

**NAXOS**  
AudioBooks

POETRY

2 CDs



Herrick • Marlowe • Rochester • Jonson  
Byron • Keats • Tennyson • Betjeman

# Classic Erotic Verse





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## CD 1

- |    |   |      |
|----|---|------|
| 1  | THE FULL FLUSH OF YOUTH<br>Green rushes with red shoots<br>Chinese (4th century) (tr. Arthur Waley) | 1:28 |
| 2  | If the forest of her hair †<br>Bhartrhari (5th century) (tr. by John Brough)                        | 0:23 |
| 3  | Either she was foul †<br>Christopher Marlowe (after Ovid) (1564-1593)                               | 4:50 |
| 4  | Don Juan (from Canto II) †<br>Lord Byron (1788-1824)  | 4:38 |
| 5  | Ancient person of my heart □<br>John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester (1647-1680)                          | 1:22 |
| 6  | The Eve of St Agnes (excerpt) †<br>John Keats (1795-1821)   | 3:19 |
| 7  | She lay all naked †<br>Anon. 17th century   | 1:52 |
| 8  | Before lowering the perfumed curtain †<br>Liu Yung (990-1050) (tr. by James J.Y.Liu)                | 0:48 |
| 9  | New Year's Eve †<br>D.H.Lawrence (1885-1930)  | 1:48 |
| 10 | The Flea †<br>John Donne (1572-1631)  | 1:31 |

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CD 1 (Cont.)

- 11 I abhor the slimie kisse † 0:31  
Robert Herrick (1594-1674)
- 12 The Geranium † 3:31  
Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751-1816)
- 13 The Willing Mistress □ 1:05  
Aphra Behn (1640-1689)
- 14 Ode 44 † 1:36  
Hafiz (14th century) (tr. by Richard le Gallienne)
- 15 My lute awake ° 3:30  
Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-1542)  
*A spurned lover addresses his instrument.*
- 16 On Cynthia's Embraces ° 2:19  
Sir Francis Kyanston (1587-1642)  
*The poet seeks something more from his mistress, Cynthia.*
- 17 Naked she lay † 4:09  
John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester (1647-1680)
- 18 When his mouth faced my mouth □ 0:33  
Amaru (5th century) (tr. by John Brough)
- 19 Madrigal (17th century) † 0:26
- 20 The Vine † 1:44  
Robert Herrick (1594-1674)

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CD 1 (Cont.)

- 21 The Choice of Valentines (excerpt) ° 12:32  
Thomas Nash (1567-1601)  
*Claudite iam rivus, Priape; sat priapa biberunt. Now shut off the streams, Priapus; the meadows have drunk enough. (Borrowed from the last line of Virgil: Eclogues III Claudite iam rivus, pueri: sat prata biberunt.)*
- 22 Down, Wanton, Down! † 1:05  
Robert Graves (1895-1985)
- 23 The Four and Twentieth Day of May ° 3:03  
Anon
- 24 Upon the Nipples of Julia's Breast 0:42  
Robert Herrick (1594-1674)
- 25 Style of the new moon † 0:50  
Vidyapati (15th century) (tr.by Deben Bhattacharya)
- 26 The Milkmaid's Epithalamium □ 1:32  
Thomas Randolph (1605-1635)  
*A milkmaid envies the marital bliss of others and yearns for a husband of her own.*
- 27 To the Fair Clorinda □ 2:05  
Aphra Behn (1640-1689)
- 28 Twin Hills † 0:41  
Vidyapati (15th century)



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**CD 1 (Cont.)**

- |    |   |      |
|----|---|------|
| 29 | Imagine the magic †<br>Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867) (tr. by Richard Howard) | 1:53 |
| 30 | Ode 173 †<br>Hafiz (14th century) (tr. by Richard le Gallienne)               | 2:00 |
| 31 | Three Poems †<br>Bhartrhari (tr. by John Brough)                              | 0:39 |
| 32 | A Subaltern's Love Song †<br>John Betjeman (1916-1984)                        | 2:57 |

THE ONSET OF MIDDLE AGE

- |    |  |      |
|----|--|------|
| 33 | To His Mistress Going to Bed ◊<br>John Donne (1572-1631) | 3:06 |
| 34 | The Glow Worm ◊<br>William Wordsworth (1770-1850)        | 1:11 |
| 35 | May I feel said he ◊<br>E. E. Cummings (1894-1962)       | 1:53 |

**Total time on CD 1: 1:19:01**



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## CD 2

- |    |  |      |
|----|--|------|
| 1  | A sweet disorder in the dress <sup>◊</sup><br>Robert Herrick (1594-1674)   | 1:10 |
| 2  | Tell me no more<br>William Cartwright (1611-1643)  | 1:36 |
| 3  | For my wife <sup>◊</sup><br>Liu Hsiao-Wei (5th century) translated by Anne Birrell                               | 2:04 |
| 4  | Now sleeps the crimson petal <sup>◊</sup><br>Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)                                    | 2:07 |
| 5  | On the Marriage of TK and CC <sup>◊</sup><br>The wedding night is hotly anticipated.<br>Thomas Carew (1594-1674) | 2:14 |
| 6  | Figs <sup>◊</sup><br>D.H.Lawrence (1885-1930)  | 4:59 |
| 7  | In the Orchard <sup>◻</sup><br>Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909)  | 3:37 |
| 8  | To Julia's Petticoat <sup>◊</sup><br>Robert Herrick (1594-1674)  | 1:06 |
| 9  | Now <sup>◊</sup><br>Robert Browning (1812-1889)  | 1:50 |
| 10 | From pent-up aching rivers <sup>◊</sup><br>Walt Whitman (1819-1892)  | 4:38 |



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## CD 2 (Cont.)

- |    |   |      |
|----|---|------|
| 11 | The Posture <sup>◊</sup><br>John Dryden (1631-1700)                             | 1:38 |
| 12 | Mariana <sup>◊</sup><br>Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)                        | 3:27 |
| 13 | Before Parting <sup>◊</sup><br>Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909)           | 2:05 |
| 14 | A beautiful woman <sup>◊</sup><br>Ts'ao Chih (4th century) (tr.by Anne Birrell) | 1:52 |
| 15 | The Sick Rose <sup>◊</sup><br>William Blake (1757-1827)                         | 1:08 |

### LATE-FLOWERING LUST

- |    |  |      |
|----|--|------|
| 16 | A Last Confession <sup>◻</sup><br>W. B. Yeats (1865-1939)                            | 1:10 |
| 17 | Doing, a filthy pleasure is <sup>◊</sup><br>Ben Jonson (after Petronius) (1572-1637) | 0:55 |
| 18 | The Connoisseuse of Slugs <sup>◻</sup><br>Sharon Olds                                | 1:35 |
| 19 | They flee from me<br>Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-1542)                                    | 1:43 |
| 20 | Late-Flowering Lust<br>John Betjeman (1916-1984)                                     | 1:48 |



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## CD 2 (Cont.)

### MEN ONLY

- |    |   |      |
|----|---|------|
| 21 | Nizam <sup>◊</sup><br>(Arabic - 9th century)  | 1:12 |
| 22 | A Glimpse <sup>◊</sup><br>Walt Whitman (1819-1892)                                    | 0:39 |
| 23 | Thousands and Three <sup>◊</sup><br>Paul Verlaine (1844-1896)                         | 3:22 |
| 24 | The Beautiful Swimmer <sup>◊</sup><br>Walt Whitman (1819-1892)                        | 1:15 |
| 25 | My mouth is often joined against his mouth <sup>†</sup><br>Arthur Rimbaud (1854-1891) | 1:12 |

### SAPPHO'S LEGACY

- |    |   |      |
|----|---|------|
| 26 | Foiled Sleep <sup>□</sup><br>Marie Madeleine (1881-?) (tr. Ferdinand E. Kappey) | 1:06 |
| 27 | Laura and Lizzie Asleep <sup>□</sup><br>Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)          | 0:55 |
| 28 | Christabel and Geraldine <sup>□</sup><br>Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834)    | 2:30 |
| 29 | Wild Nights, Wild Nights <sup>□</sup><br>Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)            | 0:36 |





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## CD 2 (Cont.)

- |                    |  |       |
|--------------------|--|-------|
| 30                 | Penumbra <i>from</i> Chansons de Bilitis <sup>□</sup><br>Pierre de Louys (1870-1925) (tr. anon.) | 1:54  |
| OF NYMPHS AND GODS |  |       |
| 31                 | Hero and Leander (excerpt)<br>Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593)                                    | 5:25  |
| 32                 | On the Happy Corydon and Phyllis <sup>†</sup><br>Sir Charles Sedley (1639-1701)                  | 2:02  |
| 33                 | Salmacis and Hermaphroditus (excerpt)<br>Francis Beaumont (1584-1616)                            | 11:18 |
| 34                 | Leda and the Swan<br>W. B. Yeats (1865-1939)   | 1:51  |

**Total time on CD 2: 1:19:24**

**Total time on CDs 1 and 2: 2:38:25**

Edward de Souza • Benjamin Soames <sup>†</sup> • Matthew Marsh <sup>◊</sup>

Stella Gonet <sup>□</sup> • David Timson <sup>◊</sup>





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Herrick • Marlowe • Rochester • Jonson  
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# Classic Erotic Verse

It is natural that poets should write about erotic love. The erotic urge is amongst the most raw and primeval of human impulses and it would be odd indeed if it were ignored in literature. Rather, the intensity of that emotion, and that of the whole creative process, make this a natural subject for writers.

Erotic love, or lust, differs from other kinds of love in that it possesses a certain degree of physicality – in very early Egyptian and Sumerian literature it is perceived as a sickness. This anthology of classic erotic verse is a celebration of this most irrational yet irrepressible of emotions.

Of course, the word love (derived from the Sanskrit *lubh* – to desire) has come to denote a variety of meanings in our language. As so often, the Greeks had a word for it – three in fact – but it was *eros*

which indicated sexual love.

As in all literary genres, poetry reflects the time and society in which it is composed. This is perhaps particularly apparent in literature which concerns itself with matters of love, and especially sexual love.

The well-documented Victorian period stands as an obvious example of repression (though often accompanied by hypocrisy) and represents one extreme on the scale of tolerance. The sexual revolution of the 1960s and the liberation it heralded (in matters sexual, as well as self-expression) typifies the other. Thus, nineteenth century prudery can give rise to a slightly amusing use of metaphor which may not always be immediately apparent.

On the other hand, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries produce literature which is far more forthright while often





retaining great beauty of language and form – and a seductive tenor. Rochester, for example, is a particularly good example of the sexual freedom and bawdiness which came to symbolise the Restoration.

This collection draws mainly on poetry from the English language though French literature is also represented with poems by Baudelaire, Verlaine and Rimbaud. There is a rich sensuous tradition in the East as well, and we have poems from the Chinese, Sanskrit and Arabic.

By its very nature the poetry of erotic love – perhaps as opposed to romantic love – is introspective and selfish in that it is generally written by the poet for him- or her-self. It has been suggested that true eroticism – the wisp of a veil, the sheen on the skin, the curve of a thigh – is largely a private affair; when it becomes public, it moves into the area of the bawdy. In spite of this there is a thread that runs through much of this verse which is derived from the commonality and passion of human emotion.

This collection has been structured in three ages and, inevitably, there are more poems written from a youthful

perspective than from a maturer point of view. Clearly, this does not mean that these poets were young when they wrote these lines, but rather indicates the ideal of young love.

I have included poems which are homosexual in nature, as to omit this area of literature would be to gloss over some of the important and tender erotic verse known to us. And our society no longer demands such censorship.

I have also included several poems which deal with eroticism in mythology. The two Elizabethan poems (by Marlowe and Beaumont) are both heavily influenced by Ovid although they also contain much from their own time and both contain comic as well as erotic elements. I am grateful to David Timson for his suggestions which add greatly to this collection – these he reads himself in this recording.

### **Notes by Anthony Anderson**





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Laurence Pollinger Ltd for **New Year's Eve** and **Figs** by D. H. Lawrence

A P Watt for **Leda and the Swan/A Last Confession** by W B Yeats

Sharon Olds – **The Connoiseuse of Slugs**. All attempts to find copyright holder unsuccessful.

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Cover picture: The Naked Maja by Goya. Courtesy of The Bridgeman Art Library, London

**This was originally issued as 'Naked She Lay'.**

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**Edward de Souza** has read *Don Quixote*, *The Canterbury Tales*, *The Island Race*, *The New Testament*, *Hamlet Prince of Denmark* and *The Life of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart* for Naxos AudioBooks. He has played leading roles in over a dozen West End plays and in several seasons with the Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford, at the Old Vic and the National Theatre. His film credits include *The Thirty-Nine Steps* and *The Spy Who Loved Me*.

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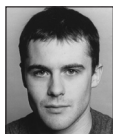
**Matthew Marsh** has appeared in several theatre productions, including the RSC and Royal National Theatre, including the West End run of *Copenhagen*. He is an extremely versatile actor with many television credits from *As Time Goes By*; *A Certain Justice*; *Heartbeat* and *A Touch Of Frost*. For film: *Miss Smilla's Sense of Snow*. For Naxos AudioBooks he also features on *John Keats: Realms of Gold*.



A series of key roles have placed **Stella Gonet** in the forefront of young British actresses. These include Titania and Isabella for the RSC, Roxanne in *Cyrano de Bergerac* and Ophelia in *Hamlet* at the National Theatre. She has also read the part of Lady Anne in *Richard III* for Naxos AudioBooks.



**David Timson** has made over 1,000 broadcasts for BBC Radio Drama. For Naxos AudioBooks he wrote *The History of the Theatre*, which won an award for most original production from the Spoken Word Publishers Association in 2001. He has also directed for Naxos AudioBooks four Shakespeare plays, including *King Richard III* (with Kenneth Branagh), which won Best Drama Award from the SWPA in 2001. In 2002 he won the Audio of the Year Award for his reading of *A Study in Scarlet*. He also reads *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes I, II, III, IV, V and VI* and *The Return of Sherlock Holmes I, II and III*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *The Sign of Four*, *The Valley of Fear* and *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes I and II*.



**Benjamin Soames** trained at LAMDA. Since then, he has been active on both stage and screen, appearing in the popular TV series *Sharpe* and touring worldwide in the acclaimed Cheek by Jowl production of Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* directed by Declan Donnellan. He also reads *Tales from the Norse Legends*, *The Tale of Troy*, *The Adventures of Odysseus and More Tales from Greek Legends*, *Venus and Adonis*, *Great Inventors and their Inventions* and *Great Scientists and their Discoveries* for Naxos AudioBooks.





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Capella Istropolitana, Adrian Leaper
- BERLOIZ** REVERIE ET CAPRICE (OP 8) 8.553034  
Igor Gruppmann, San Diego Symphony Orchestra, Yoav Talmi
- SIBELIUS** DER LIEBENDE 8.550330  
Capella Istropolitana, Adrian Leaper
- ROBINSON** GO FROM MY WINDOW 8.553874  
Christopher Wilson, lute
- ALBINONI** CONCERTO IN D MINOR OP 9 NO 2 8.550739  
Anthony Camden, The London Virtuosi, John Georgiadis
- JENKINS** 4-PART AYRE IN G MINOR 8.550687  
Rose Consort of Viols
- MAYERL** MARIGOLD 8.553515  
Gary Carpenter, Slovak RSO
- TOMLINSON** LITTLE SERENADE 8.553515  
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<b>ALBINONI</b> CONCERTO IN C MAJOR OP 9 NO 9 Anthony Camden, The London Virtuosi, John Georgiadis	8.550739
<b>DVORAK</b> STRING QUARTET NO 13 IN G MAJOR OP 106 Vlach Quartet Prague	8.553371
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<b>JANACEK</b> FROM STRING QUARTET NO 2 ("INTIMATE LETTERS") Vlach Quartet Prague	8.553895
<b>KETELBEY</b> BELLS ACROSS THE MEADOWS Czecho-Slovak RSO, Adrian Leaper Norbert Kraft, guitar, Razumovsky Sinfonia, Peter Breiner	8.553515
<b>FAURE</b> NOCTURNE FROM SHYLOCK OP 57 RTE Sinfonietta, John Georgiadis	8.553360
<b>GRANADOS</b> EVA Y WALTER FROM ESCENAS POETICAS BOOK 1 Norbert Kraft, guitar, Razumovsky Sinfonia, Peter Breiner	8.553037
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**Music programming by Anthony Anderson**





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