

Foreword

John Blow (1649-1708) has been described as "the doyen of the school of English musicians of which Henry Purcell is the most brilliant" (1). While Blow is chiefly famous for his operatic masque *Venus and Adonis*, and for his many church anthems, it is said that "he wrote well over 100 secular songs, duets and trios almost a third of them reappeared in *Amphion Anglicus*," (2) which was published by Henry Playford in 1700.

The present piece, *And is my Cavalier return'd?* (which has the heading A SONG with FLUTES), is among those many songs in *Amphion Anglicus*, and is unusual in having recorders as the obligato instruments. It is possible that they were intended to remind the listener of the military sound of fifes.

To speculate on which campaign the 'Cavalier' is due to return from, brings a salutary reminder of the politically troubled times that Blow lived in. Had Myrtilla's beau been slogging it out in Ulster in July 1690 against James II's rebel army, or perhaps in Flanders' field in the summer of 1691 against the French? The reference to 'barbarous Sun and Dust' is a reminder that planned campaigns usually took place in summer.

After a brief instrumental introduction the voice and recorders alternate in a sort of dialogue. After voice and instruments have portrayed Myrtilla's trembling, the war is suggested in clarion like arpeggios and trumpet calls, before a final rhythmic passage for voice alone as Myrtilla entices her beloved to winter with her

Editorial

The original clefs, note values, continuo figures and slurs have been retained: original time signatures are shown. Any editorial slurs are shown in brackets. Editorial accidentals are shown small, and if cautionary, in brackets. Original cautionary accidentals are shown large and in brackets. Other editorial additions are shown in square brackets, []. Any changes are noted in footnotes. In the underlay, the original spelling and capitalisation has been retained.

(1) Shaw, Watkins: 'Blow, John' in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, London, 1980.

(2) Wood, Bruce: 'Blow, John, §3: Works' *Grove Music Online* (Accessed 16 February 2008)