THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND THE OFFICE OF LECTURES AND CONCERTS

Present
THE OPERA WORKSHOP
RALPH ROSINBUN, director

Tuesday, June 5, 1979

Studio Theater, 8:00 pm

PROGRAM

JOHN BLOW

JOHN BLOW's opera, Venus and Adonis (c. 1682), is the earliest extant opera of English origin. Lacking a tradition based on a national culture, English opera suffered a sporadic development. During the 17th century, progress was further hindered by the anti-theater philosophies of the Commonwealth.

The Masque, a form of court entertainment incorporating a potpourri of song, dance, and instrumental music, served as predecessor to early opera and long before the Restoration several attempts to formalize this medium appeared.

With the Restoration of Charles II to the throne in 1660, public theaters were reopened and theater grew boundlessly. At court a double standard arose. The sophisticated French Court with its ballets and operas became a subject of imitation for the English, meanwhile playing service to the bawdy/heroic tragicomedy theatrical reaction against the puritanical Commonwealth.

By the time of the composition of Venus and Adonis, however, the outrage of Restoration Comedy had declined somewhat and we see in Blow's opera a delightful pastorale devoted to satire on court life and humor.

Patrick Stults

Cast: Venus........Maurita Rogers
      Adonis.......Eric Hanson
      Cupid.......Beth Eaton
      Shepherds...Ron Scheier
              Don Dilley
              Bob Oki
      Huntsmen....Ken Jaffee
      (singers) Peri Pierone
              John Dawson
      Cupids......Joan Behm
      (singers)...Ellen Kaisse

      Graces.......Lisa Rodgers
      (singers)...Theresa Adams
              Kyra Clefton

      Huntsman.......Kyle McLachlin
      Shepherd....Ron Aden
      Shepherdess...Debby Kurbitz
      Shepherdess..Laurie Haney
      Shannon Anderson
      Janet Reed
      (singers) Ron Sangaland
      Toni Granillo
      (dancers) Carole Fulkerson
      Susie Claypoole
      Margaret dePender

Judith Page, stage director
Patrick Stults, conductor
Suzanna Wellens, choreographer
Cosi Fan Tutti (I, X-XIV)

Don Alfonso, a cynical old bachelor who believes that faithfulness in women borders on the apocryphal, has bet two young soldiers, Ferrando and Guglielmo, that their ladies, Fiordiligi and Dorabella, are no different than any other women, despite strong protestation to the contrary. Alfonso arranges for the two men to be "called away to war," much to the displeasure of the ladies.

As the scene opens, Don Alfonso muses on the situation and finishes preparations for his scheme.

Time and Place: 18th-century Naples, Italy

Cast: (In order of appearance.)

Don Alfonso.....Paul Berkolds
Despina........Julie Carpenter
Ferrando........Richard Russell
Guglielmo.......Eric Hanson
Fiordiligi......Jacalyn Schneider
Dorabella.......Margaret Russell

Ray Bannon, director and conductor
Dietrich Villbrandt, pianist

Special thanks to Eve Green, Michel Singher, and Kyra Clefton.