

## OCR A2 Music

Performing (40%)

*15 minutes recital to examiner*

Composing (30%)

*Exercises in a particular technique + a longer composition*

Historical & Analytical Studies in Music (30%)

*2 hr exam*

*Section A – Aural extract (questions on an extract of vocal music 1900-1945)*

*Section B – Historical Topics (answer two from three questions)*

*Your topic is...*

### Music for the Stage

**Bernstein – West Side Story**

**Wagner – Die Walkure**

**Purcell – Dido & Aeneas (*PAS – Mondays, period 1!*)**

## PURCELL: DIDO & AENEAS

### *Plan of attack*

- Background and context (first half of term)
- Detailed analysis (second half of term)
- Related repertoire (first half of next term)
- Drawing it all together (second half of next term)
- Consolidation, revision and practice questions (first half of summer term)

# PURCELL: DIDO & AENEAS

## **BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

There will be one presentation each lesson

- Take care notes on each presentation (to hand in at half term)
- Each of you will be involved in one presentation
  - i.e., only one prep this half term, but it'll be quite big

**Week One: Introduction and context**

**Week Two: Henry Purcell – life, musical style, works**

**Week Three: Culture in late seventeenth/early eighteenth century England**

**Week Four: The text, the libretto and the story**

**Week Five: Manuscripts, scoring and performance concerns**

**Week Six: DVD of complete performance**

Each presentation should last at least 20 minutes

They should be stimulating!

So do include musical examples, video clips, art, quotes, etc., etc.

As part of your presentation, you will need to hand in your notes/PowerPoint/etc.

The background of the slide is a classical painting by Jean Raux titled 'Dido and Aeneas'. It depicts the queen of Carthage, Dido, seated in the center, wearing a blue and gold gown, surrounded by attendants and guests in a banquet hall. The scene is set in a grand, classical-style interior with a large archway in the background. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the central figures.

Henry Purcell (1659 – 1695)

# DIDO & AENEAS

## Presentation 1

### *Introduction & Context*

*Jean RAOUX: Dido and Aeneas*

# Henry Purcell

1659 – 1695



- Westminster Abbey
- Chapel Royal
- Integrated various styles with his own
- Adventurous use of harmony
- Large output of church music [\[clip\]](#)

# The development of opera

Italy, c.1600 – 1670 (*see also Teaching Resource 2009/A2/HIST/MONODY*)

- Florentine Camerata, c. 1600
  - Reaction against polyphony [\[clip\]](#)
  - Advent of Monody [\[clip\]](#)
- Development of recitative – reflection of drama – gave rise to opera
- In Italy, recitative gave way to virtuoso arias, and ancient Greek myths to modern texts
- Monteverdi
  - Orfeo [\[clip\]](#)

# The development of opera

France, c. 1650 – 1700

- Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632-1687)
  - Italian by birth
  - Composer for the court of Louis XIV
  - 'Arioso' – recitative/aria form
  - Development of the operatic overture – The French Overture
- French operas were lavish productions with elaborate stage settings and scenery in addition to ballets, choruses, and long disquisitions on love and glory.

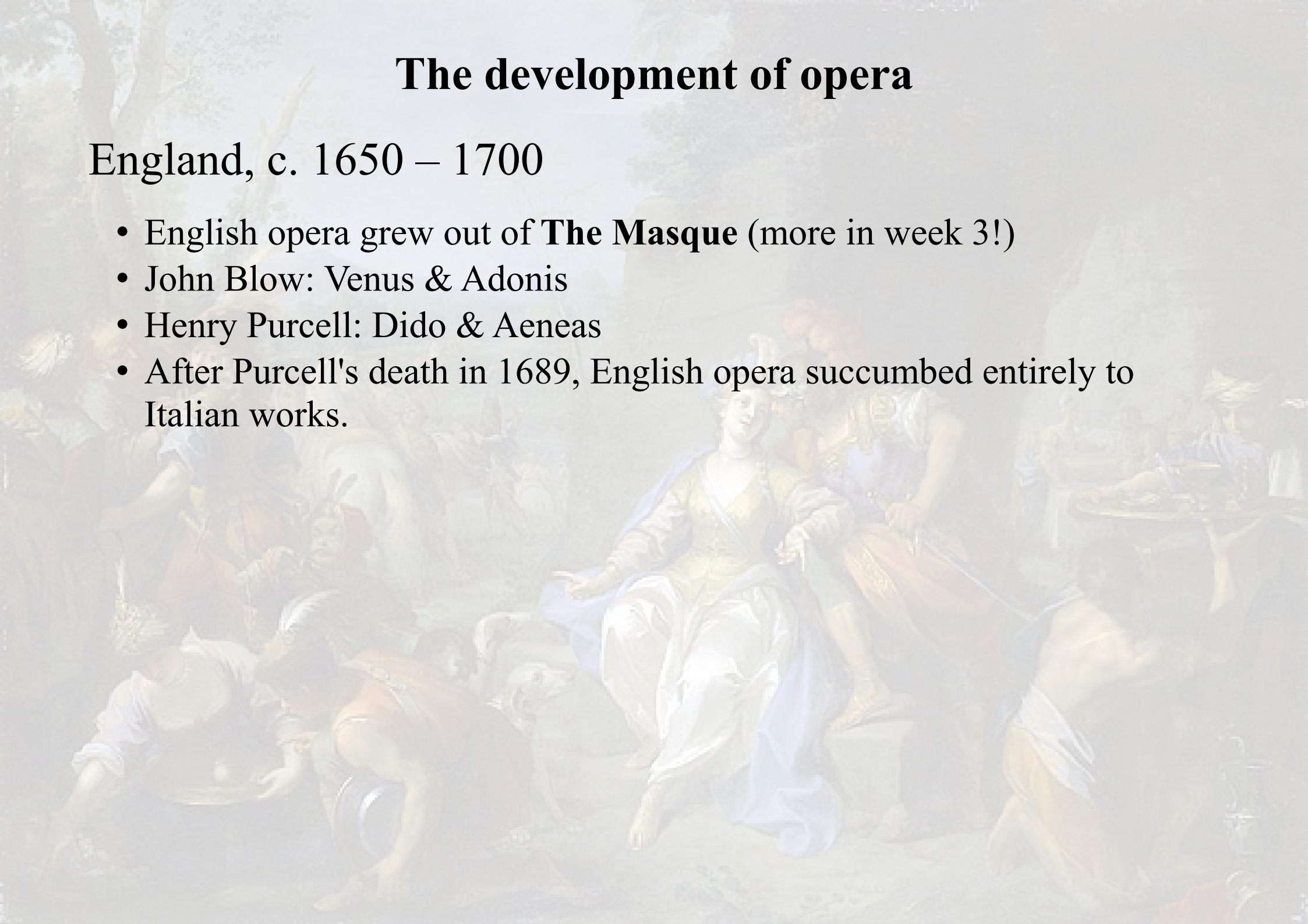


*Louis XIV - "Le Roi Soleil"*

# The development of opera

England, c. 1650 – 1700

- English opera grew out of **The Masque** (more in week 3!)
- John Blow: *Venus & Adonis*
- Henry Purcell: *Dido & Aeneas*
- After Purcell's death in 1689, English opera succumbed entirely to Italian works.



## Dido & Aeneas – Purcell's opera

- thought to have been written for a school
- therefore some aspects differ from other operas of the time:
  - short (just under an hour)
  - fairly simple to sing
  - recitative used instead of spoken dialogue
  - drama develops through character arias
  - simple orchestration
  - no elaborate scenery
- More on characters, libretto, story, structure, etc. in week 4

*[Clip]*



*Next week...*

## **Henry Purcell – life, musical style, works**

Make sure to include:

- chief biographical details
- his musical influences
- hallmarks of his musical style
- principal works (and – crucially – what makes them noteworthy)
- (short) musical examples (accompanied by intelligent musical observations!) are a must for this topic