

Venus



Venus, the Bringer of Peace inhabits a tranquil garden engendered by the glowing, rounded contours of two alternating tunes. This is a stark contrast to the opening movement. Theme A is introduced on the horns playing in their softest most velvety tones:



This theme provides masts of the melody material for this movement. Simple crotchet rhythms and undulating chords move smoothly from one to the other giving a sense of peacefulness and tranquility. An ethereal quality is created by the use of harps and celeste. The entire movement is soft and peaceful.

Sinuous cellos preface the second theme B, appearing on intimate solo violin.



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Venus is announced by four ascending notes in the solo horn and a sequence of converging chords in the flutes and oboes. Most of her music lies, symbolically, in the middle and upper registers of the instruments; and harps, celestes, and glockenspiel further characterise her heavenly nature. In addition there are beautiful melodies for her in the solo violin and oboe. Though this is music of surpassing serenity it is not simple in harmony, texture or orchestral sonority. One cannot help but observe how fitting it is that the state of peace be described in complex terms, in contrast to the complicity of the depiction of war.

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