

Henry  
**PURCELL**

**THE FAIRY QUEEN**

A Semi-Opera in Five Acts

for Soli, Chorus and Orchestra  
with English text

CHORAL SCORE

K 06868





## PREFACE.

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"THE FAIRY QUEEN" was first performed in 1692, and was repeated in the following year. For the revival in 1693 Purcell added all the music of Act I., and the two songs, "Ye gentle spirits of the air" (No. 24) and "The Plaint" (No. 43). The Opera was adapted from Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," but Purcell did not set a single line of Shakespeare's play to music. The play was considerably curtailed, many lines altered, and some Scenes rearranged; in this mutilated version it was acted, not sung. At the end of each Act some pretext is found for introducing a musical entertainment which has little or nothing to do with the play. Purcell's music, composed towards the end of his short career, includes some of his best work, and shows strong Italian influence.

The very high position of the soprano voices in several numbers, and the frequent employment of male alto voices, are serious obstacles to modern performance of this work. In this edition several numbers have been transposed a tone lower, bringing the soprano parts within a reasonable compass, and enabling the alto solos to be sung by a tenor, for which voice they are better suited than for a contralto. The numbers transposed are Nos. 9-13 and Nos. 44-51 inclusive. Among these it has been necessary to transpose a few instrumental numbers and songs of easy compass, in order to preserve the unity of tonality. The song of Summer, originally for male alto (No. 37), has been transposed from the key of G to that of D, so as to adapt it to a mezzo-soprano. In the Purcell Society's score No. 11 is a trio for alto, tenor, and bass; in this edition the four-part choral version of the music printed in the Appendix has been substituted for it. The remaining alto solos have been left untouched. Nos. 16 ("One charming night") and 28 ("A thousand several ways we'll find") are fairly suitable to a contralto. The part of Mopsa (No. 25) was originally sung by "Mr. Pate in woman's habit," and is intended to have a grotesque effect. But "Orpheus Britannicus" gives the duet in F major, in which case it can be sung by a tenor or a high soprano; this version has the authority of Purcell's autograph in the Gresham College MS. Lastly, the duet for two altos, No. 32 ("Let the fifes and the clarions"), has been left in its original key, since its whole character imperatively demands male alto voices.

The orchestra for "The Fairy Queen" consists of two flutes, two oboes, two trumpets, kettledrums, strings, and harpsichord or pianoforte.



# THE FAIRY QUEEN.

## FIRST MUSIC.

### PRELUDE.

Nº 1.

Henry Purcell.

PIANO.

The first system of the prelude consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The music begins with a piano dynamic marking. The upper staff starts with a series of eighth notes, while the lower staff has a more rhythmic accompaniment.

The second system continues the musical piece with two staves. The upper staff features a melodic line with various intervals and rests, while the lower staff provides a steady accompaniment with eighth and sixteenth notes.

The third system of the prelude shows further development of the melodic and harmonic themes. The upper staff has a more active melodic line, and the lower staff continues its accompaniment.

The fourth system of the prelude continues the musical progression. The upper staff has a melodic line with some grace notes, and the lower staff maintains the accompaniment.

The fifth and final system of the prelude concludes the piece. It features a first ending and a second ending, both marked with '1.' and '2.' respectively. The first ending leads back to an earlier part of the piece, while the second ending provides a final resolution.