

# Delia

LIBRETTO BY  
**W.H. AUDEN AND  
CHESTER KALLMAN**

*Used by permission of Curtis Brown, Ltd.*

*Copyright © 1952*

*All rights reserved.*

MUSIC BY  
**TOM CUNNINGHAM**

*Copyright © 2014*

# Delia

*or*

## A Masque of Night

(Suggested by  
George Peele's play,  
*The Old Wives' Tale*)

### CHARACTERS

SACRAPANT, a magus (bass)  
ORLANDO, a knight (tenor)  
BUNGAY, an amateur sorcerer (baritone)  
DELIA, a maiden (soprano)  
XANTIPPE, wife to BUNGAY (mezzo-soprano)  
THE CRONE (speaking role)

THREE OWLS

ECHOES

CHORUS

In the Pageant, TIME, MUTABILITY, TOIL, AGE, PAIN, DEATH,  
and a Chorus of Slaves

Place. *An enchanted Wood.*  
Time. *A night of the full moon.*  
Period. *Early Tudor.*

Duration: approximately 75 minutes.

[www.tomcunningham.org.uk](http://www.tomcunningham.org.uk)

<b>No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page</b>
	Prelude.....	5
1.	Long, long by an image (Orlando).....	6
2.	Blind wood (Orlando, Echoes).....	8
3.	As the moon rises (Chorus).....	11
4.	Woe, the day we were plighted (Xantippe, Bungay).....	16
5.	Master of wisdom magical (Bungay).....	19
6.	To know high mystery (Bungay, Sacrapant).....	22
7.	Go. Slip through the night (Sacrapant).....	23
8.	Not here? (Xantippe).....	25
9.	O my immortal light! (Sacrapant).....	27
10.	Welcome, my child (Delia, Sacrapant).....	30
11.	On a snowy bank (Three Owls).....	35
12.	Who is it comes calling Delia? (Delia, Sacrapant, Echoes).....	40
13.	O mine own true love (Delia, Orlando, Bungay).....	43
14.	My wife, my good wife (Delia, Orlando, Bungay).....	49
15.	My heart must break (Delia, Xantippe, Orlando, Bungay).....	52
16.	Spirits of darkness (Delia, Xantippe, Orlando, Bungay, Sacrapant).....	61
17.	Funeral march.....	64
18.	Pageant chorus (Chorus).....	65
19.	Can it be so? (Delia, Xantippe, Orlando, Bungay, Sacrapant).....	69
20.	I dread these chains (Delia, Xantippe, Orlando, Bungay, Sacrapant).....	74
21.	Must I choose to divide us? (Delia, Orlando, Sacrapant).....	80
22.	Kyrie eleison (Xantippe, Orlando, Bungay).....	83
23.	Solemn music.....	86
24.	What did she mean? (Xantippe, Orlando, Bungay).....	87
25.	Vision descend (Delia, Orlando).....	94
26.	Gentle people, look at me (Xantippe, Bungay).....	95
27.	We are safe (Delia, Xantippe, Orlando, Bungay).....	96
28.	Among the leaves (Chorus).....	100
29.	The crow of the cock (Chorus).....	102

## *Synopsis*

Orlando, a knight, is seeking Delia, a fair maiden whose image came to him in a dream. He befriends a Crone who gives him a willow twig which will guide its bearer to his love. We enter an enchanted wood where the animals sing a sunset chorus to welcome the magic of the night. Bungay, an amateur sorcerer, is being scolded by his wife, Xantippe, for neglecting his home duties. He attempts various spells from his book to his wife's increasing disdain when, to his great surprise, the magus Sacrapant appears. Bungay pays homage to the master and asks to be his disciple but Sacrapant scornfully turns him into a bear as a pet for Delia, who is under his spell. His old antagonist, the Crone, warns him that a prince is coming to woo Delia and tries unsuccessfully to make him tell her the secret of the magic flame that protects him. Xantippe regrets berating Bungay and fears he has fled her. She observes Sacrapant and realises Bungay is in danger. Delia enters with an animal entourage (including Bungay, now a bear). Sacrapant asks her if she has decided to share his eternal life and entertains her with food and music. Orlando bursts in and finds Delia even lovelier than his vision. Their love duet affects Bungay who regrets meddling with magic and is now desperate to find his wife. Orlando takes pity on him and gives him the magic willow twig which immediately leads him to her. Orlando explains to the startled Xantippe that the bear is her husband and she comforts him. Orlando thinks he has won Delia but suddenly she pushes him away and runs to Sacrapant who calls on the spirits of darkness to create a pageant showing the miseries of human ageing and death. Delia is horror-struck by this but nevertheless declares she will go with Orlando. Sacrapant challenges him to a duel, Orlando falls and Delia and Sacrapant go off. The Crone appears as Orlando recovers under the care of Bungay and Xantippe and he begs her help. She makes the supreme demand of him, that he marry her instead of Delia. But when he kisses her, the Crone releases him from the vow, revealing herself as the high Queen, Diana, and presenting the three of them with a mysterious riddle to overcome Sacrapant's spell. After deliberation, the trio work out how to quench Sacrapant's light, Orlando wins Delia's hand, Bungay steps out of his bear-skin and is reunited with Xantippe. As dawn breaks, the Crone instructs the spirits to restore everything to its place and she relights the mage's lamp with a kiss. The animals sing a sunrise chorus that echoes the sunset chorus, daylight returns and magic is dispelled.

Tom Cunningham