

**FROM THE ORGAN LOFT**  
**THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE MAGIC FLUTE,**  
**FREEMASON SYMBOLS IN MOZART'S OPERA**  
ARTICLE BY THAIS CAMPOS, JANUARY, 2010

One of the most enigmatic operas of all times, Mozart's, *The Magic Flute*, is powerful and enchanting. However, at first sight, one may not notice its philosophical meaning. According to the biographer Otto Jahn, who wrote *The Life of Mozart* (Oxford University Press, 1882), Mozart belonged to a family related to Freemasons and became a Mason himself in 1784, only seven years before his death. The founder of a masonic lodge, Ignaz von Born, whom Mozart had a close relationship, was considered the greatest expert in Egyptian symbolism, which is widely studied among Freemasons.

This was probably the source of inspiration of Emanuel Schikanader's libretto, which Mozart transformed into the opera *The Magic Flute*, as it is filled with alchemical and astrological symbols that date back to ancient times.

### **Alchemical and Astrological Symbols in *The Magic Flute***

*The Magic Flute* can be divided into three parts that represent the three alchemical steps – blackening, whitening and reddening, which are the stages of purification of metals resulting in the philosopher's stone, a substance that transforms everything that it comes in contact with, into gold. Just as lead can be transformed into gold, the human soul can be purified through painful tests to have all imperfections burned away becoming a better, purer being. These three stages of purification of the soul can be found in Mozart's opera.

**Blackening** – it's the first alchemical stage of purification, when all impurities of the metal start to burn. In *The Magic Flute*, Monostatos enprisons Pamina representing the planet Saturn, which in astrology, is the planet associated with restriction and limitation, its purpose is to purify the soul through the restrictions of the physical world. Pamina imprisoned is a metaphor for the soul imprisoned in the material life.

**Whitening** – it's the second alchemical stage of purification governed by the moon. Tamino, Papageno and Pamina pass through the first obstacles, representing the alchemical process of purification.

**Reddening** – It's the last stage of purification, governed by the sun, when the alchemical wedding between substances takes place generating the philosopher's stone, the final product, the metal purified. In *The Magic Flute*, Tamino and Pamina [the masculine and feminine forces of nature present in all human beings, see "Kundalini"] are finally united, representing the alchemical wedding resulting in the philosopher's stone, or - the soul completely purified [the perfect Ashlar; the union of mortal and immortal in the Crown Chakra].

### **Masonic Symbols in Mozart's Opera – the Pyramids**

In esoteric knowledge, number three represents the three attributes of God: will, wisdom and intelligence, as everything in nature is a result of these three forces. In *The Magic Flute*, number three appears many times, not only in the pyramids but also in the three ladies that accompany

## FROM THE ORGAN LOFT

the Queen of the Night, representing the three states of matter. There are also three boys in Sarastro's kingdom representing the occult forces of nature, guiding the disciples through the process.

The pyramid is an important symbol in Masonry because it represents number three [side] and number four [base], since it has four sides. Number four is the number of matter, as all things in the physical world is a result of the four elements [Earth, Air, Water, Fire], so the pyramid is three and four at the same time, spiritual and physical world together. [A polyhedron is a pyramid if it has 3 or more triangular faces sharing a common vertex. The base of a pyramid may be any polygon. If the base is a triangle too, then the pyramid has four faces. This is the simplest polyhedron, also called a tetrahedron, from the Greek word "tetra", meaning "four". See: <http://www.mathematische-basteleien.de/pyramid.htm>]

### The Magic Flute and Pan's Syrinx

In the opera, the magic flute, made by Pamina's father in a mysterious night, allows Tamino and Pamina to surpass all obstacles. The flute represents the power of will dominating nature. Just as a flute player attempts to harmonize the musical notes in order to obtain a beautiful melody, one must harmonize instincts, emotions, intellect and heart in order to become worthy of heavens [a stone fit for the builders use]. This is why musical instruments appear in the myths of many different traditions, the kind of instrument depends on the elements of each culture – it can be a flute, a syrinx, a guitar, or a sitar, but they all have the same meaning.

The flute in Mozart's opera corresponds to Pan's syrinx of the Greek mythology. In the myth, the god Pan pursued the water nymph Syrinx, and her sisters transformed her into a reed so that she could escape from Pan. The reeds emitted a beautiful melody every time the wind blew through them, so Pan cut seven reeds and made a flute, the Pan's syrinx. The seven reeds are, according to occult philosophy, the seven steps that humans need to go through until they reach the peak of evolution.

### The Message Behind the Symbolism of The Magic Flute

Mozart's opera The Magic Flute hides a beautiful message. The whole story tells that one must go through many tests in order to reach the final destination, and those who know how to harmonize body, mind, and soul, and release themselves from the material world, will be successful in their journeys, just as the player harmonizes the musical notes and comes up with a beautiful song.

Read "Masonic Symbols" along with "The Great Architect and The Political Philosophy of Freemasonry" to learn more Masonic philosophy. Readers might also want to read "Alchemy in the Middle Ages" [and "Alchemy for Dummies"] for a detailed explanation about the alchemical practices.

EDITED FAITHFULLY AND FRATERNALLY BY,  
GREG "SUDS" SUDMEIER, M.M.

Sources:

*Jahn, Otto. The Life of Mozart, Oxford University Press, 1882*

## FROM THE ORGAN LOFT

*.Read more at Suite101: Mozart – The Philosophy of the Magic Flute: Freemason Symbols in Mozart's Operas - <http://philosophy.suite101.com/article.cfm/mozart--the-philosophy-of-the-magic-flute>*