



Henry Purcell THE FAIRY QUEEN Les Nouveaux Caractères Sébastien d'Hérin	GCD 922702	PC: 021
	2 CDs 2016	
<p>Also available: GCD 922701 Jean-Philippe Rameau – LES SURPRISES DE L'AMOUR Les Nouveaux Caractères/Sébastien d'Hérin</p>		

With *The Fairy Queen*, **Sébastien d'Hérin** and **Les Nouveaux Caractères** set down on record their musical vision of one of Henry Purcell's most compelling dramatic works. The 1692/1693 work dates from around half a century before two other Baroque scores which *Les Nouveaux Caractères* has tackled recently and received significant critical approval: Leclair's *Scylla et Glaucus* and Rameau's *Les Surprises de l'Amour* (the latter, like *The Fairy Queen*, appearing on Glossa). Being a semi-opera, the music of *The Fairy Queen* doesn't need to follow a narrative methodically from start to finish and, indeed, what we get is essentially a series of self-contained masques. Purcell channels the spirit of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* rather than using the text of that comedy; many characters appear across the work but yet Purcell's music is of great coherence. Not unlike Purcell himself, Sébastien d'Hérin has opted not to use a formal chorus but to have a long-established team of musical partners singing the choral parts as well as the solo roles. Among the modern-day singers are to be found Anders Dahlin, Samuel Boden, Caitlin Hulcup (who sings "An Epithalamium"), Virginie Pochon, Hjördis Thébault and Caroline Mutel. Alongside the typical instruments of the string, wind and continuo departments of d'Hérin's orchestra are to be found a serpent, a cornett and a regal.