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## **AMPHITRYON 4**

**Opera in Three Acts**

after Molière

**Harold Blumenfeld**

### **A r g u m e n t**

*The opera concerns Jupiter's passion for Alcmena, wife of Theban general Amphitryon.  
Action encompasses a night and day. It plays in Milky Way and on Earth.*

On Milky Way, MERCURY disguises JUPITER – enamoured with ALCMENA – in guise of her husband, away leading his Thebans against Sparta. JUPITER descends, passes night of love with ALCMENA as her husband. At dawn the true AMPHITRYON, profiting from sudden military victory, returns on heels of departing god. Embarrassment, general confusion, bittersweet deununciations ensue.

JUPITER, upset, watches developing marital crisis from on high. Meantime, Battle Scenes, Victory Orgy, dances, odes. And hilarious slapstick alongside heated debate. But at the very end, disguised as husband he has wronged, JUPITER shockingly appears below, face to face with AMPHITRYON and all, at height of turmoil. He devises ruse by means of which all consternation and dumbfounding coincidences are resolved, to satisfaction of ..almost... all concerned. And returns to Milky Way.

Foreground action, involving ALCMENA with JUPITER and AMPHITRYON, is paralleled by analogous buffo triangle formed by representatives, godly and mortal, of servant classes. This involves Amphitryon's servant SOSIE, latter's shrewish wife, CLEANTHIS, and MERCURY devilishly disguised as HER husband.

*This fourth operatic treatment of Amphitryon legend derives in spirit from ingenious Molière comedy. But dramaturgically, scenically it is quite transformed. Composer's dénouement goes radically beyond all previous forms in which Amphitryon legend has been cast.*

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## **WEBSITE INTRODUCTION**

**SCORE-PAGE SAMPLES**

### **1. Vocal Score pp 124-131**

#### **Half-drunkens lyrical scene ending Victory Orgy, Act Two**

Towards end of Victory Celebration marking unexpectedly sudden defeat of Spartans, Theban General AMPHITRYON asks his military poet laureate, ARGATIPHONTIDAS, to sing an Ode to ALCMENA.. Beyond scrim, other officers drink, sing. AMPHITRYON continues the sensuous Ode, dueting with poet. Elaborate vocal cadenza. Offstage, Theban soldiers drink and sing, in ancient Greek, the Skolion of Seikilos ("Hoson Zes...") drawn from earliest known extant example of notated music. Scene ends.

### **2. Orchestral Score Vol II pp 190-193 and 197-202**

#### **Battle Music of Thebans and Spartans, near opening of Act Two**

*[In score, Bb clarinets, F horns are not in C: they are notated transposed.]*

190-193: Fugal music. Above orchestral turmoil, trumpets stand for Spartan troops, horns for Thebans.

Skipping ahead to 197-202: height of battle, war cries of clashing armies are heard.

*Action of this scene thus precedes that excerpted from vocal score.*

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124

T  
BT  
B  
D.

*sff*

*ff*

*ff*

*YAH!*

*YAH!*

*YAH!*

*ATTACCA*

*8bassa*

*p*

*p*

*DRUMS*

ALLEGRO MODERATO in  $\frac{2}{4}$  (CIRCA) [AMPH. PLACES A LAUREL WREATH ON BROW OF ARG. YOUNG POET LAUREATE OF THE ARMY. ARG. SINGING HIMSELF AND IMPROVISING ANYMORE, ACCOMPANYING HIMSELF ON THE KITHARA.]

124 calma

ARG. POS.  
AM N

**AMPH** *p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

ANDANTE in  $\frac{2}{4}$  [SI UN POCCHISSIMO PIENO MASSU CHE' PRECEDENTEMENTE]

125

Sempre soave e espr.

ARG.

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

ARG

TO HER RA-DIANT, RA-DIANT CHARM TO HER BEAU-TY SO RARE SO DIS-ARM-ING IT

GOOS A... BOVE

[ARG DRINKS HEAVILY]

ARG

POS

N

RI-VALS THE WONDERS OF THE GOOS A... BOVE

(gals.) P RE-JOICE-

(gals.) P RE-JOICE, RE-JOICE RE-

RE-JOICE RE-JOICE RE-

POS

N

AM

8 (6) AND BE GAY

8 (6) AND BE GAY

EAMPH. TAKES UP THE STRAIN

TO ALC... ME... NA... OH

[POSICLES LEAVES FOR HIS TENT IN THE COMPANY OF A SERVANT GIRL.]

**ARG**

**AM**

P AH-A-LAS!

MIS-TRESS MINE!

VI-SION EN-CHANT-ING TO YOUR RA-DIANT, RA-DIANT CHARM

**ARG**

**AM**

mf TO HER BEAU-TY SO RARE, SO DIS-ARM-ING, IT soave RI-VALS THE WON-

AH, MY LOVE! ALC-ME-NA! ALCME-NA! AH! AH!

**ARG**

**AM**

DERS OF THE GODS A-BOVE TO HER BEAU-TY, AH LAS A---

dolce e un poco misterioso

[EXIT NAUCRATES WITH HIS SERVANT GIRL]

*p*

ARG RARE AND SO DIS... ARM...ING, IT  
8 RI - VALS THE WONDERS OF THE  
GODS  
A...BOY

AM LAS ALCME - NA  
THE GODS A ...

Allegro  
MODERATO in and [sempre]

(♩ = 96)

127

ARG *p* [OFFSTAGE]

POS RE- JOICE  
8 RE- JOICE  
AM RE- BOVE  
N RE- JOICE, HA! HAHA!

*p* [LEAVING]

[AMPH. PREPARES TO REST, PRIOR TO HIS HOMeward JOURNEY. HE IS AIDED BY AN ORDERLY]

con bravura

POS RE- JOICE  
8 RE- JOICE  
N RE- JOICE  
con bravura

*p* subito tranquillo

128

[AN ADORING SERVANT POURS MORE WINE DOWN ARG'S THROAT. HE IS GETTING DRUNK.]

subito à tempo

molto ritenendo .....

128 un pochissimo meno mosso ch'el tempo  
ANDANTE ind.

POS  
N  
AM

AND LAUGH THE NIGHT AWAY  
ALC-ME-NA  
(HARP)

AM

CHE-RISH ANDA-DORE YOU ON BE-  
CON-STANT, CON-STANT

[AMPH. EXALTS ALCEMENA IN A CALM DIDE. HE IS ACCOMPANIED BY ARG. ON THE KITHARA]

AM

LOY-ED, MY

HEART FOR-EV-ER IS WAIT-ING, WAIT-ING

POS  
N  
AM

[OFFSTAGE] *PP*  
RE -----  
JOICE [OFFSTAGE]  
*PP* RE -----

AT YOUR CALL — [ARG. ALMOST PASSES OUT]

129

POS  
N  
AM

*PP*  
rall. senza misura  
- JOICE -  
KEEP ME YOUR CAP- - TIVE NEVER RE- RELEASE ME HOLD ME HOSTAGE

(in tempo)

AM

HOSTAGE IN ALL E-TER-NI-TY HOLD ME PRI-SON-ER FOR- EV- - - ER FOR- EVER

*f* con passione  
*cresc e precipitando*

*mf cresc.*

130

AM

*f* FOR-EV-ER *p* ALC-ME

*f* riten... *p*

AM

*molto soave*

quasi cadenza *p* NA!

*p* *ppp* (coda voice) *p*

ANDANTE SOSTENUTO (ad. (intro battute))

130

AM

HOLD ME FOREV-ER IN YOUR MAGIC THRALL!

(il coro da Pontano) HO-SON ZES PHAI

HO-SON ZES

[CALM REIGNS, AMPH. REPOSES]

H.

TINOU- ME DEN HO LOS

NOU ME DEN HO LOS

PHAI- ME DEN HO LOS

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CH.

T: SY LV ---- POU PROS O - LI - GON ES - TI - TO

BT: SY LV ---- POU PROS O - LI - GON ES -

B: *pizz.* *pizz.* *pizz.* *pizz.* *pizz.*

CH.

T: ZEN TO TE - LOS HO CHRO - NOS A - PAI -

BT: TI - TO ZEN TO TE - LOS HO CHRONOS

B: *pizz.* *pizz.* *pizz.* *pizz.*

CH.

T: *ritenendo* à tempo TEI niente

BT: A - PAI - TEI -

B: *pizz.* *pizz.* *pizz.* *pizz.* *pizz.* *pizz.* *pizz.* *pizz.*