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Inferno: From The Divine Comedy



Synopsis

"Abandon all hope you who enter here." ("Lasciate ogne speranza voi ch'intrate.") Dante's Hell is one of the most remarkable visions in Western literature. An allegory for his and future ages, it is, at the same time, an account of terrifying realism. Passing under a lintel emblazoned with these frightening words, the poet is led down into the depths by Virgil and shown those doomed to suffer eternal torment for vices exhibited and sins committed on earth. Inferno is the first part of the long journey which continues through redemption to revelation - through Purgatory and Paradise - and, in this translation, prepared especially for the audiobook, his images are as vivid as when the poem was first written in the early years of the 14th century.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 4 hours and 10 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Naxos AudioBooks

Audible.com Release Date: August 18, 2011

Language: English

ASIN: B005HV1MG8

Best Sellers Rank: #22 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature > Poetry #136

in Books > Literature & Fiction > Poetry > Ancient, Classical & Medieval #386 in Books >

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Customer Reviews

this was the smaller version and he wanted the 14CD. I gave it my brother as they enjoy his books very much. They said it was great as were all the others. Paul Michael is one of the best readers

I have the entire set of this reading of THE DIVINE COMEDY, and I am extremely impressed. I was dubious, at first, as I had never heard of the translator, Benedict Flynn, and so I compared the text to that of the Durling/Martinez volume from Oxford and the Hollander volume from Doubleday. I was impressed. This is an excellent translation, smooth and poetic. I have a slight prejudice in that I prefer British voices in poetic readings, and thus I am very pleased with Heathcote Williams' fine performance of the text. He dramatizes the text with certain vocal inflections, but he does so in a way that does not, for me, distract from the actual beauty of Dante's poetry. I like his soft and at time

breathy vocal tones, which add a subtle emotionalism to much of the text. The booklet that accompanies the discs is fabulous. An opening Note by Roger Marsh is followed by Notes discussing aspects of the text, thus: "CANTO III The Poets arrive at the door of Hell and pass through to the antechamber. Within are shades who achieved neither praise nor blame in life, rejected by Heaven and Hell. Charon, who ferries the souls of the damned to Hades, refuses to ferry the living souls across the Acheron. Dante falls unconscious. good of intellect: souls who lost sight of the 'Supreme Truth' of God. great refusal: either Pontius Pilate or Celestine V who abdicated in favour of Boniface VIII." The booklet is infused with a gallery of the majestic Gustave Dore illustrations for THE DIVINE COMEDY. I love this audio set and highly recommend it.

In a midlife crisis, Dante describes the first of three parts of a journey. With Virgil as his guide, travels the circles of hell and interviews the sinners—many of whom are still in a state of torture and denial—until he finally passes through to Purgatory. I often try to match up recordings (read aloud through Audible.com) and the same translation on Kindle. Sometimes I do this for me and it—Whispersync. In this case, I tried several combinations and couldn't get it quite right. When I came across Heathcote Williams as narrator and the Benedict Flynn translation, I could not find the Kindle match-up. But because, Williams is such a good reader, I followed along with a different translation (Charles Eliot Norton in the GBWW by Britannica). I like to read and listen together, and I prefer the readability of this translation to Longfellow's. I recommend this translation for its readability. I also like Dorothy Sayers' rendition in English verse, and John Sinclair's prose version. Jean and Robert Hollander have a verse translation without rhyme.

Heathcote Williams' reading is outstanding and truly amazing. He creates and keeps straight dozens of unique voices. It brings the Inferno to life in a way you could never get from the written page alone. (You might also like Anton Lesser's reading of Paradise Lost, from Naxos.)

I had trouble with some of Dante's English translations of the book when I was reading them. And some parts were hard to understand. But this audio book is the absolute best I have heard. I can easily understand and the special effects of the people in hell talking and the demons are wonderful. At the beginning of each canto there is a musical theme that sets the person in the mood before the canto starts. Heathcote Williams' voice is a delight to hear because it is so articulate and scholastic. Wonderful audio book of The Divine Comedy who want to bring the book alive and suspenseful. At times I was very emotionally affected by the certain sinners in hell and how they suffered. I myself

am a Catholic(which Dante was a devout Catholic), and I could see where some people would disagree with parts of the book (In the Inferno if you are not baptized you have no chance to go to heaven according to Dante, but the unbaptized don't suffer the way worse sinners would). But at the same time it shows the importance of Baptism, which some Christians today seem to ignore and just take as a "symbol". Either way for Christians and non-Christians alike this audio book is wonderful.

I'm no Dante expert, but I've always wanted to experience The Divine Comedy. I enjoyed both the poem and the performance, but can't comment on the accuracy of the translation. For that, you will have to check other reviews. I will definitely listen to 'The Inferno' and, probably, 'Paradise'.

There are many positives to this product; good transitions between cantos, clear articulation, and excellent liner notes. For me though, there is one huge negative that outweighs them. When the reader takes the role of the cast of tormented souls, he yells. The difference in volume between the narrator and these characters is so great that I have to keep adjusting the volume. And being damned creatures, the yelling is very harsh and guttural. Constant volume adjustments while driving is not enjoyable. I have stopped listening and am looking for another version to continue.

This story is a very moving, very disturbing story. But worth hearing (or reading). The audio version is nice since you don't have to struggle with the names, etc. This rendition is good.

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