

MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP AND MUSIC ENSEMBLE

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 8, 2016 | 7:30PM

Performing Arts Center's Patti Strickel Harrison Theatre

Part of Engagement: Symposium of Philosophy and Dance



MARK MORRIS



DANCE GROUP

A UNIVERSITY ARTS EVENT

-WELCOME-

As Dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication at Texas State, welcome to tonight's performance of the Mark Morris Dance Group and Music Ensemble. For over thirty-five years the Mark Morris Dance Group and Music Ensemble have stood at the forefront of dance, earning international acclaim as one of the premiere dance groups, enriching and extending the form of modern American dance. It is an honor and privilege to host them here at Texas State University, to share their artistry with you, our audience.

Securing a commitment from the Mark Morris Dance Group to perform on campus served as the inspiration for the creation of this three-day symposium, this blend of academic exploration and artistic expression. While MMDG was the inspiration, we are pleased that the Erick Hawkins Dance Company and ARCOS Dance Company are also sharing their talents, offering us a total of three nights of modern dance performance that extends the conversation of the three days of academic discourse. By bridging the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Fine Arts and Communication, "Engagement: Symposium of Philosophy and Dance" embodies the dynamic interchange between modes of expressing and communicating the human experience.

My deepest gratitude to the University Arts committee, the Student Service Fee Committee, Equity and Access Committee, as well as the respective Colleges who provided the funding to make tonight's performance possible. Likewise, thank you to Dr. Rebecca Farinas for being the driving force in organizing this three-day symposium.

Finally, to all our symposium attendees, guest artists, and audience at-large, welcome to the Patti Strickel Harrison Theatre and Texas State University. May your time here be illuminating and enriching.

John Fleming, Dean
College of Fine Arts and Communication

**ENGAGEMENT: SYMPOSIUM OF
PHILOSOPHY AND DANCE
AND
TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
PRESENT**

Mark Morris Dance Group

CHELSEA ACREE SAM BLACK DURELL R. COMEDY
RITA DONAHUE DOMINGO ESTRADA, JR. LESLEY GARRISON
LAUREN GRANT BRIAN LAWSON AARON LOUX LAUREL LYNCH
STACY MARTORANA DALLAS McMURRAY BRANDON RANDOLPH
NICOLE SABELLA BILLY SMITH NOAH VINSON
JENN WEDDEL MICHELLE YARD

MMDG Music Ensemble

ZACH FINKELSTEIN COLIN FOWLER
ALEXANDER SCHEIRLE GEORGY VALTCHEV

MARK MORRIS **Artistic Director**

NANCY UMANOFF **Executive Director**

PROGRAM

PACIFIC

Music: Lou Harrison, *Trio for violin, cello, and piano; 3rd and 4th movements*

Costume Design: Martin Pakledinaz

Lighting Design: James F. Ingalls

Georgy Valtchev, *violin* | Alexander Scheirle, *cello* | Colin Fowler, *piano*

Domingo Estrada, Jr., Lesley Garrison, Lauren Grant, Aaron Loux, Laurel Lynch,
Stacy Martorana, Dallas McMurray, Nicole Sabella, Noah Vinson

Premiere: May 9, 1995 San Francisco Ballet,

War Memorial Opera House, San Francisco, California

Company Premiere: February 28, 2015

George Mason University's Center for the Arts, Fairfax, Virginia

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GRAND DUO

Music: Lou Harrison, *Grand Duo for Violin and Piano*

Costume Design: Susan Ruddle

Lighting Design: Michael Chybowski

Prelude

Stampede

A Round

Polka

Georgy Valtchev, *violin* | Colin Fowler, *piano*

Sam Black, Rita Donahue, Domingo Estrada, Jr., Lesley Garrison, Lauren Grant,
Brian Lawson, Aaron Loux, Laurel Lynch, Stacy Martorana, Dallas McMurray,
Billy Smith, Brandon Randolph, Noah Vinson, Michelle Yard

Premiere: February 16, 1993

Fine Arts Center, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts

-INTERMISSION-

SOCRATES

Music: Erik Satie – *Socrate* – “Portrait de Socrate;” “Bords de L’Ilissus;”
“Mort de Socrate”

Costume Design: Martin Pakledinaz

Lighting Design and Décor: Michael Chybowski

- I. Portrait of Socrates
- II. On the banks of the Ilissus
- III. Death of Socrates

Zach Finkelstein, *tenor* | Colin Fowler, *piano*

Sam Black, Rita Donahue, Domingo Estrada, Jr., Lesley Garrison, Lauren Grant,
Brian Lawson, Aaron Loux, Laurel Lynch, Stacy Martorana, Dallas McMurray,
Brandon Randolph, Nicole Sabella, Billy Smith, Noah Vinson, Michelle Yard

Premiere: February 23, 2010
Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn, New York

-END OF PROGRAM-

ABOUT MARK MORRIS

MARK MORRIS was born on August 29, 1956, in Seattle, Washington, where he studied with Verla Flowers and Perry Brunson. In the early years of his career, he performed with the companies of Lar Lubovitch, Hannah Kahn, Laura Dean, Eliot Feld, and the Koleda Balkan Dance Ensemble. He formed the Mark Morris Dance Group (MMDG) in 1980, and has since created close to 150 works for the company. From 1988 to 1991, he was Director of Dance at Brussels' Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, the national opera house of Belgium. In 1990, he founded the White Oak Dance Project with Mikhail Baryshnikov. Much in demand as a ballet choreographer, Morris has created twenty ballets since 1986 and his work has been performed by companies worldwide, including San Francisco Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Genève, and the Royal New Zealand Ballet. Noted for his musicality, Morris has been described as "undeviating in his devotion to music" (*The New Yorker*). He began conducting performances for MMDG in 2006 and has since conducted at Tanglewood Music Center, Lincoln Center, and BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music). He served as Music Director for the 2013 Ojai Music Festival. He also works extensively in opera, directing and choreographing productions for the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, English National Opera, and The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, among others. He was named a Fellow of the MacArthur Foundation in 1991 and has received eleven honorary doctorates to date. He has taught at the University of Washington, Princeton University, and Tanglewood Music Center. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society, and has served as an Advisory Board Member for the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative. Morris has received the Samuel H. Scripps/American Dance Festival Award for Lifetime Achievement, the Leonard Bernstein Lifetime Achievement Award for the Elevation of Music in Society, the Benjamin Franklin Laureate Prize for Creativity, the International Society for the Performing Arts' Distinguished Artist Award, Cal Performances Award of Distinction in the Performing Arts, the Orchestra of St. Luke's Gift of Music Award, and the 2016 Doris Duke Artist Award. In 2015, Mark Morris was inducted into the Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney Hall of Fame at the National Museum of Dance in Saratoga Springs, New York. Morris opened the Mark Morris Dance Center in Brooklyn, New York, in 2001 to provide a home for his company, rehearsal space for the dance community, outreach programs for children and seniors, and a school offering dance classes to students of all ages and abilities.

The **MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP** was formed in 1980 and gave its first performance that year in New York City. The company's touring schedule steadily expanded to include cities in the United States and around the world, and in 1986 it made its first national television program for the PBS series *Dance in America*. In 1988, MMDG was invited to become the national dance company of Belgium, and spent three years in residence at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels. The Dance Group returned to the United States in 1991 as one of the world's leading dance companies. Based in Brooklyn,

New York, MMDG maintains strong ties to presenters in several cities around the world, most notably to its West Coast home, Cal Performances in Berkeley, California, and its Midwest home, the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. MMDG also appears regularly in New York, Boston, Seattle, and Fairfax. In New York, the company has performed at New York City Center's Fall for Dance Festival, regularly performs at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts' Mostly Mozart and White Light Festivals, and collaborates yearly with Brooklyn Academy of Music on performances and master classes. From the company's many London seasons, it has received two Laurence Olivier Awards and a Critics' Circle Dance Award for Best Foreign Dance Company. Reflecting Morris' commitment to live music, the Dance Group has featured live musicians in every performance since the formation of the MMDG Music Ensemble in 1996. MMDG regularly collaborates with renowned musicians, including cellist Yo-Yo Ma, pianist Emanuel Ax, mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe, and jazz trio The Bad Plus, as well as leading orchestras and opera companies, including the Metropolitan Opera, English National Opera, and the London Symphony Orchestra. MMDG frequently works with distinguished artists and designers, including painters Howard Hodgkin and Robert Bordo, set designers Adrienne Lobel and Allen Moyer, costume designers Martin Pakledinaz and Isaac Mizrahi, and many others. MMDG's film and television projects include *Dido and Aeneas*, *The Hard Nut*, *Falling Down Stairs*, two documentaries for the U.K.'s South Bank Show, and PBS' Live from Lincoln Center. In 2015 Morris' signature work *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* had its national television premiere on PBS' Great Performances. While on tour the Dance Group partners with local cultural institutions and community organizations to present Access/MMDG, a program of arts and humanities-based activities for people of all ages and abilities.

The **MMDG MUSIC ENSEMBLE**, formed in 1996, is integral to the Dance Group. "With the dancers come the musicians...and what a difference it makes" (*Classical Voice of North Carolina*). This core group of accomplished musicians, led by music director Colin Fowler, tours as everything from a duet to a full orchestra, with vocalists and without, determined by the music in the works being performed in the program at each venue. The Ensemble's repertory ranges from 17th century works by John Wilson and Henry Purcell to more recent scores by Lou Harrison and Henry Cowell. The musicians also participate in Access/MMDG – the Dance Group's educational and community programming at home and on the road.

BIOGRAPHIES



MATTHEW ROSE (rehearsal director) began his dance training in Midland, Michigan, with Linda Z. Smith at the age of 17. After receiving his B.F.A. in dance from the University of Michigan in 1992, he moved to New York City. He was a soloist with the Martha Graham Dance Company from 1993-1996, and in 1997 began working with MMDG. After several years of performing full-time with the Dance Group, he began assisting Morris with the creation of new works. He has been the company's rehearsal director since 2006.



COLIN FOWLER (music director, piano) began his musical study at the age of 5 in Kansas City and went on to study at the prestigious Interlochen Arts Academy. He continued his education at The Juilliard School, where he received his Bachelor of Music in 2003 and his Master of Music in 2005. While at Juilliard, he studied piano with Abbey Simon, organ with Gerre Hancock and Paul Jacobs, harpsichord with Lionel Party, and conducting with James dePriest and Judith Clurman. A versatile musician and conductor, Fowler works in many areas of the music scene in New York City. He is a veteran of numerous Broadway shows, most recently performing in the Tony Award winning musical *Jersey Boys*. A seasoned church musician, Fowler is currently the organist at Marble Collegiate Church on Fifth Avenue and also leads services and concerts at Park Avenue Synagogue, where he has served as Music Director since 2012. As a classical soloist and collaborative artist, he has performed and recorded with many world renowned musicians and ensembles, including Deborah Voigt and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He began to collaborate with the Mark Morris Dance Group in 2005 and has since then performed over 40 pieces with the company on almost every keyboard instrument possible, including the harmonium and toy piano, and has conducted performances of *Mozart Dances*, *Acis and Galatea*, and *The Hard Nut*. Hailed by the *New York Times* as 'invaluable' and 'central to Morris' music', he was appointed music director in 2013.



CHELSEA ACREE grew up in Baltimore, Maryland, where she began her dance training with Sharon Lerner, then continued at Carver Center for the Arts and Technology. Since receiving her B.F.A. in dance from Purchase College in 2005 she has had the opportunity to work with a variety of artists including SYREN Modern Dance, Laura Peterson, Hilary Easton + Company, and Michael and the Go-Getters. Acree is on the faculty at The School at the Mark Morris Dance Center, where she teaches kids and adults how to move through space. She began working with MMDG in 2007 and joined the company in 2011.



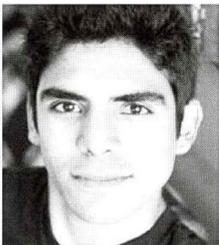
SAM BLACK is originally from Berkeley, California, where he began studying tap at the age of nine with Katie Maltzberger. He received his B.F.A. in dance from SUNY Purchase, and currently teaches MMDG master classes and Dance for PD®. He first appeared with MMDG in 2005 and became a company member in 2007.



DURELL R. COMEDY, a native of Prince Georges County, Maryland, began dancing at the age of 6 with Spirit Wings Dance Company. He graduated from the Visual & Performing Arts program of Suitland High School in 2004 and magna cum laude from George Mason University, receiving his B.F.A. in dance performance in 2008. Since then, he's worked and performed with The Metropolitan Opera, Troy Powell, and Kyle Abraham, among others. Comedy was a member of the Limón Dance Company from 2009-2015, performing principal and soloist roles. He's also appeared as a soloist dancer in Baltimore Opera Company's *Aida* and worked with Washington National Opera from 2013-2014 as a principal dancer and dance captain. He was a former fellowship student at the Ailey School and a 2014 adjunct faculty member at George Mason University's School of Dance. Comedy joined MMDG as an apprentice in 2015 and became a company member in 2016.



RITA DONAHUE was born and raised in Fairfax, Virginia, and attended George Mason University. She graduated magna cum laude in 2002, receiving a B.A. in English and a B.F.A. in dance. Donahue danced with bopi's black sheep/ dances by kraigpatterson and joined MMDG in 2003.



DOMINGO ESTRADA, JR., a native of Victoria, Texas, studied martial arts and earned his black belt in 1994. He danced ballet folklorico through his church for 11 years. Estrada earned his B.F.A. in ballet and modern dance from Texas Christian University and had the honor of working with the late Fernando Bujones. During his undergraduate studies he attended the American Dance Festival where he had the privilege of performing *Skylight*, a classic work by choreographer Laura Dean. He debuted with MMDG in 2007 and became a company member in 2009. Estrada would like to thank God, his family, and all who support his passion.

BIOGRAPHIES



ZACH FINKELSTEIN (tenor), has quickly established himself as a leading soloist in North America and abroad, from Koerner Hall to Lincoln Center to London's Sadler's Wells to the National Arts Center in Beijing, China. The "compelling tenor" (New York Times) is known for his "refined" and "elegant" (Vancouver Observer) interpretation of Bach, Mozart and Handel, performing as a soloist with the Seattle Symphony, Nova Scotia Symphony, Victoria Symphony, Toronto Mendelsohn Choir, Mark Morris Dance Group, Early Music Vancouver, Music of the Baroque, the Pacific

Musicworks, Philharmonia Baroque, and the Handel and Haydn Society. Finkelstein is with Dean Artists Management.



LESLEY GARRISON grew up in Swansea, Illinois, and received her early dance training at the Center of Creative Arts in St. Louis, Missouri, and Interlochen Arts Academy in Interlochen, Michigan. She studied at the Rotterdamse Dansacademie in The Netherlands and holds a B.F.A. from Purchase College. She first performed with MMDG in 2007 and became a company member in 2011. Garrison teaches at The School at the Mark Morris Dance Center and for MMDG's Dance for PD® program.



LAUREN GRANT has danced with MMDG since 1996, appearing in nearly 60 of Mark Morris' works. She is on the faculty at The School at the Mark Morris Dance Center, leads master classes around the globe, sets Mr. Morris' work at universities, and frequently leads classes for the dance group. Grant received a 2015 New York Dance and Performance Award ("Bessie") for her sustained achievement in performance with Mark Morris and in recognition of her "invigorating spontaneity, expansive phrasing, and robust musicality." Grant has been featured in *Time Out New York*, *Dance Magazine*, the book *Meet the Dancers*, appeared in PBS's *Great Performances*, *Live From Lincoln Center* and ITV's *The South Bank Show* and was a subject for the photographer Annie Leibovitz. Before joining MMDG, Grant moved to New York City from her hometown of Highland Park, Illinois, and earned a B.F.A. from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. She is currently pursuing her M.F.A. at Montclair State University. She and her husband David Leventhal (former MMDG dancer and current Dance for PD® Program Director) are proud parents of son Zev, born in 2012.



BRIAN LAWSON began his dance training in Toronto at Canadian Children's Dance Theatre. There he worked with choreographers such as David Earle, Carol Anderson, and Michael Trent. Lawson spent a year studying at the Rotterdamse Dansacademie in The Netherlands and graduated summa cum laude in 2010 from Purchase College, where he was also granted the President's Award for his contributions to the dance program. Lawson has had the pleasure of performing with Pam Tanowitz Dance, Dance Heginbotham, and Nelly van Bommel's NØA Dance, among others. He joined MMDG as an apprentice in 2011 and became a company member in 2013.



AARON LOUX grew up in Seattle, Washington, and began dancing at the Creative Dance Center as a member of Kaleidoscope, a youth modern dance company. He began his classical training at the Cornish College Preparatory Dance Program and received his B.F.A. from The Juilliard School in 2009. He danced at The Metropolitan Opera and with Arc Dance Company before joining MMDG in 2010.



LAUREL LYNCH began her dance training at Petaluma School of Ballet in California. She moved to New York to attend The Juilliard School where she performed works by Robert Battle, Margie Gillis, José Limón, and Ohad Naharin. After graduation Lynch danced for Dušan Týnek Dance Theatre, Sue Bernhard Danceworks, and Pat Catterson. Lynch joined MMDG as an apprentice in 2006 and became a company member in 2007. Many thanks to Gene and Becky.

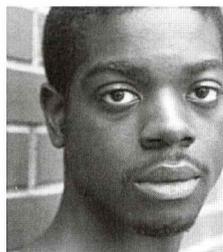


STACY MARTORANA began her dance training in Baltimore, Maryland, at the Peabody Conservatory. In 2006 she graduated from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts with a B.F.A. in contemporary dance. She has danced with the Amy Marshall Dance Company, the Neta Dance Company, Helen Simoneau Danse, Kazuko Hirabayashi Dance Theater, Daniel Gwirtzman Dance Company, and Rashaun Mitchell. From 2009-2011 she was a member of the Repertory Understudy Group for the Merce Cunningham Dance Company. She joined MMDG in 2012.

BIOGRAPHIES



DALLAS MCMURRAY, from El Cerrito, California, began dancing at age four, studying jazz, tap, and acrobatics with Katie Maltsberger and ballet with Yukiko Sakakura. He received a B.F.A. in dance from the California Institute of the Arts. McMurray performed with the Limón Dance Company in addition to works by Jiří Kylián, Alonzo King, Robert Moses, and Colin Connor. McMurray performed with MMDG as an apprentice in 2006 and became a company member in 2007.



BRANDON RANDOLPH began his training with the School of Carolina Ballet Theater in Greenville, South Carolina, under the direction of Hernan Justo. At age 14, he was accepted into the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities, where he studied with Stanislav Issaev and Bobby Barnett. Randolph received his B.F.A. in dance from Purchase College in 2012. There he had the opportunity to perform with Dance Heginbotham as well as repertory by Stephen Petronio, Lar Lubovitch, Paul Taylor, and George Balanchine. Randolph began working with MMDG in 2013 and became a company member in 2014.



NICOLE SABELLA is originally from Clearwater, Florida, where she studied at the Academy of Ballet Arts and the Pinellas County Center for the Arts at Gibbs High School under Suzanne B. Pomerantzeff. In 2009, She graduated from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, PA, earning her B.F.A. in modern dance performance and the "Outstanding Performance in Modern Dance" Award. She was a performer with Zane Booker's Smoke, Lilies, and Jade Arts Initiative. Sabella first performed with MMDG in 2013 and became a company member in 2015.

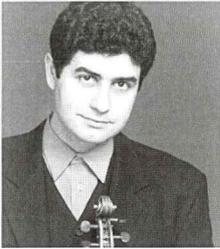


ALEXANDER SCHEIRLE (cello) has performed with orchestras around the world and recorded with such renowned composers, soloists, and conductors as Pierre Boulez, Mstislav Rostropovich, Christopher Hogwood, Paavo Järvi, David Stern, and Trevor Pinnock. He has recorded with major labels Sony, EMI, Deutsche Grammophon, Arte Nova, and Koch Schwann. From 1991 to 2007 he was the principal cellist of the Bavarian Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra in Munich, and became its Artistic Director in 2000, a position he held until 2007. In 2004 he became Artistic and Managing Director of the Crested Butte Music Festival in Crested Butte, Colorado. He became Executive Director of Orpheus Chamber Orchestra in March 2016. Scheirle was born in Germany and trained at the Conservatories in Cologne, Aachen and Saarbruecken and at the Guildhall School in London.



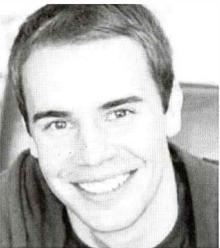
BILLY SMITH grew up in Fredericksburg, Virginia, and attended George Mason University under a full academic and dance talent scholarship. He graduated magna cum laude in 2007 and received achievement awards in performance, choreography, and academic endeavors. While at George Mason he performed the works of Mark Morris, Paul Taylor, Lar Lubovitch, Doug Varone, Daniel Ezralow, Larry Keigwin, Susan Marshall, and Susan Shields. Smith's own piece, *3-Way Stop*, was selected to open the 2006 American College

Dance Festival Gala at Ohio State University and his original choreography for a production of *Bye Bye Birdie* garnered much critical praise. An actor as well, Smith's regional theater credits include *Tulsa in Gypsy*, *Mistoffelees in CATS*, and *Dream Curl in Oklahoma!*. Smith danced with Parsons Dance from 2007-2010. He joined MMDG as a company member in 2010.



GEORGY VALTCHEV (violin) has appeared as soloist, recitalist, and chamber musician throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia. Originally from Plovdiv, Bulgaria, he came to the United States in 1992 as a scholarship student of Dorothy Delay and Masao Kawasaki at The Juilliard School, where he ultimately earned his bachelor's and master's degrees. He has been heard as soloist with orchestras in Bangor, Baton Rouge, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Miami, New York, New Jersey, in his native Bulgaria, and throughout Japan.

Since 2011, Valtchev has been a Guest Concertmaster of the London Philharmonic Orchestra. As a chamber musician he has appeared in New York's Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, 92nd Street Y, Kennedy Center in Washington DC, Chicago's Cultural Center, the Royal Carre Theatre in Amsterdam, the Barbican Centre in London, and the Guangzhou Opera House in China. He has been featured in international music festivals such as Mostly Mozart at Lincoln Center, Beethoven Festival at Bard College, Sofia Music Weeks, Varna Summer and Appolonia in Bulgaria, and Bastad Chamber Music Festival in Sweden. Valtchev is a founding member of Bulgarian Concert Evenings in New York.



NOAH VINSON is originally from Springfield, Illinois, and received his B.A. in dance from Columbia College Chicago. He was named a *Dance Magazine* "Dancer on the Rise" in 2009 and assisted Mark Morris in the creation of his most recent work for Houston Ballet, *The Letter V*, which premiered in May 2015. He began dancing with MMDG in 2002 and became a company member in 2004.

BIOGRAPHIES



JENN WEDDEL received her early training from Boulder Ballet Company near where she grew up in Longmont, Colorado. She holds a B.F.A. from Southern Methodist University and also studied at Boston Conservatory, Colorado University and The Laban Center, London. Since moving to New York in 2001, Weddel has created and performed with RedWall Dance Theater, Sue Bernhard Danceworks, Venci Dance Trio, Rocha Dance Theater, TEA Dance Company and with various choreographers including Alan Danielson and

Ella Ben-Aharon. Weddel performed with MMDG as an apprentice in 2006 and became a company member in 2007.



MICHELLE YARD was born in Brooklyn, New York. She began her professional dance training at the NYC High School of the Performing Arts and continued her studies as a scholarship student at Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. She graduated with a B.F.A. from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. Yard teaches Pilates as well as master classes for Access/MMDG programs. She joined MMDG in 1997. Mom, thank you.

SOCRATE (“Socrates”) LIBRETTO

Text: Plato

Translation: Roger Nichols © 1985

PORTRAIT DE SOCRATE (“THE PORTRAIT OF SOCRATES”)

Text taken from Plato’s *Symposium*

ALCIBIADES: So, my dear friends in order to praise Socrates I shall have to resort to comparisons: maybe he will think I’m trying to be whimsical, but I’m being utterly serious. First of all, I must say that he looks just like those busts of Silenus you see in sculptors’ workshops, the ones usually shown with a flute or pan-pipes in their hands; they are made of two separate pieces, and when you open them up you find statues of gods inside. Secondly, I reckon he is very like the satyr Marsyas—you play the flute too, don’t you? And indeed you are a more remarkable performer than Marsyas. He used to delight his listeners with the beautiful sounds he drew from his instruments, as does anyone today who repeats his melodies; in fact, the tunes Olympus used to play, I attribute them to Marsyas his teacher. The only difference, Socrates, between Marsyas and you is that without any instruments, just by talking, you produce the same effect.

For my part, my friends, if I wasn’t afraid you would think me completely drunk I would dilate upon the extraordinary effect his words have had on me, and still do have.

When I listen to him I feel my heart beating faster than if excited by the wild frenzy of the Bacchic rites, his words make tears roll down my cheeks and I know many others who experience the same feelings.

That is the effect on me and many others of this satyr’s flute.

SOCRATES: So much for your kind words about me. Now it is my turn to praise the companion on my right.

BORDS DE I’LLISSUS (“THE BANKS OF THE ILLISSUS”)

Text taken from Plato’s *Phaedrus*

SOCRATES: Let us turn off the road a little and, if you like, we’ll walk along the banks of the Illissus and find a quiet place where we can sit down.

PHAEDRUS: Really, I’m glad I came out today without my sandals. I know it’s the usual thing for you. Now we can go into the river itself and bathe our feet and walk along at the same time. That would be a real pleasure, especially in this weather and at this time of day.

SOCRATES: I agree. Lead on then, and look out for somewhere to sit down.

PHAEDRUS: Do you see that tall plain tree?

SOCRATES: Yes?

PHAEDRUS: There'll be some shade there and a light breeze and some grass. We can sit down or even lie down if we want to.

SOCRATES: On you go. I'll follow.

PHAEDRUS: Tell me, Socrates, wasn't it somewhere here on the banks of the Illissus, according to the legend, that Boreas kidnapped the young Oritheia?

SOCRATES: So we are told.

PHAEDRUS: Wouldn't it have been just here? The water is so beautiful and clear, it's the ideal place for girls to amuse themselves.

SOCRATES: Even so, it wasn't here but some way further downstream where you can cross the river. You can even see an altar dedicated to Boreas.

PHAEDRUS: I don't think I remember it. Tell me though, if you would, do you believe the story?

SOCRATES: Even if I wasn't sure, like the "experts," I wouldn't be too worried. I could give the legend a clever interpretation and say that the North wind blew her off a nearby rock while she was playing with Pharmaces, and that this manner of dying led to the belief that she had been taken off by Boreas. Or could I say she fell from the rock on the Areopagus, as several versions claim that's where it happened. Now then, isn't that the tree you've been heading for?

PHAEDRUS: That's the one.

SOCRATES: By Juno, what a delightful spot for a rest! This great tall plain tree, this bush with its wide branches making a deep shade, it's as if the air is swathed with the scent of flowers. What could be more exquisite than this stream running under the plain tree, so cool, as our feet tell us! This place could well be dedicated to some nymph and to the river Achelous, to judge by the paintings and statues on this altar. Breathe the air for a moment; is there anything more soothing and refreshing? The crickets' lively singing speaks of summer. Best of all I like this tufted grass where we can stretch out and lay our heads down gently on the slope of the bank. My dear Phaedrus, you couldn't have brought me to a nicer place.

SOCRATE (“Socrates”) LIBRETTO

MORT DE SOCRATE (“DEATH OF SOCRATES”)

Text taken from Plato’s *Phaedo*

PHAEDO: After Socrates was found guilty, we went to see him every day without fail. The open-air court where the sentence was passed was just next to the prison, so we would meet there in the morning and wait together for the prison to open—which it never did very early. The gaoler who normally let us in came out and told us to wait and not come in before he told us personally. A few moments later he came back and admitted us. Once inside, we found that Socrates had just been freed from his chains and Xanthippe—you know her—was near him, holding one of their children in her arms.

Well, Socrates sat on his stool, flexed the leg which had just been unchained, rubbed it with his hand and said: “What an odd thing it is, my friends, this feeling people call ‘pleasure.’ It has extraordinary links with pain, which everyone claims is the opposite. Surely it is through enjoyment and suffering that the body dominates and binds the soul? I would have a job persuading anyone else that I do not regard my present state as in any sense a misfortune, since even you are proof against persuasion. It seems you certainly consider me inferior to the swans in the matter of forecasting and divination. Swans, when they know they are about to die, sing better than they have ever done, from joy at going to join they serve.”

Although I have often admired Socrates, I never did so as much as at that moment. I was sitting on his right, on a little seat by the bed, and he was sitting above me. He put his hand on my head and took hold of my hair, which reached down to my shoulders: “Tomorrow, Phaedo,” he said, “you will have this beautiful hair cut, won’t you?”

He got up and went into a nearby room to have his bath. Crito followed him and Socrates asked us to wait for him. We came back and sat on the bed, but didn’t have time to say anything much to us because the slave of the Eleven (magistrates) came in almost at once and went over to him. “Socrates,” he said. “I hope I shan’t have to make the same complaint about you as the others. As soon as I come to tell them, by order of the magistrates, that they must drink the poison, they rage and swear at me. But you, I have always found you the bravest, kindest and best of all those who have been in this prison. At this moment I’m sure I can rely on you not to be angry with me but rather with those who are behind your misfortune—you know who I mean. Now, you can guess what I’m about to say. Farewell! Try to bear the inevitable and accept it.” At once he turned away from Socrates and bursting into tears left the cell.

Socrates looked after him and said: “Farewell to you also; I will do as you say.” Turning to us he said: “There goes an honest man. All the time I have been here he has often come to me and talked with me. He was one of the best of men and now you see how his

kind heart weeps for me. Well then, Crito, let us obey him with a good grace. Bring me the poison, if it's prepared; if not, let preparations be made!" Crito made a sign to the slave standing nearby. The slave went out and after being away some time returned with the man who was going to administer the poison, which he was carrying already mixed in a cup.

As soon as Socrates saw him he said: "Excellent, my friend, now what do I have to do? It's your job to teach me." "Nothing," said the man, "except walk about when you have drunk it, until you feel your legs getting heavy. Then lie down on your bed, the poison will work on its own." So saying he handed him the cup. Socrates lifted the cup to his lips and drank from it with amazing composure. Until then nearly all of us had summoned enough strength to restrain our tears, but seeing him drink, and after he had drunk, we could no longer control ourselves. As for me, in spite of all my efforts, the tears flowed from me so freely that I wrapped myself in my cloak to keep my weeping to myself. It was not Socrates' unhappiness that I wept for but mine, thinking what a friend I was about to lose.

However, Socrates, who was walking about, said that he felt his legs getting heavier and lay down on his back as the man had told him. At the same time the man who had given him the poison came to him and, after examining his feet and legs for some time, pressed his foot hard and asked him whether he could feel it. He said he couldn't. Then he pressed his calves and let them go again to show us that his body was going cold and still. He touched him and said that when the cold reached the heart then Socrates would leave us. Uncovering his face, Socrates said: "Crito, we owe a cock to Aesculapius. Don't forget to pay that debt." Shortly afterwards he made sudden movement and the man uncovered him altogether. His eyes were unmoving. Crito saw this and closed his mouth and eyes. Such, Echecrates, was the ending of our friend... the wisest and most honest of all men.

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