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University of Washington

OPERA THEATRE

presents



JULIUS CAESAR

by Georg Friedrich Handel

THE UNICORN

THE GORGON

and

THE MANTICORE

or

The Three Sundays of a Poet

By Gian Carlo Menotti

June 2 and 3, 1959

8:00 p.m.

Meany Hall

JULIUS CAESAR

by

GEORG FRIEDRICH HANDEL

In commemoration of the two hundredth anniversary of Handel's death. This version of the opera has been prepared and edited by Stanley Chapple.

Violin obligati: Emanuel Zetlin, Rebecca Ratcliffe Brooks

Violincello obligato: William Scott

CAST

Julius Caesar.....Howard Nelson, *bass*
Cornelia, wife of Pompey.....Emilie Berendsen, *contralto*
Sextus Pompey, her son.....Tommy Goleeke, *tenor*
Ptolemy, King of Egypt.....August Werner, *bass*
Achillas, Egyptian General.....Alan Lund, *bass*
Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt.....Peggy Nessel, *soprano*
Nireus, her confidant.....Edwin Maier, *bass*
Soldiers.....Robert Borden, Gene Aitken, Bill Clarke,
Lawrence Getz, Richard McCoy
Ladies-in-waiting.....Gayle Meeboer, Phyllis Silver

The scene of the action is in Egypt after the Battle of Pharsala, 48 A.D.

R #1 (1459) Act I, scene 1 Plain beside the Nile
scene 2 Palace of Ptolemy
scene 3 Caesar's Camp
scene 4 Palace of Ptolemy

R #2 (1460) Act II, scene 1 Terrace of Cleopatra
scene 2 Palace of Ptolemy
scene 3 Terrace of Ptolemy
scene 4 Plain beside the sea at Alexandria

R #3 (1461) Act III, scene 1 Palace of Ptolemy
scene 2 Plain beside the Nile

Synopsis:

The opera opens in Egypt after the battle of Pharsala, 48 A.D. Caesar has defeated the Roman rebel Pompey who has fled to Egypt seeking assistance from Ptolemy, the contender, with his sister Cleopatra, for the throne of Egypt.

Ptolemy, seeking favor from the invader Caesar, has killed Pompey and sent his head to Caesar. Just at this moment Cornelia, Pompey's wife, and Sextus, his son, are in Caesar's camp begging for the cessation of war. Caesar, horrified, determines to punish Ptolemy. Sextus vows to kill Ptolemy, his father's murderer.

Cleopatra, masquerading as Lydia, one of her friends, goes to Caesar, hoping by her beauty to win his favor. Ptolemy invites Caesar to a fete, during the course of which Cornelia and Sextus are captured. In the meantime, Caesar accepts an invitation from "Lydia" and finds—Cleopatra!

Caesar is defeated by Ptolemy in a new battle and is thought to have been lost at sea, so all hope for Cornelia and Sextus seems to vanish. Cleopatra, captured by her brother, has also given up hope. Caesar, who has saved himself from drowning, assembles new troops and hastens to liberate Cleopatra.

Sextus, in the meantime, has escaped imprisonment and joins forces with Achilles who has betrayed Ptolemy. Achilles is mortally wounded but Sextus finally succeeds in killing Ptolemy and in liberating his mother. Caesar bestows the crown of Egypt upon Cleopatra, and all ends happily.

INTERMISSION

THE UNICORN, THE GORGON AND THE MANTICORE

or, THE THREE SUNDAYS OF A POET

A Madrigal Fable for Chorus, Dancers and Nine Instruments

Music and Libretto by

GIAN CARLO MENOTTI

Choreography by Martha Nishitani

Chamber Choir Directed by Miriam Terry

R #1 (1962)

R #2 (1454)
1463

DANCERS

The Count and Countess.....	Louis Roedel and Carolyn Peterson
Their Son.....	Susan Doar
The Mayor and His Wife.....	Linder Chlarson and Marcia Sakamoto
The Doctor and His Wife.....	John Crumpler and Marjorie Carrigan
Man in the Castle (The Poet).....	Frank Ordway
The Virgin.....	Midge Bowman
The Unicorn.....	Ron Galbreath
The Gorgon.....	LeRoy Richmond
The Manticore.....	Midge Bowman
The Dwarf.....	Carol Lynn Chong
The Nursemaids and Pages.....	Marguerite Dodds-Belanger and Irene Joshi

Synopsis:

"This Madrigal Fable tells the story of a strange Man in the Castle (the poet) who 'shunned the Countess' parties . . . yawned at town meetings, and would not let the Doctor take his pulse, and did not go to church on Sundays.'

"When he is seen on Sunday 'leading by a silver chain a captive Unicorn,' he is mocked by the Townsfolk and tempted by the virgin. Soon, following the lead of the Count and Countess, all imitate him and every respectable couple is seen promenading a Unicorn.

"On the second Sunday, the poet appears with a Gorgon 'stately and proud.' As to the fate of the Unicorn, he answers the queries of Townsfolk by saying that since the Unicorn 'only liked to gambol and tease' he 'quickly grew tired of the fun' and 'peppered and grilled him.' Soon shocked surprise turns to envy and Gorgons are the rage.

"On the third Sunday, the poet appears at a picnic with the 'lonely Manticore.' He tells the scandalized Townsfolk that the Gorgon 'died of murder.' Although at first everyone declares that 'the man must be out of his mind,' the Townsfolk again bow to his influence; and having secretly disposed of their Gorgons, they bring the Manticore into fashion.

"When the poet 'is seen no more walking on Sundays his Manticore' the Townsfolk, sure that the beast has met the same fate as the Unicorn and the Gorgon, form a committee and march on the Castle to 'stop all these crimes.'

"There they find the poet dying in the 'faithful and harmonious company' of the three animals, 'pain-wrought children of a poet's fancy.' They are the dreams of youth (the Unicorn), manhood (the Gorgon), and old age (the Manticore). These creations were easily discarded by his imitators as they were adopted by them only as passing whims. But in the poet's heart they remain intact, for they were the very essence of his life.

"The entire meaning of the fable is contained in the final words of the dying poet."

Commissioned by the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation in the Library of Congress and first performed in the Coolidge Auditorium on October 21, 1956.

THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC OPERA STAFF

Conductor and Director	Stanley Chapple
Stage Director	Ralph Rosinbum
Choreographer	Martha Nishitani
Repetiteur	Bill Clarke
Stage Manager	Edwin Maier

THE SCHOOL OF DRAMA PRODUCTION STAFF

Courtesy of Glenn Hughes, Executive Director

Art Director and Technical Supervisor	John Ashby Conway
Assistant Art Director	Alanson Davis
Technical Director	Warren C. Lounsbury
Costumier	James Crider
Electrician	Dan Goodwin
Scenic Technician	Dick Montgomery
Scenic Assistant	Everett Kent
Properties	Rolf Lystead

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