



THEATRE TARQUIN
PRESENTS

ORPHEUS



CAST

Prince of Darkness,
Aristaeus..... John Wares
Envy..... Anthony Johnson
Daughters of Proteus,
Lethe..... Emma Fitzsimons,
Alicia Liley
Orpheus..... Dominic Wilkinson
Eurydice,
Human Nature..... Kerstin Wahlqvist
Pleasure..... Emma Fitzsimons

Days of Creation, Spirits of Hades,
Women of Thrace... Jo Cohen
Ebony Hack
Kay Morton
Leanne Murphy
Katie Oppel
Rebekka Sutton
Kate Gullan
Percussionist..... Simeon Moran

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Artistic Director..... Nicholas Harrington
Music Director..... Victoria Watson
Assistant to the Director (singers)
..... Jo Cohen
Composer..... Martin Mackerras
Producer..... Richard Bourke
Production Manager,
Lighting Designer.. John Ford
Costumier (actors)..... S.J. Farrell
Costumier (singers)..... Barbara Harrington
Make-up Design..... Nicholas Harrington
Stage Manager..... Philip Hill
Assistant Stage Manager... Sabdha Charlton
Lighting Operator... Lisa Parris
Set Construction..... Andy Hall
Publicity,
Front of House Manager.... Pia Di Mattina

BASED ON CALDERON'S "EL DIVINO ORFEO"

TRANSLATED BY BEATRIZ GUIMARAENS

Orpheus was born in the generation before the Trojan War, the coeval of Heracles and Peleus. His father was the god Apollo, his mother a Muse. He was a singer and player of the lyre who could charm and soften the violence of nature. He was a prophet and religious teacher who knew the secrets of the world of the dead; a shaman and magician who had crossed over into that world and used his spells to bring his dead wife, Eurydice, back to the world of the living. While the beauty of his music persuaded the King and Queen of Hades to release his beloved, he was solemnly enjoined not to look back at her until they had reached the world of the living. Yet, he turns, and Eurydice is lost. With this ultimate loss of his love, he retreats into the wilds of Thrace, abjures womankind, and, lamenting, ultimately meets his death at the hands of the Women of Thrace.

Director's Note

The decision to present a version of a classical myth was approached with great energy, yet also with much trepidation. The fundamental requirement in such an undertaking for a young, student-based group, such as Theatre Tarquin, was to stamp a strong sense of individuality on the raw fabric of the myth. Thus, the process of artistic interpretation became an adversarial one; the refusal to accept both historical and narrative givens, or any one version of the myth, while aiming to deal with elements from all versions. A desire to investigate notions of location, aesthetic, music, and movement as conduits was uppermost.

Staging this 'performance spectacle' has been an imperfect process to say the least. The site was chosen before logistics had been investigated. The power and majesty of this 'industrial cathedral' had haunted me over a number of years, so, to capture the site and present it in a raw and unsanitised form, allowing it to dictate both the overall aesthetic and design was the operating philosophy. I believe we have achieved this.

The text upon which this production is based was a further challenge to the company as I had decided on it before having read it, and without an English translation at hand. Having researched and been seduced by the myth, this approach was not wholly irrational, although perhaps a little ambitious. Calderon's text was to provide a base which suited my purpose of exploring ideas

and themes thrown up by the myth, from a number of angles. With Calderon's 'auto sacramentale' (a short devotional play, written for religious feast days and street performances) as the starting point, I have approached the allegorical nature of the piece with great artistic licence. The inclusion of such characters as Envy and Pleasure, and my addition of a 'movement chorus', The Daughters of Proteus, provoked a complex marriage of themes.

With characters, the journey has been a difficult one. Wilkinson's Orpheus has evolved from the perspective of a learned, yet dark, shamanic figure. With this approach, Calderon's Orfeo, the god-creator, was not entirely lost, but viewed from a more mathematical perspective. The notion of possession figures prominently in his conception of love.

We have approached the nature of the love between Orpheus and Eurydice by viewing this love in an oppositional form. Whereas Orpheus can only view and express his love intellectually, Eurydice, in contrast, experiences and expresses it as instinctive emotion.

Central to any Theatre Tarquin piece is the investigation of both the theatrical journey and the nature of the theatrical ritual. In this production, I have focussed acutely on the fusion of journey and ritual. The idea of a physical journey to the performance space, whereby the audience becomes both viewer and viewed, spectators and performers, leaders and the led, is central to any notion of theatre as ritual.

Assistant Director's Note

Dai si Verse, rachitsata
Dai si Verse, rachitsata

Dai, dai, Verse dai, dai, dusho dai.
Dai, dai, Verse dai, dai, pile dai.

Give me your little hand, Verse
Give me your little hand, Verse

Give it to me, Verse, give it to me sweet one
Give it to me, Verse, give it to me chicken.

This piece, from the Shoppe region of Bulgaria, was chosen for its nasal, piercing tones, and discordant harmonies. As the singers are playing the Women of Thrace at this point, music from a region near to Thrace was chosen.

Our thanks to Bagryana Popov, and Petrunka, the Bulgarian women's choir in Melbourne, for the use of this remarkable song.

Courageous Bump-in Crew

Johnathon Knowles, Sara Harrington,
James Turnbull, Roger Morrison, Jon Marshall,
Amy, Tony Fleet, Emily, Anton, Luke,
and Peter Harrington, Joe Turner, Cast and Crew.

OUR THANKS TO:

Rachel Nelson, Martin Croston, Rose Chong,
Peter Phillips, Warren Knights, Paul Raptopoulos,
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Hektic Electric, Ormond Toy Recyclers,
Cathy Martell, Virginia Jutsa, Robin Usher,
F. Dimattina & Co., Tom Kokkinos-Kennedy,
Rebecca Peniston-Bird, Sue Strano,
Melbourne University Arts Committee,
Melbourne University Theatre Department,
Melbourne University Theatre Board,
Meredith King and Kathryn Ross of King & Associates,
and Richard Weed.

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AN IMMENSE THANKYOU TO :

Simon Webb and Bob James
of

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*without whose assistance
this production would have been
impossible*



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