

A hand-drawn sketch in black ink on white paper. On the left, a figure is seen from behind, wearing a long, flowing robe and a head covering. The figure stands on a rocky or uneven ground. In the background, there are simple, sketchy outlines of hills or mountains. The sky is filled with several small, star-like symbols. The overall style is gestural and expressive.

Orfeo

ed
Furidice

By C.W. Gluck

Greenwall Music Workshop
Bennington College
November 21, 23 & 24, 1992

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Conceived & Directed By
Jonathan Bepler

Music Conducted & Re-Orchestrated By
Peter Golub

Choreography By
Jonathan Bepler & Peter Schmitz

Visual Design
Sue Rees

Narrative Interpretation By
John Smyth

Stage Manager
Hedvig Sjögren

Lighting Design
Aryn Chapman

Costume Design
Pamela Johnson

Crew

Lights

John Payne (Assistant Designer)
Michael Buhl
Rachel Whitman
Chad Lembree
Mark Owen

Floor

Michelle Dorvillier

Rehearsal Accompanist

Joseph Bloom

Program Design

Michael Buhl

Etching By

Pamela Johnson

Poster Design

Paul Ahrens

Text Translated and Condensed By

Jonathan Bepler & Alessio Assuntis

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Dedicated with increasing lust and love to all those who took part in this project. JB

O: Please, Eurydice, let's move on! I could soothe you, but the gods will not allow it.

E: Please, just one look!

O: It would mean misfortune.

E: Oh, unfaithful! This is the welcome you give me. Oh gods, if this is your gift, take it back! Go! I cannot forgive you!

O: Come on, please your husband.

E: No! Death is better than life with you

O: Cruel one, I will follow you always!

E: Then tell me why you are so cold!

O: Though I die of grief, I will not tell you.

Both: God's, though your gift is great, it is insufferable!

E: What is this life which I'm thrust into. I tremble, I weaken, my heart beats cruelly!

What harsh torment to pass from death to such suffering.

Duet: E: I was content to be away from life's torments.

O: Oh, new hardship. I die of grief.

O: I can take no more! Reason abandons me, and...

E: Orpheus, I feel myself fading.

O: Oh, if you only knew....what am I doing?...How long will this go on?

E: Orpheus, at least remember me, Eurydice.

O: My heart tears in my breast. Oh Darling Eurydice..

E: Orpheus! Gods, I die.

O: What have I done? She is dead to me. And it is I who have caused it. There is nothing left but to die myself.

What will I do without Eurydice, where will I go without my love. Your dear husband will be true forever. There is no hope left for me on earth or in heaven.

Scene 2: Love

A: Orpheus, what are you doing?

O: You! Can't you at least leave me alone with my last sorrow.

A: Calm yourself, insane one, and recognize Love.

O: Just tell me what you want from me!

A: You have proved to me your faith. Now, by my glory, you will be happy! I give Eurydice back to you....!

O: Darling..

E: Orpheus ..

O: Oh, such celestial grace! What a reunion!

A: No one doubts my power. So, adventurous lovers, return to the world. Love compensates a thousand pains!!

Chorus of Lovers: Amore triumphant, the whole world together, bows to the power of beauty and love!

Cast

Orfeo

Euridice

Amor

Narrator

Jonathan Beppler

Shannon Jones

Jennifer Kubik

John Smyth

The Chorus From Hell

Shawnette Sulker (soprano)

Catherine Wengowski (soprano)

Celia Twomey (contralto)

Susan X. Felber (contralto)

Michael Buhl (tenor)

Edmund Mooney (tenor)

Mathew Cole (bass)

Ian Jelinek (bass)

Orchestra

Violin

Viola

Violoncello

Contrabass

Oboe & English Horn

Flute

Clarinet & Guitar

Trumpet

Timpani

Keyboard

Cen Wang, Seana Gamel

Dorothy Wallace-Senft

Nathaniel Parke, Jason McDermott

Brett Simner

Lyndon Moors

Dimos Dimitriades

Paul Opel

Alex Huberty

David Brandt

Joseph Bloom

ACT ONE, Scene 1: Tomb

Chorus of Friends: Eurydice, if you wander near this dark place, hear the laments and sighs which are sadly shed for you. And hear, sweet dove, your unhappy husband who, crying, calls to you.

Orpheus: Friends, this lament increases my anguish. This place is kind to my grief. Leave me here to mourn.

This is how I call to her, by day, by night. But my crying is in vain, my heart's idol does not respond.

This is how I look for her, in these dark banks where she died. Pitying my state, Echo answers my cries.

Eurydice, your name is known to valley, woods and river. Miserable Orpheus etches it onto these trees with trembling hand. Eurydice is no more and yet I live. Gods, grant her new life or let me die.

This is how I cry over her, as the sun gilds the day, or is dispersed in the waves, the river pities my song and murmurs in answer to me.

Scene 2: Love

Amor: Love will assist you, unhappy husband. Jupiter, in his pity, agrees to help you cross the slothful waves of the Lethes. Go! Seek Eurydice in the dark realm!

If the sweet sound of your music can rise to heaven, it will soothe the gods' anger and restore your treasure.

O: Will I really see her again?

A: Yes, but only if you accomplish the task the gods demand of you.

O: I'll meet any challenge for her.

A: Listen, until you are out of the underworld, you are forbidden to look upon your better half, or else you will lose her forever. Be worthy of this heavenly favor!

Avert your gaze, hold your tongue, remember how you suffer now. It will soon pass. Just play the part of the lover too blind to speak in the presence of his desire!

O: What's this ? Then I shall have her again! And after this war of suffering, I will not be able to look on her or hold her close to me?... But I can't go on without her. Help me then, gods, I accept your offer!

PAUSE

ACT TWO, Scene 1: Hell

Chorus of Furies: What mortal, after Hercules and Pirithus, dares enter this horrid

place! If he is not a god, the fierce Eumenides and the cries of Cerberus will drive him out!

O: Oh, Specters and Larvae, be merciful to my barbarous pain!

CH: No!

CH: Miserable youth what do you wish here? There is nothing but horror and wailing in this dark place.

O: Like you, I have suffered a thousand pains. I carry my inferno deep in my heart.

CH: What is this strange, sweet sorrow which seems to soften our impenetrable fury?

O: You would be less menacing if for only one moment you felt love's languor.

CH: This sweet sorrow.... The black doors open and free passage is granted to this forlorn hero....

Ballet

Scene 2: Elysium

Eurydice and Chorus of Blessed Spirits: This calm asylum is sacred to the chosen ones. Sounds of sadness are muted forever. Happiness reigns everywhere!

O: What Pure sky and clear sun! The sweet music of winged singers! The rustling air! The murmur of clear streams! Everything here invites eternal rest....

But this does not bring me happiness. Only your sweet voice, your loving glances, Eurydice, can still my longing! I ask the blessed spirits to grant her to me.

CH: Welcome, Hero, to the realm of repose. Eurydice now arises in her full beauty and is returned to you.

INTERMISSION

ACT III, Scene 1: The Way Out

O: Come, my darling follow me.

E: Is it you? Am I dreaming?

O: It is I. I have come through much to have you back.

E: But why does your hand not hold mine? You avoid my gaze. Could your love have weakened?

From Orfeo ed Euridice, by C. W. Gluck

Amor:

Seil dolce suon de la tua lira
al ciel, Orfeo, sopra salir
placata fia dei Nume, dei Numi l'ira
eresa l'ombra cara
al primo tuo sopiro!

Avert your gaze, hold your tongue, remember how you suffer now. It will soon pass. Just play the part of the lover too blind to speak in the presence of his desire!

Gli sgaurdi tratieni
affrena gli accenti
rammenta che peni
che pochi momenti hai pui da penar
Sai pur che talora confunsi tremanti
con chi gl'innamora son cie chi glia amanti
non sanno par lar.

If the sweet sound of your music can rise to heaven, it will soothe the gods' anger and restore your treasure.

FRAUENLIEBE UND LEBEN
(A WOMAN'S LOVE AND LIFE)

1. SEIT ICH IHN GESEHEN

Seit ich ihn gesehen, glaub ich blind zu sein;
Wo ich hin nur blicke, seh' ich ihn allein;
Wie im wachen Traume schwebt sein Bild mir vor,
Taucht aus tiefstem Dunkel heller, heller nur empor.
Sonst ist licht und farblos alles um mich her,
Nach der Schwestern Spiele nicht begehrt' ich mehr,
Möchte lieber weinen, still im Kämmerlein;
Seit ich ihn gesehen, glaub' ich blind zu sein.

1. SINCE I HAVE SEEN HIM

Since I have seen him, I believe I am blind;
Whither I am looking, I see him alone;
Like in a waking dream, his image floats before me,
Rising from deepest darkness, brighter and brighter.
Everything else around me is light and colorless,
The games of my sisters I want to share no more,
I would rather weep silently in my little chamber;
Since I have seen him, I believe I am blind.

2. ER, DER HERRLICHSTE VON ALLEN

Er, der Herrlichste von allen,
Wie so milde, wie so gut!
Holde Lippen, klares Auge,
Heller Sinn und fester Mut.
So wie dort in blauer Tiefe,
Hell und herrlich jener Stern,
Also Er an meinem Himmel,
Hell und herrlich, hehr und fern.
Wandle, wandle deine Bahnen,
Nur betrachten deinen Schein,
Nur in Demut ihn betrachten,
Selig und nur traurig sein!
Höre nicht mein stilles Beten,
Deinem Glücke nur geweiht;
Darfst mich, nied're Magd, nicht kennen,
Hoher Stern der Herrlichkeit!
Nur die Würdigste von allen
Darf beglücken deine Wahl,
Und ich will die Hohe segnen
Viele tausend Mal.
Will mich freuen dann und weinen,
Selig, selig bin ich dann,
Sollte mir das Herz auch brechen,
Brich, o Herz, was liegt daran?

2. HE, THE MOST GLORIOUS OF ALL

He, the most glorious of all,
How kind he is, how good!
Gentle mouth, clear eyes,
Clear mind and firm courage,
Even as in yonder blue depth,
Shines bright and glorious that star,
So is he in my heaven,
Bright and glorious, sublime and far.
Wander, wander along your course,
Only to look at your light,
Only to look at it humbly,
Only to be blissful and sad!
Do not hear my silent prayer,
Offered for your happiness:
You must not know me, humble maiden,
Noble star of glory!
Only the worthiest of all
May your choice make happy,
And I will bless the noble one,
Many thousand times.
I shall rejoice and I shall weep then,
Blissful, blissful I am then,
Even though my heart should break,
Break, o heart, what does it matter?

3. ICH KANN'S NICHT FASSEN, NICHT
GLAUBEN

Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben,
Es hat ein Traum mich berückt;
Wie hätte' er doch unter allen
Mich Arme erhöht und beglückt?
Mir war's, er habe gesprochen:
"Ich bin auf ewig dein."
Mir war's, ich träume noch immer,
Es kann ja nimmer so sein.
O lass im Traume mich sterben,
Gewieget an seiner Brust,
Den seligen Tod mich schlürfen
In Tränen unendlicher Lust.

3. I CANNOT GRASP, NOR BELIEVE IT

I cannot grasp, nor believe it,
A dream must have me bewitched,
How could he from among all others
Have exalted and blessed poor me?
It seemed to me that he had spoken:
"I am forever yours."
It seemed to me that I am still dreaming,
For it can never be thus.
Oh let me die in my dream,
Cradled on his breast,
Let me drink blissful death
In tears of infinite joy.

4. DU RING AN MEINEM FINGER

Du Ring an meinem Finger,
Mein goldenes Ringelein,
Ich drücke dich fromm an die Lippen,
An das Herze mein.
Ich hatt' ihn ausgeträumt,
Der Kindheit friedlich schönen Traum,
Ich fand allein mich, verloren
Im öden unendlichen Raum.
Du Ring an meinem Finger,
Da hast du mich erst belehrt,
Hast meinem Blick erschlossen
Des Lebens unendlichen, tiefen Wert.
Ich will ihm dienen, ihm leben,
Ihm angehören ganz,
Hin selber mich geben und finden
Verklärt mich, in seinem Glanz.

4. YOU RING ON MY FINGER

You ring on my finger,
My little golden ring,
I press you devoutly to my lips,
Devoutly to my heart.
My dream had come to an end,
Childhood's peaceful, lovely dream,
I found myself lonely and lost
In empty, infinite space.
You ring on my finger,
You taught me only then,
You opened to my eyes,
Life's infinite, deep value.
I want to serve him, live for him,
Wholly belong to him,
Give myself and find myself
Transfigured in his splendour.