

Orpheus and magic

Business



The final scene of Ovid's Orpheus, as depicted in the painting 'Orphee' illustrates the never-ending battle between the man's basest emotions and the highest aspirations of his nature. Gustave Moreau, the artist who created 'Orphee,' was a famous Symbolist painter. Symbolists believe that art should represent absolute truths than can only be described indirectly. Therefore, all their art has metaphors woven throughout. A different approach to the same story is the opera 'Orphee et Euridice' by Christoph Willibald Gluck. Gluck was one of the first who adopted the style of 'reform operas' in which he replaced the complex music and plot of the conventional opera with what he called 'noble simplicity' so as to 'delight the eyes and ears, to rouse up and affect the hearts of the audience without the risk of sinning against reason and common sense.

'While simplicity is valuable, the use of symbolism in Moreau's works causes the viewer to think deeply upon the true meaning of the work, giving a familiar story a deeper meaning than a more narrative representation. The difference between the elves and that of Gandalf reflects the same differences. The magic of the elves is seemingly simple, expressing itself in ways such as making doors nearly impossible to open and imbuing swords and cloaks with inherent magic. In contrast to this, Gandalf's magic manifests itself as great balls of blue fire or the ability to throw objects. While this is powerful, the extent of it is easily grasped making him potentially less awe-inspiring than the elves whose magic expresses itself in slight ways such as making doors nearly impossible to open and imbuing cloaks and swords with inherent magic.