

ORCHESTRA NASHVILLE

A Celebration of the Human Spirit

Paul Gambill, conductor

Orchestra Nashville Gospel Choir, comprised of the gospel choirs *Princely Players*, *Overture* and *Pearls of Joy*

Abby Burke, soprano

Anne Holt, narrator (9/10)

Deborah Roberts, narrator (9/11)

Odessa Settles, soprano

Todd Suttle, baritone

Marietta Simpson, mezzo-soprano

Christian Teal, violin

Pierre Womble, tenor

Nathan Young, tenor

INTRODUCTION

Paul Gambill

Rain sticks

from back of hall to front

Ishay Oluwa (Yoruba chant: *What God has created, let no man destroy*)

Odessa Settles, a cappella solo with talking drum

Swing Low Sweet Chariot/Swing Down Chariot

Odessa Settles, begins a cappella solo, add choir and orchestra

Precious Lord

Hammond organ solo, narrator begins over music . . .

NARRATOR (*The Dead of September 11*, by Toni Morrison) Some have God's words: others have songs of comfort for the bereaved. If I can pluck courage here, I would like to speak directly to the dead- the September dead. Those children of ancestors born in every continent on the planet; Asia, Europe, Africa, the Americas...; born of ancestors who wore kilts, obis, saris, geles, wide straw hats, yarmulkes, goatskin, wooden shoes, feathers and cloths to cover their hair.

Percious Lord – conclusion

Nathan Young

Do Lord, Oh Do Lord

a cappella gospel choir

NARRATOR But I would not say a word until I could set aside all I know or believe about nations, war, leaders, the governed and ungovernable; all I suspect about armor and entrails. First I would freshen my tongue, abandon sentences crafted to know evil-wanton or studied; explosive or quietly sinister; whether born of a sated appetite or hunger; of vengeance or the simple compulsion to stand up before falling down.

Give Me A Clean Heart

gospel choir and orchestra

Instrumental verse of *Give Me Clean Heart* while narrator continues . . .

NARRATOR I would purge my language of hyperbole; of its eagerness to analyze the levels of wickedness; ranking them; calculating their higher or lower status among others of its kind. Speaking to the broken and the dead is too difficult for a mouth full of blood. Too holy an act for impure thoughts. Because the dead are free, absolute; they cannot be seduced by blitz. – 00:30

Give Me A Clean Heart - conclusion

gospel choir and orchestra

NARRATOR To speak to you, the dead of September, I must not claim false intimacy or summon an overheated heart glazed just in time for a camera. I must be steady and I must be clear, knowing all the time that I have nothing to say—no words stronger than the steel that pressed you into itself; no scripture older or more elegant than the ancient atoms you have become.

Endymion's Sleep

by J. Mark Scarce, orchestra only

NARRATOR And I have nothing to give either—except this gesture, this thread thrown between your humanity and mine: *I want to hold you in my arms* and as your soul got shot of its box of flesh to understand, as you have done, the wit of eternity: its gift of unhinged release tearing through the darkness of its knell.

Oh, Had I A Golden Thread

Abby Burke, gospel choir and orchestra

How Can I Keep From Singing

Todd Suttles, gospel choir and orchestra

Stand By Me

Shirley Settles & Sarah Suttles, gospel choir and orchestra

I Need You, You Need Me

Pierre Womble, gospel choir and orchestra

INTERMISSION

*This Thread **

by J. Mark Scarce

Marietta Simpson, mezzo-soprano

Christian Teal, violin

Text by Toni Morrison, *The Dead of September 11*

*** Orchestra Nashville commission and world premiere**

J. Mark Scarce was the Orchestra Nashville's Composer-in-residence in 2002-2005.

At the time of this performance, Orchestra Nashville was known as the Nashville Chamber Orchestra