

Engle, Venus and the Lute Player

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Venus and the Lute Player

(Tiziano Vecellio, 1477- 1576)

Paul Engle

Far in the background a blue mountain waits
To echo back the song
The note-necked swan, while it reverberates,
Paddles the tune along.

The player is a young man richly dressed.
His hand is never mute.
But quick in motion as if it caressed
Both lady and the lute.

Nude as the sunlit air the lady rests.
She does not listen with her dainty ear,
But trembles at the love song as her breasts
Turn pink to hear.

She does not rise up at his voice's fall,
But takes that music in,
By pointed leg and searching hand, with all
Her naked skin.

Out of that scene, far off, her hot eyes fall,
Hoping they will take in
The nearing lover, whom she can give all
Her naked skin.

Titian, Venus and the Lute-Player (1560-65)

Oil on canvas, 65 inches x 82.5 inches. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

