

## Rachel Grimes - The Way Forth (2019)

Written by bluesever

Sunday, 17 November 2019 16:21 -

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1. *Got Ahold of Me* 04:14 2. *Postcard from Pauline* 01:45 3. *Patsy* 02:10 4. *Sisterhood of Man* 03:19 5. *Red House School* 05:24 6. *The Hysterical Society* 02:15 7. *Nowhere on Earth* 03:24 8. *There Is No Other* 03:32 9. *The Spells* 01:32 10. *Fontaine Ferry* 04:25 11. *For So Long* 04:40 12. *Dix River Doxology* 03:21 13. *Dolly* 01:43 14. *Bill of Sale* 01:52 15. *End of Dominion* 12:06 16. *Sara* 02:44 17. *A New Land* 03:38 Voice: Timbre Cierpke, Joan Shelley, Scott Moore SATB Choir: SONUS Narrator: Stephen Webber Piano: Rachel Grimes Harp: Timbre Cierpke Guitar: Nathan Salsburg Banjo: Sean Johnson Percussion: Sean Johnson, Jecorey Arthur Violin: Scott Moore, Erica Pisaturo, Rob Simonds Viola: Laura De St. Croix, Evan Vici Cello: Charlie Patton, Cecilia Huerta-Lauf | Bass: Aaron May Clarinet: Teddy Abrams Spoken word: Jecorey Arthur, Martha Neal Cooke, Rachel Grimes, Joe Manning, Nathan Salsburg, Joan Shelley, Doris Smith, Bettie Wheeler

The Way Forth, a new folk opera from Rachel Grimes, encompasses lush layers of voices and orchestrations in an experiential, non-linear investigation highlighting perspectives of Kentucky women from 1775 to today.

Inspired by a treasure-trove of family documents, photos, and letters spanning several generations, Grimes began in 2016 to research some of the more vexing questions that came to the surface about these people, places, and events. Fueled by intuition, travel to visit family, photographing, and filming present day rural Kentucky life, the research led to many more questions: What is missing? What is not being said here? What did she really think and feel? Primary historical accounts routinely glossed over people without titles or voting rights, and dehumanized most others by referring to them as objects of desire, savages, or slaves. Further examination formed a framework for trying to reconcile her state's history and how it relates to the westward expansion and settlement of the United States and ultimately how an era of domination, denial, and pain is reflected in the complex culture of today.

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The songs that make up The Way Forth weave back in time through a postcard, a personal account of a long life on a farm, traces of folk tunes, names, places, and rivers, all woven into an emotional fabric of yearning, nostalgia, grief, and the rich intimacies of everyday life. Initially solo voices are heard above vivid orchestrations, expanding with the choral voices of the community through fragments of traditional church music and popular tunes. The scope widens to include a modern male narrator's reflections on a place battered by greed, civil war, bigotry, and the exploitation of natural resources. Through music, voice, and film, The Way Forth honors the emotional legacy of the silenced, the holistic, the beauty in quotidian life, and explores the eternal grace and redemption of time, as symbolized by the great Dix and Kentucky Rivers.

Instrumentation includes piano, harp, strings, choir, lead vocals and narrators. Special guest collaborators include Stephen Webber (SITI Company), Timbre Cierpke (SONUS), Joan Shelley, and Nathan Salsburg. Experimental film created in collaboration with Catharine Axley.

Rachel Grimes is a composer and pianist who creates music for chamber ensembles, orchestras, film, and collaborative live performances. Her work has been performed by ensembles such as the Louisville Orchestra, Kansas City Symphony, Knoxville Symphony, A Far Cry, Longleash and the Dublin Guitar Quartet. Recent works include the soundtrack The Doctor From India (2018), The Blue Hour (with Shara Nova, Caroline Shaw, Sarah Kirkland Snyder and Angelica Negron, commissioned by A Far Cry, 2018), Through the Sparkle (with astrïd on Gizeh Records 2017), The Clearing (Temporary Residence, 2015), Book of Leaves, Marion County 1938, If Then Not When with King's Daughters & Sons (Chemikal Underground), and numerous albums with ground-breaking indie chamber group Rachel's (Quarterstick/Touch and Go). ---rachelgrimes.bandcamp.com

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