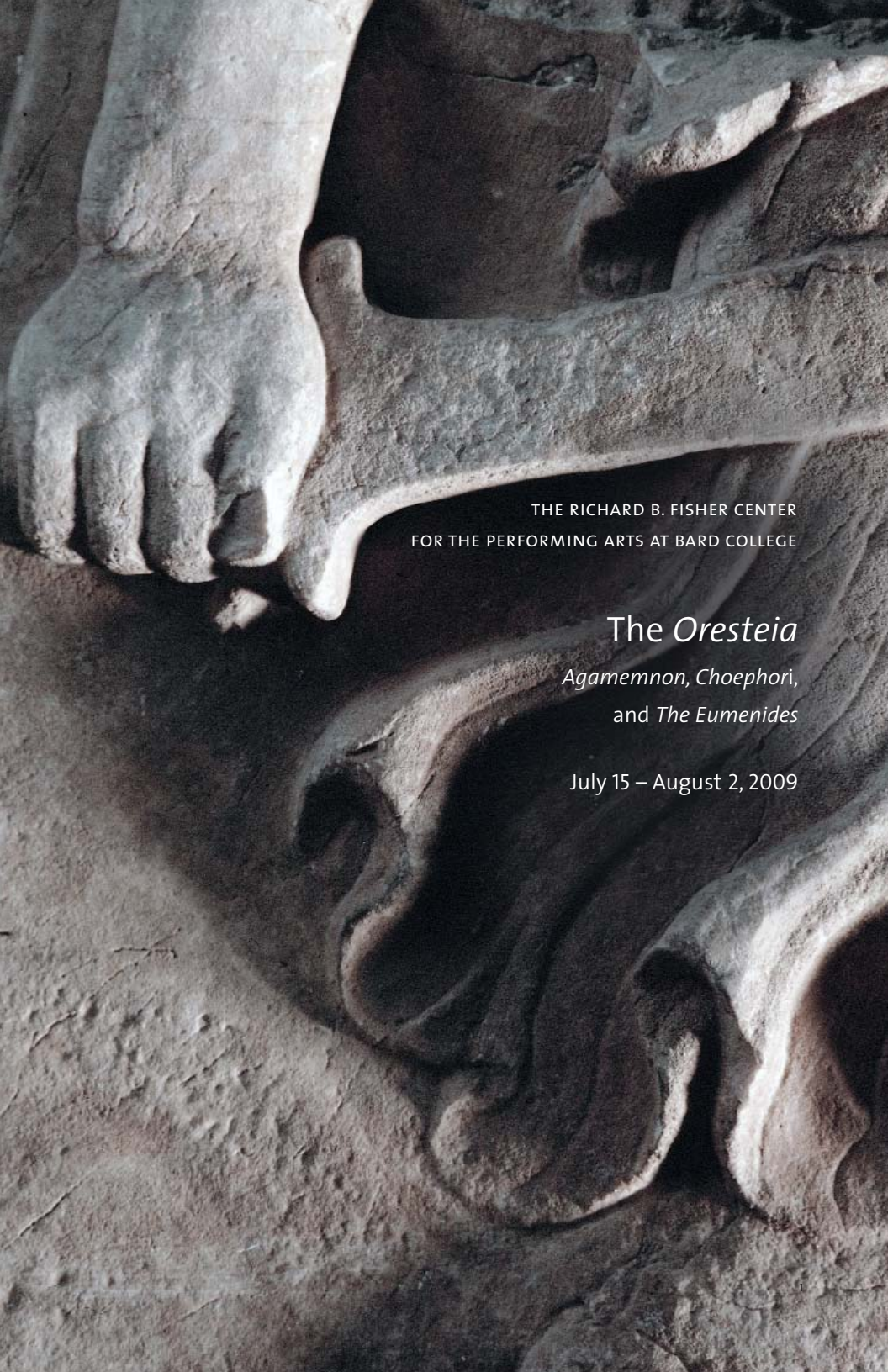

THE RICHARD B. FISHER CENTER
FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS AT BARD COLLEGE

# The *Oresteia*

*Agamemnon*, *Choephori*,
and *The Eumenides*

July 15 – August 2, 2009

**The Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College**

**Chair** Jeanne Donovan Fisher
**President** Leon Botstein

*Presents*

# The *Oresteia*

## *Agamemnon, Choephori,* and *The Eumenides*

A Translation of Aeschylus' Trilogy of Plays

by Ted Hughes

**Directed by** Gregory Thompson

**Set and Costume Design** by Ellen Cairns

**Lighting Design** by Kai Fischer

**Sound Design** by Andrea J. Cox

**Theater Two**
July 15 – August 2

*Cast*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Electra** | Louise Collins |
| **Chorus / Servant / Apollo** | David Fielder |
| **Cassandra / Chorus / Fury** | Beth Fitzgerald |
| **Orestes** | Richard Glaves |
| **Watchman / Aegisthus / Fury** | Derek Hutchinson |
| **Chorus / Chorus / Athene** | Aoife McMahon |
| **Agamemnon / Fury** | Hilton McRae |
| **Herald / Pylades / Fury** | Rhys Meredith |
| **Clytemnestra / Clytemnestra's Ghost** | Mary Jo Randle |
| **Chorus / Clissa / Priestess** | Sandra Voe |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Assistant Set and Costume Designer** | Alison Cartledge |
| **Production Stage Manager** | Anna-Maria Casson |
| **Assistant Stage Manager** | Meggie Scache |

**Flying Effects** provided by ZFX, Inc.

## *Synopsis*

*Before the play begins:*

**The Curse**

Atreus, the father of Agamemnon, and Thyestes, the father of Aegisthus, quarrel over the kingship of Argos. Atreus succeeds to the throne—but Thyestes seduces Atreus's wife. After seeking Atreus's forgiveness, Thyestes is invited to a feast where Atreus serves him a pie made from the murdered bodies of his two eldest sons. Thyestes curses Atreus and all his progeny.

**The Trojan War**

Paris, son of Priam, the king of Troy, visits Argos and seduces Helen, the wife of Agamemnon's brother, Menelaus. When Priam refuses to return Helen, Agamemnon gathers an army to attack Troy. The army is trapped in Aulis by an unchanging wind until Agamemnon appeases the goddess Artemis by sacrificing his eldest daughter, Iphigenia.

***Agamemnon***

The Greek army has been laying siege to Troy for 10 years. On the roof of the palace of Argos, a watchman awaits a beacon to tell him that Troy has fallen. He informs Clytemnestra. She makes sacrifices. The chorus examines the roots of the war. They do not believe that Troy has fallen. A herald returns from Troy and announces its fall. Agamemnon returns bearing the spoils of war, including a concubine, Cassandra, daughter of Priam. Clytemnestra greets Agamemnon with a delicate and costly purple carpet of rich tapestry and invites him back into his palace. Despite his foreboding, as a purple carpet is reserved for the gods, Agamemnon accepts. Cassandra refuses Clytemnestra's invitation into the palace. She prophesies Agamemnon's murder, her own death, and the coming of an avenger. She is not believed. Cassandra enters the palace. Agamemnon ritually cleanses himself from the battle. Clytemnestra murders him and Cassandra. Clytemnestra displays the dead bodies

and justifies her actions as revenge for the death of Iphigenia. Aegisthus, Agamemnon's cousin, claims credit for the plot and reveals himself as Clytemnestra's lover and the joint ruler of Argos. The chorus is cowed by his bodyguard, and calls for Orestes.

***Choephori***

Clytemnestra suffers a nightmare in which she gives birth to and suckles a snake, which draws both milk and blood from her breast. At Agamemnon's grave, Orestes prays for the help of Hermes, Zeus, and his dead father to fulfill Apollo's command to take revenge for his father's death and murder his mother. Clytemnestra sends her surviving daughter, Electra, and the chorus of slave women from Troy to appease the gods by pouring libations on Agamemnon's grave. Orestes hides. Electra asks the chorus for advice on how to pray for her mother when she wants revenge for her father's murder. The chorus urges her to pray for the return of Orestes. Electra finds the locks of hair placed on the grave by her brother and notices his footprints. Joyful in their reunion, Orestes relates Apollo's command. They pray for the help of the gods and the dead. The chorus urges them to act. On learning of Clytemnestra's unrest, Orestes resolves to be the snake of her nightmare. Accompanied by his cousin Pylades, Orestes requests entry to the palace by offering news. He informs Clytemnestra of Orestes' "death" and burial. Clissa, Orestes' nurse, is sent to fetch Aegisthus. She laments the loss of Orestes, and the chorus tells her to insist that Aegisthus come without his bodyguard. Orestes murders Aegisthus. He loses heart when faced with his mother. Pylades urges him to fulfill the will of Apollo. Orestes murders his mother. Orestes justifies his actions by showing how Agamemnon was murdered. He "sees" old women rising out of his mother's body. Orestes goes to Apollo's temple to receive absolution for his crimes.

***The Eumenides***

In the temple of Apollo, a priestess discovers Orestes in a trance surrounded by the sleeping Furies. Covered in blood from the sacrifices of cleansing rituals, Orestes is advised by Apollo to seek Athene's help. Clytemnestra's ghost wakens the Furies and commands them to pursue her son. The furies discover Orestes in Athene's temple. Athene is reluctant to determine whether the Furies have the right to pur-

sue him as retribution for his mother's murder, or whether Orestes had the right to avenge his father's death. She creates a court with a jury of 12 Athenian citizens to judge this homicide. The Furies press their case. Apollo defends Orestes. The Furies threaten the jury with the destruction of Athens. Apollo offers to bribe the jury with the support of Argos. The jury is divided equally, so Athene gives her verdict in favor of Orestes and he is acquitted. The Furies prepare to wreak their revenge on Athens until Athene persuades them to reconciliation by acknowledging their anger and offering them a home. The Furies accept.

Running time

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|---|---|
| ***Agamemnon*** | 2 hours and 15 minutes, plus one intermission |
| ***Choephori*** | 1 hour and 15 minutes (no intermission) |
| ***The Eumenides*** | 1 hour and 5 minutes (no intermission) |

*The use of recording equipment or the taking of photographs during the performance is strictly prohibited.*

**Some Personal Notes on Directing the *Oresteia* in New York in 2009**

**Forgive me:** The *Oresteia* has nothing to do with the Iraq War, yet this production uses modern dress. The *Oresteia* was written two and a half thousand years ago; it is not a response to the war on terror launched with a speech to a joint session of Congress on Thursday, September 20, 2001. Yet the cry for justice that begins with Paris being "nailed to the earth" and repeats throughout the trilogy recalls George Bush: "Whether we bring our enemies to justice or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done."

Agamemnon sacrificed his daughter to wage war on Troy. What was sacrificed to wage the war on terror?

The *Oresteia* is a series of responses to atrocities. The desire for vengeance is strong, irresistible. The trilogy offers no easy solutions; instead it takes the desire for revenge and twists it around on itself until it reaches a place where we both see the justification for revenge and want the cycle of killings to end. The play uses our empathy towards those who have suffered a terrible wrong—the woman whose daughter was murdered; the man whose brothers were murdered to spite his father; the man whose father was murdered—and interweaves it so that while we watch killing lead to killing we understand the motives. Each murder is justified by a call for justice. The *Oresteia* says that if revenge equals justice, there will be an unending cycle of murders, and it asks, what is justice in a civilised society? It's an urgent question that is being debated still.

Modern parallels abound. Agamemnon believed that God was on his side: "Heaven heard the prayers of Argos, because they were just. But the prayers of Troy were empty." Just before we went in to rehearsal, Robert Draper revealed (*GQ* magazine,

May 2009) that in the lead-up to the March 2003 invasion of Iraq, U.S. defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld prepared top-secret briefing papers for President George Bush illustrated with biblical quotations. The report labeled "Top secret// HCS/Comint//Orcon, Noforn//Exdis//X1, X6" had on its cover a photograph of U.S. soldiers at prayer and a quote from Isaiah: "Their arrows are sharp, all their bows are strung; their horses' hoofs seem like flint, their chariot wheels are like a whirlwind" (Isaiah 5:28). Perhaps it was an attempt to boost his standing with the deeply religious president, but given the sensitivity of a predominantly Christian country waging war on an Islamic one, and Mr. Bush's impromptu and subsequently regretted use of the word "crusade," it risked sparking outrage in the Muslim world if the papers leaked.

Perhaps Rumsfeld didn't read far enough? He was widely faulted for the poor planning and execution of the Iraq reconstruction and was replaced in December 2006. The fifth chapter of Isaiah ends two verses later: "If one look unto the land, behold darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof."

Some things never change: "War is a pawnbroker—not of your treasures but of the lives of your men. Not of gold but of corpses. Give your man to the war-god and you get ashes." The war dead come "back to widows, to fatherless children, to screams, to sobbing. The men came back as little clay jars full of sharp cinders" (*Agamemnon* Chorus).

In his inauguration speech, President Obama remembered "with humble gratitude those brave Americans who, at this very hour, patrol far-off deserts and distant mountains. They have something to tell us . . . they embody the spirit of service; a willingness to find meaning in something greater than themselves" (January 20, 2009). Aeschylus served with distinction at the battle of Marathon. His brother died in action there. These plays were written by a man who had experienced the reality of war. The male audience in Athens in 458 B.C. consisted of men who had served or were about to do so. Do those who have served make different decisions when they govern?

Forgive me. I recall the horror of the murder of thousands of innocent civilians in New York on September 11, 2001. It was an atrocity. Ten days later President Bush spoke for many: "Our grief has turned to anger and anger to resolution." He made "demands . . . not open to negotiation or discussion." He said, "Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated." He continued, "We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place until there is no refuge or no rest. And we will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation in every region now has a decision to make: Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists." It was a righteous and forceful response.

The Furies are righteous—Orestes has murdered his mother and must be punished: "His mother's blood with the voice of earth, convicts him from the earth—he can never compel it to go back into her body. Now you shall pay us, Orestes, for the blood of your mother with your own which was hers."

A strange thing: although it is called the *Oresteia*, Orestes is not present in the first play, and something amazing happens after he leaves the third play. Yet the impact of the final transformation is heightened by the narrative's having followed Orestes' journey.

Last month, in a speech at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, David Milliband, the British foreign secretary, said, "You can't teach morality with a sword."

When the Fisher Center commissioned this production, George Bush was still president, and many were debating whether America was more likely to vote for a woman or a black man. Thankfully this is no longer the frame for the debate. A tidal wave of joy swept across the Atlantic the night in November we watched you elect as your president someone committed to reason and persuasion, someone who uses language to reach out, to inspire, and to change hearts and minds: "To those leaders around the globe who seek to sow conflict, or blame their society's ills on the West—know that your people will judge you on what you can build, not what

you destroy. To those who cling to power through corruption and deceit and the silencing of dissent, know that you are on the wrong side of history; but that we will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist" (Obama's inaugural address, January 20, 2009).

Obama's oratory reminds me of Athene as she strives to shift the desire to punish to a peaceful solution: "The time of brute force is past. The day of reasoned persuasion, with its long vision, with its mercy, its forgiveness, has arrived. The word hurled in anger shall be caught in a net of gentle words, words of quiet strength. The angry mouth shall be given a full hearing. I understand your fury. But the vendetta cannot end, the bloody weapon cannot be set aside till all understand it."

The murder of the innocent is atrocious whether in New York or Fallujah.

A month ago, President Obama gave a speech in Cairo in which he said, "Just as America can never tolerate violence by extremists, we must never alter our principles. 9/11 was an enormous trauma to our country. The fear and anger that it provoked was understandable, but in some cases, it led us to act contrary to our ideals. We are taking concrete actions to change course. I have unequivocally prohibited the use of torture by the United States, and I have ordered the prison at Guantánamo Bay closed by early next year. So America will defend itself, respectful of the sovereignty of nations and the rule of law. And we will do so in partnership with Muslim communities which are also threatened. The sooner the extremists are isolated and unwelcome in Muslim communities, the sooner we will all be safer."

The time of brute force is past.

Gregory Thompson
June 2009
Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

## *Notes on the Program*

by Daniel Mendelsohn

Of the 300 or so tragic trilogies, comprising nearly 1,000 plays, that were produced in Athens during the century-long heyday of Greek tragedy, from about 500 to 400 B.C., exactly one survives: the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus, first produced in 458 B.C.E. The august position that this work occupies in the Western canon, however, goes far beyond its status as the sole survivor of a genre that is now otherwise entirely lost. Judged by any standard, it is a masterpiece of unmatched dramatic power, poetic beauty, and intellectual richness—qualities that were, if anything, necessary to treat the massive themes that Aeschylus confronted in taking on the story of the cursed House of Atreus: the complex relationship between justice and power, the tormented connection between violence and civilization, the roles played by personality, fate, and free will in the making of human history, the deep nature of sexuality, gender, and family itself.

It is, in other words, a work about nearly everything. And, as with much of the greatest literature, Aeschylus succeeds in treating his vast themes by focusing closely on one specific story: in this case, the tale of a single family, the Atreids (that is, the descendants of Atreus, king of Mycenae). It is because these people are royal, of course, that Aeschylus—who, like the other tragedians, had at his disposal a ready-made cast of characters in the kings, queens, heroes, seers, gods, and goddesses of Greek myth—was able to turn his dreadful tale of family crime and vengeance into a grand allegory of the workings of human civilization itself. But it is because these royals are a family, too, that the playwright was able to create a work whose exploration of the relationships between parents and children, brothers and sisters, and—memorably—husbands and wives remains uncannily acute and brilliant, twenty-five hundred years after its composition.

The bare bones of the trilogy's plot sketch a seemingly straightforward tale of crime, vengeance, and a culminating justice. The background of the play is the

Trojan War, which, as the drama begins, has just ended: a world at war is shifting, uneasily, to peacetime. In the first play, *Agamemnon*, the victorious leader of the Greek forces, Agamemnon, returns home to his capital, Mycenae; unlike another famous returning hero—Odysseus, of Homer's *Odyssey*—he finds not a loyal wife but an adulterous one, Queen Clytemnestra, who, with her lover, Aegisthus, have taken over the kingdom during Agamemnon's absence. The play ends with the queen's murder of the king and the concubine he has brought with him from Troy, the prophetess Cassandra.

The rest of the trilogy traces the moral, political, and cosmic aftermath of that terrible crime. In the second play, *Choephori* (often translated as *The Libation Bearers),* named after the chorus, a group of women who bring offerings to the tomb of Agamemnon, the anguished children of the murdered man, Orestes and Electra, avenge his death by murdering their mother and her lover. In the third and culminating play, *The Eumenides*, the avenger Orestes is himself now pursued by a terrible vengeance in the form of the horrible Erinyes (or Furies), supernatural beings responsible for avenging matricide. At the end of this last drama Orestes is brought to trial, where the question of his guilt is at last resolved and peace is finally restored to the family and to the state—a resolution symbolized by the new name given to the Furies, "Eumenides" or "Kindly Ones." (Among other things, the play offers a mythological explanation for the founding of the Athenian justice system: note how, by the end of the trilogy, the action has moved from Mycenae, which represents the Greek past, to Athens, which represents its future.)

What makes the *Oresteia* great is Aeschylus's brilliant enrichment of this narrative, which everywhere reminds us that the story of this crime-prone family is far more complex, and hence the relationship between crime and punishment far more vexed, than that brief description suggests. To suggest the infinite complications that words like "justice" and "vengeance" can obscure, the playwright first of all reminds us—both in choral evocations of the family's past and in the words of characters like Clytemnestra herself, one of the great tragic creations in the theater's history—that the queen's murder of her husband was itself an act of vengeance for yet another crime, Agamemnon's murder of their daughter, Iphigenia, at the beginning

of the Trojan War—a dreadful human sacrifice required by the gods. That her lover and accomplice in avenging her daughter was Aegisthus adds still more complications, still more evocations of the way in which we are never free of the past: for Aegisthus is the first cousin of Agamemnon, the son of Thyestes, whose other sons were horribly murdered by their uncle, Agamemnon's father.

Hence we see that the violence staged in the plays themselves is merely the continuation of family violence that reaches deep into the past, and of which even the most innocent family members seem unable to free themselves—just one example of the acute psychological insight Aeschylus brings to his mythic datum. But the *Oresteia* is no mere family drama. For the sacrifice of Iphigenia, the act that hovers over the entire trilogy, raises crucial questions about the relationship between the family and the state, the domestic and the public realms—questions that are as pertinent today as they were in classical Athens, to be sure. (The sacrifice is the symbol of the way in which every family must, in times of war, give up its own for the good of the larger state; that the sacrifice in the myth is of a young girl only intensifies the cruel contrast between the innocence of individuals in the private realm and the needs of the public realm, of the state and its political agendas.) The vengeance that Clytemnestra takes, therefore, dramatically reasserts the values of the private, family sphere in the face of the awful power of the community.

And, famously, it also asserts the value of the feminine in the face of the power of the masculine. A large part of the fascination of the *Oresteia* is its enactment, which at once feels both intensely psychologically real and broadly allegorical, of conflicts between men and women and the interests each group seems to represent. The progression of the trilogy, indeed, seems to career between alternating assertions of male and female power. In the first play, for instance, female power is triumphant (Clytemnestra is referred to as a "woman with a man's strength of heart"); in the second, the son's murder of the mother seems to reassert the masculine dominance. The third play, with exquisite complexity, both resolves and confuses the issue: in his trial, Orestes is acquitted, to the great distress of the female Furies—a seeming reimposition of masculine power; but the outraged Furies are themselves re-empowered as the new tutelary deities of Athens, the Eumenides. On the other

hand, while one could argue that the deciding vote in Orestes's trial is cast by a female, the goddess Athena—a seeming reiteration of feminine power—Athena is, however, no ordinary female: masculine in aspect and interests (she is a warrior-goddess), she is famous above all for being a daughter who never had a mother. The confusing intricacies keep multiplying.

Those confusions, the competition between alternative meanings and interpretations of the action as it unfolds, are related to another vital theme in the trilogy: language. Beginning with the *Agamemnon*'s opening reference to the series of signal flares that is meant to announce the Greek victory at Troy, the *Oresteia* is a work unusually preoccupied with what we might call "problems of meaning": all three plays bristle with references to language, signs, symbols, portents, dreams, double meanings, omens—in short, the whole panoply of tools by which we try, and so often fail, to communicate. The dramas' special emphasis on the possibility of double meanings, starting with those opening signal flares (which to the lonely Watchman signify Agamemnon's triumphal homecoming and the end of trouble at Mycenae, but which to Clytemnestra—and the audience—mean the king's death and a new cycle of horror) remind us that it is always possible to read the world in different, and often competing, ways.

The moral murk through which the trilogy slogs, therefore—famously symbolized by the opulent blood-red carpet on which Agamemnon finally agrees to tread, thereby sealing his fate—is paralleled (and also, possibly, explained) by a kind of linguistic murk, by the obscurity of the characters' communications with each other, and with the heavens. The trilogy's long struggle towards justice is, indeed, reflected in the play's language, which is extremely dense and convoluted in *Agamemnon* (one of whose characters, Cassandra, has a famously problematic relationship to language and meaning: she is a seer whose utterances no one believes), but which gets gradually clearer and more straightforward as the trilogy progresses towards its celebratory conclusion.

A great final question that hangs over the *Oresteia*—the question that keeps asserting itself through the various twists and turns of its crime-and-punishment plot, its

exploration of violence, gender, language, psychology, and politics—has to do with religion: To what extent are the actions we perform our own? To what extent are the workings of the world predetermined by a higher, if often inscrutable, system? Does Agamemnon "decide" to sacrifice his daughter—or is the war in Troy a preordained conclusion, a cosmic fait accompli, part of a divine plan in which the Mycenaean king is merely a puppet? Are the younger members of this family predestined by an ancient curse to bathe in one another's blood—or are the psychologies that Aeschylus so subtly limns in his drama the real reason for the violence among the Atreids? Do the gods themselves obey a higher power?

The answers to those and so many other questions raised by the *Oresteia* are as complex, and perhaps as elusive, as everything else about the work. Part of the deep pleasure of seeing it performed lies, indeed, in realizing how none of its discrete concerns—theatrical, moral, political, erotic, familial, religious, existential—is extricable from the others. It is for this reason that Aeschylus' creation remains not only the oldest but perhaps the greatest surviving example of what Wagner called a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, a "total work of art": a work whose seemingly infinite intricacies have been challenging, and enthralling, audiences for 25 centuries, and are sure to do so for 25 more to come.

*Daniel Mendelsohn is the Charles Ranlett Flint Professor of Humanities at Bard College.*

**Gregory Thompson** Director

Gregory Thompson directed the acclaimed SummerScape 2007 production of George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*. As founder and artistic director of AandBC (1989–2009), he (and designer Ellen Cairns) produced a series of touring productions of classical and new drama, including *Henry VIII* (for the Royal Shakespeare Company, at Stratford's Holy Trinity Church); *The Tale that Wags the Dog* (Edinburgh, Plymouth, London, Los Angeles); *The Tempest* (Bath, Canterbury, London, Milton Keynes, Czech Republic, Hong Kong, Poland, Romania, Russia, Trinidad, and the United States); *The Winter's Tale* (Bath); and *Pericles*, *Twelfth Night*, *Measure for Measure*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *As You Like It* (all at Lincoln's Inn, London). Thompson also directed a Royal Shakespeare Company production of *As You Like It* at Stratford, Newcastle, and Washington, D.C. His honors include two Critics Awards for Theatre in Scotland: Best Ensemble 2008, for *The Wall* at Glasgow's Tron Theatre, where he was director from 2006–07; and Best Director 2006, for *Molly Sweeney* at the Glasgow Citizens Theatre; the Jerwood Young Vic Director's Award 2006; and, for *The Pull of Negative Gravity* at Edinburgh's Traverse Theatre, a Fringe First award and the *Guardian's* Best Director award. He has also served as creative director for the LIFT Business Arts Forum, and as director on attachment at the National Theatre Studio.

**Ellen Cairns** Set and Costume Designer

Ellen Cairns is a graduate of Glasgow School of Art and a post-graduate of the Slade, London. She was awarded the British Arts Council prize for Theatre Design in 1980. She now designs extensively in the United Kingdom and Europe. Her recent designs include *Romeo and Juliet* and *She Stoops to Conquer* at the Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester; Brecht's *Threepenny Opera* in Oslo; and *La Cage aux Folles* in Helsinki. Her site-specific productions include *Henry VIII*, directed by Gregory Thompson, at Holy Trinity Church in Stratford-upon-Avon; Harold Pinter's *The New World Order* at Brighton Town Hall; and Joe Orton's *The Erpingham Camp* on Brighton Pier. Cairns's

other productions with Thompson directing are *Saint Joan* at SummerScape in 2007, *The Pull of Negative Gravity* at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and 59E59 Theatre in New York, and *Molly Sweeney* at Glasgow's Citizens Theatre. Her current projects are a new Willy Russell musical in Liverpool, *A Raisin in the Sun* at the Royal Exchange, and a new musical, *Spin*, which will be performed in China in late 2010.

**Kai Fischer** Lighting Designer

Kai Fischer trained at Glasgow University and at Hochschule der Medien (HdM) in Stuttgart, Germany, where he graduated with a degree in audiovisual media design in 1999. He lives and works in the United Kingdom. His most recent lighting designs include *The Mystery of Irma Vep* (Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh); *The Indian Wants the Bronx* (Young Vic, London); *Macbeth* (Theatre Babel / Hong Kong Cultural Centre); *Sleeping Beauty* (Carnegie Hall, Dunfermline); *The New Not New* (Citizens Theatre, Glasgow); *4.48 Psychosis* (Sweetscar, Cumbernauld Theatre, and Tramway, Glasgow); *The Tailor of Inverness* (Dogstar); *The Demon Barber* (Perth Theatre); and *The Pearlfisher* (Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh). He also works as a set designer, and his recent credits include *Interiors* (Vanishing Point and Napoli Teatro Festival, Italy); *Heer Ranjha* (Ankur and Tramway, Glasgow); *Fewer Emergencies* (Ankur); *Little Otik* (Vanishing Point and the National Theatre of Scotland); *Home Caithness* (National Theatre of Scotland); and *Subway, Mancub,* and *Lost Ones* (all at Vanishing Point). Outside Europe, his work has toured to Canada, India, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, the Philippines, Malaysia, and, most recently, to Hong Kong. After a short tour to New Hampshire in 2002, this is his second visit to the United States as a lighting designer. Fischer's upcoming projects include a set and lighting design for *The Beggar's Opera* (Royal Lyceum Edinburgh, Vanishing Point, and Belgrade Theatre Coventry) and a lighting design for *Othello* at the Citizens Theatre, Glasgow.

**Andrea J. Cox** Sound Designer

Andrea J. Cox studied physics and philosophy at Liverpool University before she began designing shows at the Liverpool Everyman Theatre and the Bristol Old Vic. She then joined the Royal Shakespeare Company, where she has designed the sound for a broad range of Shakespeare plays, including *Measure for Measure*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *As You Like It*, and, most recently, all eight of the history plays, from *Richard II*

to *Henry V*, in Stratford and at the Roundhouse, London. She has designed sound for the RSC in Stratford-on-Avon, London, Michigan, and Washington, D.C. Her other sound designs for the RSC include *The Silent Woman*, *The Duchess of Malfi*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, *The Theban Plays*, *Little Eyolf, Tales from Ovid, Ghosts*, *The Mysteries*, *The Phoenician Women, A Servant to Two Masters, Shadows*, *Bad Weather*, *Back to Methuselah*, and *Postcards from America*. Outside the RSC, her sound design work also includes *The Pull of Negative Gravity* at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2004 and 59E59 in New York in 2005, *Sons of York* at the Finborough Theatre, and *The Scarecrow and His Servant* at Southwark Playhouse.

**Anna-Maria Casson** Production Stage Manager

For the past year, Anna-Maria Casson has been working at the Old Vic Theatre in London, on the recent productions of Brian Friel's *Dancing at Lughnasa* and Alan Ayckbourn's *The Norman Conquests*, the latter of which transferred to Broadway in the spring. She has also worked for various other theater and opera companies in London, including the Young Vic, English National Opera, Unicorn Theatre for Children, and Opera Holland Park. She has also worked for the Buxton Opera Festival, the Nuffield Theatre, and Theatre by the Lake, Keswick.

**Louise Collins** Electra

Louise Collins played the title role in the sold-out SummerScape 2007 production of Shaw's *Saint Joan*, which was also directed by Gregory Thompson. She previously worked with Thompson when she played the role of Miranda in AandBC's U.S. tour of *The Tempest*, and as Bethan in *The Pull of Negative Gravity* at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival (Fringe First award) and at New York's 59E59. She trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. At Clwyd Theatr Cymru, in North Wales, she played Poppy in *Noises Off* and Abigail Williams in The Crucible (both directed by Terry Hands), Mary in *The Suicide* (Barry Kyle), Mariana in *Measure for Measure* (Phillip Breen), and Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Tim Baker). Her other roles include Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet* and Ariel, Miranda, and Sebastian in *The Tempest* (both directed by Ellie Jones at the New Wolsey); Meg in Arnold Wesker's *Amazed and Surprised* at the Royal Court and on BBC Radio (Fiona Weir); Teresa in *A Bed to Die For* at the Windsor Festival (Donald Sturrock); and Kitty in *Anna Karenina* at the Royal Lyceum (Muriel Romanes). Her television and radio work includes *Nice Day for a Welsh Wedding, Doctor Who*, and *Out of the Ordinary*.

**David Fielder** Chorus / Servant / Apollo

This is David Fielder's second appearance at SummerScape: in 2007 he played the Inquisitor in Shaw's *Saint Joan,* directed by Gregory Thompson. Since then, he has won awards in both the United Kingdom and the United States for his performances as Vladimir in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*; as Shylock in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*; and for acting in a new drama by Jennie Franks called *Dr. Freeman and Hilda*, based on the life of Dr. Walter J. Freeman, the famous "ice-pick lobotomist." He worked under Thompson's direction while touring the world with AandBC Theatre Company as Prospero in *The Tempest* and performing Jaques in *As You Like It* with the Royal Shakespeare Company. After more than 35 years as an actor, his favorite roles include Friar Lawrence in *Romeo and Juliet* for the Royal Shakespeare Company; Touchstone in Shakespeare's *As You Like It* and Fluellen in *Henry V* for the Globe Theatre Company; and Willy Loman in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, Azdak in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, and Arturo Ui in *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* for the Library Theatre.

**Beth Fitzgerald** Cassandra / Chorus / Fury

Beth Fitzgerald trained at the Welsh College of Music and Drama. At the National Theatre, her roles have included Thalia in *The Women of Troy,* Olga in *The Seagull*, and Anya in *Three Sisters*, all directed by Katie Mitchell, as well as the Mourner in *The House of Bernarda Alba*, directed by Howard Davis. For Guy Masterson Productions she has played Ruth Ellis in *Follow Me* during its 2008 tour (Best Actress, Brighton's Latest 7), Carol in *Oleanna*, Zelda Fitzgerald in *Bye Bye Blackbird,* and Marianne in *The House of Correction* (Best Actress, Stage Awards). For Brighton Festival Productions she has played Queen Mary in *The Bootmaker's Daughter,* directed by Thomas Guthrie, and Gila and Sara in *The New World Order,* directed by Ellie Jones. Her other theater roles include Ophelia in *Hamlet,* the title role in *Laodomia*, various roles in *Comedy Sketches,* Sarah in *The Lover,* Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet,* Olivia in *Twelfth Night,* Vera in *Private View*, Paulina in *The Winter's Tale,* and Yeliena in *The Bear.* Her television credits include *Catterick, Doctors, Bad Girls, Slightly Filthy Show, The Safe House,* and *Bang Bang It's Reeves & Mortimer.*

**Richard Glaves** Orestes

Richard Glaves trained at Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He recently completed a West End run of Alan Bennett's *Enjoy* at the Gielgud Theatre. His other London theater work includes *Journey's End* (Duke of Yorks and U.K. tour); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Macbeth* (Regents Park); and *Richard II, Edward II,* and *Twelfth Night* (Shakespeare's Globe). His other theater work includes *As You Like It* (Sheffield Crucible/Royal Shakespeare Company); *Scuffer* (West Yorkshire Playhouse); *The Tempest* (Liverpool Playhouse); *Candida* (Oxford Stage Company), for which he received an Ian Charleson Award nomination; *Habitat* (Royal Exchange, Manchester); *The Accrington Pals* (Minerva, Chichester); *The Clandestine Marriage* (Watermill, Newbury); *Spike* (Nuffield, Southampton); *The Boy Who Left Home* (ATC, Lyric Studio, and U.K. tour); and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Wild Thyme, Neuss Shakespeare Festival, Germany). His television work includes *Housewife 49* (BAFTA award, Best Single Drama)*; The Tudors; The Roman Mysteries;* and *Richard II: Live from Shakespeare's Globe*. He was in the film *Atonement*, and he was in the cast of the Big Finish Productions audio drama *The Final Amendment*.

**Derek Hutchinson** Watchman / Aegisthus / Fury

Derek Hutchinson's last U.S. appearance was on Broadway in Deborah Warner's acclaimed production of *Medea* with Fiona Shaw, in which he played the Messenger. Previously he appeared at New York's BAM in the Royal Shakespeare Company's productions of T. S. Eliot's verse drama *The Family Reunion* and Cheek by Jowl's *Much Ado About Nothing*. His recent theater work includes *Ashes to Ashes* (Royal Academy of Dramatic Art); *The Herbal Bed* (Salisbury Playhouse); *Martha, Josie, and the Chinese Elvis* and *Elizabeth Rex* (Birmingham Rep); *Henry VIII* (AandBC/RSC Festival); *Dead Funny* (West Yorkshire Playhouse); *Oliver Twist* (Lyric Hammersmith); *Greater Good* (Mill Studio, Guildford); *The Critic* (Manchester Royal Exchange); *Villette*, *Way Upstream*, and *Leonce and Lena* (Crucible Theatre, Sheffield); *Rebecca* and *Jekyll and Hyde* (Edinburgh Lyceum); and *King Lear* and *Coriolanus* (Kick Theatre Company). For the National Theatre he has performed in *Under Milk Wood*, *Arcadia*, *Napoli Milionaria*, *King Lear*, and *Richard III* (world tour). With the Royal Shakespeare Company he has performed in *The Churchill Play*, *Electra*, *Titus Andronicus*, *The*

*Taming of the Shrew*, *Measure for Measure*, and *Julius Caesar*. His television work includes *Doctors*, *Forgiven*, *Spooks*, *Midsomer Murders*, and *The Bill*. He appeared in the films *PU-239*, *V for Vendetta*, *Stage Beauty*, *Being Julia*, and *The Cormorant*.

**Aoife McMahon** Chorus / Chorus / Athene

Aoife McMahon trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London. Her screen credits include *A Touch of Frost*, *Doctors*, *My Dad's the Prime Minister*, *The Clinic*, *Steel River Blues*, and *Holy Cross* for BBC films, and a leading role in *Random Passage*, directed by John N. Smith, for which she was awarded the 2002 Best Actress Gemini Award (Canadian BAFTA). McMahon's theater credits include *Hallelujah* and *The Great Theater of the World* at the Arcola; Anne Boleyn in *Henry VIII* for the RSC; Zoe in *Oh Go My Man* at the Royal Court; Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth* at the Derby Playhouse; Alma in *Gates of Gold* at the Finborough Arms; Beauty in *Beauty and the Beast* for the Royal Shakespeare Company; Maeve in *Scenes from the Big Picture,* directed by Peter Gill, at the National Theatre; Chris in *Dancing at Lughnasa* at the Greenwich Theatre and the Watermill in Newbury; *Pains of Youth*, directed by Katie Reid, at the National Theatre Studio; Barblin in *Andorra*, for Gregory Thompson, at the Young Vic; Pegeen Mike in Robert Delamere's production of *Playboy of the Western World* at the Liverpool Playhouse; *Oriana,* for the Kabosh Theatre Company; and the title role in *Deirdre,* for the Armagh Rhymers Theatre.

**Hilton McRae** Agamemnon / Fury

Hilton McRae has acted in venues ranging from 7:84 Theatre Company Scotland to the Royal Shakespeare Company to the West End. He was in the original cast of *Mamma Mia*, and he played the Engineer in *Miss Saigon*, Thenardier in *Les Misérables*, and Prince Nikki in *My One and Only*. His New York theater work includes the Broadway production of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* and *Rabbit* at 59E59. He has played Hamlet, Macbeth, Iago, Prospero, Othello, Claudius, and a host of other Shakespearean roles, and he has acted in Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, *A Doll's House*, and *Hedda Gabler*. Recently he played Max in Tom Stoppard's *Rock 'n' Roll*, the Scarecrow in *The Wizard of Oz* at the Royal Festival Hall in London, Josef in Brenton's *Weapons of Happiness*, and Mr. Stopnick in Tony Kushner's *Caroline, Or Change* at the National Theatre. He just completed a film called *The Death Penalty*; his other films include

*The French Lieutenant's Woman*, *Greystoke*, *Return of the Jedi*, and *Mansfield Park*. His television appearances include *Frances Tuesday*, *Silent Witness*, *Lewis*, and *Max Headroom*. Later this summer McRae will work with composer Giorgio Battistelli at the Edinburgh International Festival.

**Rhys Meredith** Herald / Pylades / Fury

Rhys Meredith trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. He is a member of the Factory Theatre. He, too, was in the 2007 SummerScape production of *Saint Joan*. His other stage credits include *Knives in Hens* (Ustinov); *Nostalgia* (Drum); *The Tempest* (AandBC's U.S. tour); *Hamlet* (West End production and U.K. tour); the Factory's *Hamlet*; *Twelfth Night* (Shakespeare's Globe U.S. tour); *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Golden Ass* and *Twelfth Night* (Shakespeare's Globe); and *Mister Paul* (Contemporary Stage Company). On television he has worked on *Doctors*, *Robin Hood*, *Charles II*, *Henry VIII*, *State of Play*, *Fun at the Funeral Parlour*, *NCS: Manhunt*, and *Ali Meek Gets A Result*. His film credits include *The Hollow*, *Loony in the Woods*, *Daylight Robbery*, and *Chasing Sheep*. He has also performed in radio, in works such as *Flash For Freedom*, *The Determined Client*, *In a Glass Darkly*, and *They Do It with Mirrors*.

**Mary Jo Randle** Clytemnestra / Clytemnestra's Ghost

Mary Jo Randle trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, where she won the Bancroft Gold medal. Her film and television work includes *Monkey Love*; *Small Island*; *Souled Out*; *Control*; *Red Riding*; *Wire in the Blood*; *Affinity*; *Pierrepoint*; *Midsomer Murders*; *Cutting It*; *The Lakes*; *Born to Run*; *Bad Behaviour*; *Olly's Prison*, a trilogy for television by Edward Bond; *Inspector Morse*; and *Victoria Wood as Seen on TV*. Her theater work includes *The Memory of Water* (Hampstead); *Divine Right* (Birmingham); the title role in *Phaedra* (Lyric Hammersmith); *Monster* (Manchester Royal Exchange); *Paradise Bound* (Liverpool Everyman); *What's in the Cat?* (Royal Court); *Question Time* (Arcola); and *As You Like It*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (Royal Shakespeare Company). She has also devised a one-woman show, *Dearly Beloved*, for The Not the RSC Festival at Stratford and the Almeida Theatre. The show was subsequently published in book form, entitled *Catch Me When I'm Happy*.

**Sandra Voe** Chorus / Clissa / Priestess

Sandra Voe's numerous theater appearances include roles in *Attempts on Her Life* and *The Strangeness of Others* (National Theatre); *Enemies*, *Camera Obscura*, *The Winter Guest*, *The Deep Blue Sea*, *Nana*, and *The Seagull* (Almeida); and *The Kitchen* and *Attempts on Her Life* (Royal Court). She has also appeared in productions for the Royal Shakespeare Company, National Theatre of Scotland, Royal Exchange, Shared Experience, Bush Theatre, Crucible Theatre, Lyric Hammersmith, and many others. Her film roles include appearances in the award-winning *Vera Drake* and *Naked*, both directed by Mike Leigh; *Breaking the Waves,* directed by Lars Von Trier; *Local Hero* (Bill Forsyth); *Comrades* (Bill Douglas); and *Immortal Beloved* (Bernard Rose); and she recreated her stage role of Chloë for Alan Rickman's film version of *The Winter Guest*. She has had recurring roles in the television series *Love Hurts*, *Body and Soul*, *Holding On*, and *Playing the Field*. She has made guest appearances on many other popular shows, such as *Midsomer Murders*, *Monarch of the Glen*, and *Foyle's War*, and she played the part of Camilla Pocket in the Emmy-nominated television version of *Great Expectations*.

We honor the late Richard B. Fisher for his generosity and leadership in building and supporting this superb center that bears his name by offering outstanding arts experiences. We recognize and thank the following individuals, corporations, and foundations that share Dick's and our belief in presenting and creating art for the enrichment of society. Help us sustain the Fisher Center and ensure that the performing arts are a part of our lives. We encourage and need you to join our growing list of donors. (The list reflects donations received in the last 12 months.)

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