



Photo: Patricia Duncan

FROM THE HUGE SILENCE BY GORDON PARKS

THE PRAIRIE IS STILL IN ME,
IN MY TALK AND MANNERS.
I STILL SNIFF THE AIR FOR RAIN OR SNOW,
KNOW THE LONELINESS OF NIGHT,
AND DISTRUST THE WIND
WHEN THINGS GET TOO QUIET.
HAVING BEEN AWAY SO LONG
AND CHANGED MY FACE SO OFTEN,
I SOMETIMES SUSPECT THAT THIS PLACE
NO LONGER RECOGNIZES ME—
DESPITE THESE COWBOY BOOTS,
THIS WESTERN HAT AND
MY FATHER'S MUSTACHE THAT I WEAR.
TO THIS PLACE I MUST SEEM
LIKE WOOD FROM A DIFFERENT FOREST,
AND AS SECRETIVE AS BLACK LOAM.
THIS EARTH BREATHES UNEASILY UNDER MY BOOTS.
THEIR ODOR OF CITY ASPHALT
DOESN'T MIX WELL WITH THE CLEAN SMELL
OF WILD ALFALFA AND PURPLE LOVEGRASS.
IT PUZZLES ME THAT I LIVE SO FAR AWAY
FROM OUR OLD CLAPBOARD HOUSE
WHERE, IN OAK TREE SHADE,
I USED TO SIT AND DREAM
OF WHAT I WANTED TO BECOME.
I ALWAYS RETURN HERE WEARY,
BUT TO DRAW STRENGTH FROM
THIS HUGE SILENCE THAT SURROUNDS ME,
KNOWING NOW THAT ALL I THOUGHT
WAS DEAD HERE IS STILL ALIVE,
THAT THERE IS WARMTH HERE—
EVEN WHEN THE WIND BLOWS HARD AND COLD.

A CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF

GORDON PARKS

NOVEMBER 30, 1912 – MARCH 7, 2006



Photo: Gary Palmer

THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2006

3:00 P.M.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

308 S. CRAWFORD

FORT SCOTT, KANSAS

Prelude

Air—Bach
Sinfonia—Bach
Largo—Handel
Adagio in G minor, Albinoni
Organist, Greg Turner
Bonnie George, violin; Olivia Turner, violin
James Beltz, viola; Greta Adams, cello

Processional

“Hymn,” Gordon Parks

Opening Words

Pastor Christopher Culbreth

Hymn

“Joyful, Joyful” # 464 — Beethoven

Remembrances

Avery Brooks
Alain Brouillaud
Kurt Baker

Music

“*The House I Live In*” — Robert Nelson
Pianist: Ronda Bailey; Words-Millard Lampell, Music-Earl Robinson

Remembrances

Jill Warford
Katie Strickler

Music

“*Theme from The Learning Tree*” — Avery Brooks
Words and Music by Gordon Parks

Remembrances

Ken Lunt
Charles McAfee
David Parks

Tribute from the State of Kansas

Governor Kathleen Sebelius

Prayers and Closing Words

Pastor Culbreth

Reading from “The Huge Silence” by Gordon Parks

Toni Parks

Benediction

Pastor Culbreth

Postlude

Toccata on O ‘Worship the King’—Penfield

Recessional

Postlude on ‘Lauda Anima’—Schaffner
Voluntary—Stubley

Pallbearers

David Parks
Gordon Parks III
Alain Brouillaud
Charles Parks
Dr. Richard Piper
Dr. Gordon Piper

Interment

Evergreen Cemetery
Fort Scott, Kansas
(Private Family Service)