

The Juniper Tree



by Philip Glass &
Robert Moran

CSUN®

DEPARTMENT OF
MUSIC

CSUN
OPERA

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the world of The Juniper Tree.

This brothers Grimm tale was inspired by the work of Philipp Otto Runge, a painter and philosopher whose work has been compared to that of William Blake. He was adept at philosophy, and his paintings were full of symbolism and allegory. This tale, more than many of the Grimm's stories, is full of Christian (and Catholic) imagery and themes, including the Eucharist, resurrection and martyrdom. The use of imagery like the juniper tree, the gold chain, the millstone, and the red shoes are drawn directly from the bible.

Approaching this piece was a bit like trying to make sense of a bad dream, full of blood, cruelty, fear, revenge, and ultimately, some kind of unsettling redemption. I found the powerful themes were brought to life by the music of Philip Glass and Robert Moran, and the tension between these two composers amplified the unsettling nature of the story. We have worked to create a world which will seem both familiar, yet alien, like seeing our own world through a "Glass Darkly".

We invite you to let this story wash over you and just like a disturbing dream, we hope you find our production both disconcerting and beautiful.

~ **Maurice Godin**

California State University Northridge

Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication

Department of Music

Present

The Juniper Tree

Music by Philip Glass and Robert Moran

Libretto by Arthur Yorinks

Stage Director

Maurice Godin

Music Director

Mercedes Juan Musotto

Choreographer

Paula Thomson

Coach & Collaborative Pianist

Alex Lansburgh

Lighting Designer

Kira Daehlin

Collaborative Pianist

Derrick Morales

Costume Designer

Mary Linn Daehlin

Stage Manager

Kira Daehlin

Zoe Monge

Shigemi Matsumoto Recital Hall

April 16-19 2026

7:30 pm, except April 19 at 2:30 pm

Parking on campus is by permit only. Permit machines are available in parking lot B-1.

Runtime is approx. 1 hours, 10 minutes

There will be no intermission

Advisory: This production contains gunshot sounds and loud noises.

English supertitles will be projected above the stage.

CAST

Character

The Husband

The Wife

The Son/The Juniper Bird

The Stepmother

The Daughter

The Goldsmith

The Cobbler

The Miller

The Mama Bird

April 16/18

Patrick Bittner

Samantha Rosenberg

Sophia Paz

Fantasia Guerra-Rivera

Gabrielle Pilar Johnson

Gabe Baker

George Froehlig

Jonathan Hernandez

Paulette Sta. Maria

April 17/19

Leviticus Valko

Jessica Liu

Mia Karnakis

Kristin McGinnis

Isabella Catalano

Gabe Baker

Artur Tarveryan

Colin Schmaltz

Amber Keys

Chorus

Andrea Salas

Danica Huerta

Esai Meador

Dancers

Eliana Baker

Kaythe Hernandez

Ashley Sanchez

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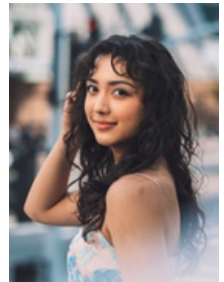
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**DERRICK
MORALES**



**ELIANA
BAKER**



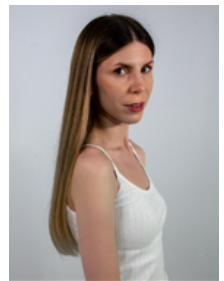
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ORCHESTRA

Piccolo/flute

Kailey Queen

Clarinet/bass clarinet

Casey Grimm

Bassoon

Eric Johnson-Tamai

Horn

Alec Chinnery

Trumpet

David Etterbeek

Trombone

Wilfrido Cruz-Solano

Keyboard 1

Alex Lansburgh

Keyboard 2

Derrick Morales

Violin 1

Nelly Guevara

Violin 2

Volkan Can Canbolat

Viola

Jonathan Burns

Cello

Mark Bassett

Double bass

Zachary Orr

Percussion

Lauren Rooke

Tori Mitchell

SYNOPSIS

A loving couple share a home under the shade of a juniper tree. They cherish each other deeply and yearn to share that love with a child. The wife expresses her longing while cutting an apple. She cuts her hand and the blood drips into the roots of the juniper. She conceives a boy but dies in childbirth and is buried by the roots of the juniper tree.

The husband remarries, has a daughter with his second wife and the four live together, but the home is not a happy one. The man and the second wife struggle to find happiness, but his new wife resents the man's son. This resentment grows to hatred. The stepmother worries that her husband sees his first wife in his son, "her hair, her eyes." She fears that the man will leave everything to the son and nothing will be left for her or her daughter. This suspicion festers, and the stepmother surrenders to darkness and madness. She cuts the boy's head off by slamming the sharp edge of a trunk full of apples on the boy's neck. She then cuts the boy up, cooks him in a stew and feeds him to his own father. The boy's sister takes his bones and buries them in the shade of the juniper tree, by his mother.

The boy resurrects as a beautiful bird, whose voice acts like a siren to the townspeople. He sings for them in exchange for gifts: a gold chain from the goldsmith, a pair of red shoes from the cobbler, and a millstone from the miller.

The husband returns, full of optimism for the day. The stepmother, however, is overcome with foreboding. She senses a terrible storm coming. The bird appears and gifts the father with the gold chain and the daughter with the red shoes. He then drops the millstone on the stepmother, killing her. The bird then transforms back into the boy, and he is reunited with his sister and his father.

COMPOSERS

Philip Glass

Through his operas, his symphonies, his compositions for his own ensemble, and his wide-ranging collaborations, Philip Glass has had an extraordinary and unprecedented impact upon the musical and intellectual life of his times.

The operas – “Einstein on the Beach,” “Satyagraha,” “Akhnaten,” and “The Voyage,” among many others – play throughout the world’s leading houses, and rarely to an empty seat. Glass has written music for experimental theater and for Academy Award-winning motion pictures such as “The Hours” and Martin Scorsese’s “Kundun,” while “Koyaanisqatsi,” his initial filmic landscape with Godfrey Reggio and the Philip Glass Ensemble, may be the most radical and influential mating of sound and vision since “Fantasia.” His associations, personal and professional, with leading rock, pop and world music artists date back to the 1960s, including the beginning of his collaborative relationship with artist Robert Wilson. Indeed, Glass is the first composer to win a wide, multi-generational audience in the opera house, the concert hall, the dance world, in film and in popular music – simultaneously.

He was born in 1937 and grew up in Baltimore. He studied at the University of Chicago, the Juilliard School and in Aspen with Darius Milhaud. Finding himself dissatisfied with much of what then passed for modern music, he moved to Europe, where he studied with the legendary pedagogue Nadia Boulanger (who also taught Aaron Copland, Virgil Thomson and Quincy Jones) and worked closely with the sitar virtuoso and composer Ravi Shankar. He returned to New York in 1967 and formed the Philip Glass Ensemble – seven musicians playing keyboards and a variety of woodwinds, amplified and fed through a mixer.

The new musical style that Glass was evolving was eventually dubbed “minimalism.” Glass himself never liked the term and preferred to speak of himself as a composer of “music with repetitive structures.” Much of his early work was based on the extended reiteration of brief, elegant melodic fragments that wove in and out of an aural tapestry. Or, to put it another way, it immerses a listener in a sort of sonic weather that twists, turns, surrounds, develops.

There has been nothing “minimalist” about his output. Glass has composed more than thirty operas, large and small; fourteen symphonies, thirteen concertos; soundtracks to films ranging from new scores for the stylized classics of Jean Cocteau to Errol Morris’s documentary about former defense secretary Robert McNamara; nine string quartets; a growing body of work for solo piano and organ. He has collaborated with Allen Ginsberg, David Bowie, Paul Simon, Linda Ronstadt, Yo-Yo Ma, Leonard Cohen, and Doris Lessing, among many others.

Robert Moran

Moran, Robert (Leonard), American composer; b. Denver, Jan. 8, 1937. He studied piano; went to Vienna in 1957 and took lessons in 12-tone composition with Apostel. Returning to America, he enrolled at Mills Coll. in Oakland, Calif., where he attended seminars of Berio and Milhaud (M.A., 1963); completed his training with Haubenstock-Ramati in Vienna (1963); also painted in the manner of Abstract Expressionism. He was active in avant-garde music circles; with Howard Hersh, he was founder and co-director of the San Francisco Cons. 's New Music Ensemble; was composer-in-residence at Portland (Ore.) State Univ. (1972–74) and Northwestern Univ. (1977–78), where he led its New Music Ensemble; also appeared extensively as a pianist in the U.S. and Europe in programs of contemporary music. In his compositions, he combines the “found art” style with aleatory techniques; some of his works are in graphic notation animated by a surrealist imagination.

APR – MAY

CSUN MUSIC EVENTS SPRING 2026

APR 26 HONORS STRING QUARTET - 3:00 PM

APR 27 MARIACHI LOS MATADORES DE CSUN

APR 29 JAZZ C, VOCAL JAZZ & LATIN JAZZ

APR 30 NORTHRIDGE SINGERS
UNIVERSITY CHORUS

MAY 1 CSUN STUDIO ENSEMBLE

MAY 2 CSUN WIND ENSEMBLE

MAY 3 CSUN YOUTH ORCHESTRAS GALA \$20

MAY 5 PACIFIC BRASS ENSEMBLE

MAY 6 CSUN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

MAY 7 CSUN JAZZ A - WYCLIFFE GORDON

PLAZA DEL SOL
SHIGEMI MATSUMOTO RECITAL HALL
THE SORAYA

EVENTS 7:30 PM AND \$10-\$20 UNLESS NOTED

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Supertitles operators	Fantasia Guerra-Rivera
	Kristin McGinnis
Crew	Angela Rhodes
Lighting Assistant	Kira Shimamura
Lighting Professor	Andrea Heilman

Thank you to the wonderful vocal and instrumental performance faculty for all their work with the students involved in this production.

Voice Faculty

Hugo Vera, Diane Ketchie-Saar, Shigemi Matsumoto, Erica Davis, Garineh Avakian, Jeremy Galyon

Strings

Lorenz Gamma, Wendy Richman, Diane Roscetti, Jory Herman, Ryan Baird, Allison Allport

Winds and Percussion

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