

teater Barbara.



The Tale of Perseus

A story about a boy facing the struggles of life, on his way to manhood.



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The Tale of Perseus

About a boy facing the struggles of life, on his way to manhood.

Cast, in order of appearance:

Perseus - Sverrir Gudnason

Danae, the mother of Perseus – Eva Azcárate

Acrisius, the king of Argos, father of Danae – Otto Milde

Dictys, slightly retarded fisherman – Otto Milde

Polydectes, the king of Seriphos, younger brother of Dictys – Otto Milde

The Graeae sisters, Otto Milde and Eva Azcárate

Sea nymphs, the daughters of Poseidon – Otto Milde and Eva Azcárate

Medusa - Eva Azcárate

Storytellers - the ensemble

Introduction :

Dance

Scene 1

Prologue. The actors are telling what the story is about; life, death, seafood recipes..., about growth, hair growth. They mix reality with their tasks as actors. It is about responsibility, about being able to play, but at the same time being able to take responsibility. The actors argue about different interpretations of the play.

Scene 2

The king of Argos, Acrisius, visits an oracle to learn about the future. He warns the king that he in time will be killed by Perseus, a son born to his daughter Danae. Acrisius has everything a man can dream of, power and wealth, but no son who can inherit the throne.

Scene 3

King Acrisius forbids his daughter Danae to ever meet a man. She refuses and is jailed in the tower. Danae is locked up for two years. The sun rises, the sun sets. Only a narrow ray of light reaches her from a crack in the roof.

Scene 4

Danae is in the tower, praying to Zeus, begging for a child, a son. Zeus grants her wish by spreading a shower of gold over Danae.

Scene 5

Acrisius is outraged, places Danae and the baby in a chest and throws it into the sea.

Scene 6

Choreography of the stormy sea. Poseidon, the God of sea, sees the desperation that Danae is in and is moved by the infants tears. He allows the chest to float to a beach where Dictys, a lonely fisherman lives.

Scene 7

The chest is washed up on the shore of Seriphos. Danae meets the fisherman Dictys.

Choreography/song

The song of sun, sand, water and wind.

Days become weeks, months pass
 Slowly Danae recovers.
 They feel secure, son and mother.
 Dictys becomes like an elder brother
 He feels great, there are now more of them,
 Living together on the beach, with water and wind
 and Perseus, he is laughing and growing.

Dictys brother, king Polydectes,
 has heard of the mystical 'fairy'
 that floated ashore
 and was washed up on this island

Curious, he goes there to see for himself
 the miracle sent by the Gods.
 First he can't understand what it is
 But his hard heart softens...

King Polydectes immediately falls in love
 and comes to the beach more often
 Just to see...her smile.

Scene 8

Danae meets Polydectes, younger brother of Dictys and king of Seriphos.
 Polydectes is trying to convince Danae to move in with him in the castle, he can offer her a much better life. It is obvious that Polydectes neither cares about Perseus nor really loves Danae. He only cares about his power and wealth.
 Danae reveals the threatening truth that Perseus is the son of Zeus.

Times goes by.....Choreography

Scene 9

Perseus grows up together with Danae and Dictys.

Scene 10

Perseus is overjoyed. He's received an invitation to the castle. He dreams of being somebody, now he has the chance to show the king that he can be useful. Perhaps get a job on a boat? He is dreaming... Danae disapproves and worries. She knows that Polydectes is dangerous and revengeful. Perseus is obnoxious.

Scene 11

Danae asks Goddess Athena for help. She gets good advice, but can't memorize all the advice. She asks Athena for a pen to write some notes. She is also given the sword.

Scene 12

Perseus wanders to the castle to meet Polydectes, the king.
 He is fascinated by the surroundings, by the liveliness of all the people and by the breathtaking view of the magnificent castle. The narrators, yet again, slowly but surely get out of character and shift into their private selves. Playing, fooling around and nearly losing control.

Scene 13

At the castle. There are plenty of celebrities and dignified guests. They have all brought expensive gifts, except for Perseus who didn't bring a thing. Eager to win the king's trust and in an attempt to impress, he offers his services. He'll do anything. The king gives Perseus the task of finding the monster Medusa and coming back with its head. He bets the freedom of his mother that he will succeed.

Scene 14

Perseus tells his mother about the mission. Danae's devastated. Danae tells about her relation to Polydectes. He is also told, for the first time, that he is a son of the God Zeus. He's given the sword of Athena and the words: You'll make it, with the Gods help. Listen carefully to what Athena said to me... You shall head north, cross the Sea of Ice, to the end of the world. Find the Graeae, the forever old, they know the way to Medusa. And most importantly, you must never ever look her in the eyes!

Scene 15

Perseus journey starts.- Choreography.

He travelled for four days and four nights, it got colder and colder.... no more food, no houses, not a single soul in sight...he collapses, exhausted.

Scene 16

Perseus reaches the Graeae sisters. He becomes drowsy and weary. Fever and chills. Dreams turn into nightmares. Life flashes by. His dreams are destroyed by cynicism. Absurd and grotesque hallucinations. He wants to give in, yet wants to fight on. Existential anguish. The meaning of life.

Satirical scene where Perseus thanks to his, 'success', suffers from a fit. He thinks he is an Adonis, a Greek God, that he's invincible. Reality hits him and he collapses.

Scene 17

Sea dance

Scene 18

Perseus is treated by the lovely and caring Sea nymphs, who cure him. He is given Hermes sandals, Hades helmet and a sack from sewing class in which to bring home the head of Medusa. He desperately wants to stay.

Scene 19

Perseus flies.

Faster than the wind, he flies south towards the heat. It gets hotter and hotter. He reaches the desert. Snakes and scorpions crawl in the sand.

He puts the helmet on to protect him from the heat, but doesn't care to fasten the buckle. He seeks shelter in a dark cave.

Scene 20

In Medusa's cave. He hears her voice. Words like...: Give me something...to ease the pain. Why did you break my heart?...Give me something to drink, something to soothe my longing, my passion. Was it right what he did? ...

Medusa tries to seduce him.

But tell me, was it right what he did? To awaken my lust, use me and then leave me, hollow, feeling empty as a shell? Perseus finds out that Poseidon hurt her. Perseus innocence against the experience and cynicism of Medusa. Medusa talks of erotical love, Perseus of motherly love.

Scene 21

The birth of Pegasus. From Medusa's bleeding neck, a slimy creature begins to press itself out. From the bloody carcass, on shaky legs, rises....a white, winged stallion. Shining with beauty.

Perseus grabs hold of the tail just as the winged horse leaves the ground. He climbs up onto the warm back and allows himself to be lifted high into the sky...they journey for days and days.

Scene 22

Perseus heads for home with the help of Pegasus.

On Seriphos he meets Dictys who tells Perseus he hasn't seen his mother since he left. He immediately hurries to the castle. Blinded by hate, he neither sees nor hears a thing. Suddenly he stands there again, in front of the castle walls. The previously so dazzling castle garden, now lies withered before him. In the courtyard he finds people lying scattered all over. Perseus kicks a dead pigeon out of his path and makes his way into the large hall...

Scene 23

Perseus confronts Polydectes. He says he has accomplished his mission and now wants his mother back. Polydectes lures Perseus into telling about his mission. This in order to delay the truth about his mothers whereabouts, of which Polydectes knows nothing. He finally explains that Danae is no longer alive and that Perseus life will now also come to an end...

Scene 24

Perseus meets Danae. They shortly brief each other about what has taken place.

When the people of Seriphos learn that their ruler is dead, they want Perseus to take over the crown. However, Danae wishes to return to Argos and Dictys is elected to be the king. His first order is that, from now on, everyone should always have octopus stew for lunch...

Scene 25

The boat trip back to Argos. There they are greeted by the old king Acrisius.

When he understands that the man before him is his grandson, Acrisius is regretful and begs Perseus for forgiveness.

Scene 26

To celebrate the return of Danae and Perseus, Acrisius arranges for Olympic games. Perseus is challenged to compete in a discus tournament. He throws the discus, which is disastrously carried by the wind way up into the grandstand, to where Acrisius is gaping over the astonishing throw...

Acrisius asks for forgiveness. Tells Perseus that he has always loved him, but became afraid, afraid of his own destiny. He asks him to take over the throne and wishes them happiness for...

Danae and Perseus wonder: "For...what?"

The End