



Following Seeker: Landscape, Music, Myth and Transformation

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This is the story of the creation of an oratorio, a European musical form that most often depicts religious subjects. In 2006, I was asked to join a team that would create a new kind of oratorio drawn from an indigenous American myth rather than a traditional biblical source.

Enemy Slayer: A Navajo Oratorio tells a contemporary story with an archetypal root. Created for the Phoenix Symphony Orchestra's 60th Anniversary Season, the work's conceptual source lies within the Navajo sacred tradition, telling the story of Seeker, a young Iraq war veteran returning to his home on the reservation. Welcomed as a hero, Seeker soon finds himself losing grip, when the traumas of his wartime experience return to haunt him. As his thoughts turn to despair and suicide, the voices of the elders intervene, urging him to return to the Pollen Path, to the way of hozho, beauty and harmony.

The libretto is by Dr. Laura Tohe, Diné poet and professor of English at Arizona State University. The musical score is by Mark Grey, a California composer. In creating the story line for *Enemy Slayer*, Laura and Mark consulted frequently with a group of Diné elders in order to ensure that the story we told would not offend the gods or the people in any way. Our task was to very consciously create a bridge between the Diné and Anglo cultures of Arizona and beyond, in a work that would appeal to a broad multi-cultural audience.

Seeker's psychological journey echoes that of his mythic forebears, the hero twins Monster Slayer and Child Born for Water. As children of Changing Woman and the sun, the hero twins undertook to save the earth surface people, whose existence in this world was threatened by monsters. The twin hero's

exploits were made possible through the divine intervention of the holy people, who bestowed them with magical weapons. Returning from their triumphant quest, the twins could not let go of the longing to slay enemies, and had to be sung back to psychological balance.

This story forms the basis for the Enemy Way ceremony, used to heal the psyches of returning soldiers and return them to a life of harmony within their community. It is said that the very first Enemy Way Ceremony was performed for the twin warrior heroes at the end of their journey.

Seeker appears in *Enemy Slayer*, at the completion of the first half of his mythic journey. He has gone to Iraq to fight the enemy, having “signed away his life with gratitude, with honor, with love,” in the true tradition of the Navajo warrior. He returns home to be greeted as a hero, but because the memories and psychological monsters of war are still with him, there is a further battle to be fought. *My challenge in accepting this commission was to find a way to “illuminate” the music and myth using photography without literally picturing a ceremony (which would have been both wrong and impossible). The telling of Navajo sacred stories outside of the proper context is strictly forbidden. But the importance of the valuable psychological knowledge in this tale could be adapted to inform a contemporary audience outside of the ceremonial setting. For this reason, the elders gave the project their blessing. And as it turns out, this knowledge is sorely needed in our world today.*

Both the myth of the hero twins and the story of Seeker moves around and through the Navajo nation, contained within the boundary of four sacred mountains. The spiritual journey represents also the four cardinal directions and

related stages of life, completion of which constitutes a kind of initiation and achievement of wholeness, expressed as a quaternity. Throughout the Navajo worldview, in fact, the number four is paramount. Four seasons, four times of day, four stages of life, four colors, four sacred stones - one might not receive answer to a question posed once, but if asked four times, an answer must be given. When the mythical hero twins reach their final stage of development, the two become four, to stand astride the four sacred mountains.

Four sacred mountains, Sisnaajini, Tsoodzil, Dook'ooslid, and Dibe Nitsa, constitute both the physical and spiritual boundaries of the Navajo world. In his commentary on the Beautyway Ceremony, Leland Wyman emphasizes that

“Place is of the utmost importance to the Navajo. The need is felt ritually to recapitulate mythical toponymy and topography in song and prayer. The geographical details of the long journeys of the protagonists of the myths almost literally bound the Navajo country; at least they state its landmarks.” p. 36

Today the four sacred mountains continue to carry their archetypal status as container of the people and their culture, although threats from outside the culture demand vigilance in the courts and political arena. Desecrations abound – ski lodges, uranium mines, loss of freedom of access and grazing rights, telecommunications towers, housing developments – such intrusions have rendered many places no longer suitable for the performance of ceremony, but the sacred mountains remain powerful in their real and symbolic status as protectors of the Navajo people.

Therefore, I took it as my challenge to undertake a similar journey, following a route of pilgrimage to the sacred mountains from east to south, west to north, and back to east again, to depict the mythic yet real backdrop for Seeker's journey from returning hero, to personal hell and thoughts of suicide, and back to the path of beauty. What I didn't realize was how undertaking this journey would also test me with new physical and psychological challenges or that a straightforward road trip could become a transformative inner journey.

Dr. Joseph Henderson, in his psychological commentary on the stories of *The Pollen Path*, as retold by Margaret Schevill Link, relates that many of the stories in the Navajo tradition deal with the archetype of the journey and initiation. Of these, he says,

“Behind the delicate perception of natural phenomena, the Navajo is a natural psychologist showing his awareness of inner psychic facts. He describes the arduous journeys of his heroes over mountains and deserts which imperceptibly loses their outer reality and become, as it were, landscapes of human emotion reaching heights of elation and depths of despair. The journey itself becomes a journey of inner exploration in which a man, at variance with the contrasting opposites in his nature, strains toward a goal of unity expressed paradoxically as a fourfold symbol of wholeness.” p.128

Just as the hero twins were given magical weapons, gifts with which to conquer their enemies, my own mythic journey also commenced with a gift. Arriving at the extremely crowded Southwest Airlines terminal in Oakland, I had two extremely heavy bags of equipment to check. After paying my overweight fees, I hurried off to find a security line longer than anyone had ever seen, snaking around the edge of the huge baggage claim area and then further coiling

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around and around the baggage carousels. I was glad that I had arrived hours early, and took my place in line. But just then, I heard someone call my name – it was the baggage handler at the curbside kiosk walking toward me, gesturing to me to get out of line and come to her. No!! I thought, this is terrible. I'll miss my flight and my equipment will sit without me there to claim it. I asked her anxiously if she would return me to the line. "Just take my arm," she said sternly. "I didn't give you your receipt." Having no other choice, I followed obediently. Whereupon she handed me my receipt for the overweight baggage payment and proceeded to escort me to the very front of the security line. As a result, I was first in line for my flight instead of last, got a perfect window seat in front of the wing instead of middle seat at the back of the airplane, and was able to make the photographs that make up the entire prologue of the Enemy Slayer montage. The fact that none of my subsequent flights into the region took this precise path over the sacred landscape of the Navajo - Monument Valley, the goosenecks of the San Juan River, Shiprock and Dinetah, made this quite a gift, indeed.

Let me now invite you into the journey in the way that I set out for the symphony audience. The chorus sings

"Red earth below his feet; Red earth with open arms; The ground feels familiar; Earth-surface child returns home; From across the big water."

As Seeker flies home and sees the red earth below his feet, so do you in the musical prologue:



Upon arrival in Albuquerque, I was surprised by the sudden onset of a feeling of being utterly lost and panicked. How on earth would I do this? What, in fact, was I looking for? (I didn't yet realize I had already begun the piece, with the photographs taken from the airplane. That discovery would come months later, in my studio, as I began assembling the visual sequences.) In reality, it seemed at that moment that I had succumbed to an immense case of hubris. For I had absolutely no idea how I would translate landscape photographs into a meaningful setting for a story as profound as Seeker's. I had not been to war, I was not Navajo, I had never participated in a ceremony. What had seemed like a dream assignment suddenly felt a bit nightmarish. What was I thinking!!?

But there I was with a job to do, so I found my way to Petroglyph National Monument for an afternoon walk. Again, I received a gift. The area contains Anasazi petroglyphs not directly related to the story I was hoping to tell. The Anasazi were earlier settlers of the four corners region who disappeared mysteriously not long before the Navajo arrived. But I wanted to get a feel for the

terrain, and set out on foot to see what I would learn. Almost immediately, I noticed a trio of doves watching me from the rocks just uphill from where I stood. Observing as they flitted from rock to rock, I noticed carvings quite far from the pathway, hidden from sight. The doves guided me more than halfway into Rinconada Canyon, stopping uphill, inviting my gaze, urging me to slow down, to pay attention to small things, to become as quiet as the place I was entering, to listen to the voices of people long gone. They were leading me into the past, away from the bustle of contemporary life and into the quieter space of history and myth.

Thanking the doves and the spirits in the petroglyphs, I packed up and hit the road toward my first goal – Sisnaajini, Mount Blanca, the sacred mountain of the east. Sisnaajini signifies birth, is represented by the color white and is associated with dawn, spring, white shell and White Shell Woman. Driving northeast toward my goal, a clear sunlit day suddenly turns grim. Torrential rains, pounding hailstorms, thunder and lightning surround me. I'm on a high, flat, empty plain, almost zero visibility, with no place to go for shelter to await the end of the storm. There's no time to ponder the meaning of the mountain now, just pay attention to the road and make it safely to my destination.

At the outset of *Enemy Slayer*, Seeker experiences another kind of exhilaration. In his case, it is the thrill of returning home a hero. He is warmly welcomed by his family and community, as are all returning warriors in the Navajo tradition. He sings, "I am called seeker.....I am part white shell." But his feeling of happiness is short-lived. He sings, "brother, I miss you....and the plastic flowers that cover you now." For Seeker witnessed the death of his clan

brother and begins to feel a sense of guilt – both survivor guilt and the gnawing sense that he had failed, that he should have been able to save his brother’s life. A visual meditation in the Navajo Veterans Cemetery in Fort Defiance, Arizona serves as witness to this sense of loss.



I reach Alamosa, Colorado with Sisnaajini still distant on the horizon and it’s pouring rain. I lay on my motel bed, exhausted, wondering again what I’m doing here and how I’m going to accomplish my task when a strong beam of sunlight shatters my reverie. (I’m reminded of Jung’s comments on perceptions of sunlight as a solid – an indication of possible insanity.) It’s close to sundown and the day has turned brilliant. I race to the mountain. Sisnaajini welcomes me with a show of absolute splendor. I will look back on this moment as the opening of my own consciousness to the strength of mountains, and cling to this knowledge when things are not going well.



Tsoodzil, Mount Taylor, the turquoise mountain, represents summer, youth, noontime, and is the sacred mountain of the south. As much as Sisnaajini greeted me with a flamboyant show of welcoming beauty, Tsoodzil retreated, enigmatic and reticent, as if it wished to avoid my gaze. Here, Seeker begins to be haunted by memories of war. He sings “Over there their eyes shudder behind glass; I smoked myself in the mad smoke of war; Mothers’ hopes wrapped in bloodied rags; The children lay like broken toys spilled on the streets; Red rags. Limbs and dreams rearranged by war.” This mountain has suffered brutal desecration from activities related to war – most especially uranium mining and its infiltrating toxic waste poisoning the area’s waters. My own attempts to approach the mountain become threatening. Driving up the only access road, a sign warns “do not pick up hitchhikers.” I soon pass a prison, and the men behind the razor wire wave at me from outdoor picnic tables. I shudder, both from the sight of men penned up like animals and the knowledge that at least

some of them are possibly violent and dangerous to society. A little further up the road, a man in a very old and dilapidated van has parked near a ditch. He is shooting at rocks through a fence with a very large pistol. A recent fire has left the trees on this side of the mountain charred and black. The closer I come to the mountain, the less of it I see. There is absolutely nothing welcoming about this landscape, and I leave, feeling inadequate to the task.

Flowing south from Mount Taylor is the lava flow known as El Malpais, significant in the hero twins myth as the coagulated blood of the giant monster slain by them in a final effort to save their people. This is a ghastly landscape of sharp, black and blood red lava, twisted bushes and burned trees. Visiting this place, I ask, “Seeker, where are you now?” He is sinking into the abyss, suffering intensifying dissociated episodes, acid flashbacks of his war experiences. He cannot re-enter his former life and begins to wander, hopeless and lost. He sings “Brother, here’s a toast to you! A toast! And a toast to you, Grim Reaper.” And later, “At that moment I forgot your warrior name; that brilliant flash knew you; I let my shield down; Brother, forgive me!”

Dr. James Hillman, in his book *A Terrible Love of War*,” says of this condition,

“PTSD carriers of the remnants of war in their souls infect the peaceable kingdom. They are like initiates among the innocents. The pain and fear, and knowledge, absorbed in their bodies and souls constitute an initiation – but only halfway. It is an initiation *interruptus* still asking for the wise instruction that is imparted by initiations. Why war; why that war; what is war? How can what I now know in my bones about treachery and hypocrisy, about loving compassion and courage, and killing,

reenter society and serve my people. If peace means no war and I am soaked in war's blood, what am I doing here?"



In mythic times, the Diné, too, wandered, lost in the Painted Desert. As Seeker sinks deeper into post-traumatic stress and depression, he encounters this barren yet beautiful land of his ancestors. He leaves the protection of the turquoise mountain, the provider of his warrior's shield, no longer searching but simply wandering. He has become completely alienated now with delusions of increasing intensity. I am reminded of Paul, the protagonist of *All Quiet on the Western Front*, when he goes on leave. His intense longing to return home from the death-filled trenches of World War I becomes pure disillusionment, when he realizes he no longer "belongs."

"I imagined leave would be different from this. Indeed, it was different a year ago. It is I of course that have changed in the interval. There lies a gulf between that time and today. At that

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time I still knew nothing about the war, we had only been in quiet sectors. But now I see that I have been crushed without knowing it. I find I do not belong here any more. It is a foreign world.” p.168

And later, “I bite into my pillow. I grasp the iron rods of my bed with my fists. I ought never to have come here. Out there I was indifferent and often hopeless – I will never be able to be so again. I was a soldier, and now I am nothing but an agony for myself, for my mother, for everything that is so comfortless and without end. I ought never to have come on leave.” p.185

From the Painted Desert to the monsters of Bisti – the solace of the desert exists simultaneously with the danger and desolation found there. What am I doing here? As I ask myself, I think perhaps Seeker, too, is asking this fundamental question. As he fills with guilt and remorse the landscape threatens. The sun burns overhead. His alienation stems from the psychic barriers that keep him from re-entering his former life. Mine stems from the self-doubt of the outsider. Hiking alone in the Chindi Wilderness of the Painted Desert, with only birds, lizards, snakes and insects as my companions, I become intensely aware of what it means to be an outsider and feel a sudden empathy with Seeker. At the same time, I wonder if what I am doing makes any sense. Will the well-heeled symphony-goer have any clue? Can a landscape really project psychological states? Can I maintain a consciousness of what I am doing that will not tread coarsely on what belongs rightly to the Diné and their tradition? Although I feel

that I have begun to see this land through Seeker's eyes, can such a psychological projection inform the images I am making?

By the time he reaches the badlands of Bisti, Rock Monsters threaten Seeker at every turn. Suicide beckons. "What's the use to go on living, when I can just end this madness," he sings, sinking into the deepest despair. The voices of the ancients beg him, remind him that he has purpose for his existence, that he must return to the corn pollen pathway of life.



Dook'oosliid, Mount Humphreys in the San Francisco Peaks, is the sacred mountain of the west. It is represented by the color yellow; abalone shell is its stone. It signifies autumn and adulthood. In its shadows, Seeker's angst begins to gnaw at his soul. He sings

"Your blood poured brightly through my hands like a lamb being slaughtered; I could not stop it! I wish for sleep, a deep sleep not hammered with gunfire and the click of my nerves,"
and the voices of the ancients urge him back.

“Your spirit weighs heavily and has wandered away from your heart and mind. War causes imbalance in you and the world.”

The power of the sacred mountain is invoked. A blast of brass instruments signals a point of no return, but the clarity of the mountain’s image emerging from the yellow fog and memories of war summons hope and the strength of mountains.



The spectre of suicide for war veterans is not part of a fictional story. In *Enemy Slayer*, Seeker’s journey represents the very real and dangerous path faced by many returning from war’s horrors. In the San Francisco Chronicle of April 22, 2008, an article on suicide by veterans of the current Iraq war states

“More than 120 veterans of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq commit suicide every week while the government stalls in granting returning troops the mental health treatment and benefits to which they are entitled... veterans are committing

suicide at the rate of 18 a day - a number acknowledged by a VA official in a Dec. 15 e-mail. (SF Chronicle – Bob Egelko)

This is but one of many such articles appearing in newspapers all over the country revealing the magnitude of the crisis facing our returning soldiers. Society's typical response to this crisis is most often to impose isolation on the sufferer whether by abandoning them to cope on their own or hospitalizing them in psychiatric facilities.

No thought is given to the second half of the equation of balance proposed by the elders who warned "War causes imbalance in you *and in the world.*" (my emphasis) One goal of the Enemy Way ceremony is to give the warrior psychological weapons with which to rid himself of the monsters that have invaded his psyche and to make possible his return to home and community without carrying ghosts. The health of the community is equally at stake. Again an observation from Dr. Hillman:

"Peace for veterans is not an 'absence of war' but its living ghost in the bedroom, at the lunch counter, on the highway. The trauma is not 'post' but acutely present, and the 'syndrome' is not in the veteran but in the dictionary, in the amnesiac's idea of peace that colludes with an unlivable life." p. 32

Dr. Hillman continues: "Breakdown reveals the human under the calloused skin of the warrior." Navajo ceremony seeks to penetrate this "calloused skin" and restore balance to the warrior, thus also bringing balance into the community. Donald Sandner's important study, *Navajo Symbols of Healing*, delves deeply into the way in which symbolic healing takes place, noting

“Healing was and remains one of the foremost concerns of the Navajo, among whom physical healing is not so important as bringing the patient into a strong, symbolic relationship with his social, cultural, and natural environment. This is the time honored task of the medicine man, or hatali.” p. 25

Ceremony involves and heals both the individual and the collective, representing an entirely different approach to psychological treatment than that of modern medical culture.

Dibé Nitsa, Mount Hesperus, is the sacred mountain of the north. Its color is black, its stone, black jet. It signifies death, old age, and winter. Its resident deity is Monster Slayer himself, and is the final point on the compass of sacred mountains, closing the circle around the Navajo homeland. As Seeker approaches this point, the chorus of elders pleads more urgently than ever. They sing “Throughout your life you carry your warrior name; Your name is your shield; Your name is your protection; Remember your warrior name,” and later “You are armed to walk forward into the world with courage, with strength, with bravery.” Recognizing and paying honor to Seeker’s warrior role rather than trying to negate or eliminate it, the ancient voices wisely work toward a transformation of the negative energy that controls him, turning it toward a peaceful goal. Thus they validate him as a complete being with all of his life experience respected and intact.

As I approach Dibé Nitsa, a sense of dread overcomes me. Driving around the region, I discover no way to view the mountain. I am nearing the end of my travels. I have experienced transcendent moments, especially at dawn in the Valley of the Gods and hiking the magnificent red rock canyons of Tséyi (Canyon

de Chelly). And I experienced real fear, like when my car broke down miles from anywhere in 95 degree heat with no cell phone signal and no passersby willing to stop and help me.

Landscape photography is a mercurial pursuit. Atmospheric conditions, changing light patterns, time of day, season, mood and pure luck all must combine in the right way to make a successful image. Opportunities for the elements to align themselves one more time seemed to be slipping away, and I couldn't find the mountain. Now I must seek help, and I find it in a most surprising person. Stopping at the local US Forest Service office, an elderly man at a desk asks if he can help. "Yes, please, can you tell me if there are places where I might find good views of Mount Hesperus?" He pulls out a large map of the region, and describes several routes, all involving very remote, poor, undeveloped dirt roads into the wilderness. I have rented a 4-wheel drive vehicle, but really have no experience in actual 4-wheel drive techniques. Marking out the routes in pencil, he advises, "Now go, strap on your sense of adventure and have a great time."

With that confidence building counsel, I make my way up the mountain. Sure enough, the road becomes rutted, narrow, the way often partially obstructed by large rocks. I go forward incredibly slowly, trying not to scrape the bottom of the car or worse, to tip over. Had I not received the guidance and implicit validation of my ability to pursue this path, I would surely have turned back in frustration and disappointment. But the elderly voice urges me on. With my "sense of adventure" fully awakened I reached an opening in the dense aspen forest with a view of the magnificent, isolated, eerily formed, rocky and striated

peak. Its force is immediate, magnetic, even hypnotic, as it telegraphs the strength of mountains beyond anything I've experienced. This mountain, or, perhaps, the combination of the mountain and my effort to reach it, has the power to enact transformations. I find myself immediately captured in its magnetism. What seems like a moment of intense viewing turns out to have lasted nearly four hours. As clouds move over the peak and the sun moves across the sky, I am filled with a sense of peace, of immensity within and without, no fear – no emotion, really, just pure, quiet being.



Again I ask, “Seeker, where are you now?” If the essence of his life experience has not been honored, what chance has he to return to peace? As Dr. Hillman states,

“The return from the killing fields is more than a debriefing; it is a slow ascent from hell. ...The veteran needs a *rite de sortie* that belongs to every initiation as its normal conclusion, making possible an intact return.” p. 33

In *Enemy Slayer*, a contemporary veteran finds the means for such an intact return to health and balance through his encounter with the mythic tradition of his people. In fact, the Enemy Way Ceremony is still being used to help these wounded warriors. Approaching Dibé Nitsa, Seeker has reached the turning point. In his moment of transformation he sings,

“To choose the abyss or to slay; the enemies pressed inside me; I hear my relatives’ voices in my dreams; I know it’s time to make the choice.”

He recognizes and accepts himself powerfully as he sings

“I know who I am; I am Enemy Slayer! Enemy! I destroy you! I take myself back. I make the world safe.”

To complete the transformation requires a return, a new beginning. The first white light of morning, the time during which healing prayers are said at the end of a night of ceremony, is the moment of emergence of this new found balance. Seeker sings “Early twilight dawn brings the cleansing light; I emerge from the belly of my mother’s beauty.” His journey complete, *Enemy Slayer* concludes with an impassioned prayer from the combined voices of Seeker and the chorus, referencing the quaternary elements of wholeness, it is a prayer for love, compassion, hozho.



Enemy Slayer is above all a psychological story. It is the journey of a psyche damaged by and under the control of traumatic war experience. The healing that overcomes this traumatic psychic injury is through a shamanic journey, led by the wisdom of the elders, back to harmony with existence, in which landscape plays an integral role. Dr. Sandner, in *Navajo Symbols of Healing*, says,

“All this symbolism has a definite purpose: to link the mythic events to physical reality, just as the prayers do when they begin with familiar places and proceed to mythic ones. This allows the psyche to fix on well-known images such as familiar mountains, rivers, canyons, etc., and then gradually move beyond them into an inner mythic landscape.” p.202

Encountering the immensity of a mythic landscape allows for a kind of inside-out experience – where one feels at once astonishingly small and

insignificant and, simultaneously, at one with that immensity. At that point, one sees that what is known, what is rational, is only a small part of the wholeness of reality. Again, Dr. Henderson:

“The energy thus activated (through contact with the collective unconscious via the archetypes) is never finite and therefore never perishable, nor is it either good or bad from a conscious point of view. It is essentially amoral and immortal, being always capable of renewal in an autonomous manner.” p.130



Is healing to be found in conscious surrender to this infinite mystery? For although the psyche – especially through individuation – separates us, the archetypal world, that liminal zone between the individual and the infinite – binds us together. From the Navajo ceremony, we are reminded that the fate of one is not separate from the fate of another. As the container becomes contained in the mystery, and paradoxically, contained becomes container as consciousness

dawns, a marriage of opposites occurs that allows for a restructuring of the relationship to self, place, home, and family.

It contains the fullness of psyche – conscious and unconscious – memories of battle, hero worship, myth and reality. In his book *On the Nature of the Psyche*, Jung reminds us to remain vigilantly open-minded when, in describing the limitations of the psychology of the day, he said,

“the position of psychology is comparable with that of a psychic function which is inhibited by the conscious mind: only such components of it are admitted to exist as accord with the prevailing trend of consciousness. Whatever fails to accord is actually denied existence, in defiance of the fact that there are numerous phenomena or symptoms to prove the contrary” p.72

We must continue to find new ways, new tools for creating psychological health and balance in our selves and in our communities, maintaining constant awareness of the limitations of our perceptions.

At the premiere performance of *Enemy Slayer*, a Navajo audience member approached Laura and me as we stood talking in the lobby. He clearly had something important to say. Addressing us both, he said “The essence of the story of *Monster Slayer* is the need for a people to constantly find new tools with which to battle their enemies and solve their problems. I think that in making this piece, you have done that. You have found new tools for telling this important story.”

I am not advocating for pilgrimages to the Navajo sacred mountains, nor am I suggesting that we try to create imitation ceremonies for non-Navajo veterans. But I do think that some very important and universal principles exist

in this story that might help us to find new roads toward healing, especially when it comes to the psychic wounds suffered by returning warriors. Those must include the acceptance of the archetypal nature of war, the recognition of the changes of personality affecting the soldier, validation of the soldier's intentions and experiences, inclusion of family and community in the process of re-integration and healing, and a container, a sacred space within which to create the spiritual connection to the world that allows for a real transaction between the participants and their surroundings. That everything on the earth is sacred is both an awe-inspiring characteristic of the Navajo worldview and also something very humble, something to which we can all aspire. Namely, allowing the natural world to remind us, at every moment, of its connection to that immensity, that transcendent realm we touch through psyche, art and archetype.

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Performance excerpts courtesy of the Colorado Music Festival, Michael Christie, Music Director

A CD recording of *Enemy Slayer: A Navajo Oratorio* is available at www.naxos.com. Unfortunately, there was no DVD of the performance, but more clips are available at www.deborahogrady.com under the pull-down menu: moving pictures.