

MEDEA

BY EURIPIDES



THE QUESTORS THEATRE COMPANY



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First performance: May 10th 1980

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The 'Medea' of Euripides was written for a state drama contest in 431BC. It won third prize — the two other winners are now lost to antiquity. The drama contest was the theatre form of the day, and all the Greek plays we now know were written for such contests, which could last several days. They were religious festivals honouring various gods throughout the year, and were attended by an audience near the capacity of a modern football match. In the main the stories of the plays were taken from mythology, concerning the gods and the heroes. The audience would have been very familiar with the stories.

Euripides follows this tradition, but he differs from his contemporaries in his concern with human passions and sufferings, although he does not dismiss the gods entirely. His use of the obligatory chorus, too, is very different from that of Aeschylus and Sophocles. With them, it plays a large part, closely associated with the fate of the main characters, but Euripides' chorus acts more as a sympathetic listener and commentator, with the real drama confined to the men and women at the centre. It is that which makes Euripides the most modern of the Greek dramatists, and perhaps the most theatrically approachable for today's audiences.

MEDEA

by

EURIPIDES

translated by Rex Warner

CAST

Medea	GILLIAN KERSWELL
Jason	NORMAN WILKINSON
Their children	HAL CRUTTENDEN HUW LANGRIDGE
Nurse	PAM GOWER
Tutor to the children	NED GETTINGS
Kreon, King of Corinth	WILFRID SHARP
Aigeus, King of Athens	JOHN MARTIN
Messenger	ALAN CHISHOLM
Medea's servant	CATHERINE PALMER
Chorus	JANE DEWEY SUZANNE GREGERSON SYLVIA HYSON LYN JONES FRANCES MARTIN SARAH MORRISON SUE SOTHERAN

Directed by BRIAN RICH

Set designed by DEIRDRE DUCKER

Costumes designed by BRIAN RICH

Musician — JULIA COOKE

The play will be performed without an interval

RUNNING TIME — APPROXIMATELY 1 hr. 30 mins.

Stage Manager	—	ERIC LISTER
Deputy Stage Manager	—	BRIAN McLOUGHLIN
Assistant Stage Managers	—	BRON BECKFORD BARBARA NEWHEY JUDITH JONES ANGELA TAYLOR
Construction	—	DOMINIC O'DWYER
Prompter	—	MARJORIE EDWINS
Lighting Designer	—	ALAN N. SMITH
assisted by	—	RICHARD BROADHURST DAVID WILLIAMS
Lighting Operator	—	MALCOLM ROBERTSON
Properties	—	CANDY CLOTWORTHY
Wardrobe Mistress	—	GRACE LACAILLE
assisted by	—	WENDY BRACKLEY EVELYN CURRY CELIA LACAILLE

DISCUSSION

An

OPEN DISCUSSION

on this production will be held on TUESDAY, 20th MAY at 7.45p.m. in the Bernard Shaw Room and will be led by

HOVHANNES I. PILIKIAN

All are invited.

Hovhanness I. Pilikian has been in the vanguard of those who have sought to re-interpret the great Greek tragedies and has made the plays the subject of special study and research. His controversial views have been given expression in his own productions, notably of 'Oedipus Tyrannos' at the Chichester Festival Theatre, 'Electra' at the Greenwich Theatre, 'Helen' and — in 1972, 'Medea'.

Mr. Pilikian may shake certain preconceptions, but a fascinating, and probably controversial, discussion is assured.

DON'T MISS IT

TUESDAY, 20th MAY at 7.45p.m.

in the BERNARD SHAW ROOM

MEDEA – the background

Euripides' 'Medea' is concerned not with the fairy-tale legend of the taking of the Golden Fleece, but with the domestic situation between Medea and Jason some years later.

Jason had met and fallen in love with Medea, daughter of the king who kept the fleece, and a sorceress related to the gods, when he sailed in his ship the 'Argo' to take the fleece for his uncle Pelias, King of Iolcos. With the help of Medea's magic, he obtained the fleece and escaped, taking Medea with him. To assist the escape, Medea murdered her own brother, strewing the pieces of his body on the water, so that her father's fleet would be distracted from its pursuit by picking up the pieces for burial. On Iolcos, Pelias cheated Jason of his hereditary rights and in revenge Medea persuaded the King's daughters to kill their father and cut up his body, in the belief that this would restore the King to youth. The crime meant exile for Jason, Medea and their children, and they came to Corinth where Euripides' play is set.

Here, Jason attempts to strengthen his own position by marrying the daughter of the Corinthian King. Medea believes he is tired of her, and plots her terrible revenge.

COMING UP —

IN THE THEATRE

BUTLEY

by Simon Gray

May 31, June 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 at 7.45p.m.

IN THE STUDIO

Directors' Shop Window

May 25 at 7.45p.m.

and if you've chanced your arm in the Annual Draw
come to the Theatre for

SHAKESPEARE LADY

followed by The Draw

on May 18 at 7.45p.m.
