

EDZELL GARDEN, PLANETARY DEITY CARVED PANEL: VENUS

Use this worksheet to colour your own renaissance image!

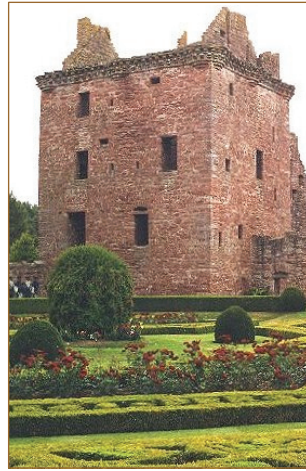
Edzell castle, located in Angus, was built in the 15th century, and had a walled 'Renaissance' garden added to it in the early 16th century by Sir David Lindsay, (*top right*). The Renaissance was a European wide movement, embraced by members of the Scottish aristocracy and in particular King James V, that sought to learn from and build upon the knowledge of classical antiquity. These gardens are thought to have been relatively common in Scotland at the time, but Edzell represents a unique survival. As well as being an ornamental garden there were carved figurative representations of the seven Planetary deities, the seven Virtues, and the seven Liberal Arts - most of which have survived. Venus, a Planetary Deity, is represented by the female 'Venus', which we can see here, (*centre right*). Such a garden was therefore a place for relaxation and entertainment, but also serious contemplation.

It is believed the carvings are all based on a popular series of engravings, which were often published in pattern books. Nuremberg was the origin of numerous such books, and one may have been brought to Edzell by the miner Hans Ziegler. Specifically, the images of the deities are derived from engravings of 1528-29 by the German artist Georg Pencz (or Iorg Bentz, c.1500-1550), a pupil of Albrecht Dürer, (the initials I. B. appear on the carving of Mars). The arts and virtues are both based on engravings derived from paintings by the Flemish artist Marten de Vos. The engravings, by Jan Sadeler and Crispijn de Passe, were widely distributed in Scotland, along with those of the deities.

Note the similarity between the carved stone panel, (*centre right*) and the engraving by George Pencz, (*bottom right*). The image on the far right is a line drawing based on the stone carving, and uses information from Pencz's image to fill in the missing areas where the stone carving has been damaged, such as the face.

The existence of the planet Venus had been known about since Babylonian times, but it was the Romans who gave us the planetary names that we are familiar with today, the so-called 'classical' planets. Venus was the Goddess of love, and so it makes sense that we see her carrying a flaming heart that represents desire. She was also associated with roses that the artist has depicted around the border of the carving. The depiction of the Ox may represent a sacrifice made for love. The Renaissance was a time of scientific experimentation, one example being the practice of Alchemy whereby individuals attempted to understand the substance of various metals and transform them into other forms. Venus was associated with Copper, and we see the symbol to represent this hanging beside her, ♀. This symbol is of course recognised today as the universal representation for the female.

It is likely that these carvings would have been painted, but having been exposed to the elements have long since lost their pigment. You can now restore this image to its former glory by colouring it in.



Edzell castle and garden, looking west.



Carving of the Planetary Deity, Venus, at Edzell.



An engraving of Venus by George Pencz.



Reconstruction line drawing of 'Venus'.