



AMERICAN CLASSICS



**Paul
MORAVEC**

Sanctuary Road

An oratorio based on
the writings of William Still

**Libretto by
Mark Campbell**

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**Raehann Bryce-Davis,
Mezzo-soprano**

Joshua Blue, Tenor

Malcolm J. Merriweather, Baritone

Dashon Burton, Bass-baritone

**Oratorio Society of New York
Chorus and Orchestra**

Kent Tritle

Paul Moravec (b. 1957)

Sanctuary Road

Oratorio as Musical Drama

A few years ago, librettist Mark Campbell and I wrote *The Shining*, an opera based on the Stephen King novel, for the Minnesota Opera. The operatic form proved to be the ideal way to convey the passion in Mr. King's terrifying story of love and madness. Our collaboration further convinced us of opera's primacy in musical storytelling; but in *Sanctuary Road*, we also discovered an equal power in the form of oratorio.

Opera and oratorio originated at essentially the same time and place: early 17th-century Italy. Both employ solo singers, chorus, and orchestra to tell stories through libretti set to music, but with a few salient differences. Reflecting its Florentine origins, opera has been mainly a secular genre, whereas Rome-linked oratorio has been generally associated with sacred subjects. Another distinction between the two is oratorio's greater emphasis on the role of the chorus. Most obviously, opera is staged musical theater, whereas oratorio is traditionally performed without staging, in concert.

Beneath these differences, however, there remains the common bond of enthralling musical drama delivered through shared conventions such as aria and recitative. For instance, Bach's oratorio *St. Matthew Passion* stands as one of history's greatest musical dramas, performed without staging, in concert. Stravinsky and Cocteau imaginatively combined the two genres in their 1927 secular "opera-oratorio" *Oedipus Rex*. Over the four centuries of its existence, oratorio has demonstrated considerable durability, variety and flexibility.

Sanctuary Road is an oratorio, the second in a series of my large-scale works I call "American historical oratorios." My first was *The Blizzard Voices*, commissioned and premiered by Opera Omaha in 2008, with a libretto by Ted Kooser, about the "Children's Blizzard" which devastated the Great Plains in 1888. Ted's libretto is based on the actual words of the blizzard's survivors: plain-speaking, ordinary people describing the most

extraordinary events and circumstances. Oratorio's sacred associations and central use of chorus make it well-suited to convey the biblical scale and suffering of the tragedy.

For *Sanctuary Road*, the challenge of approaching the sweeping saga of the Underground Railroad called for a similarly large-scale canvas. The role of the chorus as both participant and commentator in the action seemed an effective way to suggest the epic nature of these stories of courage, perseverance, and sacrifice. As with all story-telling, of course, God is in the details, which are recounted principally by the five soloists.

In addressing this important chapter in American history, Mark chose to adapt the writings of William Still, an African American conductor on the Underground Railroad. Still was based in Philadelphia and facilitated the escape of some 800 fugitive slaves, recording in detail their accounts and eventually compiling them in his landmark 1872 book, *The Underground Railroad*. The astonishing stories of Ellen Craft, Wesley Harris, and others make up the substance of the libretto's narrative. At the center of it all stands the majestic Mr. Still, whose words and resolute spirit guided me as a composer through the challenge of imagining this work's musical universe.

In Mark Campbell's libretto, William Still assumes the roles of both narrator and active participant. As narrator, Still begins the oratorio by stressing the need to document and remember the history of the Railroad, a sentiment echoed by the other solo voices and chorus (*Write*). As an agent in the action, in movements 5, 10, and 13, Still conducts interviews with fugitive slaves for the records that will form the basis of his book.

In the second movement, *Quietly*, the soloists sing of their longing for freedom from slavery. On the words "May not be tomorrow" they introduce what might be called the "freedom" musical theme that runs throughout the oratorio, returning at pivotal dramatic points in *The Same Train*, *This Side Up*, *Interview/Ensemble*, *Rain*, and, most crucially, the *Finale*.

In the third movement, *Reward!*, the chorus joins the action as slave hunters issuing wanted posters for the capture and return of slaves to the South. The chorus returns as both actor and observer in *I Waited*, a setting of Psalm 40 and a continuation of movement 7, *This Side Up*, in which Henry "Box" Brown recounts his amazing escape in a crate mailed from Richmond to William Still in Philadelphia. The story goes that when the crate was opened, Brown stood up and recited the psalm to the assembled abolitionists. The chorus's most unusual dramatic role comes in 15. *Interlude: 1861–1865*, in which I imagine their wordless singing as the ghostly voices of fallen soldiers in the Civil War.

In the *Finale*, Still tells of recovering his Underground Railroad records kept hidden during the War, among them letters from fugitive slaves written when they reached Canada. The soloists sing excerpts from the letters expressing gratitude to Mr. Still, and the oratorio ends with an anthem of freedom for the combined forces.

We too owe a debt of gratitude to William Still. The activities of the Underground Railroad were necessarily secret during its years of operation, but his "record of facts" ensures that the courage and virtuous resolve of these people struggling for freedom will always be remembered.

Paul Moravec

Kent Tittle

Conductor's Note

Sanctuary Road began as an initiative from one of our singers in the Oratorio Society of New York, Jody Spellun. Having grown up in segregated Kentucky, Jody expressed to me a desire to address questions such as "How could we make a statement with deep roots about racial disparity in our history?"

We had performed in recent seasons the New York premiere of Paul Moravec's *The Blizzard Voices*. On the strength of that experience, Ms. Spellun wished to commission Paul to create a new work along these lines. To our delight, he and librettist Mark Campbell proposed an oratorio based on William Still's *The Underground Railroad* (1872).

The Oratorio Society of New York performed the US premiere of Brahms's *Ein deutsches Requiem* in 1877, beginning a long legacy of first performances of works in the choral canon. Recent premieres include Moravec's *The Blizzard Voices*, Ranjbaran's *We Are One*, Merryman's *Jonah* and Filas's *Song of Solomon*. *Sanctuary Road* marks a high point not only in this tradition of premieres but in the Oratorio Society's role in the creation of new works.

The composer and librettist of *Sanctuary Road*, and the Oratorio Society of New York Chorus and Orchestra, express our profound gratitude to Joanne Abell Spellun for supporting the creation, performance, and recording of this work.

Our sincere thanks also go to Larry Madison, Sue Dramm, Bruce Patrick, Denise Sobel, William and Leigh Forsyth, and Richard and Lois Pace for their contributions to this recording.

SANCTUARY ROAD

An oratorio based on the writings of William Still, conductor for the Underground Railroad.

Commissioned and premiered by the Oratorio Society of New York Orchestra and Chorus through the generous support of Joanne Abell Spellun.

1 WRITE

William Still, Soloists, Chorus

SOPRANO

Sarah Grace...
A slave all her days...
Separated from her family...
Ellen Craft...
Sold three times.

MEZZO-SOPRANO

[Overlapping with above.]
Clarissa Davis...
Born in Martinsburg...
A slave all of her life...
A slave all of her days.

TENOR

[Overlapping with above.]
Wesley Harris...
Talbot Johnson...
Fled from Richmond...
On horseback all night.

BARITONE

[Overlapping with above.]
Barnaby Grigby...
Isaac Jackson...
Fled from Charleston...
Samuel Green.

WILLIAM STILL

[Spoken.]
"The Underground Railroad.
A record of facts,

Authentic narrative, letters, et cetera,
Narrating the hardships,
Hairbreadth escapes,
And death-struggles,
Of the slaves in their efforts of freedom,
As related by themselves and others,
Or witnessed by the author;
Together with sketches of
Some of the largest stock-holders
And most liberal aiders and
Advisors of the road,
By William Still."

MEZZO-SOPRANO

Escaped on the roof of a train...
Cordelia Loney...
Emiline Chapman...
Charlotte Giles.

TENOR

[Overlapping with above.]
Wesley Harris...
On horseback all night...
On foot...
On a steamer...
Talbot Johnson...
A slave all of his life...
John Henry Pettifoot.

SOPRANO

[Overlapping with above.]
Separated from her family...
Henry Brown...
Owner had five-hundred slaves...
Edmundson Turner.

BARITONE

[Overlapping with above.]
Isaac Jackson...
Fled from Charleston...
Fled from Atlanta...
Hid in a cave for one year.

WILLIAM STILL

Write it down.
Write it.
Write.
Record.
Recount.
Chronicle.
Write.
Write it down,
Every word.
Every word they say,
Every detail.
Every sentence,
Every phrase,
Every syllable.
Write it down.
Write it.
Write.

WILLIAM STILL

Set it to paper.
Preserve every story, every fact,
Every event.
Preserve, collect,
Compile every testimony.

SOPRANO

Clarissa Davis...
Harriet Eglan...
Ellen Craft...
Mary Epps...
Our struggles,

MEZZO-SOPRANO

Cordelia Loney...
Sarah Grace...
Our struggles...

TENOR

Isaac Jackson...
Sam Green...
Robert Carr...
Our stories,

BARITONE

Emiline Chapman...
Charlotte Giles...
Our testimony...
Our testimony...

SOLOISTS

Our sacrifices.

WILLIAM STILL

From cities and plantations,
Rice swamps and cotton fields,
Kitchens and mechanic shops,
From cruel masters, and kind masters,
They arrived.
By steamer, by skiff,
By train, on foot,
Shipped in a crate...
They arrived.

CHORUS + SOLOISTS

Our testimony.
Our stories cannot be forgotten.
Our testimony,
Our stories will be repeated,
Over and over.
Our testimony will never be forgotten.
Our struggles,
Our triumphs,
Our sacrifices,
Will be remembered,
Remembered.

BARITONE SOLO + BARITONE CHORUS

Our testimony,
Our stories cannot be forgotten.
Our testimony,
Our stories will be repeated,
Over and over.
Our testimony will never be forgotten.
Write it down.
Every word they say,
Every word,
Every detail will be remembered.
Remembered.

WILLIAM STILL

Their testimony will never be forgotten.
Write it,
Write,
Write,
Write it down.
Every word they say,
Every word, every detail.
Dip the quill in the well.
Draw, draw from it deeply,
Deeply, and write.
Write it down.
Write it,
Write.
Record.
Recount.
Chronicle.
Write,
Write it,
Write,
Write.

2 QUIETLY

Soloists

BARITONE

Spoken in a whisper,
Spoken in a whisper,
Quietly, quietly,
Just a rumor,
Too good to be true,
Free.

TENOR

Spoken, spoken in a whisper
Spoken in a whisper,
Never too loud,
Just a rumor,
Too good to be true,
Too good to be true,
Free.

MEZZO-SOPRANO

Spoken, spoken,
Spoken in a whisper,
Too good to be true,
Free.

BARITONE + TENOR

Hard to believe,
Not a hope in Heaven,
But there it is,
Even just a chance,
They must never know.

MEZZO-SOPRANO + SOPRANO

Quietly, quietly.
They must never hear.

SOLOISTS

One little word,
One sweet little word,
Free.

MEZZO-SOPRANO + SOPRANO

Free,
To be your own person,
To have your own life,

TENOR + BARITONE

To raise your own family,
Free to have your own life,

SOLOISTS

Your own soul.
May not be tomorrow,
May take us a while.
Imagine it,
Pray for it,
Find a way,
Make it come to be,
Quietly,
Quietly,
Free.

3 REWARD!

Chorus, Soloists

CHORUS

Reward will be paid!
Runaway slave!
Age...
Appearance...
Countenance...
Demeanor...
Last seen...
Reward will be paid!
Runaway, runaway slave!

BARITONE + TENOR CHORUS

Reward.

CHORUS

\$100...
\$2000...
\$400...
\$1600...

SOPRANO + ALTO CHORUS

Will be paid.

BASS + TENOR CHORUS

For the apprehension...

BARITONE CHORUS

For the safe return...

CHORUS

For the arrest and confinement...
Of a runaway slave.

BARITONE

Talbot Johnson...
Edward Morgan...
Mary Epps...

BARITONE

Josiah Jackson...
Robert Carr...
Wesley Harris...
Sam Green...

TENOR

Emiline Chapman...
Sarah Grace...
Clarissa Davis...

TENOR

John Henry Proudfoot...
Saj Tracey...

ALTO

Sarah Grace...
Clarissa Davis...

ALTO

Cordelia Loney...
Barnaby Grigby...

CHORUS

AGE:

CHORUS

Twenty-nine...
Forty years of age...
Thirty-four years old...
Thirty-six...
Fifty-nine years old...
Between nineteen and twenty-two...
Older than he looks...
Sixty-four...
They both are twenty-five...
Forty-seven years old...
Younger than her years...
On the verge of womanhood...
Lies about his age.

CHORUS

APPEARANCE:

CHORUS

Five feet seven inches...
A little over five feet...
High cheekbones...
A little bowlegged...
Broad across the shoulders...
Round featured...
Stoops while walking...
Face rough...
A scar above his eye...
Small mustache and beard...
Thickset and stout made.

CHORUS

DEMEANOR:

BARITONE + TENOR CHORUS

Arrogant eyes...

SOPRANO + ALTO CHORUS

A happy countenance...

CHORUS

Can read and write well...
Plays on the violin...
A confident manner...
Quick-spoken...
Laughs a good deal...
Of awkward manners...
Stammers some.
Reward will be paid!
LAST SEEN:
On their way up north...

SOLOISTS

New York...
Boston...
A free state...
Philadelphia...

CHORUS

Philadelphia.

4 THE SAME TRAIN (ELLEN CRAFT)

Mezzo-soprano solo

MEZZO-SOPRANO

He doesn't know.
He doesn't know.
He shuffles into the train,
Huffs a "hello,"
And sits across from me,
Right across from me.
My master's brother.
I'm done for.
I'm finished.
He sees through my disguise!
Knows I'm a slave.
Throws me in jail,
Has me whipped,
Shot,
Worse.
But... but he doesn't know.
He does not know.
Last night I served him leg of mutton,
Sweet potatoes,
Blueberry pie.
Poured his wine,
Cleared his plates,
Twice folded his napkin.
Everything but chew his food for him.
Last night I was a slave:
Young, female, black.
Today I'm a gentleman:
Old, feeble, and white,
At death's door,
[Coughs theatrically.]
On my way to see my "doctor" in Philadelphia,
Dressed up in a fine suit,
Tinted glasses,
A little powder to lighten my skin,
My head bandaged up.
I pretend not to hear
If someone speaks to me.
But no one does.

No one knows.

Not a soul.

They see me as a sick, white gentleman,
A sick white gentleman,
Who has his own valet –
A black man who sits with the other slaves,
In the other car.
But he's *not* my valet.
That man is not my valet.
He's the man I will marry,
The man I will marry in Philadelphia.
He's in a different car.
But we're on the same train,
Humming along like a hymn,
All the way to Philadelphia,
To Philadelphia.

5 INTERVIEW I

William Still, Baritone solo

WILLIAM STILL

How old are you?

BARITONE

Thirty-two years old, first day of June.

WILLIAM STILL

Were you born a slave?

BARITONE

Yes.

WILLIAM STILL

How have you been treated?

BARITONE

Badly all the time.

6 RUN I (WESLEY HARRIS)

Tenor solo

TENOR

Run, run,
Run through the woods,
Along the creek,
Past the marsh,
Up the ridge,
Down the hill.
Avoid the trail,
Avoid the road,
Avoid the port,
Anywhere they wait,
Anywhere they wait,
To stop you.
Run, run, run...

7 THIS SIDE UP (HENRY "BOX" BROWN)

Baritone solo

BARITONE

They can't seem to read.
They don't seem to know.
The crate I'm in,
It says:
"THIS SIDE UP WITH CARE"
This side up with care.
In big, big letters.
To clarify:
"This Side Up" is above me,
Not below.
Been on a cart,
On a train,
On a steamer,
And on a train again.
It'll be twenty-six hours since I had myself
Nailed in a shipping crate.
It'll be twenty-six hours of being thrown
This way and that,
Of not seeing the light of day,
Of not moving a muscle,

Of not saying a word,
Twenty-six hours of breathing through a
Hole in this box
No bigger than a button.
My brain may burst from being
Upside down.
And my eyeballs may explode.
But it's worth every second,
Every second of those twenty-six hours,
Even if I'm caught,
Even if I'm beaten,
Even if they hang me from a tree,
For just a chance,
For the slightest chance,
The dimmest hope,
For just a chance,
The slightest chance,
The dimmest hope that this crate,
This crate I mailed myself in arrives,
Safe and sound in Philadelphia.
Philadelphia.
Now if only these fools could READ.

8 I WAITED
Chorus

CHORUS
I waited,
I waited patiently for the Lord,
And He inclined unto me,
And heard my calling.

9 RUN II (WESLEY HARRIS)
Tenor solo

TENOR
Run,
Go,
Run,
Quicker than the wind,
Quicker than their horses,
Quicker than their whips,
Quicker than their bullets.

Run,
Go,
Run,
Hide under a house,
Hide in a cave,
In a hollow,
Up a tree,
In a barn,
Hide,
Then run,
Run again...

10 INTERVIEW II
William Still, Soprano solo

WILLIAM STILL
What do you mean by
Being treated badly?

SOPRANO
Have been whipped and sold three times.

WILLIAM STILL
What was the name of your master?

SOPRANO
Fleming Bibbs.

WILLIAM STILL
Where did he live?

SOPRANO
Caroline County.

11 AUNT ABIGAIL (HARRIET EGLAN, CHARLOTTE GILES)
Mezzo-soprano solo + Soprano solo

SOPRANO + MEZZO-SOPRANO
Oh, oh, oh,
Poor, poor Aunt Abigail.
Summoned to Heaven
Too, too, too early

SOPRANO/MEZZO-SOPRANO
By gout / By scarlet fever.

SOPRANO + MEZZO-SOPRANO
So sudden,
So, so, so sudden,
Too soon, too soon,

SOPRANO
Plucked from our arms.

MEZZO-SOPRANO
By the clutches of death.

SOPRANO + MEZZO-SOPRANO
Oh, oh, oh,
Poor Aunt Abigail.
Will our suffering ever,
Ever cease?
So far, so good,
On this train.

SOPRANO
No one wants to question,

SOPRANO + MEZZO-SOPRANO
No one wants to trouble,
The black women in black,
Their faces covered in veils.
But we're *not* in mourning,
We're not in mourning,
And poor Aunt Abigail,
She doesn't exist.

MEZZO-SOPRANO
And if someone looks askance,

SOPRANO
If someone suspects,

SOPRANO + MEZZO-SOPRANO
(Like that man,
Walking right toward us...)
Then it's...
"Oh, oh,
Poor, poor Aunt Abigail.
Will our suffering ever cease?
Oh, oh, oh..."

SOPRANO
How many tears?

MEZZO-SOPRANO
How many sobs,

SOPRANO
How many whimpers,

SOPRANO + MEZZO-SOPRANO
How many whimpers?
How many "ohs?"
And how many nose-blows,
To Philadelphia?
To Philadelphia...

12 RUN III (WESLEY HARRIS)
Tenor solo, Chorus

TENOR
Run, run,
Run through the woods,
Along the creek,
Past the marsh,
Up the ridge,
Down the hill.
Avoid the trail,
Avoid the road,
Avoid the port,
Anywhere they wait,
Anywhere they wait,
To stop you.
Run,

Go,
Run,
Quicker than the wind,
Quicker than their horses,
Quicker than their whips,
Quicker than their bullets.
Run all day, all night.

CHORUS
All day, all night.

TENOR
Was that a voice?

CHORUS
You don't hear it.

TENOR
Was that a face?

CHORUS
You don't see it.

TENOR
Was that a shadow?

TENOR + BARITONE CHORUS
Don't look back.
Don't look around.

CHORUS
Not there.

TENOR
Was that a shot?

CHORUS
You don't hear it?

TENOR
Was that another shot?

CHORUS
You don't hear it.
You don't feel it.

TENOR
There was no shot.
And it's so close,
So close...
So close...
You can wrap your arms around it...

CHORUS
You can taste it.
You're nearly there.

TENOR
So close... nearly there...

13 INTERVIEW III
William Still, Soloists

WILLIAM STILL
We're giving you some new clothing.
A good meal.
Money, and a ticket away from here.
To New York and then Boston
And then further north.
Talk to no-one.
Don't look around.
Do not look back.
Keep on moving.
Keep on going until you're
Over the border.

SOLOISTS
New clothing.
A good meal.
And a ticket away from here.
Talk to no-one.
Don't look around.
Do not look back.
Keep on moving.
Keep on going.

14 RAIN (CLARISSA DAVIS)
Soprano solo, Soloists

SOPRANO
Come down, rain.
Come down hard.
Come down fast.
Come down Noah's Ark heavy.
Empty the streets,
Empty the squares of those
Who might want to catch me.
Empty the streets of those
Who might want to stop me,
Who might want to hurt me,
Who might want to kill me.

SOPRANO
Double the darkness of this night,
That I might slip away,
Like a shadow,
And get to the boat
That will take me up North
To liberty,
To my own life.
Come down, rain.
Come down hard.
Come down fast.
Come down Noah's Ark heavy.
And when I'm free,
When I'm free,
I'll dance in that rain that hid me,
That saved me,
That delivered me to freedom.

SOLOISTS
Come down, rain.
Come down hard.
Come down fast.
Come down Noah's Ark heavy.
And when I'm free,
When I'm free

I'll dance in that rain.
I'll dance in that rain,
I'll dance.

SOPRANO
I'll dance.

15 INTERLUDE: 1861–1865
Chorus

16 FINALE
William Still, Soloists, Chorus

WILLIAM STILL
Five years since I hid these records.
Five years,
Five terrible years since the start of the war.
And fearing the outcome,
Concealed them in a shelf in
Lebanon Cemetery.
The war is done.
The records must be recovered.
Gently, gently,
So that they don't fall apart.
Gently... and pray that no moisture or mice
Got in to trouble the page,
To trouble the fate of their testimony.

Survived.

Every page,
Every record,
Every handbill,
Every account,
Every letter,
And here,
The best letters,
The ones from Canada,
Sent when they got there.
Sent when they first knew freedom.
Sent when they first saw their new flag
And shook hands with the lion's paw.

MEZZO-SOPRANO

Dear Mister Still...
I take this method of informing you...
In health and mind...

TENOR

My dear friend Mister Still...
Excuse me for not writing sooner...
As I don't write myself...

BARITONE

Dear brother in Christ...
As I don't write myself...

SOPRANO

Dear Sir...
That I am well...

SOPRANO + MEZZO-SOPRANO

I arrived safe into Canada...
I arrived on Friday last...
And I am happy to tell you I am well...

WILLIAM STILL

Write it.
Recount every word.
Record every syllable.

TENOR

Shaking hands with the lion's paw.
Hear that big cat roar.
I'm unbound,
Unchained,
Unshackled.
A slave no more.

WILLIAM STILL

Every word they say.
Every detail.
Every phrase.
Every syllable.
Write every story,
Every detail...

SOLOISTS

[Overlapping.]
Much pleased with Toronto...
Made a good start...
Endeavored to make every day
Tell for itself...
I will open a shop for myself...
I go to work this morning...
Went right to work at the Willard House...

MEZZO-SOPRANO + SOPRANO

\$16 a month...

SOLOISTS

\$5 a week...
I shall, with the help of the Lord,
Go to school...
I have no master in Canada,
But I am my own man...
Learning to read and write...

MEZZO-SOPRANO + SOPRANO

The wedding takes place on Saturday...

SOLOISTS + WILLIAM STILL

Shaking hands with the lion's paw.
In the nick of time.
Fin'ly found a place
Where freedom is not a crime.

SOLOISTS

I wish all in bondage were as
Well off as I am...
I must request from you to write
A few lines to my wife...
If my brother is well send him on
For I have a place for him...
Send me word if any of our friends
Have been passing through...
I am grateful for my liberty...
Obliged to you for all you have done and
For your kindness...
When I was in distress and
Out of doors you took me in...
I was hungry and you fed me.

SOPRANO + TENOR

For these things God will reward you.

MEZZO-SOPRANO + BARITONE

I hope to meet you all again.

SOPRANO + TENOR

If not on Earth may we so live...

SOLOISTS

That we shall meet in that happy land
Where tears and parting are never known.

CHORUS

Shaking hands,
Shaking hands with the lion's paw.

SOLOISTS + CHORUS

Here I know I'll stay.
The sky,
The land,
The whole world is mine today.

SOLOISTS + WILLIAM STILL

Shout from every roof top,

ALL SOLO + CHORUS

Loud as can be,
Joyfully,
Finally come true...

SOLOISTS + WILLIAM STILL

Free.
Free.
One sweet little word.
Everyone must hear,
Everyone must know.

CHORUS

Thou shalt not deliver
Unto his master the servant
Who has escaped his master
Unto thee.

SOLOISTS, WILLIAM STILL + CHORUS

Shout from every rooftop,
Loud as can be:
Free.

[THE END.]

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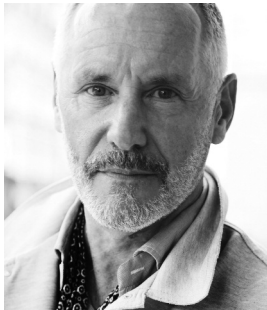
Paul Moravec



Paul Moravec, recipient of the 2004 Pulitzer Prize in Music, has composed numerous orchestral, chamber, lyric, choral and operatic works. He holds the unique position of University Professor at Adelphi University. His best known works are *Tempest Fantasy*, *The Time Gallery*, and operas *The Letter* and *The Shining*. His catalog of nearly 200 published compositions is available at www.subitomusic.com

www.paulmoravec.com

Mark Campbell



Mark Campbell has written thirty-five opera librettos, seven musicals, five song cycles and two oratorios. His best-known works are *Silent Night* (2012 Pulitzer Prize for Music) and *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* (2019 GRAMMY Award). Other operas include *Stonewall*, *Elizabeth Cree*, *As One*, *The Shining*, and *Later the Same Evening*.

www.markcampbellwords.com

Laquita Mitchell



Laquita Mitchell has earned acclaim on international stages including the Los Angeles Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Washington National Opera, and the New York Philharmonic. In addition to global live performances, she is seen in her signature role as Bess in *Porgy and Bess* on DVD from San Francisco Opera and PBS broadcast.

www.laquitamitchellsoprano.com

Raehann Bryce-Davis



Mezzo-soprano Raehann Bryce-Davis's recent credits include *Don Carlos*, *Satyagraha*, *Sadko*, *Der fliegende Holländer* (Opera Vlaanderen); *La Favorite* (Teatro Massimo, Palermo); Elgar's *Sea Pictures* (Musikverein Wien); Verdi's *Requiem* (Carnegie Hall); and *Die Ring-Trilogie* (Theater an der Wien). She is a 2018 recipient of the prestigious George London Award.

www.raehann.com

Joshua Blue



British-American tenor Joshua Blue's career has taken him to The Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, and the Seiji Ozawa Matsumoto Festival. He has sung with the Washington National Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and with the National Symphony Orchestra. Blue attended the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and The Juilliard School. He is currently a Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist with the Washington National Opera.

www.joshuabluetenor.com

Malcolm J. Merriweather



Conductor and baritone Malcolm J. Merriweather is music director of The Desoff Choirs and assistant professor at Brooklyn College. He has conducted ensembles in venues from Carnegie Hall to the Vatican before Pope Francis, and has been featured as a baritone soloist throughout the US.

www.malcolmjmerriweather.com

Dashon Burton



Critically acclaimed by *The New York Times*, bass-baritone Dashon Burton has established an international career in opera, recital, and in many works with orchestra. He is also active in education, activism, and is interested in music of all kinds.

www.dashonburton.com

Oratorio Society of New York

Since its founding by Leopold Damrosch, the Oratorio Society of New York has been an essential part of New York City's cultural fabric, and is one of the city's oldest cultural organizations. The Oratorio Society presented its first concert on December 3 1873. One year later, on Christmas night, the Society began what has become an unbroken tradition of annual performances of Handel's *Messiah*, given at Carnegie Hall since its opening in 1891. The Oratorio Society has given world, US, and New York premieres of works as diverse as Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem* (1877), Berlioz's *Roméo et Juliette* (1882), a full-concert production of Wagner's *Parsifal* at the Metropolitan Opera House (1886), Britten's *The World of the Spirit* (1998), Filas's *Requiem* (2015), Moravec's *The Blizzard Voices* (2013) and *Sanctuary Road* (2018), and Ranjibaran's *We Are One* (2018). On its 100th anniversary the Oratorio Society received the Handel Medallion, New York City's highest cultural award, in recognition of these contributions.

www.oratoriosocietyofny.org



Kent Tritle



Kent Tritle is one of America's leading choral conductors. Music director of the Oratorio Society of New York since 2005, he is also director of cathedral music and organist at the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York City and music director of Musica Sacra, the longest continuously performing professional chorus in New York.

www.kenttritle.com

Paul
MORAVEC
(b. 1957)

Sanctuary Road (2017)

Libretto by Mark Campbell (b. 1953)

1	1. Write	6:06	11	11. Aunt Abigail	3:34
2	2. Quietly	2:26	12	12. Run III	2:14
3	3. Reward!	2:27	13	13. Interview III	1:27
4	4. The Same Train	4:52	14	14. Rain	4:00
5	5. Interview I	0:52	15	15. Interlude: 1861–1865	3:41
6	6. Run I	1:13	16	16. Finale	9:23
7	7. This Side Up	3:27	17	“Write It!” – Reflections on <i>Sanctuary Road</i>	20:34
8	8. I Waited	2:29			
9	9. Run II	0:50			
10	10. Interview II	0:44			

WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING

Laquita Mitchell, Soprano **1–3 10 11 13 14 16**

Raehann Bryce-Davis, Mezzo-soprano **1–4 11 13 16**

Joshua Blue, Tenor **1–3 6 9 12 13 16**

Malcolm J. Merriweather, Baritone **1–3 5 7 13 16**

Dashon Burton, Bass-baritone **1 5 10 13 16**

**Oratorio Society of New York
Chorus** **1 3 8 12 15 16** **and Orchestra**

Kent Tritle

The English libretto is included in the booklet, and may also
be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/559884.htm

Recorded live: 7 May 2018 at Carnegie Hall,
New York, NY, USA

Producer: Richard Pace

Recording engineer: Leszek Wojcik

Editing, mixing and mastering: Joseph Branciforte

Booklet notes: Paul Moravec and Kent Tritle

Publisher: Subito Music Publishing

Cover: William Still by an unknown photographer



AMERICAN CLASSICS

After the success of his opera *The Shining*, Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Paul Moravec has once again collaborated with librettist Mark Campbell to create the second of his “American historical oratorios.” *Sanctuary Road* draws on the astonishing stories to be found in William Still’s book *The Underground Railroad*, which documents the network of secret routes and safe houses used by African American slaves to escape into free states and Canada during the early- to mid-1800s. The epic nature of these stories of courage, perseverance and sacrifice is transformed into an enthralling saga, heard here at its world premiere performance at Carnegie Hall – a performance acclaimed by *BroadwayWorld* for its “riveting, pulsating wall of sound [and] stellar soloists.”

www.naxos.com

Playing
Time:
70:43