

The Art of Bringing Us Together

In honor of the Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center

People gather for commerce, for trade; they gather by rivers,
And fertile fields, pathways to the past and to new places—
Journeys over a mountain pass, across wide plains. People gather
To worship, to celebrate, to mourn; they gather for spectacle:

Think of the silence after the final word of a play, and the audience
Exhales a performed world labored to life, the shared,
Strange language of the no-longer familiar unfurled
In a rippling way that says we are more than wind in the lungs,

An ecstatic pulse becoming dust. That says we imagine, we create.
Let us see each other clearly, hear the songs of making, watch the grace
Of moving bodies. Let us trust our urge to shape, to hear, to feel made things.
To love what is sculpted, scribbled, spoken. There are silences beyond metaphor,
Beyond music, and so, the words we speak or sing, our diligent seeking
Of their arrivals, how we gather and listen: these acts are what we are for.

Tod Marshall
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