thou gentle murm'ring stream,
Shepherds' pleasure, muses' theme!
Through the plains still joy to rove,
Murm'ring still thy gentle love.

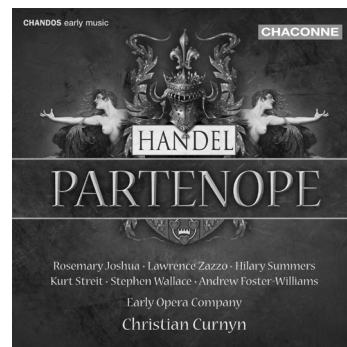
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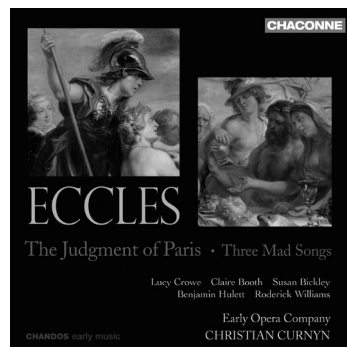


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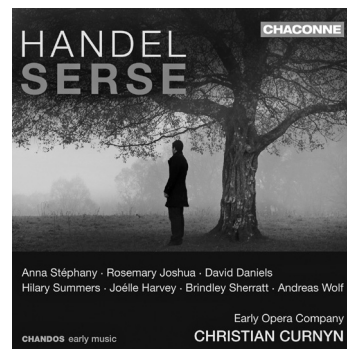


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Clifford Bartlett's edition of *Acis and Galatea*, which was the basis of this recording, is available from The Early Music Company.

Recording producer Rachel Smith

Sound engineer Jonathan Cooper

Assistant engineer Rosanna Fish

Editor Rosanna Fish

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HANDEL: ACIS AND GALATEA

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GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685–1759)

Acis and Galatea, HWV 49a (1718)

Pastoral entertainment in one act

Libretto probably co-authored by John Gay,
Alexander Pope, and John Hughes

Galatea **Lucy Crowe** soprano
Acis **Allan Clayton** tenor
Damon **Benjamin Hulett** tenor
Polyphemus **Neal Davies** bass-baritone
Coridon **Jeremy Budd** tenor
Soprano in choruses **Rowan Pierce** soprano

Early Opera Company
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