

# Magdalene Community at Rothko Chapel

Sunday, July 9, 2006, 10:00 a.m.

## Opening Music and Meditation

### Opening Dialogue

*Solo: we see not only with our eyes*

*Unison: we hear not only with our ears*

*Solo: we touch not with our hands*

*Unison: but feel beyond the senses with our hearts*

*Solo: Truth is bound*

*Unison: yet unbound*

*Solo: What was hidden*

*Unison: remains hidden until we choose to look*

*Solo: What was unspoken*

*Unison: remains silenced until we choose to hear*

*Solo: As above*

*Unison: So below*

*Solo: The world...round or flat?*

*Unison: depends solely upon the perspective of the time*

*Solo: Those who have ears to hear*

*Unison: Let them hear*

### A Reading from *Pistis Sophia*, Chapter 24:

*"It happened now when Jesus finished speaking these words to his disciples, Maria, the beautiful in her speech, came forward. The blessed one prostrated herself at the feet of Jesus and said : "My Lord, suffer me that I speak in thy presence, and be not angry with me because I trouble thee many times, questioning thee". The Savior answered compassionately, he said to Maria: "Speak the discourse which thou dost wish, and I will reveal it to thee openly" Maria answered and said to Jesus : "My Lord, in what manner would the souls be delayed outside or in what form will they be quickly purified?"*

## **A Reading from Pistis Sophia, Chapter 25:**

"However Jesus answered and said to Maria : "Excellent, Maria. Thou dost ask well with an excellent question and thou dost seek everything with certainty and with accuracy. Now indeed I will not conceal anything from you from this hour, but I will reveal everything to you with certainty and openly. Hear now, Maria, and give ear, all you disciples.

## **A Reading of Rumi: "Moses and the Shepherd"**

Moses heard a shepherd on the road, praying,  
"God,  
where are you? I want to help you, to fix your  
shoes and comb your hair. I want to wash your  
clothes and pick the lice off. I want to bring you  
milk to kiss your little hands and feet when it's  
time for you to go to bed. I want to sweep your  
room and keep it neat. God, my sheep and goats  
are yours. All I can say, remembering you,  
is ayyyyy and ahhhhhhhhhhh."

Moses could stand it no longer.  
"Who are you talking to?"  
"The one who made us,  
and made the earth and made the sky."  
"Don't talk about shoes  
and socks with God! And what's this with your  
little hands  
and feet? Such blasphemous familiarity sounds like  
you're chatting with your uncles.  
Only something that grows  
needs milk. Only someone with feet needs shoes.  
Not God!  
Even if you meant God's human representatives,  
as when God said, 'I was sick, and you did not  
visit me,'  
even then this tone would be foolish and irreverent  
Use appropriate terms. Fatima is a fine name  
for a woman, but if you call a man Fatima,

it's an insult. Body-and-birth language  
are right for us on this side of the river,  
but not for addressing the origin,  
not for Allah."

The shepherd repented and tore his clothes and  
sighed  
and wandered out into the desert.

A sudden revelation  
then came to Moses. God's voice:  
You have separated me  
from one of my own. Did you come as a Prophet to  
unite,  
or to sever?  
I have given each being a separate and unique way  
of seeing and knowing that knowledge.  
What seems wrong to you is right for him.  
What is poison to one is honey to someone else.  
Purity and impurity, sloth and diligence in  
worship,  
these mean nothing to me.  
I am apart from all that.

Ways of worshipping are not to be ranked as better  
or worse than one another.  
Hindus do Hindu things.  
The Dravidian Muslims in India do what they  
do.  
It's all praise, and it's all right.  
It's not me that's glorified in acts of worship.

It's the worshipers! I don't hear the words  
they say. I look inside at the humility.  
That broken-open lowliness is the reality,  
not the language! Forget phraseology.  
I want burning, 'burning'.  
Be friends  
with your burning. Burn up your thinking  
and your forms of expression!  
Moses,  
those who pay attention to ways of behaving  
and speaking are one sort.  
Lovers who burn  
are another.  
Don't impose a property tax  
on a burned-out village. Don't scold the Lover.  
The "wrong" way he talks is better than a hundred  
"right" ways of others.  
Inside the Kaaba  
it doesn't matter which direction you point  
your prayer rug!  
The ocean diver doesn't need snowshoes!  
The love-religion has no code or doctrine.  
Only God.  
So the ruby has nothing engraved on it!  
It doesn't need markings.  
God began speaking  
deeper mysteries to Moses. Vision and words,  
which cannot be recorded here, poured into  
and through him. He left himself and came back.  
He went to eternity and came back here.  
Many times this happened.  
It's foolish of me  
to try and say this. If I did say it,  
it would uproot our human intelligences.  
It would shatter all writing pens.

Moses ran after the shepherd.  
He followed the bewildered footprints,  
in one place moving straight like a castle  
across a chessboard. In another, sideways,  
like a bishop.  
Now surging like a wave cresting,  
now sliding down like a fish,  
with always his feet  
making geomancy symbols in the sand,  
recording  
his wandering state.  
Moses finally caught up  
with him.  
"I was wrong. God has revealed to me  
that there are no rules for worship.  
Say whatever  
and however your loving tells you to. Your sweet  
blasphemy  
is the truest devotion. Through you a whole world  
is freed.  
Loosen your tongue and don't worry what comes  
out.  
It's all the light of the spirit."  
The shepherd replied,  
"Moses, Moses,  
I've gone beyond even that.  
You applied the whip and my horse shied and  
jumped  
out of itself. The divine nature and my human  
nature  
came together.  
Bless your scolding hand and your arm.  
I can't say what's happened.  
What I'm saying now  
is not my real condition. It can't be said."

The shepherd grew quiet.  
When you look in a mirror,  
you see yourself, not the state of the mirror.  
The flute player puts breath into a flute,  
and who makes the music? Not the flute.  
The flute player!

Whenever you speak praise  
or thanksgiving to God, it's always like  
this dear shepherd's simplicity.

### **A Reading from The Gospel of Mary**

(Mary said) 'I said to him, 'Lord, now does he who sees the vision see it (through) the soul (or) through the spirit?' The Savior answered and said. 'He does not see through the soul nor through the spirit, but the mind which [is] between the two - that is [what] sees the vision and it is [..]'. (pp. 11-14 missing)

The Ascent Vision:

And Craving said:  
"I did not see you descend,  
but now I see you rising.  
Why do you lie, since you belong to me?  
The soul answered:  
I saw you  
Though you did not see me,  
Nor recognize me  
I was with you as with a garment  
And you never felt me."  
Having said this  
The soul left, rejoicing greatly,  
Then it entered into the third climate  
Known as Ignorance.  
Ignorance inquired of the soul:  
Where are you going?  
You are dominated by wicked inclinations.  
Indeed, you lack discrimination and you are enslaved."  
The soul answered:

When you eventually see  
through the veils to how things really are,  
you will keep saying again  
and again,

"This is certainly not like  
we thought it was!"

Why do you judge me, since I have made no judgment?  
I have been dominated, but I myself have not dominated.  
I have not been recognized,  
But I myself have recognized  
That all things which are composed shall be decomposed,  
On earth and in heaven.”

Freed from this third climate, the soul continued its ascent  
And found itself in the fourth climate  
This has seven manifestations  
The first manifestation is Darkness;  
The second, Craving  
The third, Ignorance  
The fourth, Lethal Jealousy  
The fifth, Enslavement to the Body  
The sixth, Intoxicated Wisdom  
The seventh, Guileful Wisdom.  
These are the seven manifestations of Wrath  
And they oppressed the soul with questions  
Where do you come from, murderer?  
And Where are you going vagabond?

The soul answered:  
That which oppressed me has been slain  
That which encircled me has vanished;  
My craving has faded,  
And I am freed from my ignorance.

I left the world with the aid of another world  
A design was erased,  
By virtue of a higher design  
Henceforth I travel toward Repose  
Where time rests in the Eternity of Time;  
I go now into Silence.

# Call to Conversation

## Closing Dialogue

*Solo: Whence do you come, slayer of man?*  
*Unison: Where are you going, Conqueror of space?*

*Solo: What binds me has been slain.*  
*Unison: What surrounds me has been overcome.*

*Solo: Ignorance has died.*  
*Unison: We are released to another world.*

*Solo: We who have ears, have heard.*  
*Unison: We who have vision, have seen.*

*Solo: Peace I give to you*  
*Unison: Acquire my peace within you.*

*As an expression of appreciation to The Rothko Chapel for use of this sacred space,  
your love offering in the box marked "Magdalen Community"  
will be gratefully received.*



*For more information about the Magdalen Community, please contact Bridgitt Ayers,  
<[bdickey@rice.edu](mailto:bdickey@rice.edu)>. Please include "Magdalen Community" in the subject line.*