

# Hebrews 11:29-12:2 (NRSV) for Interpretive Movement

Arranged and choreographed by David A. Douthett

This reading arranged for interpretive movement is imagined with one person reading and two others performing the movements. While the mood of the piece is rather dire in places, the movements, many of which are pantomime, are intended to be somewhat lighthearted and caricatured. At least that's the idea as I'm sitting down to write them. There will need to be some noticeable pauses between some of these micro-vignettes to allow for resetting the scene, as it were.

29 By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land,	Walking across chancel, one as if something (like the Red Sea) is going to drop on her head at any moment, the other striding confidently and passing the first.
but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned.	One starts to charge back across, as carrying a spear overhead. The other overtakes him, tackling him to the ground from above.
30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days.	The two face each other, 10 feet apart, with hands over head. They are the walls. Slowly, they fold at the waste, collapsing to the "ground", standing but bent 90 degrees at the waste.
31 By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.	"Rahab" greets the "spy" with a kiss on each cheek, and then covertly, casually, hustles the spy "out" so no one will notice, then stands and "looks innocent"
32 And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—	One starts ticking of on her fingers, while the other taps his watch impatiently
33 who through faith conquered kingdoms,	Both gesture with one hand toward heaven as a token of faith. #1 begins to "fight" and slash with a "sword" this way and that, then holds both hands up in victory!
administered justice, obtained promises,	#2 mimes weighing two things as with a scale balance [justice], then when they are even, gives two thumbs up!
shut the mouths of lions,	#1 mimes roaring like a lion. #2 shuts #1's jaws, either forcefully or playfully or casually
34 quenched raging fire,	#2 mimes being roaring flames. #1 dumps a bucket of water on #2, quenching same.
escaped the edge of the sword,	#1 takes a swing at #2 with a mimed sword, missing as #2, praying upward, steps aside.

won strength out of weakness,	#1 starts crumpled over and grows to full stature in a strong-man pose
became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.	#2 swings sword, hack! Hack! "Yells" victoriously and points at retreating enemy
35 Women received their dead by resurrection.	#1 dies. #2 sobs. #1 gets up again. They hug.
Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection.	#2 as hanging by wrists or stretched on rack, #1 cranks the wheel
36 Others suffered mocking and flogging,	
and even chains and imprisonment.	Holding arms up in front of their faces as if chained at the wrists
37 They were stoned to death,	#1 mimes throwing rocks at #2, who staggers
they were sawn in two,	#1 mimes working a saw on #2, who falls to knees
they were killed by the sword;	#1 mimes swinging a sword at #2, who finally "dies" <i>(then get back up, the show must go on!)</i>
they went about in skins of sheep and goats,	Both indicating their skanky clothing
destitute, persecuted, tormented—	Poor pockets, then defensive poses as if being hit
38 of whom the world was not worthy.	"Oh no, you didn't" ( <a href="#">Take your pick</a> , but I like <a href="#">this one</a> )
They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.	Both wander about the chancel, hiding here and there
39 Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith,	Come back to center stage, arm around each other's shoulders, thumbs up
did not receive what was promised, 40 since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect.	#1 - " <a href="#">No, no, no</a> " hands Then, #2 - "Come on with me!" hands
12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,	Both, sweeping arms indicating everywhere, then pointing at the "saints" within the "cloud" (and also in the sanctuary)
let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely,	Take heavy objects off shoulders and lay them down, and shaking it out

and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us,	#1 to #2, come on! Both jog around the chancel and back to center
2 looking to Jesus	Both: <a href="#">soft hand pointing heavenward</a>
the pioneer and perfecter of our faith,	#1 - "we're #1" hand; then #2 - fist to upturned palm - finished!
who for the sake of the joy that was set before him	Celebrate together! Stretch arms up and out! ...
endured the cross, disregarding its shame,	#2 - arms out as on the cross, head bows #1 - looks away, aghast
and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.	Both turn to the outside, coming around together to center, facing congregation; look up, hands toward heaven in praise and awe!  Freeze. End.

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