



Red Hen Press and the Poetry Society of America

The Figure of Orpheus in Poetry & Performance



SUN / APR 28 / 2:00 PM

Paul Barnes
PIANIST

Henri Cole
POET AND MEMOIRIST

Robin Coste Lewis
POET

Atsuro Riley
POET

Running time: 1 hour 20 minutes with no intermission



PROGRAM NOTES

The Figure of Orpheus in Poetry and Performance

The tragic, fateful love of Orpheus for Eurydice has inspired countless poets, artists, and musicians—among them Rainer Maria Rilke, Christophe Willibald Gluck, and in our own time choreographer Mark Morris and composer Philip Glass, whose 1993 *Orphee Suite* was inspired by Jean Cocteau’s 1950 film. Master Pianist Paul Barnes who has been praised for his “Lisztian thunder and deft fluidity” will perform segments of his transcription from the Glass opera for solo piano; a touching segment of Marcel Camus’s Brazilian film *Black Orpheus* will be featured; and acclaimed contemporary poets Henri Cole, Robin Coste Lewis, and Atsuro Riley will present work of their own and of contemporary and classic poetic forbears to round out this moving evocation of the myth in art.

BIOS

STAFF

ALICE QUINN is Executive Director of the Poetry Society of America and an adjunct professor at Columbia University's School of the Arts. She was poetry editor at *The New Yorker* from 1987-2007 and at Alfred A. Knopf, Publishers, from 1976-1986. She is the editor of *Edgar Allan Poe & The Juke-Box: Uncollected Poems, Drafts, and Fragments* by Elizabeth Bishop and is at work on an edition of Bishop's journals.

MADLINE WEINFELD is the Development Director of the Poetry Society of America. She holds a B.A. in Literature and Creative Writing from Franklin University Switzerland. Prior to joining the PSA, she worked in the human rights field, focusing on fundraising for grassroots organizations working with marginalized communities in the developing world. She has produced intimate and large scale fundraising and cultivation events and has worked with boards and development committees to create goal-oriented programming. Madeline oversees the PSA's membership program, and individual and foundation giving, as well as the annual spring benefit.

ARTIST

PAUL BARNES is a distinguished Professor of Music at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Glenn Korff School of Music and teaches during the summer at the Vienna International Piano Academy and the Amalfi Coast Music Festival. Celebrating his twenty-three year collaboration with Philip Glass, Barnes commissioned and gave the world premier of Glass's Piano Quintet 'Annunciation' with the Chiara Quartet on April 17, 2018. Barnes' twelfth CD is *New Generations: The New Etudes of Philip Glass and Music of the Next Generation*.

Of his adaptation of this work of Glass's, Barnes has written, "The disarming simplicity of Glass's music idiom is especially suited to communicating the unique tension that exists between the spiritual and the physical worlds. I have tried in my selection of seven transcriptions to communicate the most poignant aspects of the emotional world so brilliantly crafted by Glass in his score."

HENRI COLE is the author of nine collections of poems including *Touch*, *Pierce the Skin: Selected Poems 1982-2007*, *Blackbird and Wolf*, and *Middle Earth*, a Pulitzer Prize finalist and the winner of the Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award. He has received the American Academy of Arts and Letters' Rome Prize and the Berlin Prize as well as fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Ingram Merrill Foundation, and the Guggenheim Foundation. He has collaborated with visual artists Jenny Holzer and Kiki Smith and has taught at Harvard, Ohio State, and Yale, and he is currently a professor at Claremont McKenna College. "Perhaps," he has written, "I sometimes rationalize, the ecstasy of sexual love is not so different from the near religious fervor of creating, or rather assembling language into poetry." His most recent book is *Orphic Paris*, a memoir, serialized by *The New Yorker* online and published by the New York Review of Books.

ROBIN COSTE LEWIS received the National Book Award for Poetry for her debut collection, *Voyage of the Sable Venus and Other Poems*, published by Alfred A. Knopf. She received her MFA from New York University's Creative Writing Program and a Master of Theological Studies in Sanskrit and Comparative Literature from Harvard Divinity School. She is a Cave Canem Fellow and has taught at Wheaton College, Hunter College, Hampshire College, and the NYU Low-Residency MFA in Paris. She was born in Compton, California and is currently Poet

Laureate for the city of Los Angeles and a Provost Fellow in the Creative Writing and Literature PhD Program at USC.

ATSURO RILEY's work has been anthologized in *The Open Door: 100 Poems*, *100 Years of Poetry Magazine*, *The Oxford Anthology of Contemporary American Poetry*, *Poems of the American South*, and *The McSweeney's Book of Poets Picking Poets*. He is a winner of the Whiting Writers' Award and his debut volume, *Romey's Order*, received the Kate Tufts Discovery Award, the Believer Award, and a Witter Bynner Award from the Library of Congress. His work appears regularly in *Poetry Magazine* and in *The Threepenny Review*, *The New Republic*, *Poetry International*, and other distinguished journals and magazines.

SPONSORSHIP

The Poetry Society of America is grateful to Jane Deknatel of the Broad for welcoming this program and Kate Gale from Red Hen Press for including it in her popular series at the theater.

NOTE ON THE PSA

The Poetry Society of America, established in 1910, is the nation's oldest organization devoted to the art. Its signature program, *Poetry in Motion*, is celebrating its twentieth anniversary on the subways and buses of Los Angeles and its twentieth sixth on the subways and buses of New York. The PSA presents some forty poetry programs annually nationwide, sponsors fourteen distinguished annual awards, and since 2003 has launched the careers of 64 emerging poets in a Chapbook Fellowship Program presenting four volumes a year selected and introduced by acclaimed contemporary poets.