

PLAYS FOR
New Audiences

A Division of Children's Theatre Company

Apollo and the Trials of Hercules

by John Maclay and Joe Foust

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE (Starting with Latin in the Greek play! Irony!)

Total cast size (8-10, depending on doubling)

CHORUS (The chorus can/will double as various characters in the Underworld)
APOLLO SCHENKLEBERGER (a whip-smart trans masculine teen)
PROFESSOR SCHENKLEBERGER (APOLLO's father and leading scholar of Greek Mythology)
HERMES
HERCULES
CYCLOPS
CHARON
PAN
KAMPE
HADES
DEMETER
DIONYSUS
(Voice overs of teachers, classmates, SYSIPHUS)

A note on casting:

There should be transgender actors in the production. The genders of all residents of the Underworld are completely flexible, i.e. the genders of Hercules, Cyclops, Hades, Pan, etc are completely up to your production. Depending on your casting, you may (and should) alter pronouns as needed to be appropriate to your actors.

HERCULES

Welcome to our production of Apollo and the Trials of Hercules starring Hercules. Before we begin, we would like to thank some special people. First, we would like to thank Dionysus and we hope that our performance pleaseth him and we are rewarded with bountiful crops. Also, our sponsor Children's Hospital of Wisconsin. We would also like to thank the all-powerful Zeus who smote no actors during the rehearsal process. Which shows some nice emotional growth.

There will be one intermission where you can give us money in return for items which cost us considerably less than you'll pay for them. But it's for charity so ... Anyone found eating, drinking, texting, taking pictures or recordings will be banished to the underworld to endure an eternity of suffering. There is a special room there for people who are rude at the theater.

But by all means, have fun and laugh. In that department you can go nuts. Also, there will be a talkback and you can ask questions about how theater works. In case the show runs long, and we can only answer one question, here's the answer: The swords are real. And now ...our play!

FULL CHORUS

A Greek chorus

SINGLE CHORUS

Was always part of

FULL CHORUS

ancient Greek theater

SINGLE CHORUS

they were always masked and

FULL CHORUS

Spoke in one voice

SINGLE CHORUS

But times have changed

SINGLE CHORUS

Back then, they were always men, as was the audience

FULL CHORUS

But we think that's stupid

SINGLE CHORUS

Theater should be inclusive. In any case, there are some things we must tell you before we begin our story, first:

FULL CHORUS

The title

SINGLE CHORUS

Yes, the title.

FULL CHORUS

APOLLO and the Trials of Hercules

SINGLE CHORUS

Is not the title.

FULL CHORUS

No. No it is not.

SINGLE CHORUS

The real title of our play is: Apollo Schenkelberger

FULL CHORUS

And the Trials of Hades

SINGLE CHORUS

Our marketing department thought Schenkelberger was too contemporary and confusing. And that having Hercules in the title would sell more tickets than Hades.

FULL CHORUS

And so we lied to you.

SINGLE CHORUS

Though, to be fair... it looks like it worked.

SINGLE CHORUS

And now that you're here, do you really care about the title? And Hercules is totally in the play. So:

FULL CHORUS

We the chorus

SINGLE CHORUS

Present to you the story of

FULL CHORUS

Apollo Schenkelberger and the Trials of Hades.

APOLLO

But first, we will tell of a newly found legend

SINGLE CHORUS

The last thing Professor Artemis Schenkelberger

APOLLO

My father-

SINGLE CHORUS

-wrote before his mysterious disappearance

APOLLO (*Holding up the journal*)

He wrote it here, in his personal journal. It tells of Hades

(HADES fades in from behind, A menacing figure in full battle gear)

SINGLE CHORUS

And how he tricked the strongest of the Olympian gods by inviting them to a lavish feast.

(HADES fades out as PAN fades in. He is playing music for the feast. Perhaps we add a "welcome to the feast" song)

The god Pan lulled them with his music. (*Lily plays three chords*) The guest list included

FULL CHORUS

Children of the Titan Cronus:

SINGLE CHORUS

Zeus

SINGLE CHORUS

Poseidon

SINGLE CHORUS

Hera

SINGLE CHORUS

and Demeter

FULL CHORUS

And many of Zeus' most powerful offspring

SINGLE CHORUS

Athena

SINGLE CHORUS

Apollo

SINGLE CHORUS

Ares

SINGLE CHORUS

Aphrodite

SINGLE CHORUS

Hermes

HERCULES

and the mighty Hercules

CYCLOPS

Me there too!

HERCULES

Yes you were, buddy. Cyclops was my plus one.

SINGLE CHORUS

Hades mixed water from the river of forgetfulness with the nectar he served them

SINGLE CHORUS

Thus, when they drank of it, they forgot who they were.

APOLLO

Having forgotten who they were, the Olympians also had forgotten their powers and how to use them. So, Hades wielded a freshly minted new weapon, forged by the mightiest of the Cyclopes to easily conquer the other gods.

(HADES unleashes a mighty scream. He then uses his new double ended mace staff to fight all the gods. This is epic.

The chorus may shout out fight narration like "Zeus down" or "Ceres bested" throughout)

APOLLO

Hades kept the gods trapped in the underworld. And as long as they were under his rule, he could wield their powers as his own.

(The scene changes to reveal APOLLO has been reading from the journal in his school classroom)

And that's why, to this day, the old Greek gods have not been seen or heard from in the earthly realm.

STUDENT

I have a question? Can you just make up a bunch of stuff and call it a report?

APOLLO

I didn't make it up, it's the last entry in my father's journal. Before he disappeared.

STUDENT

I suppose if I were your father, I'd disappear too. *(Students laugh)*

APOLLO

Well if you were my father, I'd hope you disappear.

STUDENT

You better shut your face!

TEACHER

Class! Settle down! Apollo, you may sit down.

SINGLE CHORUS

The unities of Aristotle's poetics require three things of a play:

SINGLE CHORUS

To tell a story of a single action, in a single place, in a single day.

SINGLE CHORUS

But we can break these rules

FULL CHORUS

as we are a modern Chorus!

(Various high-fives, right ons, and maybe a guitar riff)

SINGLE CHORUS

And so we can show you, dear audience, what Apollo has yet to discover: what happened on that fateful day to their father, Professor Artemis Schenkelberger.

(The scene shifts to a university classroom)

PROFESSOR SCHENKELBERGER

And so, class, you can see, the Greek gods could be petty and selfish. They wanted sacrifice to themselves not to sacrifice of themselves. When Prometheus created humans, he made people who have the choice and ability to sacrifice themselves for the

greater good. It can be the most noble quality a human can have. Any questions? Any at all? Ok. Class dismissed.

(Students file out. The chorus narrates while actors play out what happens.)

SINGLE CHORUS

Hermes, messenger to the gods, could travel between Realms. Having grown weary of Hades' tyrannical rule, Hermes came to Earth to seek help from Professor Artemis.

SINGLE CHORUS

The Professor met an actual Greek god.

SINGLE CHORUS

He took the moment in stride.

(The PROFESSOR goes crazy, throwing paper, happy dancing, touching HERMES to make sure he is real.)

HERMES

Ok, Ok, that's enough. Calm down. I know this is exciting for you. But I need your help.

PROFESSOR SCHENKELBERGER

My help?

SINGLE CHORUS

Hermes told Professor Schenkelberger of Hades feast and how he used the river of forgetfulness on his guests

HERMES

But see, I was drinking my own nectar, since underworld drinks were always surprisingly weak sauce.

PROFESSOR SCHENKELBERGER

I see...

SINGLE CHORUS

Professor Schenkelberger quickly wrote down the entire account in his personal journal.

HERMES

So I've just been laying low this whole time. And, listen, I'm actually in favor of many of these god's losing their memories. Who needs Zeus running around causing trouble? Am I right? But here's the thing: it was bad before. But it's so much worse now. Hades surrounds himself with suck ups and yes-gods. He throws tantrums. He hates everyone who doesn't kiss his butt. So you mortals can forget about any divine help from Lord Hades. He does not care. You're dead to him. Until you're dead to him. Ugh. He's a terrible, terrible ruler. He thinks he's tremendous, but he's the total opposite.

PURCHASE PERUSAL FOR FULL SCRIPT