

# GLUCK

## Orphée et Euridice

(1774 Paris Version)

Fouchécourt • Dubosc • Le Blanc

Opera Lafayette Orchestra and Chorus

Ryan Brown



## Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714–1787)

### Orphée et Euridice

There have been three significantly different versions of Gluck's work before the public since *Orfeo* was first produced in 1762. Gluck composed his first version in Vienna and in Italian. The second he revised (in French) and expanded for Paris in 1774, and the third is one which Gluck's admirer Hector Berlioz revised in Paris in 1859. Of the many differences between these versions, the most prominent is the voice used for Orpheus: in 1762 Gluck wrote the rôle for a castrato, in 1774 he rewrote it for a tenor, and in 1859 Berlioz rewrote it again for a female alto. It is a variant of the Berlioz version, though translated back into Italian, which has been heard most often in the opera house of the last century. More recently the 1762 version has been recreated with a counter-tenor in the title rôle. The 1774 Paris version, however, which was the most popular version in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, is only now receiving its due.

The high tenor, or haut-contre, was a voice that French composers of the eighteenth century cultivated and challenged, and which Gluck made remarkable use of in this version of *Orphée*. The relatively low pitch of the Paris Opera orchestra in the eighteenth century, and its apparent flexibility, helped make the tenor's high tessitura possible. (Rousseau and others said that the Opera orchestra actually varied its pitch depending on the needs of the singers.) Period-instrument orchestras today again play at these lower pitches (ours is A=392), and they offer a different and more comfortable set of sonorities and articulations with which to accompany this vocal range.

In addition to rewriting the title rôle for tenor, Gluck's other changes to the 1774 version of *Orphée et Euridice* involved the incorporation of new dances and airs for the Parisian stage. The flute solo from the *Ballet des Ombres Heureuses* is certainly the most famous of these. Additionally Gluck reworked and orchestrated the opera's recitatives.

Our recording is based upon the very first Paris performance on 2nd August, 1774. In addition to fragments of an autograph score, we consulted the performance materials for this Parisian début found in the

Bibliothèque Nationale, including the conductor's score, a choral score, and the livret (the pre-prepared text for the audience.) We compared each of these to the Bärenreiter edition, a kind of compendium of various Paris performances in the late eighteenth century. Not only was the conductor's score in particular very helpful with regard to interpretive matters, but it also indicated ways in which the 2nd August 1774 performance was shorter than subsequent eighteenth-century versions. These initial performance materials suggested, for instance, that at the end of Act I, Scene 1, the récit '*Eloignez-vous*' directly follows the Pantomime, which then proceeds directly to the Chœur, without a ritournelle. The materials also indicated that the tenor Legros decided not to attempt the ariette '*L'espoir renait*' at the end of Act I. (Legros was known for his beautiful high notes but not, it seems, for his agility). We have decided to keep it, however, as Jean-Paul Fouchécourt negotiates it with ease. In Act III, Scene 2, the conductor's score suggests that L'Amour's récit with Orphée and Euridice moves directly into the final chorus, without an additional trio, and that the chorus finishes the work without an additional ballet. These indications preserve a direct and dramatic finish, at least within the conventions of late eighteenth-century opera. The greatest conventional change to the story is of course the one described in the Argument of the livret, which states that 'to adapt this fable to our stage, it has been necessary to change the catastrophe and to add the episode in which Love reunites husband and wife'.

Soon after the 1774 début, more dances were added for other Parisian performances. Most of these dances Gluck borrowed from his earlier works. In 1776 *Orphée et Euridice* was choreographed by the famous Jean-Georges Noverre. For our public performance of the work we engaged the choreographer Catherine Turocy and the New York Baroque Dance Company, and added a final ballet, or divertissement.

For this recording we are pleased to be able to present the 1774 version of *Orphée* as sung by a tenor experienced in the major rôles of eighteenth-century

French opera. We hope that it will breathe new life into Gluck's magnificent retelling of a myth which has been

so central to our collective imagination for many centuries.

Ryan Brown

## Gluck and Reform Opera

The son of a forester who, by 1727, was in the service of Prince Philipp Hyazinth von Lobkowitz, Christoph Willibald Gluck was born in 1714 and spent his childhood in his native Bohemia, with its strong musical traditions. He studied at the University of Prague, while continuing his own musical activities, and by 1734 was in Vienna, it is supposed with the patronage of the Lobkowitz family. There followed a period in Italy, chiefly in Milan, during which he began to establish himself as a composer of opera. It was perhaps through his connection with the Lobkowitz family that he found himself in 1746 in London, commissioned to provide opera for the King's Theatre, and the following years brought employment in various cities of Europe. In 1750 he married in Vienna and in the next years wrote operas on libretti by Metastasio for that city, for Prague, Naples and Rome, while serving first as Konzertmeister and then as Kapellmeister to the Prince of Saxe-Hildburghausen. For this patron he set Metastasio's libretto *Le cinesi*, a sumptuous performance of which for the Emperor brought a satisfactory reward, not least in establishing Gluck in court circles. During the decade he collaborated with Count Durazzo, who had been appointed in 1754 to take charge of the two principal theatres of Vienna, particularly in the provision of adaptations of French *opéra comique* for the Viennese stage.

The collaboration with Durazzo was of great importance both for Gluck and for the history of opera. In 1755 he became court composer and in 1759 composer of ballets, with responsibility in the following year for theatre music. In 1761 he collaborated with the dancer and ballet-master Gasparo Angiolini in a new *ballet d'action*, a ballet with a story, following now current fashions, *Don Juan ou Le festin de pierre* (Don

Juan or The Stone Guest). The arrival in Vienna that year of Ranieri de' Calzabigi was the catalyst for a change of course for opera, now abandoning the conventions of Metastasian *opera seria* in favour of a new simplicity and a measure of dramatic realism. The first result of the joint work of Calzabigi, Angiolini and Gluck, under the encouragement of Count Durazzo, was *Orfeo ed Euridice*. There were to be two further 'reform' operas with Calzabigi, in 1767 *Alceste* (Naxos 8.66066-68) and in 1770 *Paride ed Elena*. Between 1774 and 1779 Gluck enjoyed considerable success in Paris, where a French version of *Orfeo ed Euridice*, with a libretto adapted by Pierre Louis Moline, was staged in August, 1774, and an adaptation of *Alceste* two years later. The failure of his Ovidian *Echo et Narcisse* and ill-health brought him back to Viennain 1779, where he remained until his death in 1787.

Gluck later credited Calzabigi with the inspiration for *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Naxos 8.660064), a judgement in which the librettist himself fully concurred. Calzabigi laid particular stress on the relationship between opera and declamation, in one sense a return to the very origins of the form in its late sixteenth-century association with rhetoric. In his introduction to the work he explains that he has changed the scene of Eurydice's death from Thrace to Campania, near to the reputed entrance to the Underworld near Lake Averno, thus preserving the Aristotelian unity of place. He further adapted the legend, according to which Orpheus had lost Eurydice by disobeying the prohibition laid on him not to look round at her as he left the Underworld, by conforming with the happy ending expected of the modern stage and avoiding the harsher ending outlined in his classical sources, Vergil's fourth *Georgic* and the sixth book of the *Aeneid*.

## Synopsis

### CD 1

**[1]** The overture touches briefly on something of the drama to come.

#### ACT I

##### Scene 1

**[2]** Solemn music at the rise of the curtain reveals a lonely grove of laurels and cypresses, with the tomb of Eurydice, around which nymphs and shepherds lament, while Orpheus calls on his beloved. He bids his companions to desist and leave him alone to mourn. The nymphs and shepherds disperse.

##### Scene 2

**[3]** Orpheus calls out the name of his beloved Eurydice, weeping for her loss.

**[4]** He bitterly inveighs against the powers of the Underworld.

##### Scene 3

The god of Love appears, offering help. Orpheus will be allowed to bring Eurydice back from the dead, if he can, with his music, placate the furies and spirits of Hades. In bringing her back, he must not turn to look at her, as she follows him back to the land of the living, nor may he explain to her the reason for his actions. Love urges Orpheus to follow this decree, reminding him that his suffering will be transitory and that lovers are sometimes without words.

##### Scene 4

**[5]** Orpheus now has hope again, but foresees the difficulties he will encounter in view of the restrictions placed upon him.

#### ACT II

##### Scene 1

**[6]** The scene is set in the dreaded caverns of Hades. Furies and spectres dance their infernal dance, interrupted

by the sound of the lyre of Orpheus. The spirits seek to know who dares to enter Hades. Orpheus pleads with them, but they are adamant, and repeat their question, asking why he has come. Orpheus seeks to calm the Furies and spirits, who are partially placated by his pleas, and give way, allowing Orpheus to enter the gates of their realm. They dance, and Orpheus passes through the gates.

### CD 2

#### Scene 2

**[1]** The scene changes to a verdant countryside, meadows covered in flowers, arbours and murmuring streams. Orpheus is joined by the blessed spirits, who dance.

#### Scene 3

**[2]** Orpheus delights in the scene, but Elysium is not for him: his paradise is Eurydice, whom he now seeks. The spirits praise Orpheus, and promise that Euridice will soon be with him again.

#### Scene 4

The spirits lead Eurydice in. Orpheus takes her hand and leads her away.

#### ACT III

##### Scene 1

**[3]** Orpheus leads Eurydice on the path to the upper world, always without looking at her. She is at first delighted and then puzzled and angry at the failure of her husband to embrace her or even look at her. He remains steadfast, still leading her on. Both are distressed by the situation, Eurydice by her husband's seemingly unfeeling behaviour, and Orpheus by her importunity. Eurydice foresees future unhappiness and declares herself now unused to the troubles of humanity. She pleads with Orpheus, who finally can resist no longer. He turns to look at her, and she dies, leaving him to lament the second death of his beloved.

**4** Now he only wants to follow her back to Hades, to join her in death.

### Scene 2

As he is about to kill himself, Love intervenes, disarming him and bringing a reward for his love and constancy. Eurydice shall live again, and she comes to life again,

waking as from a deep sleep. They are now re-united.

### Scene 3

At a sign from Love the scene changes to the temple of Love, where nymphs and shepherds celebrate the return of Eurydice, joined in their rejoicing by Orpheus.

### Synopsis and additional note by Keith Anderson

*Opera Lafayette would like to extend its thanks to the following people for their extraordinary support of this debut recording:*

*The Ambassador and Mrs. Francois Bujon de l'Estang  
Sandra and Tom Jordan and the Jordan Vineyard and Winery  
Mike and Foster Beigler  
Bill and Cari Gradison  
G. Lewis and Ingrid B. Meyer  
Melissa Monson and Monson Communications LLC*

*Opera Lafayette also extends its thanks to all of its supporters who have given of themselves in countless ways in order that our work can continue to flourish. Among the institutions who have provided major support to the ensemble are The Florence Gould Foundation, The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, The Helen Sperry Lea Foundation, and The Marpat Foundation, Cogema, Inc., and Suzan Reed Graphics.*

*Opera Lafayette is indebted to the Clarice Smith Center for the Performing Arts and to the Inn and Conference Center at the University of Maryland for their assistance in making this project possible.*

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## Jean-Paul Fouchécourt

Jean-Paul Fouchécourt is known as a tenor, but his work in the Baroque repertoire also qualifies him as an exponent of haut-contre. After studying the classical saxophone and conducting, he decided to become a singer after taking part in a workshop with Cathy Berberian. William Christie invited him to join his ensemble Les Arts Florissants in 1986, and with that ensemble he appeared in concerts in Europe and the United States, the Soviet Union, South America, Australia and Japan, and made many recordings. Many of the highlights of Jean-Paul Fouchécourt's career thus far have come from his appearances with Marc Minkowsky and his Musiciens du Louvre. These include the principal rôles of Rameau's *Hippolyte et Aricie*, Mondonville's *Titon et l'Aurore*, Lully's *Acis et Galatée* and Handel's *Resurrezione*. He has also sung with other Baroque ensembles, directed by Philippe Herreweghe, René Jacobs, Sigiswald Kuijken, Nicholas McGegan, Hervé Niquet and Christophe Rousset. His gradually expanded repertoire includes such composers as Berlioz, Britten, Ravel, Rimsky-Korsakov and Szymanowski, and he has also been invited to sing with such conductors as Franz Brüggen, Myung-Wun Chung, Andrew Davis, Charles Dutoit, John Eliot Gardiner, James Levine, Seiji Ozawa, Antonio Pappano, Michel Plasson, Simon Rattle, G. Rozhdestvensky and many others. On stage his most important rôles have included Rameau's *Platée*, Arnalta in Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, the husband in Poulenc's *Les mamelles de Tirésias*, the four servants in Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffmann*, Bardolfo in Verdi's *Falstaff* and Goro in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, a rôle which he has performed with leading international opera companies including Covent Garden, the Paris Opéra, the Metropolitan Opera of New York, New York City Opera, Netherlands Opera, Geneva Opera, and the Festivals of Salzburg, Edinburgh and Aix-en-Provence. He has also performed opera in concert with the orchestra of Saito Kinen (Japan), the Boston Symphony, the National Orchestra of France, the Philharmonic Orchestra of Radio France, and the Berlin Philharmonic. Jean-Paul Fouchécourt devotes a large part of his time to French song, from the baroque *Air de cour* and classical *Romance* to the romantic *mélodie*, and has performed in recital in France and abroad, including Warsaw, Abu Dhabi, Moscow, Caracas, San Francisco, Tokyo, New York and London. His discography already includes some 75 recordings. He has been honoured as a Chevalier dans l'ordre national du mérite by the French Government.

## Catherine Dubosc

Catherine Dubosc has appeared on the major French stages, the Opéra Comique, Théâtre du Châtelet, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Opéra de Strasbourg, Toulouse, Nice, Opéra de Montpellier, and at the Aix-en-Provence, Vaison-la-Romaine, Saint-Denis, La Chaise Dieu, Innsbruck and Edinburgh festivals. She has sung under many famous conductors, including John Eliot Gardiner, René Jacobs, Jean-Claude Malgoire, Harry Christophers, Semyon Bychkov, Charles Dutoit, Sylvain Cambreling and Christoph Eschenbach. Recent performances include the rôle of the child in Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges* in concert at the London Royal Albert Hall and *La Vierge* by Massenet at the Teatro del Liceu in Barcelona. She made her début as Musette in *La Bohème* with the Netherlands Opera and was heard in *L'enfant et les sortilèges* in Santiago de Compostela. In Tours and Rennes she appeared in Gluck's *Orphée et Euridice*. She sang a series of concert performances of *L'enfant et les sortilèges* and *Le rossignol* with the Fribourg SWR and *Quatre chants pour franchir le seuil* with the Wiener Klangforum in Vienna and Graz. She also performed *Orphée aux enfers* in Cologne.

## Suzie Le Blanc

The soprano Suzie LeBlanc has established a distinguished career specialising in music of the baroque and classical periods. Her schedule is an enviable mix of concert and opera performances, festival appearances and recording projects both on video and for the CD market. She has been involved in a number of critically acclaimed productions including Sartorio's *Orfeo*, a recording awarded the Cini prize for Best Opera CD of 1999, *Poppea* in Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* for Opéra de Montréal, and the same composer's *Orfeo* for Netherlands Opera, the Vienna Konzerthaus and Festival Vancouver. Solicited by some of the most distinguished period orchestras, she has performed with Teatro Lirico, Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, La Petite Bande, Tafelmusik, Musica Antiqua Köln, the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, NY Collegium, l'Académie Baroque de Montréal (which she founded in 2001), as well as with Les Violons du Roy, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra and the Metropolitan Orchestra of Montreal. In the more intimate setting of chamber music, she performs and records with Tragicomedia, Les Voix Humaines, the Purcell Quartet, Theatre of Early Music and forms a duo with the lutenist Stephen Stubbs, with whom she has recorded several discs. Her impressive discography, ranging from medieval to contemporary music, includes Handel's *Gloria* with l'Académie Baroque de Montréal, Bach's *Coffee* and *Peasant Cantatas* with Tafelmusik, Vivaldi motets with Teatro Lirico (awarded Best Canadian Vocal recording by Opus Magazine), *Amour Cruel*, French *airs de cour* with Stephen Stubbs and Les Voix Humaines (awarded the Prix Opus for the Early Music Recording of the Year 2000).

## Opera Lafayette

In 1994 the Artistic Director Ryan Brown founded The Viols of Lafayette, a Washington DC-based period-instrument ensemble dedicated to the great wealth of music from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In its opening season, VOL produced a series of chamber concerts in the Salon Doré, an eighteenth-century drawing-room in the Corcoran Gallery of Art. In the following seasons the ensemble grew to produce larger works such as Rebel's *Les Eléments* and concerti grossi of Handel and Corelli. Collaborations resulted in performances of the complete *Brandenburg Concertos* of Bach with Dumbarton Concerts as well as a programme of Purcell's theatrical music with texts by Congreve, Shakespeare, and Dryden with the Olney Theatre. VOL also produced a programme of sacred music by Schmelzer and Biber in collaboration with the Choir of St Ignatius Loyola in New York and at the Austrian Embassy in Washington, and an orchestral concert of works by Rameau, J.C. Bach, Mozart, and Gluck at the Embassy of France. As part of its artistic development, The Viols of Lafayette has given particular attention to performances of opera, both semi-staged and in concert. In 1998 VOL produced Charpentier's *Actéon*, and in 1999, in the stately hall of the Corcoran Gallery, Rameau's *Pygmalion*. This performance featured both the tenor Jean-Paul Fouchécourt and dancer-choreographer Catherine Turocy, and the critical response to the quality and individuality of the opera was exceptional. Subsequently VOL invited both artists, along with the NY Baroque Dance Company and many other distinguished singers to collaborate with the ensemble on Lully's opera-ballet *Acis et Galatée*, an event that won critical praise. In the same year VOL complemented this production with Handel's *Acis and Galatea* in collaboration with The Four Nations Ensemble. In 2001, encouraged by its success in presenting opera and recognizing an opportunity to present this literature on both coasts, The Viols of Lafayette and The Redwoods Festival, a summer festival in Sonoma County, California, joined as one organization called Opera Lafayette. In its first season Opera Lafayette and guests from Le Neon Theatre produced a programme that included scenes from Charpentier and Molière's comedy *Le malade imaginaire*. In early 2002 Opera Lafayette produced the 1774 Paris version of Gluck's *Orphée et Euridice* in collaboration with the new Clalice Smith Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Maryland. Opera Lafayette's début recording is of this version of Gluck's masterpiece. In 2003 Opera Lafayette produced Rameau's *Hippolyte et Aricie*, again to high praise, and in 2004, Haydn's *Il mondo della luna*, with staging by Leon Major and featuring François Loup, also to great critical acclaim.

**VIOLIN I**

Claire Jolivet,  
*concertmaster*  
 Nina Falk †  
 Alexandra Eddy  
 Christof Richter  
 Risa Browder

**VIOLIN II**

Elizabeth Field \*  
 June Huang †  
 Melissa Dougherty  
 Sarah Wetherbee

**VIOLA**

Anthony Martin \*  
 Peter Bucknell  
 Scott McCormack †

**VIOLONCELLO**

Loretta O'Sullivan \*  
 John Moran  
 Nancy Jo Snider †

**BASS**

Anne Trout

**FLUTE**

Colin St. Martin  
 Kathryn Roth

**OBOE**

Geoffrey Burgess †  
 Sarah Davol

**CLARINET**

Nina Stern  
 Robert Adelson

**BASSOON**

James Bolyard  
 Marilyn Boenau

**HORN**

Richard Sarasinoff  
 Linda Dempf

**TRUMPET**

Barry Bauguess  
 Stanley Curtis

**TROMBONE**

Terry Pierce  
 Greg Ingles  
 Mack Ramsey

**TIMPANI and  
PERCUSSION**

Thomas Jones

**HARP**

Alison Attar

**HARPSICORD**

Andrew Appel

\* Principal

† Second Orchestra

*Nancy Jo Snider,  
 orchestra personnel  
 manager*

**SOPRANO**

Kathryn Aaron  
 Gisele Becker  
 Susan Bender  
 Joan McFarland

**ALTO**

Marta Kirilloff Barber  
 Marjorie Bunday  
 Roger Issacs

**TENOR**

Wayne Glass  
 Tony Boutté  
 Michael Harrison

**BASS**

Charles Bowers  
 William Brubeck  
 Steven Combs  
 Guy Lushin

*Michael Harrison,  
 chorus personnel  
 manager*



## CD 1

### 1 Ouverture

#### ACTE PREMIER

##### SCÈNE I

### 2 Choeur *Ah! Dans ce bois*

Récit *Vos plaintes, vos regrets* (Orphée)

##### Pantomime

Récit *Eloignez-vous* (Orphée)

Choeur *Ah! Dans ce bois*

##### SCÈNE II

### 3 Air *Objet de mon amour!* (Orphée)

Récit *Euridice! Euridice!* (Orphée)

Air *Accablé de regrets* (Orphée)

Récit *Euridice! Euridice!* (Orphée)

Air *Plein de trouble et d'effroi* (Orphée)

### 4 Récit *Divinités de l'Achéron* (Orphée)

##### SCÈNE III

Récit *L'Amour vient au secours* (L'Amour)

Air *Si les doux accords de ta lyre*

(L'Amour, Orphée)

Air *Soumis au silence* (L'Amour)

### 5 SCÈNE IV

Récit *Impitoyables Dieux!* (Orphée)

Ariette *L'espoir renaît dans mon âme* (Orphée)

#### ACTE DEUXIEME

##### SCÈNE I

### 6 Maestoso

##### Prélude

Choeur *Quel est l'audacieux*

Air de *Furie*

Choeur *Quel est l'audacieux*

Orphée et Choeur *Laissez vous toucher*

Choeur *Qui t'amène en ces lieux*

Air *Ah! La flamme qui me dévore* (Orphée)

Choeur *Par quels puissants accords*

Air *La tendresse qui me presse* (Orphée)

Choeur *Quels chants doux et touchants!*

Air de *Furies*

## CD 2

##### SCÈNE II

### 1 Ballet des Ombres heureuses

Air *Cet astle aimable* (Euridice, Choeur)

Danse des Héros et Héroïnes

##### SCÈNE III

### 2 Récit *Quel nouveau ciel* (Orphée)

Choeur *Viens dans ce séjour paisible*

Danse des Ombres Heureuses

Orphée et Choeur *O vous ombres*

##### SCÈNE IV

Choeur *Près du tendre objet qu'on aime*

#### ACTE TROISIEME

##### SCÈNE I

### 3 Récit *Viens, viens, Euridice* (Orphée, Euridice)

Duo *Viens, suis un époux qui t'adore*

(Orphée, Euridice)

Récit *Mais, d'où vient qu'il persiste* (Euridice)

Air *Fortune ennemie* (Euridice)

Duo *Je goûtais les charmes* (Euridice, Orphée)

Air *Fortune ennemie* (Euridice)

Récit *Quelle épreuve cruelle!* (Orphée, Euridice)

Air *J'ai perdu mon Euridice* (Orphée)

### 4 Récit *Ah! Puisse ma douleur* (Orphée)

##### SCÈNE II

Récit *Arrête, Orphée!*

(L'Amour, Orphée, Euridice)

##### SCÈNE DERNIERE

Choeur *L'Amour triomphe*

(Orphée, L'Amour, Euridice)

## ARGUMENT

(tel qu'il figure dans la partition originale)

*La Fable d'Orphée et d'Euridice est assez connue pour ne pas entrer dans un long détail à cet objet. Les Poètes nous ont appris qu'Euridice mourut dans les Campagnes de Thrace de la morsure d'un Serpent quelques jours après son mariage avec Orphée.*

*Pour conserver l'unité de lieu dans ce Poème, on suppose qu'elle est morte et ensevelie dans une Campagne voisine du Lac d'Averne qui conduit à l'entrée des Enfers. Les Dieux touchés du désespoir d'Orphée lui permettent de pénétrer dans les Champs Elysées pour en retirer Euridice à condition qu'il ne la regarderoit point qu'il ne soit de retour sur la terre. Orphée avant de sortir des Enfers pressé par la violence de son Amour oublie la loi qui lui est imposée et donne la mort à Euridice en osant la regarder.*

*Pour adapter cette Fable à notre Scène on a été obligé de changer la catastrophe, et d'y ajouter l'épisode de l'Amour qui réunit les Époux. Ovide rapporte ce sujet dans le X. livre de ses Métamorphoses; Virgile en fait mention dans le quatrième chant de ses Géorgiques, et dans le sixième de son Eneïde.*

## CD 1

### 1 Ouverture

*Un bois agréable et solitaire  
où se trouve le tombeau d'Euridice.*

## PREMIER ACTE

*La scène est occupée par les bergers et les nymphes de la suite d'Euridice qui, derrière Orphée, portent des couronnes de fleurs et des guirlandes de myrte. D'autres brûlent des parfums, recouvrent le tombeau de couronnes et jettent des fleurs sur le marbre.*

## THE STORY

(here translated from the original score)

The Fable of Orpheus and Eurydice is well enough known to avoid our entering into great detail about it. The Poets tell us that Eurydice died in the Thracian Countryside from the bite of a Serpent several days after her marriage to Orpheus.

To retain the unity of place in this Poem, it is supposed that she is dead and buried in the Countryside near Lake Avernus, which leads to the entrance of Hades. The Gods are touched by Orpheus' despair and permit him to enter the Elysian Fields to take Eurydice away — on the condition that he not look at her until he has returned to earth. Before leaving Hades, Orpheus is so moved by his intense Passion that he forgets the law which had been imposed on him and causes Eurydice to die by daring to look at her.

To adapt this Fable to our Stage, it has been necessary to change the catastrophe and to add the episode in which Love reunites Husband and Wife. Ovid treats this subject in the 10th Book of his Metamorphoses; Virgil mentions it in the Fourth Canto of his Georganica and in the Sixth of his Aeneid.

## CD 1

### 1 Overture

*A solitary, agreeable wood,  
with the tomb of Eurydice*

## ACT ONE

*The stage is filled with shepherds and nymphs from Eurydice's train, who, walking behind Orpheus carry floral wreaths and some garlands of myrtle. Others burn fragrances, cover the tomb with wreaths and throw flowers onto the marble.*

**2 SCENE 1***Orphée, le chœur des bergers et des nymphes*

LE CHOEUR

Ah, dans ce bois tranquille et sombre,  
 Euridice, si ton ombre  
 Nous entend . . .

ORPHÉE

Euridice!

LE CHOEUR

Sois sensible à nos alarmes!  
 Vois nos peines, vois les larmes  
 Que pour toi l'on répand!

ORPHÉE

Euridice!

LE CHOEUR

Ah, prends pitié du malheureux Orphée!  
 Il soupire, il gémit, il plaint sa destinée.

ORPHÉE

Euridice!

LE CHOEUR

L'amoureuse tourterelle,  
 toujours tendre, toujours fidèle,  
 Ainsi soupire et meurt  
 De douleur.

**Récit**

ORPHÉE

Vos plaintes, vos regrets  
 augmentent mon supplice!  
 Aux mânes sacrés d'Euridice  
 Rendez les suprêmes honneurs  
 Et couvrez son tombeau de fleurs.

**2 SCENE 1***Orpheus, Chorus of Shepherds and Nymphs*

CHORUS

Ah, in this tranquil, sombre wood,  
 Eurydice, if your spirit  
 hears us . . . .

ORPHEUS

Eurydice!

CHORUS

Be moved by our affliction!  
 See our unhappiness, see the tears  
 which are shed for you!

ORPHEUS

Eurydice!

CHORUS

Ah, take pity on the unfortunate Orpheus!  
 He sighs, he moans, he bewails his fate.

ORPHEUS

Eurydice!

CHORUS

The loving turtle-dove,  
 ever tender, ever faithful,  
 sighs thus and dies  
 of sorrow.

**Recitative**

ORPHEUS

Your lamentations and your regrets  
 increase my torment!  
 To the sacred spirit of Eurydice  
 render the highest honour  
 and cover her tomb with flowers.

**Pantomime**  
**(des nymphes et des bergers)**

**Récit**  
ORPHÉE

*(à la suite)*

Eloignez-vous, ce lieu convient à mes douleurs,  
Et je veux sans témoins y répandre des pleurs.

LE CHOEUR

Ah, dans ce bois tranquille et sombre,

Euridice, si ton ombre

Nous entend,

Sois sensible à nos alarmes!

Vois nos peines, vois les larmes

Que pour toi l'on répand!

*(La suite d'Orphée se retire avec les nymphes  
et ils se dispersent dans le bois.)*

**3 SCÈNE II**

**Air**  
ORPHÉE

Objet de mon amour,

Je te demande au jour

Avant l'aurore;

Et quand le jour s'enfuit,

Ma voix pendant la nuit

T'appelle encore.

**Récit**

Euridice, Euridice! Ombre chère,

Ah, dans quels lieux es-tu?

Ton époux gémissant, interdit, éperdu

Te demande sans cesse à la nature entière.

Les vents hélas emportent sa prière!

**Air**

Accablé de regrets,

Je parcours des forêts

La vaste enceinte.

Touché de mon destin,

**Pantomime**  
**(of nymphs and shepherds)**

**Recitative**  
ORPHEUS

*(to his attendants)*

Go now. This wood is becoming to my misery,  
and I wish to shed tears without being seen.

CHORUS

Ah, in this doleful and sombre wood,

Eurydice, if your spirit

hears us,

be moved by our affliction!

See our unhappiness, see the tears

which are shed for you!

*(Orpheus' train retires with the nymphs  
and disperses in the wood.)*

**3 SCENE II**

**Air**  
ORPHEUS

Object of my love,

I call to you

before dawn;

and when day has gone,

my voice all night

still calls for you.

**Recitative**

Eurydice, Eurydice, beloved spirit,

Ah, where are you?

Your crying, stunned, distraught husband

endlessly seeks you in nature's realm.

The winds, alas, bear off his prayer!

**Air**

Overwhelmed with regret,

I roam through

the vastness of the woods.

Touched by my fate,

Echo répète en vain  
Ma triste plainte.

### Récit

Euridice, Euridice! De ce doux nom  
Tout retentit, ces bois, ces rochers, ce vallon;  
Sur ces troncs dépouillés, sur l'écorce naissante  
On lit ces mots gravés par une main tremblante!  
Euridice n'est plus, et je respire encor!  
Dieux, rendez-lui la vie ou donnez-moi la mort!

### Air

Plein de trouble et d'effroi,  
Que de maux loin de toi  
Mon cœur endure;  
Témoin de mes malheurs,  
Sensible à mes douleurs,  
L'onde murmure

#### 4 Récit

ORPHÉE  
Divinités de l'Achéron,  
Ministres redoutés de l'empire des Ombres,  
Vous qui dans les demeures sombres  
Faites exécuter les arrêts de Pluton,  
Vous que n'attendrit point la beauté, la jeunesse,  
Vous m'avez enlevé l'objet de ma tendresse.  
Oh cruel souvenir!  
Eh quoi! les grâces de son âge  
Du sort le plus affreux n'ont pu la garantir!  
Implacable tyrans, je veux vous la ravir!  
Je saurai pénétrer jusqu'au sombre rivage.  
Mes accents douloureux fléchiront vos rigueurs.  
Je me sens assez de courage  
Pour braver toutes vos fureurs.

*(L'Amour apparaît)*

Echo vainly repeats  
my sorrowful complaint.

### Recitative

Eurydice, Eurydice! With this sweet name  
everything echoes; the woods, the rocks, the valley;  
on the bare trunks, on the early bark of the trees  
can be read this word traced by a trembling hand!  
Eurydice is no more, and I still have breath!  
O gods, give her back life or bring me death!

### Air

Troubled and frightened,  
far from you how many pains  
my heart endures;  
A witness to my misery,  
sympathetic to my wretchedness,  
the water murmurs.

#### 4 Recitative

ORPHEUS  
Divinities of Hades,  
fearful ministers of the realm of death,  
you who in those gloomy abodes  
have Pluto's decrees carried out,  
you whom beauty and youth do not move,  
you have taken from me the one I loved.  
O, cruel memory!  
What? Her tender years  
could not protect her from the most dreadful fate!  
Implacable tyrants! I will carry her off from you!  
I will find my way to the dark shore.  
My pleading shall overcome your severity.  
I feel courageous enough  
to confront your fury.

*(Love appears.)*

### SCÈNE III

L'AMOUR

L'Amour vient au secours de l'amant  
le plus tendre.

Rassure-toi, les dieux sont touchés de ton sort;  
Dans les enfers tu peux descendre.  
Va trouver Euridice au séjour de la mort.

**Air**

L'AMOUR

Si les doux accords de ta lyre,  
Si tes accents mélodieux  
Apaisent la fureur des tyrans de ces lieux  
Tu la ramèneras du ténébreux empire.

ORPHÉE

Dieux, je la reverrais!

L'AMOUR

Si les doux accords de ta lyre, *etc.*

**Récit**

ORPHÉE

Dieux, je la reverrais!

L'AMOUR

Oui, mais pour l'obtenir,  
Il faut te résoudre à remplir  
L'ordre que je vais te prescrire.

ORPHÉE

Ah, qui pourrait me retenir!  
A tout mon âme est préparée.

L'AMOUR

Apprends la volonté des dieux:  
Sur cette amante adorée,  
Garde-toi de porter un regard curieux,  
Ou de toi, pour jamais, tu la vois séparée.  
Tels sont de Jupiter les suprêmes décrets.  
Rends-toi digne de ses bienfaits.

### SCENE III

LOVE

Love comes to the help of the most tender heart.  
Do not worry, the gods have been moved  
by your fate;  
You may descend to Hades.  
Go and find Eurydice in the sojourn of death.

**Air**

LOVE

If the sweet music of your lyre,  
and your melodious singing  
calm the anger of the tyrants of that realm  
you will bring her back from the kingdom of darkness.

ORPHEUS

Heavens, I may see her again!

LOVE

If the sweet music of your lyre, *etc.*

**Recitative**

ORPHEUS

Heavens, I may see her again!

LOVE

Yes, but to obtain her,  
you must resolve to fulfill  
the command which I shall give you.

ORPHEUS

Oh, what could hold me back!  
I am resolved to do anything.

LOVE

Hear the will of the gods:  
towards your true beloved  
you must refrain from looking,  
or you will be forever separated from her.  
Thus does Jupiter decree.  
Be worthy of his generosity.

**Air****L'AMOUR**

Soumis au silence,  
 Contrains ton désir,  
 Fais-toi violence;  
 Bientôt à ce prix tes tourments vont finir.  
 Tu sais qu'un amant  
 Discret et fidèle,  
 Timide et tremblant,  
 Auprès de sa belle  
 en est plus touchant.

Soumis au silence, *etc.*

(*Il s'éloigne.*)

**5 SCENE IV****Récit****ORPHÉE**

Impitoyables dieux, qu'exigez-vous de moi!  
 Comment puis-je obéir à votre injuste loi?  
 Quoi, j'entendrai sa voix touchante,  
 Je presserai sa main tremblante  
 Sans que d'un seul regard. . .  
 Ô ciel, quelle rigueur!  
 Eh bien, j'obéirai, je saurai me contraindre,  
 Et devrais-je encore me plaindre  
 Lorsque j'obtiens des dieux  
 la plus grande faveur?

**Ariette**

L'espoir renaît dans mon âme  
 pour l'objet qui m'enflamme.  
 L'Amour accroît ma flamme  
 je vais revoir ses appas.  
 L'enfer en vain nous sépare  
 Les monstres du tartare ne m'épouvantent pas  
 L'Amour accroît ma flamme.  
 je vais revoir ses appas.  
 L'espoir renaît. . . .

**Air****LOVE**

Accepting to remain silent,  
 restrain your love.  
 Force yourself to obey;  
 If so, your torments will soon end.  
 You know that a lover  
 who is discreet and faithful,  
 timid and trembling,  
 is to his beloved  
 only more touching.

Accepting to remain silent, *etc.*

(*Love withdraws.*)

**5 SCENE IV****Recitative****ORPHEUS**

Pitiless gods, you demand so much of me!  
 How can I obey your unjust decree?  
 What? I shall hear her touching voice,  
 I shall hold her trembling hand  
 without a single glance at her. . .  
 Heavens! How demanding!  
 I will obey! I will constrain myself,  
 How can I complain  
 when the gods have granted me  
 the highest favour?

**Ariette**

Hope stirs in my soul  
 for the object of my passion.  
 Love increases my ardour,  
 I will again see her charms.  
 In vain does Hades separate us  
 Tartarus' monsters do not frighten me  
 Love increases my ardor.  
 I will again see her charms.  
 Hope stirs. .

## DEUXIÈME ACTE

*Le théâtre représente l'entrée des enfers: un lieu caverneux effroyable au-delà du Cocyte, caché dans le lointain par une fumée ténébreuse.*

### 6 Introduction

#### SCÈNE 1

*Le chœur des spectres et des furies,  
Orphée avec sa lyre*

#### LE CHOEUR

Quel est l'audacieux  
Qui, dans ces sombres lieux,  
Ose porter ses pas  
Et devant le trépas  
Ne frémit pas?

#### Air des furies

#### LE CHOEUR

Quel est l'audacieux, *etc.*

Que la peur, la terreur  
S'emparent de son cœur  
A l'affreux hurlement  
Du Cerbère écumant  
Et rugissant!

#### Air

#### ORPHÉE

*(il s'approche avec sa lyre)*  
Laissez-vous toucher par mes pleurs,  
Spectres. . .

#### LE CHOEUR

Non!

#### ORPHÉE

Larves. . .

#### LE CHOEUR

Non!

## ACT TWO

*The entrance of Hades: a grim landscape with caves beyond the Cocythus, concealed in the distance by a dark pall of smoke.*

### 6 Introduction

#### SCENE 1

*Chorus of Spirits and Furies,  
Orpheus with his lyre*

#### CHORUS

What man so audacious  
into this darkness  
dares to come  
and confronted by death  
does not shudder?

#### Air of the Furies

#### CHORUS

What man so audacious, *etc.*

May fear and terror  
seize upon his heart  
at the frightful roaring  
of Cerberus, who rages  
and howls!

#### Air

#### ORPHEUS

*(approaching with his lyre)*  
Let me move you by my tears,  
spectres . . .

#### CHORUS

No!

#### ORPHEUS

Frightening ghosts . . .

#### CHORUS

No!



ORPHÉE  
Ombres terribles. . .

LE CHOEUR  
Non!

ORPHÉE  
Soyez sensibles  
A l'excès de mes malheurs.

LE CHOEUR  
Non, non, non!

ORPHÉE  
Laissez-vous toucher par mes pleurs, *etc.*

LE CHOEUR  
Qui t'amène en ces lieux,  
Mortel présomptueux?  
C'est le séjour affreux  
Des remords dévorants,  
Et des gémissements  
Et des tourments.  
Qui t'amène en ces lieux, *etc.*

**Air**  
ORPHÉE  
Ah, la flamme qui me dévore  
Est cent fois plus cruelle encore.  
L'enfer n'a point de tourments  
Pareils à ceux que je ressens.

LE CHOEUR  
*(attendri par le chant d'Orphée)*  
Par quels puissants accords,  
Dans le séjour des morts,  
Malgré nos vains efforts,  
Il calme la fureur de nos transports.

Par quels puissants accords, *etc.*

ORPHEUS  
Awful shades . . .

CHORUS  
No!

ORPHEUS  
Give way  
to my overwhelming unhappiness.

CHORUS  
No, no, no!

ORPHEUS  
Let me move you by my tears, *etc.*

CHORUS  
What brings you here,  
arrogant mortal?  
This is the frightful sojourn  
of devouring remorse,  
of moaning  
and of anguish.  
What brings you here, *etc.*

**Air**  
ORPHEUS  
Oh, the fire which devours me  
is a hundred times more painful.  
Hades has no tortures  
like those I feel!

CHORUS  
*(mollified by Orpheus' singing)*  
By what powerful harmonies,  
in the realm of the dead,  
and despite our vain efforts,  
he calms the violence of our hatred.

By what powerful harmonies, *etc.*

**Air****ORPHÉE**

La tendresse  
 Qui me presse  
 Calmera votre fureur.  
 Oui, mes larmes,  
 Mes alarmes  
 Fléchiront votre rigueur.

**LE CHOEUR**

Quels chants doux et touchants,  
 Quels accords ravissants!  
 De si tendres accents  
 Ont su nous désarmer  
 Et nous charmer.

Qu'il descende aux enfers,  
 Les chemins sont ouverts.  
 Tout cède à la douceur  
 De son art enchanteur;  
 Il est vainqueur!

**Danse des Furies**

*(Les portes de l'enfer s'ouvrent: Orphée passe au milieu des spectres, enchantés par les sons de sa lyre, et il entre dans les enfers.)*

**CD 2****1 SCÈNE II**

*La scène représente les Champs Elysées.  
 Troupe d'Ombres Heureuses*

**Dances des Ombres Heureuses**

Lent et très doux  
 Même mouvement  
 Lent et très doux  
 Dolce con espressione

**Air****ORPHEUS**

The tender love  
 which I feel  
 will calm your fury.  
 Yes, my tears,  
 my unhappiness  
 will cause your harshness to relent.

**CHORUS**

What sweet and affecting singing,  
 What entrancing harmonies!  
 Such tender sincerity  
 disarms us  
 and charms us.

He may enter Hades,  
 The way lies open.  
 Everything surrenders to the gentleness  
 of his bewitching art;  
 he has conquered!

**Dance of the Furies**

*(The gates of Hades open up; Orpheus passes through the group of spirits, who are entranced by the sounds of his lyre, and enters into the underworld)*

**CD 2****1 SCENE II**

*The scene represents the Elysian Fields.  
 A group of Blessed Spirits.*

**Dances of the Blessed Spirits**

Lent et très doux  
 Même mouvement  
 Lent et très doux  
 Dolce con espressione

**Air avec Choeur**

UNE OMBRE HEUREUSE

Cet asile,  
 Aimable et tranquille,  
 Par le bonheur est habité.  
 C'est le riant séjour de la félicité.  
 Nul objet ici n'enflamme  
 L'âme.  
 Une douce ivresse  
 Laisse  
 Un calme heureux dans tous les sens;  
 Et la sombre tristesse  
 Cesse  
 Dans ces lieux innocents.

CHOEUR DES OMBRES HEUREUSES

Cet asile, *etc.**(Les Ombres s'éloignent. Orphée entre)***2 SCÈNE III****Air**

ORPHÉE

Quel nouveau ciel pare les lieux!  
 Un jour plus doux s'offre à mes yeux.  
 Quels sons harmonieux!  
 J'entends retentir ce bocage  
 Du ramage  
 Des oiseaux,  
 Du murure des ruisseaux  
 Et des soupirs de Zéphyre.  
 On goûte en ce séjour un éternel repos.  
 Mais le calme qu'on y respire  
 Ne saurait adoucir mes maux.  
 Chère épouse, objet de ma flamme,  
 Toi seule y peux calmer le trouble de mon âme!  
 Tes accents,  
 Tendres et touchants,  
 Tes regards séduisants,  
 Ton doux sourire  
 Sont les seuls biens que je désire.

**Air with Chorus**

A BLESSED SPIRIT (EURYDICE)

In this refuge,  
 pleasant and tranquil,  
 happiness dwells.  
 Happiness reigns in this agreeable place.  
 Here nothing troubles  
 the soul.  
 A sweet exhilaration  
 leaves  
 a happy calmness in all the senses;  
 and sombre sadness  
 ceases  
 in this guiltless place.

CHORUS OF BLESSED SPIRITS

In this refuge, *etc.**(The Spirits withdraw. Orpheus enters.)***2 SCENE III****Air**

ORPHEUS

What a pure sky adorns this realm!  
 Here a softer light meets my eyes!  
 What harmony!  
 From this coppice come the sounds  
 of the warbling  
 of birds,  
 of the murmur of brooks  
 and of the sighs of the breeze.  
 In this place one can enjoy eternal rest.  
 But the calm which I breathe here  
 cannot alleviate my pain.  
 Dear Wife, object of my passion,  
 only you can quiet the confusion of my soul!  
 Your voice,  
 so tender and touching,  
 your gentle glances,  
 and your sweet smile  
 are all that I desire.

**CHOEUR DES OMBRES HEUREUSES***(entrant sur scène)*

Viens dans ce séjour paisible,  
 Époux tendre, amant sensible.  
 Viens bannir tes justes regrets.  
 Euridice va paraître,  
 Euridice va renaître  
 Avec de nouveaux attraits.

**Danse des Ombres Heureuses****Récit et Choeur****ORPHÉE**

Ô vous, ombres que j'implore,  
 Hâtez-vous de la rendre à mes empressements!  
 Ah, si vous ressentiez le feu qui me dévore,  
 Je jouirais déjà de ses embrassements.  
 Offrez à mes désirs la beauté que j'adore!  
 Hâtez-vous de me rendre heureux!

**CHOEUR DES OMBRES HEUREUSES**

Le destin répond à tes vœux.

**SCÈNE IV***(Euridice entre.)***CHOEUR DES OMBRES HEUREUSES***(à Euridice)*

Près du tendre objet qu'on aime  
 On jouit du bien suprême.  
 Goûtez le sort le plus doux,  
 Va renaître pour Orphée;  
 On retrouve l'Elysée  
 Autprès d'un si tendre époux.

*(Le choeur conduit Euridice auprès d'Orphée,  
 lequel prend sa main et l'entraîne.)*

**CHORUS OF BLESSED SPIRITS***(entering)*

Come into this peaceful abode,  
 tender husband, kind lover.  
 Rid yourself of all regrets.  
 Eurydice is about to appear,  
 Eurydice will live again  
 even more beautiful than before.

**Dance of the Blessed Spirits****Recitative and Chorus****ORPHEUS**

Oh, spirits whom I implore,  
 by my entreaties return her quickly!  
 Ah, if you felt the fire devouring me,  
 I would already be enjoying her affections.  
 Fulfill my longing for the beauty I love!  
 Hasten to make me happy once more!

**CHORUS OF THE BLESSED SPIRITS**

Destiny answers your wishes.

**SCENE IV***(Eurydice enters)***CHORUS OF BLESSED SPIRITS***(to Eurydice)*

Near the tender object of one's love  
 one feels the highest bliss.  
 Enjoy the happiest fate,  
 live again for Orpheus;  
 One finds Elysium again  
 with such a tender husband.

*(The chorus lead Eurydice to Orpheus,  
 who takes her hand and leads her away.)*

### TROISIÈME ACTE

*Une caverne sombre, en forme de labyrinthe,  
couverte de rochers et de plantes sauvages,  
qui conduit hors des enfers*

#### 3 SCÈNE I

##### Récit

ORPHÉE

*(conduisant Euridice sans la regarder)*

Viens, viens, Euridice, suis-moi,  
Du plus constant amour, objet unique et tendre.

EURIDICE

C'est toi . . . je te vois!  
Ciel, devais-je m'attendre . . .

ORPHÉE

Oui, tu vois ton époux: c'est moi: je vis encore  
Et je viens t'arracher au séjour de la mort.  
Touché de mon ardeur fidèle,  
Jupiter au jour te rappelle.

EURIDICE

Quoi, je vis! et pour toi?  
Ah, grands dieux, quel bonheur!

ORPHÉE

Euridice, suis-moi . . .  
Hâtons-nous de jouir de la faveur céleste.  
Sortons de ce séjour funeste.  
Non, tu n'es plus une ombre  
Et le dieu des amours  
Va nous réunir pour toujours!

EURIDICE

Qu'entends-je! Ah, se peut-il?  
Heureuse destinée!  
Eh quoi, nous pourrions resserrer  
Les noeuds d'amour et d'hyménée.

ORPHÉE

Oui, suis mes pas sans différer.

### ACT THREE

*A dark cavern leading out of Hades.  
It is in the form of a labyrinth and is covered  
by rocks and wild plants.*

#### 3 SCENE I

##### Recitative

ORPHEUS

*(leading Euridice, without looking at her)*

Come, come, follow me, Euridice,  
only object of my constant love.

EURIDICE

It is you . . . I see you!  
Heavens, how I am moved . . .

ORPHEUS

Yes, you see your husband, I am still alive  
and I have come to take you from the realm of death.  
Touched by my faithful ardour,  
Jupiter allows you to return to life.

EURIDICE

What? I live! and for you?  
Ah, kind gods, what happiness!

ORPHEUS

Euridice, follow me . . .  
Let us hasten, while the gods favour us.  
Let us leave this evil place.  
You are no longer a shade  
and the god of love  
will reunite us forever!

EURIDICE

What do I hear! Ah, can it be?  
Happy destiny!  
What, we can tie once more  
the bonds of Amor and of Hymen?

ORPHEUS

Yes. Follow me quickly.

EURIDICE

Mais, par ta main, ma main n'est plus pressée. . .  
Quoi, tu fuis ces regards que tu chérissais tant!  
Ton coeur pour Euridice est-il indifférent?  
La fraîcheur de mes traits serait-elle effacée?

ORPHÉE

(Ô dieux, quelle contrainte!)  
Euridice, suis-moi. . .  
Fuyons de ces lieux, le temps presse.  
Je voudrais t'exprimer l'exès de ma tendresse. . .  
(Je ne le puis, ô trop funeste loi!)

EURIDICE

Un seul de tes regards. . .

ORPHÉE

Tu me glaces d'effroi!

EURIDICE

Ah, barbare!  
Sont-ce là les douceurs que ton coeur me prépare?  
Est-ce donc là le prix de mon amour?  
Ô fortune jalouse!  
Orphée, hélas, se refuse en ce jour  
Aux transports innocents de sa fidèle épouse.

ORPHÉE

Par tes soupçons, cesse de m'outrager!

EURIDICE

Tu me rends à la vie, et c'est pour m'affliger!  
Dieux, reprenez un bienfait que j'abhorre!  
Ah, cruel époux, laisse-moi!

**Duo**

ORPHÉE

Viens, suis un époux qui t'adore.

EURIDICE

Non, ingrat, je préfère encore  
La mort qui m'éloigne de toi!

EURIDICE

But you are no longer holding my hand . . .  
What, you avoid the glances which once you loved!  
Is your heart indifferent to Euridice?  
Has the bloom of my youth faded?

ORPHEUS

(O gods! How I must restrain myself!)  
Euridice, follow me . . .  
Let us flee this place, time is passing.  
I wish I could express my love. . .  
(I cannot! Oh, harsh decree!)

EURIDICE

A single glance from you . . .

ORPHEUS

You make me shudder!

EURIDICE

Barbarian!  
Is this the gentleness which your heart will grant me?  
Is this then the reward for my love?  
Oh jealous Fortune!  
Orpheus, alas, refuses  
the innocent love of his faithful wife.

ORPHEUS

Cease to insult me with your suspicions!

EURIDICE

You give me life again only to make me suffer!  
Gods, take back your generous gift. I now abhor it!  
Cruel husband, leave me!

**Duo**

ORPHEUS

Come, follow the husband who loves you.

EURIDICE

No, ungrateful one! I prefer  
death, which separates me from you!

ORPHÉE

Vois ma peine!

EURIDICE

Laisse Euridice!

ORPHÉE

Ah, cruelle, quelle injustice!

Je suivrai toujours tes pas!

EURIDICE

Parle, contente mon envie!

ORPHÉE

Dût-il m'en coûter la vie,

Non je ne parlerai pas.

EURIDICE, ORPHÉE

(*chacun à part*)

Dieux, soyez-moi favorables!

Voyez mes pleurs,

Dieux secourables!

Quels tourments insupportables,

Quelles rigueurs

Mêlez-vous à vos faveurs.

EURIDICE

Parle, *etc.*

ORPHÉE

Dût-il m'en coûter la vie, *etc.*

### Récit

EURIDICE

Mais d'où vient qu'il obstine à garder le silence?

Quels secrets veut-il me cacher?

Au séjour du repos devait-il m'arracher

Pour m'accabler de son indifférence!

Ô destin rigoureux!

Ma force m'abandonne.

Le voile de la mort retombe sur mes yeux;

Je frémis, je languis,

ORPHEUS

See how miserable I am!

EURIDICE

Leave Euridice!

ORPHEUS

Ah, cruel one, what injustice!

I will always follow your steps!

EURIDICE

Speak, fulfill my desire!

ORPHEUS

Even at the cost of my life,

I will not speak!

EURIDICE, ORPHEUS

(*together, aside*)

Gods, be favourable to me!

See my tears,

gracious gods!

What unbearable torture,

what severity

come with your favours.

EURIDICE

Speak, *etc.*

ORPHEUS

Even at the cost of my life, *etc.*

### Recitative

EURIDICE

But why does he remain so obstinately silent?

What secrets is he trying to hide from me?

Did he have to tear me from the sojourn of rest

only to afflict me with his indifference!

Oh, cruel destiny!

My strength is leaving me.

The veil of death is falling once more across my eyes;

I shiver, I languish,

Je frissonne, je tremble, je pâlis;  
Mon coeur palpite,  
Un trouble secret m'agite.  
Tous mes sens sont saisis d'horreur  
Et je succombe à ma douleur.

**Air et Duo**

EURIDICE

Fortune ennemie,  
Quelle barbarie!  
Ne me rends-tu la vie  
Que pour les tourments?  
Fortune ennemie, *etc.*

Je goûtais les charmes  
D'un repos sans alarmes.

ORPHÉE

Ses injustes soupçons  
Redoublent mes tourments.  
Que dire, que faire?  
Elle me désespère!

EURIDICE

Le trouble, les larmes  
Remplissent aujourd'hui  
Mes malheureux moments.  
Je goûtais les charmes, *etc.*

ORPHÉE

Ne pourrais-je calmer  
Le trouble de ses sens?  
Que mon sort est à plaindre,  
Je ne puis me contraindre.

EURIDICE

Je frissonne, je tremble!

Fortune ennemie, *etc.*

I shudder, I tremble, I blanch;  
my heart throbs,  
a secret confusion agitates me.  
All my senses are horror-stricken  
and I am overcome by grief.

**Air and Duet**

EURIDICE

Oh, unkind fortune,  
what ruthlessness!  
Are you giving me back life  
only so that I may suffer?  
Oh, unkind Fortune, *etc.*

I was enjoying  
an untroubled happiness.

ORPHEUS

Her unjust suspicions  
increase my torment.  
What shall I say? What shall I do?  
She is driving me to despair!

EURIDICE

Afflictions, tears  
today fill  
my unhappy moments.  
I was enjoying, *etc.*

ORPHEUS

Can I not calm  
her troubled mind?  
How piteous is my fate,  
I cannot bear it.

EURIDICE

I shudder, I tremble!

Oh, unkind fortune, *etc.*



**Récit**

ORPHÉE

(Quelle épreuve cruelle!)

EURIDICE

Tu m'abandonnes, cher Orphée!  
 En ce moment ton épouse désolée  
 Implore en vain ton secours!  
 Ô dieux, à vous seuls j'ai recours!  
 Dois-je finir mes jours  
 Sans un regard de ce que j'aime?

ORPHÉE

(Je sens mon courage expirer  
 Et ma raison se perd.  
 Dans mon amour extrême  
 J'oublie la défense, Euridice et moi-même.  
 Ciel!)  
*(Il fait un mouvement pour se retourner  
 et tout à coup se retient.)*

EURIDICE

Cher époux, je puis à peine respirer.

ORPHÉE

Rassure-toi, je vais tout dire.  
 Apprends. . .  
 (Que fais-je? Justes dieux,  
 Quand finirez-vous mon martyre?)

EURIDICE

Reçois donc mes derniers adieux,  
 Et souviens-toi d'Euridice. . .

ORPHÉE

(Où suis-je? Je ne puis résister à ses pleurs.)  
 Non, le ciel ne veut pas un plus grand sacrifice!  
 Ô ma chère Euridice!  
*(Il se retourne impétueusement.)*

EURIDICE

Orphée, ô ciel, je meurs!

**Recitative**

ORPHEUS

(What cruel tribulation!)

EURIDICE

You are forsaking me, dear Orpheus!  
 In this moment your wretched wife  
 begs in vain for your help!  
 O gods, you are my only refuge!  
 Must I end my days  
 without one look from the object of my love?

ORPHEUS

(I feel my courage dying,  
 and I am losing my reason.  
 In the passion of my love  
 I am forgetting the decree, Euridice, and myself.  
 Heavens!)  
*(He starts to turn around  
 and suddenly stops himself)*

EURIDICE

Dear husband, I can scarcely breathe.

ORPHEUS

Console yourself, I shall tell you everything.  
 It happened that . . .  
 (What am I doing? O gods,  
 When will you end my martyrdom?)

EURIDICE

Receive then my last farewell,  
 and remember Euridice. . .

ORPHEUS

(Where am I? I cannot bear her tears.)  
 No, the gods do not require such a sacrifice!  
 O my beloved Euridice!  
*(He turns around impetuously)*

EURIDICE

Orpheus, heavens, I'm dying!

**ORPHÉE**

Malheureux, qu'ai-je fait!  
 Et dans quel précipice  
 M'a plongé mon funeste amour!  
 Chère épouse. . .Euridice!  
 Euridice. . . chère épouse!  
 Elle ne m'entend plus, je la perds sans retour!  
 C'est moi qui lui ravis le jour!  
 Loi fatale!  
 Cruel remords!  
 Ma peine est sans égale,  
 Dans ce moment funeste,  
 Le désespoir, la mort  
 Est tout ce qui me reste.

**Air****ORPHÉE**

J'ai perdu mon Euridice,  
 Rien n'égale mon malheur.  
 Sort cruel, quelle rigueur!  
 rien n'égale mon malheur.  
 Je succombe à ma douleur.  
 Euridice. . .Euridice. . .  
 Réponds-moi, quel supplice!  
 C'est ton époux fidèle;  
 Entends ma voix qui t'appelle. . .

J'ai perdu mon Euridice, *etc.*

Euridice. . . Euridice. . .  
 Mortel silence, vaine espérance,  
 Quelle souffrance!  
 Quel tourment déchire mon coeur!

J'ai perdu mon Euridice, *etc.*

**4 Récit****ORPHÉE**

Ah, puisse ma douleur finir avec ma vie!  
 Je ne survivrai pas à ce dernier revers.  
 Je touche encore aux portes des enfers;  
 J'aurais bientôt rejoint mon épouse chérie.

**ORPHEUS**

Wretched man, what have I done!  
 Over what precipice  
 has my tragic love thrown me!  
 Dear wife . . . Euridice!  
 Euridice . . . dear wife!  
 She no longer hears me. I have lost her forever!  
 It was I who took away her life!  
 Fatal decree!  
 Cruel remorse!  
 My pain is unequalled,  
 In this tragic moment  
 despair and death  
 are all that remain for me.

**Air****ORPHEUS**

I have lost my Euridice,  
 Nothing equals my despair.  
 Cruel fate, what severity!  
 Nothing equals my despair.  
 I am overwhelmed by grief.  
 Euridice . . . Euridice . . .  
 Answer me, what torture!  
 I am your faithful husband;  
 Listen to my voice calling you. . .

I have lost my Euridice, *etc.*

Euridice. . . Euridice. . .  
 Deathly silence, vain hope,  
 what suffering!  
 What torment tears my heart!

I have lost my Euridice, *etc.*

**4 Recitative****ORPHEUS**

May my pains end, and my life also!  
 I cannot survive this last reversal of fate.  
 I am still on the threshold of Hades;  
 I will soon rejoin my beloved wife.

Oui, je te suis, tendre objet de ma foi,  
Je te suis, attends-moi!  
Tu ne me seras plus ravie  
Et la mort pour jamais va m'unir avec toi.

*(Il sort son épée pour se donner la mort.  
L'Amour apparaît.)*

## SCÈNE II

### Récit

L'AMOUR  
Arrête, Orphée!

ORPHÉE  
Ô ciel, qui pourrait en ce jour  
Retenir le transport de mon âme égarée?

L'AMOUR  
Calme ta fureur insensée.  
Arrête et reconnais l'Amour,  
Qui veille sur ta destinée.

ORPHÉE  
Qu'exigez-vous de moi?

L'AMOUR  
Tu viens de me prouver  
ta constance et ta foi.  
Je vais soulager ton martyre.  
*(Il touche Euridice et la ranime.)*  
Euridice. . . respire!  
Du plus fidèle époux  
viens couronner les feux.

ORPHÉE  
Mon Euridice!

EURIDICE  
Orphée!

Yes, I am following you, tender object of my love,  
I am following you, wait for me!  
You shall never again be taken from me  
and death shall unite us forever.

*(Orpheus draws his sword to kill himself.  
Love appears.)*

## SCENE II

### Recitative

LOVE  
Stop, Orpheus!

ORPHEUS  
Heavens, who could now  
restrain the ardour of my distraught soul?

LOVE  
Calm your mad frenzy,  
stop and recognise Love,  
who watches over your destiny.

ORPHEUS  
What do you demand of me?

LOVE  
You have proved  
your constancy and your faithfulness.  
I shall end your martyrdom.  
*(Love touches Euridice and brings her back to life.)*  
Euridice. . . Live again!  
Come reward the passion  
of the most faithful of husbands.

ORPHEUS  
My Euridice!

EURIDICE  
Orpheus!

ORPHÉE

Ah, justes dieux!

Quelle est notre reconnaissance!

L'AMOUR

Ne doutez plus de ma puissance.

Je viens vous retirer de cet affreux séjour.

Jouissez désormais des faveurs de l'amour.

### SCÈNE III

*Temple magnifique dédié à l'Amour. Orphée, Euridice et l'Amour, précédés de bergers et de nymphes qui viennent fêter le retour d'Euridice.*

ORPHÉE

L'Amour triomphe,

Et tout ce qui respire

Sert l'empire de la beauté.

Sa chaîne agréable

Est préférable à la liberté.

LE CHOEUR

L'Amour triomphe, *etc.*

L'AMOUR

Dans les peines, dans les alarmes

Je fais souvent languir les coeurs.

Mais, dans un instant, mes charmes

Font pour jamais oublier mes rigueurs.

LE CHOEUR

L'Amour triomphe, *etc.*

EURIDICE

Si la cruelle jalousie

A troublé mes tendres désirs,

Les douceurs dont elle est suivie

Sont des chaînes de plaisirs.

LE CHOEUR

L'Amour triomphe, *etc.*

ORPHEUS

Ah, just gods!

How grateful we are!

LOVE

No longer doubt my power.

I have come to take you from this dreary abode.

Enjoy henceforth the favour of love.

### SCENE III

*Magnificent temple dedicated to Love. Orpheus, Euridice and Love, preceded by shepherds and nymphs coming to celebrate Euridice's return.*

ORPHEUS

Love is triumphant,

and all living things

are servants of beauty.

Its pleasant bonds

are preferable to liberty.

CHORUS

Love is triumphant, *etc.*

LOVE

In pain and in worry

I often cause hearts to languish.

But, in an instant, my magic

causes my severity to be forgotten forever.

CHORUS

Love is triumphant, *etc.*

EURIDICE

If cruel jealousy

troubled my tender desires,

the joys which followed it

are bonds of pleasure.

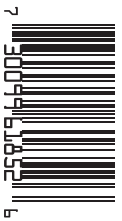
CHORUS

Love is triumphant, *etc.*



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Playing Time  
1:25:43

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Booklet notes and synopsis in English  
French Libretto and English translation included  
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Gluck's best-known work has been part of the operatic repertory for nearly two centuries, today performed principally in the more familiar 1762 Vienna version, *Orfeo ed Euridice*, sung in Italian. The later *Orphée et Euridice* was revised (in French) and extended for Paris in 1774, with the rôle of Orphée now performed by an haut-contre, or high tenor voice. This was the most popular version of the 18th and early 19th century, but is only now receiving its full due. Other principal changes include a full-length ballet with its popular *Dance of the Blessed Spirits*.

Christoph Willibald  
**GLUCK**  
(1714–1787)

**Orphée et Euridice (1774 Paris Version)**  
(Opera in Three Acts)

CD 1	41:03	CD 2	44:40
1 Overture	3:20	1-2 Act Two (cont.)	21:29
2-5 Act One	23:38	3-4 Act Three	23:11
6 Act Two	14:05		

**Jean-Paul Fouchécourt, Orphée • Catherine Dubosc, Euridice  
Suzie Le Blanc, Amour**

**Opera Lafayette Orchestra and Chorus • Ryan Brown**

Recorded in the Clarice Smith Center for the Performing Arts, University of Maryland, USA from 11th to 15th January, 2002 • Producer: Max Wilcox • Engineers: Max Wilcox & Antonino D'Urzo  
Editor: Antonino D'Urzo • Publishers: Bärenreiter Verlag • Booklet Notes: Ryan Brown  
Please see booklet for a complete track list

Cover Picture: *Orpheus Leading Eurydice from the Underworld, 1861* by Jean Baptiste Camille Corot (1796-1875) (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, USA / Bridgeman Art Library)

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