



Divine Rapture

A theatrical incantation of 17th-century songs and contemporary dance.

Forces: voice/dance, harpsichord/recorder, viola da gamba, stage manager

Running time: ca. 65 minutes

The programme title 'Divine Rapture' is derived from a three-stanza poem by 17th-century poet Francis Quarles (1592-1644). This poem reappears in an elongated form in his best-selling *Emblems* (1635) which includes hundreds of pages of illustrations and meditative verse. The poem itself (best known today through the musical setting 'Canticle I' by Benjamin Britten for tenor and piano) is in many ways reminiscent of the sumptuous language and imagery of the biblical Song of Songs (which is oft-quoted in *Emblems*), and speaks of the love of Christ in a highly personal manner.

Divine Rapture is a personal incantation on the advent, life, and passion of Christ mirrored theatrically with a narrative on the anticipation, experience, and loss of love. Images and verses from Quarles's *Emblems* unite the sacred and profane narratives while the integration of movement and music acts as a bridge between the traditional concert and contemporary music theatre.

Technical requirements:

'Divine Rapture' can be adapted for a theatre or church setting. Technical and lighting requirements are minimal and flexible depending largely on the size and design of the location.

Ideal technical requirements would include:

- lighting/sound technician (for set-up)
- sprung/wooden floor (10m x 8m - full floor surface visible by audience)
- memory lighting console (minimum 13 channels and 30 timed cues)
- 4 profile spotlights
- 7-9 Fresnel spotlights
- 2 music stand lights (dimming)
- large white screen or clean wall surface
- video projector
- stereo sound system
- 2 folding music stands

PROGRAMME

How long, great God? Allemande (Suite in a minor)	Henry Purcell (1659-1695) Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683-1764)
Exulta filia Sion	Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)
O Jesu, nomen dulce	Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672)
Captain Humes Pavin O quam pulchra es Laudate dominum	Tobias Hume (1569?-1645) Monteverdi Monteverdi
Lord, what is man	Purcell
Tombeau pour M. de Sainte Colombe O süßer, o freundlicher	Marin Marais (1656-1728) Schütz
Close thine eyes	Purcell

CREDITS:

Direction/Choreography: Kevin Skelton; **Performers:** Kevin Skelton (voice/dance), Thomas Baeté (viola da gamba), Dimos de Beun (harpsichord/recorder); **Music:** Henry Purcell, Jean-Philippe Rameau, Claudio Monteverdi, Heinrich Schütz, Tobias Hume, Marin Marais; **Poetry:** Francis Quarles; **Illustrations:** Charles Bennett & W. Harry Rogers; **Improvisations:** Dimos de Beun, Thomas Baeté; **Costume:** Jeannine Rummens; **Video:** Cristina Dias; **Artistic advice:** Johanne Saunier, Gunther Vandeven

E'EN like two little bank-dividing brooks,
That wash the pebbles with their wanton streams,
And having ranged and search'd a thousand nooks,
Meet both at length in silver-breasted Thames,
Where in a greater current they conjoin:
So I my Best-beloved's am; so He is mine.

E'en so we met; and after long pursuit,
E'en so we joined; we both became entire;
No need for either to renew a suit,
For I was flax, and He was flames of fire:
Our firm-united souls did more than twine;
So I my Best-beloved's am; so He is mine.

If all those glittering Monarchs, that command
The servile quarters of this earthly ball,
Should tender in exchange their shares of land,
I would not change my fortunes for them all:
Their wealth is but a counter to my coin:
The world 's but theirs; but my Beloved's mine.

Francis Quarles (1592-1644)





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