

Frances White and James Pritchett: *As night falls* (2012)

Program Notes:

As night falls is the third in a series of works that began with *The old rose reader*. In that piece, the scene is a bedroom. A woman is having difficulty getting to sleep, and a man sits by her bedside, reading to her from horticultural books about roses. Sometimes he reads from the book, and sometimes he makes up his own fanciful stories about the roses. After *The old rose reader* we made a companion piece, *The book of roses and memory*, which acts as a kind of remembrance of the first piece, as if from a much later time.

As night falls is meant to occupy the space between *The old rose reader* and *The book of roses and memory* to form a concert-length theatre piece. The bedroom scene is the same, but this time we view it from the perspective of the woman. Her monologue, read by the narrator, comes from a place of fluid boundaries: between past and present, memory and perception, consciousness and unconsciousness, reality and dream, life and death.

In *As night falls* Frances refrained from alluding to themes from the other two pieces. Instead, she tried to create music that is in the same sonic world but has a completely different feeling and texture. Because this is a duet, the violin and viola inevitably suggest, in some sense, the couple in the story, but they also create a kind of commentary on the text that magnifies and empathizes with the human condition of the characters.

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—Frances White and James Pritchett