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STRAVINSKY *Perséphone*

New York Philharmonic Orchestra Igor Stravinsky

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Perséphone (Persephone) is a musical work (mélo-drame) for speaker, solo singers, chorus, dancers and orchestra with music by Igor Stravinsky and a libretto by André Gide.

It was first performed under the direction of the composer at the Opéra, Paris on April 30, 1934 in a double bill with the ballet "Diane de Poitiers" by Jacques Ibert. The premiere was staged by the ballet company of Ida Rubinstein, with Rubinstein herself dancing and speaking the part of Perséphone and the tenor René Maison singing Eumolphe.

It was also premiered at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires with Victoria Ocampo under Stravinsky himself in 1934, and then in Rio de Janeiro. It was reprised at the Colón in 1995 with China Zorrilla under Pedro Ignacio Calderón.

Other versions include George Balanchine's, Kurt Jooss (1955), Pina Bausch's (1965) and Martha Graham own choreographies.

It was recorded by Stravinsky himself with Vera Zorina and also under André Cluytens (with Nicolai Gedda, 1955, Paris), Sir Andrew Davis (with Paul Groves, London) and Michael Tilson Thomas (with Stuart Neill, 1999, San Francisco).

(Notes from Wikipedia)

Restoration notes

This transfer of Stravinsky's rarely-heard *Perséphone* was suggested to me by John Phillips, who also supplied the source recording, a copy of the original Columbia Masterworks LP in near mint condition. The original recording was exceptionally well made, though one can only curse Columbia for their non-adoption of stereo at this stage in the 1950s! In carrying out the XR remastering of the recording I compared it sonically to a more recent recording of the work by Kent Nagano and the London Symphony Orchestra. The two shared a very close average frequency response curve, though the latter did highlight a slight thinness in the voices and suggest an adjustment which brings out greater richness in the voice of the tenor, Richard Robinson. This aside, and with a reduction in the tape hiss present on the original LP, this transfer is exceptionally faithful to the original. Unlike the LP, however, there is here no requirement to split the lengthy second section into two halves in order to meet the time limitations of the vinyl long playing record.

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FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM
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Stravinsky

conducts his mélo-drame
Perséphone

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Vera Zorina, narrator
Richard Robinson, tenor
New York Philharmonic Orchestra

The Westminster Choir
Dr. John Finley Williamson, director
Igor Stravinsky, conductor

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STRAVINSKY PERSÉPHONE
STRAVINSKY, NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Stravinsky Perséphone

- 1 I. Persephone Abducted (*Perséphone Ravie*) (10:42)
- 2 II. Persephone in the Underworld (*Perséphone aux Enfers*) (26:20)
- 3 III. Persephone Restored (*Perséphone Renaissance*) (16:31)

Vera Zorina Narrator

Richard Robinson Tenor

The Westminster Choir Dr. John Finley Williamson

New York Philharmonic Orchestra Igor Stravinsky

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XR remastering by **Andrew Rose**

Transfer from Columbia
Masterworks LP ML 5196

Cover artwork based on a
photograph of **Igor Stravinsky**

Recorded 14 January 1957
Columbia 30th Street Studios
New York City

Total duration: **53:33**

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