

OPERA EXPLAINED

This audiobook series introduces, in words and music, the plot and background of major operas. Using the principal themes and arias, taken from the Naxos recordings of the complete works, the presentation is informative yet entertaining, enabling the listener to get more from this remarkable art form.

An Introduction to...

MONTEVERDI

Orfeo

Written by **Thomson Smillie**

Narrated by **David Timson**

Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, first performed in 1607, generates a special excitement because it is the first unquestioned masterpiece of opera. Notable for its precise orchestration and powerful drama, it was a groundbreaking work. It concerns the legend of Orpheus, the demi-god whose music had the power to conquer the forces of Hell and to bring his wife back, briefly, to life. The extracts used in this introduction are from Naxos's full recording; it uses authentic period instruments, which serve to evoke the early Baroque period of the opera's composition.

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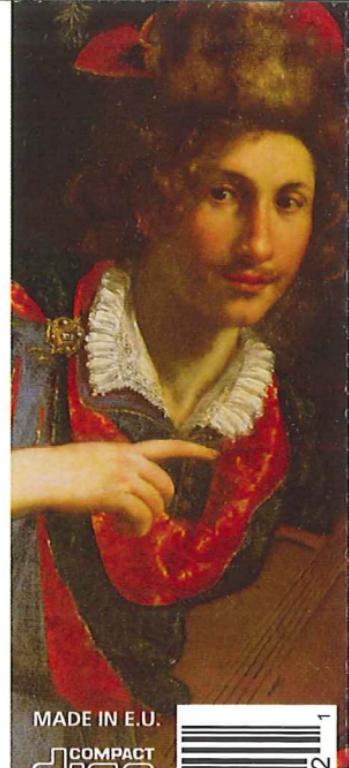
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