

Joan Sutherland

Handel - Acis & Galatea; 2 Recitals



"Joan Sutherland is a perfect Galatea; her voice conveys magisterially that somewhat difficult ideal - not a simple country girl, but an eighteenth-century actress playing in a slightly sophisticated manner at being what she knows perfectly well she is not. Her singing of *"Hush the pretty warbling choir"* and *"As when the dove"* puts her on a pedestal of classic elegance, and even the short recitatives are given with due regard for their place in the scheme as a whole. Winton Dean finds this "formal regularity" of the masque its only discoverable blemish, but I have a feeling that hundreds of ardent Handelians will gladly overlook it and offer up their thanks for the fine performances of Joan Sutherland and Peter Pears. As Acis, Pears brings something of the same combination of qualities already enumerated in connection with the heroine; his gentle roulades in *"Love in her eyes sits playing"*, his brisk and valiant prowess in *"Love sounds th' alarm"*, and his sad and touching demise (when even the friendly sound of the harpsichord is suppressed by Handel's own command) leave the listener in no doubt about the high quality of his portrayal of an endearing character."

D.S., The Gramophone, March 1960

Joan Sutherland's 1959 recording of *Acis and Galatea* is widely regarded as a classic. For many it's the greatest recording of Handel's operatic masterpiece, but over recent years it's become increasingly difficult to find in many parts of the world. This new transfer by Andrew Rose for Pristine has required minimal intervention from near mint discs, with the gentle touch of XR remastering bringing subtle improvements to an excellent 1959 recording. CD purchasers should note that full and vocal scores of the work are available with your free MP3 download, together with a copy of the libretto.

The two recitals presented here were, we believe, both recorded in 1961 by the BBC. The first was broadcast on Christmas Eve, 1961, exactly a year after a similar broadcast featuring Joan Sutherland and Richard Bonyng. A recital of 18th and early-19th century music, here it is accompanied by piano. The second recital was recorded and prepared by the BBC Transcription Service but did not receive a domestic broadcast - we have been unable to determine where and when it might have been transmitted, but understand it to have been another 1961 recording session. Here the music has harpsichord accompaniment yet draws from material from a similar era to the first recital.

Technically both suffered from a degree of wow and flutter which has required careful intervention to cure or ameliorate. Some upper-frequency peak distortion in the voice marred the piano recital disc, which has largely been fixed. Otherwise both were recorded to the high technical standards one expects from the BBC.

Andrew Rose



HANDEL Acis and Galatea

- 1 Part 1 - Sinfonia (3:44)
- 2 O the pleasure of the plains (5:46)
- 3 Ye verdant plains (1:03)
- 4 Hush, ye pretty warbling choir (4:34)
- 5 Where shall I seek the charming fair? (2:43)
- 6 Stay, shepherd, stay (0:35)
- 7 Shepherd, what art thou pursuing? (3:05)
- 8 Lo! here my love (0:35)
- 9 Love in her eyes sits playing (6:09)
- 10 O didst thou know (0:26)
- 11 As when the dove laments her love (4:57)
- 12 Happy we (2:52)
- 13 Part 2 - Wretched lovers (5:17)
- 14 I rage, I melt, I burn (1:40)
- 15 O ruddier than the cherry (3:25)
- 16 Whither, fairest, art thou running? (1:30)
- 17 Cease to beauty to be suing (3:40)
- 18 Would you gain the tender creature (4:08)
- 19 His hideous love (0:35)
- 20 Love sounds the alarm (3:11)
- 21 Consider, fond shepherd (4:05)
- 22 Cease, O cease (0:39)
- 23 The flocks shall leave the mountains (2:36)

Joan Sutherland *Galatea, a sea-goddess*
Peter Pears *Acis, a shepherd*
David Galliver *Damon, a shepherd*
Owen Brannigan *Polyphemus, a giant*
The St. Anthony Singers • Philomusica of London
Thurston Dart *harpsichord*
Sir Adrian Boult *conductor*

XR remastering by Andrew Rose
Cover artwork based on a photograph of
Joan Sutherland
Total duration: 2hr 24:10

HANDEL Acis & Galatea
Recorded Watford Town Hall
31 May & 2-4 June 1959
First issued as L'Oiseau-Lyre SOL60011-12

Song Recitals
BBC Radio recordings, 1961
Recital No. 1 was first broadcast on
BBC radio on 24 December 1961

- 1 Help, Galatea (1:35)
- 2 Mourn, all ye Muses (3:16)
- 3 Must I my Acis still bemoan? (4:34)
- 4 'Tis done (0:31)
- 5 Heart, the seat of soft delight (4:02)
- 6 Galatea, dry thy tears (3:12)
- 7 O ruddier than the cherry (alternative version) (3:35)

Song Recital No. 1

- 8 DALAYRAC Quand la bien aimé reviendra (*Nina*) (3:56)
- 9 BONONCINI Per la gloria (*Griselda*) (4:58)
- 10 BOYCE Tell me lovely shepherd (*Solomon*) (3:49)
- 11 ARNE The traveller benighted (*Love in a Village*) (1:56)
- 12 PAISIELLO Nel cor più non mi sento (*La bella molinara*) (4:01)
- 13 SHIELD Light as thistledown (*Rosina*) (1:41)
- 14 SHIELD Whilst with village maids I stray (*Rosina*) (2:44)
- 15 SHIELD When William at Eve (*Rosina*) (2:38)

Richard Bonyng *piano*

Song Recital No. 2

- 16 PERGOLESI Nina (2:38)
- 17 SOLER Dolce mi parve un di (3:01)
- 18 MAYR Che dici (2:53)
- 19 HANDEL With plaintive notes (4:19)
- 20 ARNE When daisies pied (2:36)
- 21 HAYDN Pastoral Song (4:09)
- 22 HAYDN She never told her love (3:41)
- 23 SPOHR Rose, softly blooming (3:16)
- 24 HORN Cherry Ripe (1:55)
- 25 RECLI Bergerette (1:59)

Richard Bonyng *harpsichord*