Ben Jonson and the Story of Charis

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Abstract
'A Celebration of Charis in Ten Lyric Pieces' (The Underwood, 2) is one of the most attractive and seemingly most accessible of all Ben Jonson's poetic works. Subtle, humorous, and enchanting, these often admired lyrics appear at a casual reading to present few problems of exegesis or interpretation. Yet the sequence has provoked sharply divergent readings over recent years. There is continuing disagreement amongst critics about the tone and seriousness of the sequence, about the contexts (intellectual, historical, and literary) within which it may need to be understood, and even about the main outlines of the narrative which these seemingly simple lyrics seemingly unfold.

Ben Jonson, therefore, was about nine years younger than Shakespeare, and he survived Shakespeare about twenty-one years, dying in August, 1637. Next to Shakespeare Ben Jonson was, in his own different way, the man of most mark in the story of the English drama. His mother, left poor, married again. Her second husband was a bricklayer, or small builder, and they lived for a time near Charing Cross in Hartshorn Lane. Ben Jonson was taught at the parish school of St. Martin’s till he was discovered by William Camden, the historian. Camden was then second master in Westminster School. Ben Jonson Poetry Collection from Famous Poets and Poems. Ben Jonson Poems. Back to Poet Page. Sort by: Views | Alphabetically. Total Poems: 41. 1. On My First Son. 2. Song To Celia – I. 3. A Celebration of Charis: I. His Excuse for Loving. 33. A Pindaric Ode. 34. An Ode to Himself. 35. Ode to Himself upon the Censure of his New Inn. 36. A Celebration of Charis: IV.