

An Oedipus—The Untold Story  
A Ghostly Mythodrama in One Act  
a play by Armando Nascimento Rosa



with a Foreword by Susan Rowland and  
Essays by Christine Downing and Marvin Carlson

# AN OEDIPUS—THE UNTOLD STORY

*A Ghostly Mythodrama in One Act*

Armando Nascimento Rosa

Translated from the Portuguese by LUIS TOLEDO

Revised and edited by MICHAEL MENDIS

in collaboration with the author

*With a Foreword by*

SUSAN ROWLAND

*and Essays by*

CHRISTINE DOWNING *and* MARVIN CARLSON



Spring Journal Books  
New Orleans, Louisiana

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Published by  
Spring Journal, Inc.  
627 Ursulines Street #7  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70116  
Tel.: (504) 524-5117  
Fax: (504) 558-0088  
Website: [www.springjournalandbooks.com](http://www.springjournalandbooks.com)

Printed in Canada  
Text printed on acidfree paper

Cover design by  
Northern Cartographic  
4050 Williston Road  
South Burlington, Vermont 05403

Library in Congress Cataloging in Publication Data  
Pending

# AN OEDIPUS —THE UNTOLD STORY

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*JOCASTA: What shall man fear, if he is subject to the laws of  
chance and nothing can be foreseen with any clarity?*

SOPHOCLES, *Oedipus Rex*

*OEDIPUS: Evil cannot be cured by ignorance.*

SENECA, *Oedipus*

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ORIGINAL CAST  
of the World Premiere  
of the English version of  
*An Oedipus — The Untold Story*

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DIRECTOR: PIPPA GUARD

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TIRESIAS: KATE DRAKEFORD, KEITH PARKER LARKIN

JOCASTA: HELENA EDWARDS, VICKY PUTTOCK, TABATHA SMITH

CHRYSSIPUS: DES REGAN

PELOPS: TIRESIUS

MANTO: RUBY RAJINDERPAL

OEDIPUS: BOBBIE YARWOOD

LAIUS: TIRESIUS

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To be performed  
at the University of Greenwich, UK  
at  
"Psyche and Imagination"  
A Multidisciplinary Academic Conference of  
Jungian and Post-Jungian Studies  
July 6-9, 2006

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

**TIRESIAS:** a blind shaman

**JOCASTA:** ghost of the queen of Thebes

**CHRYSIPPUS:** ghost of the son of Pelops

**PELOPS:** presence of Chrysippus's father, which speaks  
through Tiresias

**MANTO:** daughter of Tiresias

**OEDIPUS:** blind wanderer, deposed king of Thebes and son of  
Laius

**LAIUS:** ghost of Oedipus's father, which takes possession  
of the body of Tiresias

# Manto's Song

(To be sung as an incantation, in the manner of a vocalise)

Armando Nascimento Rosa \*

*Legato*

(♩ = 66)

The musical score is written on seven staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo marking 'Legato' is above the staff, and '(♩ = 66)' is below it. The first staff contains a whole rest, followed by a quarter note D, a half note E, a quarter note F#, and a half note G. The second staff starts with a quarter note A, a quarter note B, a quarter note C, a quarter note D, a quarter note E, a quarter note F#, and a half note G. The third staff begins with a quarter note A, a quarter note B, a quarter note C, a quarter note D, a quarter note E, a quarter note F#, and a half note G. The fourth staff starts with a quarter note A, a quarter note B, a quarter note C, a quarter note D, a quarter note E, a quarter note F#, and a half note G. The fifth staff begins with a quarter note A, a quarter note B, a quarter note C, a quarter note D, a quarter note E, a quarter note F#, and a half note G. The sixth staff starts with a quarter note A, a quarter note B, a quarter note C, a quarter note D, a quarter note E, a quarter note F#, and a half note G. The seventh staff begins with a quarter note A, a quarter note B, a quarter note C, a quarter note D, a quarter note E, a quarter note F#, and a half note G. The score includes various tempo markings: 'rit.' (ritardando) and 'a tempo' (return to tempo). The key signature changes to two sharps (F# and C#) in the second staff and remains there for the rest of the piece. The score ends with a double bar line.

\*Transcribed by Paulo Jorge Pires and revised by Michael Mendis



*We hear Manto's Song [see facing page] sung by the eponymous songster herself, who is the daughter of Tiresias. She sings ever more softly, her voice mingling with Oedipus's monologue, as he appears on stage, blind and without a guide.*

### OEDIPUS:

In the blind night I search for Tiresias. Now that I am as he is, I must open my inner eyes. But I haven't done so yet. I haven't reached soul's knowledge. I am at war with myself. I mutilated myself in vengeance. And I took revenge upon my eyes when they saw Jocasta hanging at the foot of the bed. I am dead, yet still living, and my world is now a prison made up of sounds. I search for the melody within them, but I cannot find it. I don't know how to listen to it. Just like the Gibraltar whales, led astray by Iberian ships, I am cast adrift in the ocean. I'm on the rocks, ready to die. But death flees from my body. I left my throne. I blinded myself so as to throw off the mantle of tyranny. But now, life's tyranny follows me, present in the screams of the living. The world is at war, even as I am at war with myself. My sons slay each other in the field of battle. My sons—they are my brothers, too! It is accursed—this generation of mortal beings, born with crime in its veins. And I, who wanted to escape from that cycle of death, never to have power over my equals again! But the power passes on into less worthy hands than mine. My blindness opened the way for Creon to seize the throne. If only I knew the origin of the evil that besets Thebes! Yet evil is a gift, poisoned by the envy of the gods. The wild Sphinx lives in every one of us. I need to find Tiresias so he can make her speak, so he can destroy her. I left Antigone composing dithyrambs in Hipnos's tavern. She didn't even notice I'd gone. I dare to walk alone among the crags. And my dead eyes will lead me either into a bottomless pit or to the mirage of light. Maybe they are one and the same thing. *(He exits, tottering in his blindness).*

*Manto hums her song as she walks, looking up at the skies as if she were an astronomer. Jocasta goes towards her.*



JOCASTA:

So, young maiden, what do the skies hold for you?

MANTO:

I am following the trail of the birds flying south. My father taught me to read their flight—for him they were words written by Zeus's hand.

JOCASTA:

You talk of him in the past tense. Has he gone, then, to Hades?

MANTO:

Oh no, he's still alive. Only his eyes are dead. But look! (*Points up at the sky, worried.*) Something's not right. It looks like his time is nigh.

JOCASTA:

Is that what the birds are telling you?

MANTO:

(*looking away from the sky*) No, I will not read any more. I must be wrong. I never did understand the language of the birds. But I'd like to fly away with them to the warmer climes in the south.

JOCASTA:

Our Greek sun isn't warm enough?

MANTO:

Not enough to keep *me* warm. (*Shivers.*) And since you got here, it's become colder.

JOCASTA:

That's because we're high up. A maiden should not hide away like this, up in the mountains, far from the devouring eyes of young swains. Only Eros can bring some fire into our lives.

MANTO:

Well, Dionysus makes the heart drunk, too.

JOCASTA:

I can see you worship that dangerous yet fascinating god.

MANTO:

I wish it were so, my lady. That which I'm fit for I do not want, and what I want I cannot do.

JOCASTA:

I don't understand.

MANTO:

Men were forbidden from the Bacchic rites, so now they refuse to allow women into the masked plays. I despise those processions of hysterical women. What I love is Dionysus's mind, which men guard on the stage just for themselves.

JOCASTA:

I see you have a passion for the theater.

MANTO:

An unconsummated passion.

JOCASTA:

Who knows? I may be able to do something for you .... But don't expect too much. I'm just a poor woman who has forgotten her way home. Only Tiresias can help me get back. Where is your father?

MANTO:

Over there, behind those trees. He meditates in solitude. My father gets annoyed if he is interrupted. Tell him I saw you crying in despair. Maybe that will move him.

JOCASTA:

I'll do that. I won't forget what you've done for me.

MANTO:

So what is your name?