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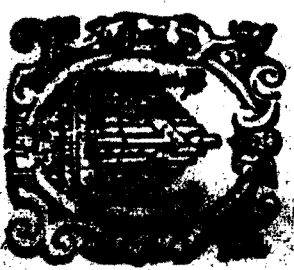
University of Washington
 THE SCHOOLS OF MUSIC AND DRAMA
 present

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 1993
 2-21

L'OPFEO
 FAVOLA IN MUSICA
 DA CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI
 RAPPRESENTATA IN MANTOVA

Fanno 1607. & Restaurazione dopo la pace.

AL SERENISSIMO SIGNOR
 D. FRANCESCO GONZAGA
 Principe di Mantova, & di Montecatini, &c.



In Venezia Appreso Riccardo Anselmo.
 M D C I E

Title page from a 1609 printing of L'Orfeo

February 17-19, 1993, 8:00 PM, Mooney Studio Theater
 February 21, 1993, 3:00 PM, Mooney Studio Theater

L'ORFEO

La favola in musica

A Fable in Music

first performed in Mantua, 1607

Music by Claudio Monteverdi, 1567-1613.
Libretto by Alessandro Striggio

CONDUCTOR..... Joan Catoni Conlon
STAGE DIRECTION Theodore Deacon
SET & LIGHTING DESIGN..... Donna Popky
COSTUME DESIGN..... Sean Sullivan

featuring the combined forces of

THE MADRIGAL SINGERS
Joan Catoni Conlon, director

COLLEGIUM MUSICUM
Margriet Tindemans, director

THE BAROQUE ENSEMBLE
Carole Terry, director

Music edited by Clifford Bartlett
by special arrangement with King's Music, Gmc

This production made possible through donation to
The University of Washington Friends of Opera

THE CAST OF L'ORFEO

LA MUSICA (THE MUSE OF MUSIC) Erin Durrett
ORFEO (ORPHEUS) Andrew Childs
EURIDICE Eun Ju Oh
SYLVIA (THE MESSENGER) Carolyn Gronlund
SPERANZA (HOPE) Elisa Verb
CARONTE (CHARON THE FERRYMAN) Robert Tangney
PROSERPINA (PERSEPHONE) Carolyn Gronlund
PLUTONE (PLUTO) James Creswell
APOLLO Kevin Helppie
NINFA (NYMPH) Nina Modi
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PASTORE III Matthias Lutz
PASTORE IV Evin Lambert
SPIRITO I (INFERNAL SPIRIT) Dierdre Forman
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SPIRITO III Lucretia Fleury
SPIRITO IV Dennis Chan
ECO (ECHO) Krista-Dawn Jenner
ENSEMBLE Dorothea Heitsch, Melek Ortobasi, Jennifer Stewart,
Bonnie Thoreson, Glenn Gregg, John Neuharth

INSTRUMENTALISTS

Violin
Daniel Perry
Kim Zabelle
Thane Lewis
Viol
Joseph Bichsel
Ellen Seibert
Ann Wilkinson
Recorder
Peggy Monroe
Sally Weak
George Forman
Percussion
Peggy Monroe

Dulciana
David Stenelson
Cornetto
Bill Perry
David Stenelson
Sackbutt
Hugh Dodd
Chad Kirby
Gretchen Hopper
David Marriott, Jr.
Nathan Oxford
Kelly van Amberg

CONTINUO
Harpisichord
Kevin Johnson
Chitarrone
Jon Walwick
Organ
Dominika Rossel
Regal
Lisa Ham
Lute
Christine Eisen
Viol
Margriet Tindemans
Cello
Joseph Bichsel

Program Notes

L'Orfeo was classified by its creators as "A Fable in Music." Looking back after nearly 400 years it must unquestionably be hailed as the first masterpiece of the art form we now call "opera." There had been a number of pre-Monteverdian attempts by groups such as the Florentine Camerata to fashion dramas that were sung throughout, but it would be the 1607 premiere of *L'Orfeo* in the north-central Italian dukedom of Mantua that would give the nascent art form maturity and distinction. Its greatness lies solely in the eloquence and emotional power of Claudio Monteverdi's musical genius. The unprecedented existence of two contemporary printed editions (1609 and 1615) attests to the impact the score had on the audiences of Monteverdi's time. In turn, these editions give modern performers a wealth of information concerning instrumentation and vocal ornamentation. Indeed, Orpheus' magnificent central aria, "Possente Spirto," has its brilliantly complex ornaments and instrumental solos written out in full, presenting a daunting challenge to singers and players alike. In our performance we have assembled a wide variety of the instruments indicated in these editions, assigning particular timbres to particular individuals or scenes (chitarrone to Orfeo, organ to Pluto, sackbuts for Infernal Sinfonias, and so forth).

In comparison, we know very little about the premiere dramatic presentation of this great score. *L'Orfeo* was composed for the Accademia degl'Invaghiti, an intellectual discussion group in which the Duke of Mantua, Francesco Gonzaga, and the poet Alessandro Striggio were prominent members. The exact location of this performance is unknown, though Monteverdi in a letter described it as "a narrow stage." Striggio's libretto is static and highly stylized, focusing on the detailed expression of emotions rather than overt action or complex stage machinery. Monteverdi's score is intricately structured with frequent use of over-arching, mirror-like musical repetitions. These factors seem to suggest that the first performances were largely of a "staged concert" nature.

Still, the extraordinary emotional quality of Monteverdi's music demands a dramatic complement. For our production we have placed the story in the milieu of a peasant wedding. Here the fable of Orpheus is played out by the wedding participants as part of the nuptial ceremony. In this ritual setting Orpheus' classical tale of eternal love and the power of music conquering grief, fear, and death can be given universal significance on a human scale.

Synopsis

Prologue. The peasants assemble for a wedding. The prologue, in the guise of the Spirit of Music, announces her theme as the power of song. To this end she will present the story of Orpheus and how his musical gifts were put to the service of immortal love by bringing him to the Underworld in search of his departed wife Euridice.

Act I. The ritual proper begins. Nymphs and shepherds celebrate the wedding of Orpheus and Euridice in song and dance. At the request of a shepherd Orpheus rhapsodizes on the greatness of his love for his bride ("Rosa del ciel"). Euridice responds in kind, declaring their hearts now beat as one ("Io non dirò"). The marriage ceremony is performed and the shepherds sing of their joy.

Act II. While the women prepare Euridice for the evening nuptials Orpheus reflects on the sorrows and joys of his courtship ("Vi ricorda"). Sylvia, Euridice's companion, arrives seeking Orpheus. In anguished tones this messenger tells how Euridice, having been bitten by a snake, died in her arms ("Ahi, caso acerbo"). The disconsolate Orpheus sings of the depths of his sorrow ("Tu sei morta"). He vows not surrender to fate, but to travel to the Underworld and use his song to soften the heart of Pluto. The nymphs and shepherds join Orpheus in his grief.

CASS
12,103
B
(25')

Intermission

Act III. The Spirit of Hope leads Orpheus to the gate of Hades, but because of the Dantean edict, "Abandon all hope, ye who enter here," she can go no further. She urges the panic-stricken singer to trust in the power of his voice. At the river Styx, Orpheus encounters Charon, the boatman who ferries the souls of the dead across to the Underworld. Charon, seeing that Orpheus is still a living being, bars the singer from entering his boat. Orpheus pleads with him through a most eloquent, florid song ("Possente spirito"). Charon is touched by the music but still will not let him pass. Seeing that he pleads in vain, Orpheus plays softly on his lyre, lulling the ferryman to sleep. Triumphant Orpheus enters the boat and rows across to the Underworld.

CASS
12,104
A
(20')

Act IV. At the court of the dead Orpheus is presented before Pluto, the God of the Underworld and his melancholy Queen. She is Persephone, the Goddess of Spring and Fertility who unhappily must spend half of the year among the dead. Finding in Orpheus' plight echoes of her own sad circumstance, Persephone pleads with her Lord to allow Euridice to return to the world of the living with her husband. Pluto reluctantly consents provided that, while leading Euridice back, Orpheus does not turn to look back at her. Infernal spirits prepare the trial and Orpheus ecstatically begins to lead his wife out of the Underworld ("Qual honor"). But doubts as to whether Euridice is truly following him begin to torment the singer. Hearing a noise behind him Orpheus turns, only to see his sorrowing wife taken away from him once more. A chorus of infernal spirits intones, "Only he who is victorious over himself deserves eternal glory."

CASS
12,104
B

Act V. Benumbed with grief, Orpheus returns to the fields of his homeland ("Questo i campo di Tracia"). He muses on his sorrow with an echo who can only answer back his lamentations. Bitterly he condemns worthless love. Orpheus' father, the great god Apollo, appears to him and urges the singer to abandon his shallow terrestrial desires for immortal celestial perfections. In response to Orpheus' despair of ever again seeing his beloved Euridice's glance, Apollo counsels that he seek her image in the sun and stars. Together, father and son rise to the heavens ("Saliam").* The ritual over, the peasants end with song and dance ("Vanne Orfeo").

(30')

*In the original libretto Orpheus is torn to pieces by Maenads, a wild band of followers of Bacchus. The music for this ending does not appear in either of the printed versions of the score. The Neoplatonic ending of tonight's version is thought to have been composed later to complement subsequent performances before more sensitive audiences.

CASS
12,103
A
(23')

Production Staff

Stage Manager..... Erin Gabriel
Projection Design..... Leilah Stewart
Guest Vocal Coach..... Nancy Zylstra
Opera Coaches..... Lisa Bergman, Alison Guay, Glenda Williams
Assistant Director..... Margo Maier
Repetiteur..... Kevin Johnson
Assistant Conductor..... Gabriel Dumitrescu
Properties Master..... Alex Danilchik
Choreography Advisor..... Goodwin Schaefer Deacon
Master Electrician..... Scott Allison
Light Board Operator..... Mark Rudowicz
Costume Crew..... Jean Frazier, Kathryn Layson, Sarah Murdock,
Jennifer Mathieson, Nancy Nelson
Assistant Stage Manager..... Lisa Ramer
Lighting Crew..... Drama 212
Production Running Crew:..... Mark Oordt, Nicole Heit, Leilah Stewart,
Byron Au

Staff for the Schools of Music and Drama

Production Manager..... Anne Stewart
Head, Design and Technical Production..... Bill Forrester
Costume Advisor..... Sarah Nash Gates
Lighting Advisor..... Rick Paulsen
Faculty Technical Director..... Jay O. Glerum
Scene Shop Supervisor..... Alan Weldin
Scene Shop Carpenter..... Malcolm Brown
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To request disability accommodations, contact the Office of the ADA Coordinator at least ten days in advance of the event. 543-6450 (voice); 543-6452 (TDD); 685-3885 (FAX); access@u.washington.edu (E-mail).

February 22, University Symphony. Meany Theater, 8:00 PM.

February 24, The Contemporary Group. Meany Theater, 8:00 PM.

February 26, Concert: Pacific Northwest Jazz Band Concert and Festival, Meany Theater, 7:30 PM.

February 26, Festival: Pacific Northwest Jazz Band Concert and Festival, Meany Theater, 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM.

March 1, University Studio Jazz Ensemble, Meany Theater, 8:00 PM.

March 2 & 3, Jazz Combos. Brechemin Auditorium, 8:00 PM.

March 7, Soni Ventorum Wind Quintet. Brechemin Auditorium, 3:00 PM.

March 8, Collegium Musicum. Brechemin Auditorium, 8:00 PM.

March 8, Percussion Ensemble. Meany Studio Theater, 8:00 PM.

March 9, University Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Band. Meany Theater, 8:00 PM.

March 10, ProConArt. Brechemin Auditorium, 8:00 PM.

March 11, Keyboard Debut Series. Brechemin Auditorium, 8:00 PM.

March 12, University Symphony & Combined Choruses. Meany Theater, 8:00 PM.

March 15, Opera Directors' Workshop. Meany Studio Theater, 8:00 PM.

March 19, David Russell, guest guitar. Brechemin Auditorium, 8:00 PM.

March 30, Brechemin Scholarship Winners Showcase. Meany Theater, 8:00 PM.

April 7, Third Annual Electro-Acoustic Music Festival. Meany Theater, 8:00 PM.

April 8, Faculty Artist Recital: Lisa Bergman, piano; Arthur Grossman, bassoon; Alex Klein, oboe; William McColl, clarinet; Patricia Michaelan, piano; Toby Saks, cello; Eric Shumsky, viola; Felix Skowronek, flute; and guest Geoffrey Bergler, trumpet. Meany Theater, 8:00 PM.

April 12, Harp Ensemble Honors Lynne Palmer. Meany Theater, 8:00 PM.