

Jörgen Smit

Osiris and Isis

A fifth grade play

(Entrance – Gavotte in D Minor – Violins)

Scene 1

(The Pharaoh's throne hall. Some of the court are gathered, among them Seth and his three accomplices, Tashenatit, Nut-hetepeth and Hu-nefer. A Herald enters).

Herald: A message of joy I bring to all the people. Osiris is now returning. He sent me in advance to spread the word that festivities will be held upon his arrival. He brings great riches from foreign lands. They have given him presents in thankfulness for the good deeds he spread to the people of the world from his country of black earth along the Nile.

Seth: Our hearts rejoice at this message. We shall see our enlightened brother again. We have longed for him, as he was abroad. Upon the day that Osiris no longer lives in the Kingdom of Egypt our land will be dark, cold and divided. Go now to prepare the festivities.

(Everyone leaves the throne hall, except Seth and his three conspirators who return alone).

Seth: Remember, now we must stand together. Our great day has arrived, when we shall revenge our suffering during many years of subjugation. Evil's great Gods, give us the strength and power to topple the false God of Light, Osiris. Brother, now you shall die.... Tashenatit, is the coffin built with the correct measurements?

Tashenatit: Yes, my lord, with the exact measurements. In secret we have measured King Osiris as you commanded. And the coffin is now the correct size for the King, to the breadth of a piece of hair.

Seth: Good, our slyness shall be fulfilled. But has the right moment now arrived? Nut-hetepeth where does the sun wander at this time?

Nut-hetepeth: It is the 17th day of the month of Athyr. Among Scorpion's bright stars the sun now shines.

Seth: And where is the moon?

Nut-hetepeth: It stands in full splendor when Osiris returns home. His 28th year of rule is now completed. The full moon shines from the eye of the Bull, Aldebaren, near the Milky Way's most powerful stars.

Seth: And Mars? Where does the mighty Mars shine?

Nut-hetepeth: It has disappeared, my lord, and may not be seen by the naked eye. Yet we have followed its route carefully and know where Mars, the red and powerful is headed. It has disappeared in its own house, in the sign of Scorpion behind the luster of the sun.

Seth: The right moment has arrived. Just like Mars I sneak behind the king's back, and now, Osiris, you shall die. In the sign of death and picture we lay him in the coffin that fits his measurements perfectly, while the moon shines from the other side..... and you, Hu-nefer, have you finished melting the lead?

Hu-nefer: Yes, lord, we have melted the lead, so much that it covers the whole coffin. We have it ready outside. As soon as Osiris lays down in the coffin and we have carried it out, the red-hot lead shall flow over it and fasten all openings so he will be choked in his own breathe within.

Seth: And now move aside. The moment is near.

The Herold enters. (Osiris approaches and enters with Isis and his court. Music. Seth and his conspirators bow down with their foreheads on the floor).

(Seitz Concert # 2 - Violins)

Osiris: Be greeted, arise my dear brother. You shall not lie in the dust before me. You shall stand by my side, my brother. I know you have governed the Kingdom of Egypt well, while I was in foreign lands. Tomorrow you will hear more about what I have accomplished abroad. Now we shall enjoy our reunion.

(Celebration – Impromptus by Schubert- Piano)
(As Osiris speaks the three conspirators carry in the coffin.)

Osiris: But what is this? A wonderful coffin! What a masterpiece! Such valuable wood. Where have you found the precious jewels that cover the lid? Who shall own this treasure?

Seth: It has been decided that the coffin shall be owned by the man who fits in it perfectly.

Osiris: But who is that? You speak in riddles my brother. You, wise sign-bearer Kerasher, maybe it is you....try, see if you fit in the coffin.

Kerasher: I certainly do not fit. This valuable coffin shall be owned (hesitatingly) by someone more honorable than me. (Kerasher climbs carefully out of the coffin)

Seth: (Quickly and sharply). No, not him. He is too short.

Kerasher: (As he climbs out of the coffin). I knew it. I never succeed in life's trials.

Osiris: But you, my brave cup-bearer, Panetchem, maybe you have better luck. You try.

Panetchem: My lucky moment has come. I recognize it, no I am certain. I dreamt it last night. I should become the richest in the whole kingdom.

Seth: You are a little too tall, my good Panetchem. A happy dream is not good enough. Here only the right measurements count.

Panetchem: (As he steps out of the coffin): What a disgrace and disappointment.

Seth: (Turning suddenly ingratiatingly to Osiris): Perhaps you fit my brother,Osiris,

look, will you try, lay down in the coffin. If it fits you, it is yours.

Osiris: I do not know the measurements of the coffin. Nor do I have the desire for the coffin's treasures. But I will try if it can please my brother. (Osiris proudly lowers himself into the coffin)

All: Look it fits.

Seth: Yes, truly, it fits to the breadth of a hair. Osiris has the correct measurements. The coffin is owned by Osiris..... (with a crude voice); and Osiris is now owned by the coffin! (Immediately the lid is closed tightly with an explosion. The stage darkens completely. Seth's scornful laughter is heard in the darkness. Covered by darkness the conspirators carry out the coffin... and all together cries of anguish are heard. Afterwards subdued light. – Everyone stands like stone statues.)

(Beethoven's 5th)

Isis: Seth, what have you caused? Your own brother. You are killing him in the coffin. Let go of him... O woe.... (Isis walks a couple of steps to the left where Seth and the conspirators have disappeared. She stops and becomes rigid.)

All: Osiris is dying. We are lost.

Isis: (As she unsuccessfully tries to continue to walk): O,woe! What a catastrophe! Bottomless darkness sinks over the people of the earth. An ice-cold wind will penetrate every human heart.

(Daniel 1 as the curtain falls).

(Daniel 1).

Scene 2

In Byblos at the court of King Malkandros. The background is a huge oak tree that has grown up and now encases the Osiris coffin within its limbs. Malkandros and Queen Astarte enter from the left.

Malkandros: Astarte, you my queen, what happiness for our country that the gods have given us a son, even though it must occur on this day of sorrow, the same day that Osiris was killed by his own brother, the dark and evil Seth.

Astarte: And no one knows where the corpse has been buried.

Malkandros: No, no one knows for sure. But I have heard that some children have seen the dark men with Seth accompany the coffin down to the beach. They shoved it into the waves. Now it is cradled on the wide spaces of the oceans of the world.

Astarte: Tell me King Malkandros, can it be driven into land?

Malkandros: Never, I believe. Osiris is dead. In our state of mourning our child must grow up. (Malkandros and Astarte exit). (Isis enters unveiled, walking with slow steps from the right.)

(Marlow 1)

- Isis: I have wandered from land to land and searched for Osiris. Not one good day have I had. I must find him. Maybe he can be awakened to life again? (She notices the oak tree). What is that? This beautiful tree is no ordinary tree. The form hides something secret. My brother, Osiris. I feel you. You are near! Has the coffin drifted to land where the tree grew up and hides you in its boughs. The dead hidden in life. O, what a wonder!
- Astarte: (Enters from the left): Who are you? Where do you come from? What do you want in the castle?
- Isis: I come from far away and ask to serve. I am a widow in mourning. Do you need someone to breast feed your baby?
- Astarte: Yes, truly you arrive at the right time. I feel you are a good person. You may take care of my child. It is asleep in here.
(Astarte exits to the left, while Isis remains and turns towards the oak tree.) ... (After a short moment Astarte returns with her child and gives it to Isis).
- Astarte: Here is our only child. It is born in sad times but you, my dear nurse, shall turn the dark warnings to joyful rays of sun for this child.
- Isis: (With the child) You my dear child, see me dressed as a nurse. I will give you my forces, for I am Isis, she who was, she who is and she who shall become. You shall take part in the God's eternal forces. But first I must cleanse you in God's purifying fire, so all of the earth's clusters are torn away to enable your being's starry luster to shine forth. (The stage becomes darker). The dark of night is falling upon us. See my star, Sirius burning bright. I will go to work. (Isis stands before the oak tree with the child in her arms looking at the audience)

(Patitique – Beethoven)

- Isis: Come divine fire, come blazing flames. (red lights) Appear divine purifying force. Come consuming willpower..... (stronger red lights) Come flaming beings that give eternal force.
(Red flames (Eurythmy) come in from all sides towards the middle, where they flame against each other. As they enflame Isis lifts up the child between the flames. The flames run out and Isis holds the child close to her. The flaming beings come back again towards the middle and Isis lifts up the child again between them. The flames move out again. The whole action repeats a third time. Music and song can accompany). (Suddenly Queen Astarte enters from the left).
- Astarte: (Screams) What are you doing? Stop! Let go of my child! You wicked witch. Do you want to damage my son?
(The flaming beings run out. It is pitch dark on the stage. From behind the stage cries of woe, O woe. Half light on the stage. Isis has put the child down below Astarte and stands by the oak tree.)
- Isis: Look, there is the child, take it back now Astarte. You have stopped me in the holy act. I wanted to give him eternal life through the God's purifying forces. Know that I am Isis, the sister of Osiris...(Astarte falls on the floor). In me you see the wisdom of the universal starry heavens, for I am she who was, who is and who will become.

No mortal being has lifted my veil.

Astarte: (Lying on the floor with only her head barely lifted) O woe! You great Isis, have mercy. I did not know what I did. I did not recognize you behind your veil. I did not understand your holy act. Fear lamed me. Be graceful. Take the child back to you and finish the holy act.

Isis: No, I may not. You prevented the Gods in their actions.

Astarte: But tell me what we can do? What do you suggest? We will give you whatever you want.

Isis: Then give me that mysterious tree that grows so powerfully here. Keep the tree and give me what is hidden in its boughs.

(Hills of Lorne - Violins)

Scene 3

(By the Nile. High reeds and palms. In the front of the stage stands the open coffin. Isis kneels bowing over one side of it.-) (Instrumental music and song....
improvisation from the background as three figures do eurythmy to words of the choir).

(Hills of Lorne - Violins)

Choir: (Not visible from behind the stage.)
O' Woe, Osiris, the light of the world is put out,
See his dead body in the coffin.
How will we find the strong source of life?
How will we find the lost light?

Isis: (As Isis speaks the three figures do softer eurythmy movements as Isis lifts her head and arms) Osiris, hear my call, Osiris come out of the dark house of death, Osiris, hear the wings of my spirit, lift yourself out of the darkness.

Choir: (From the background) Our hearts carry bitter sorrow.

Isis: Osiris, the morning sunshine is here, wake up.

(Marlow 2)

Seth: (Sticks out his head and half his body from the side) Now we must stop the forces of life. Soon Isis will awaken the dead Osiris. I will fool her away with a call. (Seth disappears and is heard from outside with a fake voice of a child): Come. Help me. I am drowning, help. I am sinking, help.

Isis: (Stands up) Who is shouting? Where? I am coming soon to help....
(Isis and the three mourning-dressed figures exit quickly) (Seth and three conspirators run in with axes – they wildly cut up the body in the coffin).

Seth: (While he is cutting): The great Isis shall never awaken life of the dead. We cut the body into fourteen pieces. Take the parts quickly for Isis is arriving..... And hide

them in the reeds over there. You take out the head. You take out the legs. I will take the chest, the rest you take...
(Almost totally dark, as Seth and his conspirators run out with parts of Osiris).

(Violin)

Isis: (Returns with the three mourning-dressed figures, more light appears) I sense danger..... what has happened? Osiris is gone,..... The coffin is empty, o woe...
(Isis bows over the empty coffin. Music and song from the background. The three mourning-dressed figures make movements, as Isis lies unable to move.)

Isis: (Stands up) Now I must search for him and find him. I sense it is Seth, his evil brother. Yet Seth shall not win. Osiris show me where you are to be found.

(Music ?)

(Isis leaves with her hands raised before her as in a trance. The three mourning-dressed figures follow).

Scene 4

(Asholen Farewell- Violins)

(Another place by the Nile. Pyramids, palms, reeds. In front and to the right a large stone).

Isis: (Entering slowly, carrying the Horus child in her arms, sits by the stone).
I have searched for many heavy days. Some parts of the dead Osiris I have found.
The evil Seth has cut him into pieces. I found his head first, - o bitter fate, cut to pieces, thrown into an unworthy place.....
I let his face be formed, sculptured with great artistic work, And it was buried where the head was found.
The people believe Osiris is resting in his grave, where they lay his portrait.....
And I have eight more pieces, a foot, a hand and the chest, what a torment.... And I have buried eight portraits of his godly body at each place where the parts are found.
And eight new graves show the people that they shall search in the kingdom of death..... But I must search further until I have buried all of the pieces.
O, you my child, my little Horus child, I gave birth to you during the long, sorrowful wandering, your father was dead as you first saw the light of day.
But you shall grow magnificently in his light.

(Isis lifts up the child, - at the same time the curtain opens to the side, and Osiris stands in strong light, music and song).

Osiris: Yes, Horus, you my child shall live forever,
You grow up as the splendor of the morning sun.
I shall protect you and give you strength
From the land beyond the dark gates of death.

(Asholen Farewell- Violins)

Scene 5

(The Veil of Destiny - Song)

(The grown Horus sits on the throne. Horusfalken over his head. To the left Lower-Egypt's priest, Oadsjit-hm-ntr, with the snake symbol,..... to the right Upper Egypt's priest, Nechbet-hm-ntr, with the falcon symbol). (Eventually a number of Court Members).

Horus: I have finally united the whole Kingdom of Egypt,
united wisely the lower with the upper,
and saved the people of Egypt from division and strife....
What does Oadsjit-hm-ntr bring to the Pharaoh?

Oadsjit-hm-ntr: We bring the Earth's hidden treasures of wisdom
From lands below the Nile delta,
From the SnakeGod to the new Sun.

Horus: And what gifts are from Nechbet-hm-ntr?

Nechbet-hm-ntr: We bring the heaven's wisdom of the stars
From the lands upper part, the sources of the Nile,
From the FalconGod to the new Sun.

Horus: And like my father Osiris, I unite the lower
with the upper, snake, falcon with Godlike
power of the Sun
and the heart of gold.....
But I am helpless, unless you my honored father, Osiris
Will give me your help from the kingdom of the heavens.

(Osiris appears in the background on a platform above the throne). (Eventually music).

Osiris: My son, what do you plan to do? Will you let Seth wander freely in the Kingdom?
Will you not fight the murderer of Osiris?

Horus: You challenge me to act Osiris! The dark Seth shall be driven out of the Kingdom I
shall conquer him so he can do no harm With his deceitful cunning.

Osiris: Blessed be Horus, you my son I send you my light of wisdom and all my strength

(The Veil of Destiny - Song)

Scene 6

(Music)

(At the Nile. High Reeds and palms. Eventually blue curtain). (Seth together with three darkly dressed, - equipped with spear and net).

Seth: We are gathered to fight against Heka-Horus,

The false ruler who has stolen the throne,
He maintains that he is the son of King Osiris,
But it is a lie, he is a sly mutineer,....
There he comes.

(Just then the three darkly dressed figures move to the left)

Stay together here, defend our rights.

Horus: (Appears from the right together with three light-filled figures- equipped with flaming swords)
To battle for light over darkness!
(Eurythmic movements- drums in the background.)

Horus: You are trapped in your own net.
Now you lie enwrapped.
You pathetic brother murderer, prince of darkness.

Seth: (Stretches spastically to come free)
Whispers:
I am still alive, you have not killed me,
Be proud for a while. But remember:
the higher you stand, the deeper you fall!

Horus: Take the prisoner to the AbydosPalace.
You shall be dragged in front of those you have hurt,
In front of Isis, the widow, queen mother, Goddess,
She sentences you to eternal imprisonment.

Seth: (Quietly to himself, as he is dragged away)
I can safely count on Isis' weak heart.

(Gavotte)

Scene 7

(Gavotte)

(The Throne at Abydos. Horus sits on the throne. Isis with a golden crown on her head sitting on her own throne to the left, Dsjoti (Thot-Hermes) with the Ibis-symbol and a papyrus roll to the right. Forward to the left Lower Egypt's priest, Oadsjit-hm-ntr, with snake symbol, in front of him right the High-Egyptian Priest, Nechbet-hm-ntr, with the falcon symbol. Horus Falcon above the throne in the middle. Possibly: Sign-carrier Kerasher and cup-bearer Panetchem and some of the Pharaoh's warriors).

Horus: The wretched murderer has been captured.
He sits powerlessly in prison.
Bring Seth in and lie him down below the throne.
(Seth is pulled in by one or more prison guards).

Seth: Mercy. Have mercy. Save my life. I beg you!

Horus: You whimper for mercy. Were you merciful?

You who cunningly took your brother's life.
You shamefully cut his body into pieces with an axe.
Now you await your sentence. It will be absolutely merciless.
(Turns to Nechbet-hm-ntr)
Wise Nechbet-hm-ntr, what is your sentence?

Nechbet-hm-ntr: The prisoner was trapped in his own net,
There he shall remain, in the darkness he loves so much.
In the mountain's deepest cave he belongs.

Horus: And you my honorable priest, Oadsjit-hm-ntr,
Who advises the Pharaoh, what do you say?

Oadsjit-hm-ntr: His tongue lies. His abandonment is the poison of a snake.
It is best to fill his cave with that which he loves.
He shall live with snakes and his spirit be filled with the
Same poison he spreads to others.

Horus: I have never heard more severe words.
This merciless sentence he brought upon himself
The priests have formulated it in words.
Therefore I remain silent. I leave the final sentence to my mother
You Isis, the star-filled wisdom of the universe,
How do you judge this pathetic murderer
Who killed King Osiris, your brother?

Seth: (Tries violently to wrestle off the guards, but remains caught in his net.
He manages to come a little closer to Isis and stretches towards her).
Isis, dear sister, remember our blood relationship,
Our common blood, from the same motherly womb.
I was born too early and in the wrong position,
But I am just as much your brother,
You would not do your brother harm?
O mercy, dear sister, remember our blood.

(All turn towards Isis, silence for a moment, then Isis stands and moves slowly from her throne towards Seth,
waves the guard away, frees Seth from the net, - Seth stands in astonishment).

Isis: I do not have the heart to judge you,
You were wrong, destruction and evil became your lot.
But we are of the same womb, that is true
You were born too early and in the wrong position,
But you are just as much my own brother,
You stem from Geb, as much as I do
And Nut, the magnificent heavenly mother
I cannot do anything against our mother.
I cannot do anything against my brother.
Go free, I cannot sentence you to anything else.

Seth: I am free. I am free. I must move quickly,
Before injustice captures me.

(Seth runs off to the right, as everyone remains stunned).

Horus: (Stands from the Throne and walks a few steps towards Isis).
What have you done my mother, unknowingly?

Have you lost all of your heavenly wisdom?
Now I tear off the golden crown from you.
Your head shall never again carry a crown that witnesses the light
of heavenly wisdom.

(Horus tears off her crown. She bows forward silently. Horus also bows forward holding her golden crown In his hand.– For a moment they all stand like statues, then they all speak except Isis, Horus and Dsjoti. Everyone speaks simultaneously, chaotically but divided into three groups.)

1. group: What did he do, against Isis, against his mother?
2. group: What shall we do, I have no idea?
3. group: Osiris return, darkness rules again.
(They all continue to talk at each other chaotically).

(Music?)

Dsjoti: (Steps forward to the middle of the stage. Everyone else
Step aside and remain silent).
Now, I can no longer remain silent.
The Gods named me Dsjoti, and my task is to always
Retain the words of wisdom
so they may be used in the right moments.
And that which no longer lives here
Must be retained as a picture,
A picture revealing to us that the most powerful
that once was
Now works secretly,
Behind the mysterious, dark veil.
(He takes out a crown that is formed as a cow head with
horns and walks towards Isis).
Isis I give you another crown,
A sign, a head of a cow with a horn.
You remain Isis, but in mourning.
For long periods of time you will live secretly
hidden behind a veil
Thus mankind will sense that you are
that which was and is and shall become,
A child shall be born of a pure woman.
In him shall live the Wisdom-filled Words of Light,
And Isis, - then you shall be redeemed.

Finale

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