

# THE EARLY BAROQUE

1600 - 1700

# VENICE

- It all began in the Venetian Republic
  - Incredibly rich city-state on the Adriatic
  - Perfectly situated to become a commercial hub and trading empire.



# VENETIAN MUSIC

- Venice gloried in grandiloquent, majestic music which announced the Republic's prosperity and power to the world.
- A particular favorite sound was double choir, organ, and low brass instruments (often trombones).
- The slideshow that follows illustrates such a setting.



# GIOVANNI GABRIELI

## O MAGNUM MYSTERIUM

- Second part of a longer motet written for the Christmas season.
- Written for:
  - Two choirs (each with three parts)
  - Four instrumental parts
  - Organ

# GIOVANNI GABRIELI

## O MAGNUM MYSTERIUM

- 5 lines of text, each with its own unique setting:
  - *O magnum mysterium* — full chorus, repeated in sequence (up a step)
  - *et admirabile sacramentum* — introduces soloists, repeating *sacramentum*
  - *ut animalia viderunt Dominum natum* — full chorus
  - *iacentem in presepio* — soloists, highly polyphonic, includes the boy choir
  - *Alleluia, alleluia* — full ensemble; alternates triple meter a slow concluding section in duple meter; repeated.

# LINE 1

O magnum mysterium

O, what a great mystery

# OPERA

- *Opera reggia* are “staged works”, which gives the origin of the name.
- Originally they combined music, theater, dance, poetry, and fabulous scenic effects.

# OPERA

- Early operas were vastly expensive court entertainments
- To this day opera still has an (undeserved) cachet of being sophisticated, although it remains extremely expensive.

# OPERA

- Most Baroque operas consist of single scenes, each of which is made up out of:
  - *Recitative*: a technique of declaiming speech with music that follows the general rhythm of speech.
  - *Arioso*: a short songlike fragment
  - *Aria*: an extended piece for a solo singer, much more melodic than a recitative.

# OPERA

- Baroque operas might also contain ballets or pageants set to music.
- Chorus or ensemble pieces might be included as well.

# CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI

- One of the great figures of Baroque music.
- Was in Venice by 1610, writing works very much like Gabrieli.
- Wrote particularly in the genres of madrigal and opera.

# CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI

## THE CORONATION OF POPPEA

- Late opera of Monteverdi's, from 1642.
- Amazingly modernistic plot.

# CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI

## THE CORONATION OF POPPEA

- Poppea is the mistress of the Roman emperor Nero.
- She schemes to have Nero's wife Ottavia deposed, and his advisor, Seneca, put to death — both being in her way.
- She succeeds at both.
- A counterplot involves attempts to whack Poppea, but the perpetrators fail and are exiled.
- At the end, Nero and Poppea celebrate their marriage — even with the blessings of the gods.

# CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI

## THE CORONATION OF POPPEA

- Operas aren't known for the quality of their dialog, then or now...

Poppea:	Addio...	Farewell...
Nero:	Addio...	Farewell...
Poppea:	Nerone, Nerone, addio...	Nero, Nero, farewell...
Nero:	Poppea, Poppea, addio...	Poppea, Poppea, farewell...
Poppea:	Addio, Nerone, addio!	Farewell, Nerone, farewell!
Nero:	Addio, Poppea, ben mio.	Farewell, Poppea, my love.

# CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI

## THE CORONATION OF POPPEA

- Both Nero and Poppea are sung by women in this recording.
  - Nero is a mezzo-soprano.
  - Poppea is a soprano.

# Recitative

Poppea: Tornerai?

Won't you return?

# LANDMARKS OF THE ENGLISH 17TH CENTURY

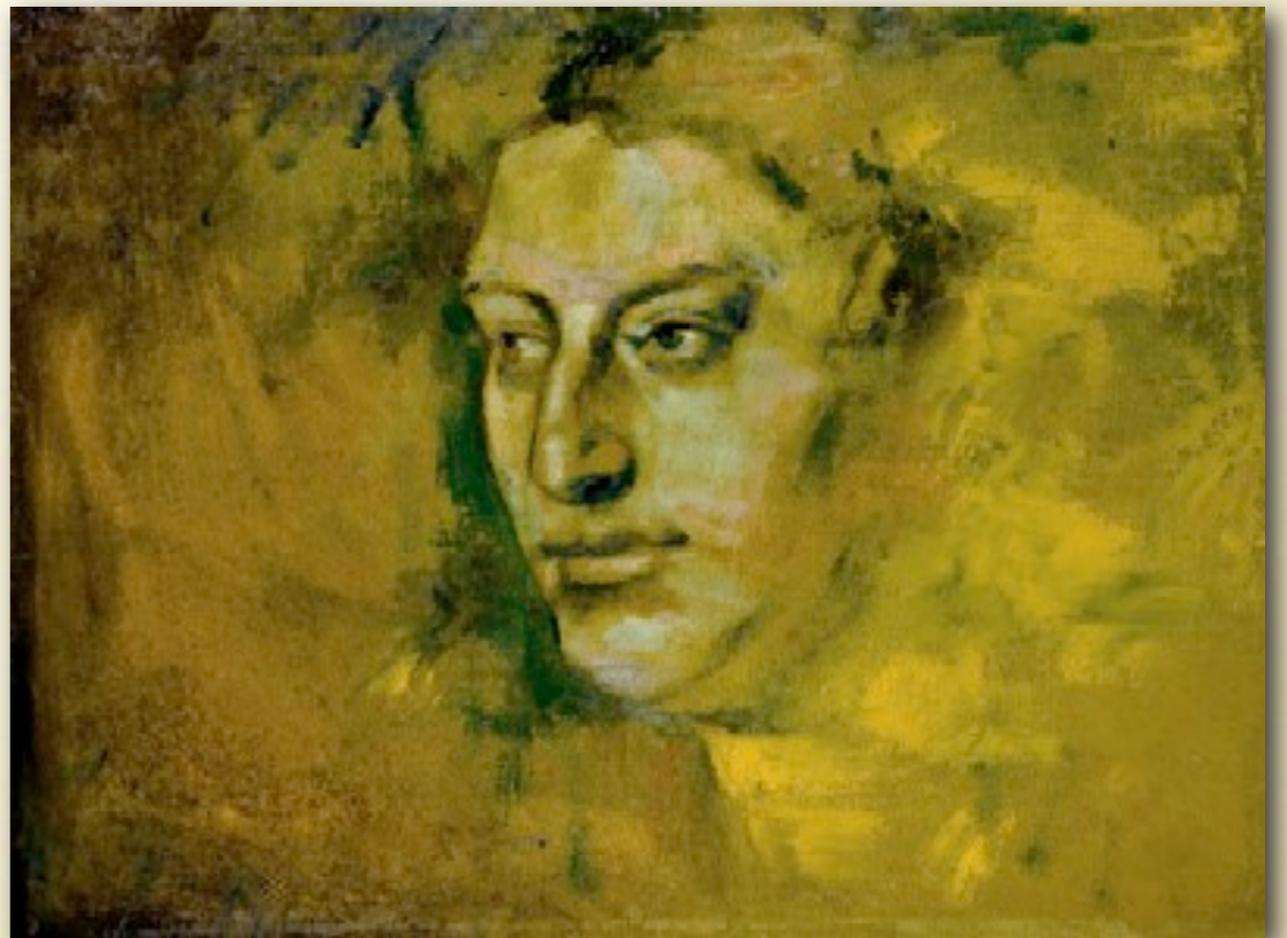
- 1603 - Death of Elizabeth I and Accession of James I (Stuart Dynasty)
- 1608 - Birth of John Milton
- 1616 - Death of William Shakespeare
- 1631 - Birth of John Dryden
- 1642 - Start of English Civil War
- 1649 - Execution of Charles I
- 1649 to 1660 - Puritans close theaters in England
- 1651 - Cromwell defeats Charles II
- 1649 to 1659 - Commonwealth of England under Cromwell
- **1659 - Birth of Henry Purcell**
- 1660 - Restoration of Charles II as monarch
- 1674 - Death of John Milton
- **1695 - Death of Henry Purcell**
- 1700 - Death of John Dryden

# HENRY PURCELL

- 1659 - 1695
- Born into a musical family.
- Spent his entire life connected with royal service in one capacity or another.
- Primarily wrote instrumental and church music for the first part of his life; began to specialize in theatrical music around 1690.
- Collaborated with John Dryden on a number of projects; also was a close friend of Christopher Wren.
- Contemporaries include Isaac Newton, John Locke.

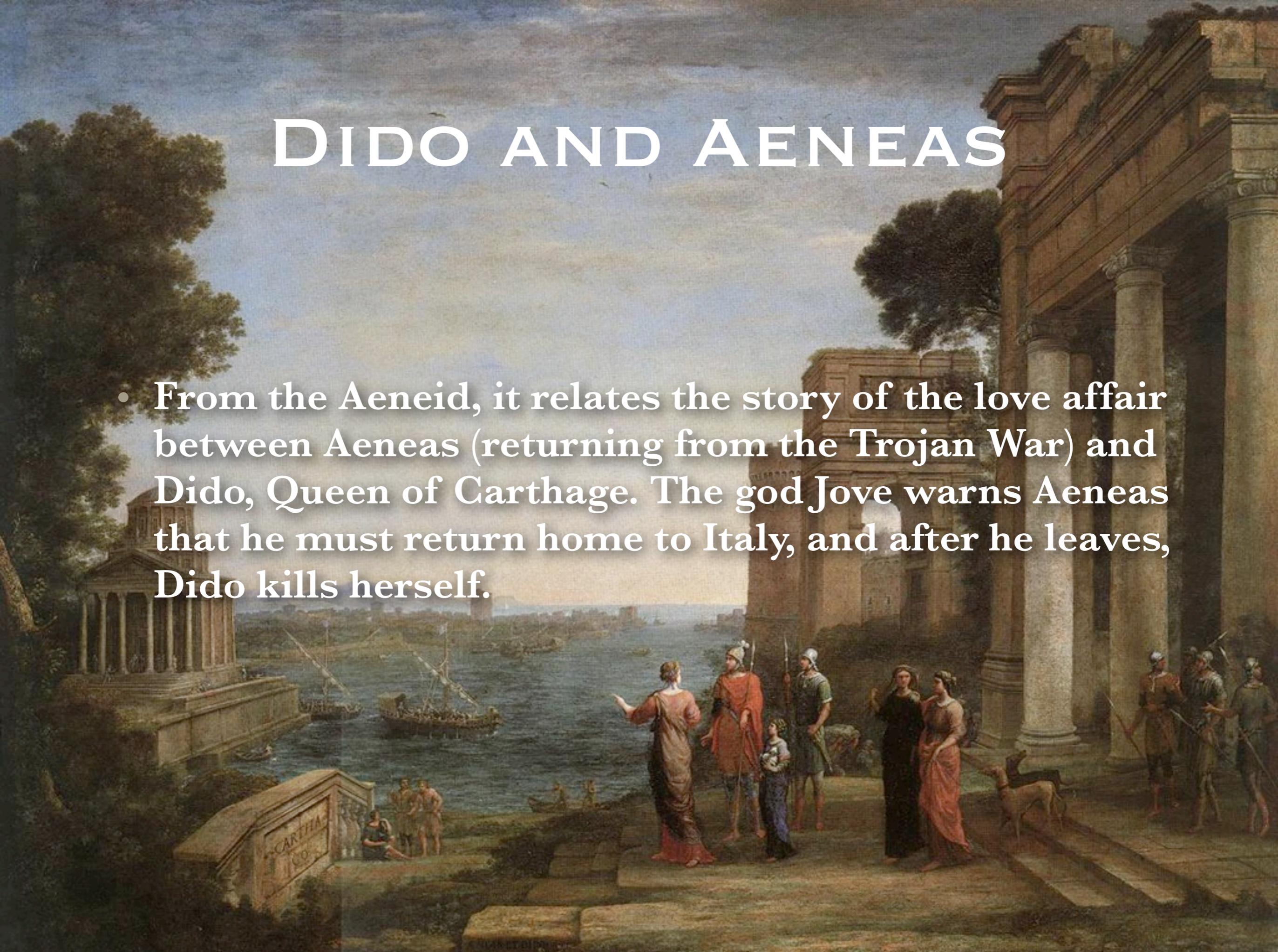
# PURCELL'S THEATER WORKS

- King Arthur
- The Fairy Queen
- The Indian Queen
- Dido and Aeneas



# DIDO AND AENEAS

- From the Aeneid, it relates the story of the love affair between Aeneas (returning from the Trojan War) and Dido, Queen of Carthage. The god Jove warns Aeneas that he must return home to Italy, and after he leaves, Dido kills herself.

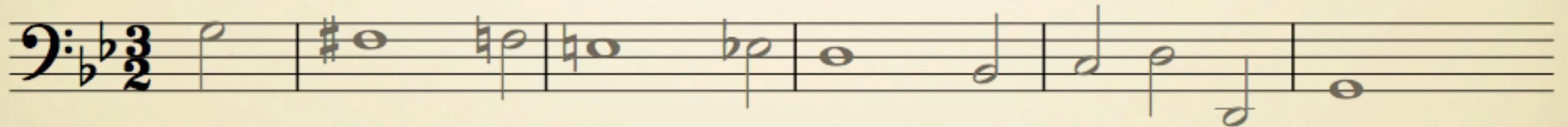


# DIDO AND AENEAS

- Amazingly, *Dido and Aeneas* was written for a performance in a girls' school. Technically it isn't really an opera (it's a masque), but it is nowadays considered the first great English opera.

# DIDO'S LAMENT

- Dido's "suicide" aria.
- Written as a *ground bass*, with a bass line that repeats continually throughout the aria.



# DIDO'S LAMENT

- Opens with a recitative which demonstrates Purcell's mastery of setting English prose as recitative.
- It was generally felt that English could not be set as recitative — Purcell proved it could be done.
- Ends with a chorus lamenting Dido's death.



Thy hand, Belinda;  
Darkness shades me:  
On thy bosom let me rest:  
More I would, but Death invades me:  
Death is now a welcome guest.

# INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC: SOURCES

- *Dance*
  - Dances from operas were popular
  - Composers would arrange them into *suites*
- *Virtuosity*
  - The art of the early virtuoso was improvisatory
- *Vocal music*
  - Vocal techniques transferred to instrumental media
  - One in particular was imitative polyphony

# GIROLAMO FRESCOBALDI

- 1583–1643
- Great organ virtuoso
- Influential teacher
- Composer

# GIROLAMO FRESCOBALDI

- Organ compositions in various genres:
  - *Toccata*: free-formed pieces meant to sound like improvisations.
  - *Canzona*: rigorously organized work featuring imitative polyphony—the forerunner of the fugue.
  - *Stylized dances*: always formed of two parts each.
  - *Variations*: on melodic or harmonic patterns, from contemporary vocal music.

# MUSICAL FORM

- A phrase is given a letter, such as *a*.
- When a phrase is repeated you would write *a a*.
  - If the repetition is slightly varied, it might be *a'*
- A different phrase is *b* and so forth.
- Thus *a a b b* refers to a two-phrase piece with each phrase repeated.
- Sections are just like phrases, except we use capital letters (*A A B B*)

# GIROLAMO FRESCOBALDI

## SUITE

- Canzona
- Balletto
- Corrente
- Passacaglia

# CANZONA

- Theme
- Theme in new voice
- Theme in new voice
- Cadence (clear ending)
- New Theme
- Two themes combined to the end

# BALLETTO



a

# CORRENTE



a

# PASSACAGLIA

