JEAN COCTEAU'S ORPHEUS

Next attraction
Cocteau's 'Orpheus' Compels His Audience 'To Believe'

By OTIS L. GUERNSEY JR.

"It is not necessary to understand; it is necessary only to believe."

These words are spoken by Death's chauffeur to Orpheus in Jean Cocteau's latest picture, a surrealist variation on the Orpheus and Eurydice legend, now showing at the Fifty-fifth Street Playhouse. The words, in context, are a bit more than a detailed description of each of the professional adventures of the main character. Enraptured by a swing in the plot, the spectator is left with a feeling of wonder, if not understanding.

The critic of the Daily Compass, in his review of the film, stated: "Cocteau's 'Orpheus' is based on the ancient Greek legend of Orpheus and Eurydice, which has enthralled and inspired writers and artists throughout the ages."

Cocteau believes the legend has enduring appeal because of its timeless themes and the way it speaks to the human condition. The film's lush cinematography and poetic dialogue further enhance the timeless quality of the story. Cocteau's use of symbols and motifs from classical mythology is also notable, as it contributes to the film's rich thematic tapestry.

The critic praised the film's visual beauty, commenting on the stunning cinematography and the imaginative sets that bring Cocteau's vision to life. The film's musical score, composed by Georges Auric, was also commended for its ability to evoke the emotions of the characters and the audience.

In conclusion, Cocteau's 'Orpheus' is a masterful blend of classical mythology, surrealism, and modern filmmaking techniques. It is a work of art that invites the viewer to suspend disbelief and enter into a world of fantasy and imagination. With its timeless themes and visual splendor, it is a film that will continue to captivate audiences for generations to come.
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