



Nodin Press

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Messages from the Nile

Philip S. Bryant

From the sleepy college town of St. Peter, Minnesota, Philip S. Bryant once again shares with us a wide range of impressions, images, and rhythms. On one page he's appreciating delicate lines across new-fallen snow, and on the next he's reassessing the Battle of the Little Bighorn or offering up a prayer for the NRA. Time and again he succeeds in bringing the historical, political, and natural worlds together in surprising ways. He can transform rage into lyricism without undercutting the significance of the injustices involved, and he can instill evidently mundane experiences—the song of a goldfinch or the appearance of a spring ephemeral—with cosmic significance. Baseball, campfire smoke, intelligent design, a farm repair sign along the highway, there's no telling what theme will command his attention next, and that's half the fun.

What's the true meaning of a liberal arts education? In Bryant's view, it's "Just Soul," and soul abounds in these challenging and delightful lyrics.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Philip S. Bryant, a native of Chicago, is the author of four previous collections of poetry: *Blue Island*, *Sermon on a Perfect Spring Day*, *Stompin' at the Grand Terrace: a jazz memoir in verse*, and *The Promised Land*. His work has appeared in *Blues Vision: African American Writing from Minnesota*, *Good Poems*, *American Places*, selected and introduced by Garrison Keillor, and *Where One Voice Ends Another begins*, *150 Years of Minnesota Poetry*. *Sermon on a Perfect Spring Day* was nominated for a Forward Prize and was a finalist for the Minnesota Book Award in poetry. Selections from *Stompin' at the Grand Terrace* were chosen by *Los Angeles Times* Music Critic Ann Powers to appear in *Best Music Writing, 2010*. *The Promised Land* was a finalist for the Benjamin Franklin Award. He was a fellow of the Minnesota State Arts Board in 1992 and 1998, and has served on the governing board of the Loft. He has worked with the Givens Foundation as a mentor for emerging African American writers. He was a radio-essayist for Minnesota Public Radio and is currently a professor emeritus at Gustavus Adolphus College. He lives with his wife, Renée, in St. Peter, Minnesota.

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