LOSSES

CORNEL WEST
Scholar

Chekhov/Coltrane

Wearing cufflinks, a black vest, tie, white shirt, no jacket, in an easy chair with table and lamp (the interview took place in a hotel room). Sipping cognac from a snifter and at some point lighting a long, brown cigarette. This piece is a verbal tour de force, and must be spoken with swiftness and passion, and the actor must completely understand its complexity, speaking it as if it were everyday, simple speech.

To use the language of decline
decay and despair
Rather than doom gloom and
no possibility
Because I think any talk about
despair is not where you end but
where you start
and then the courage and the sacrifice
come in
and at the level of hope
not optimism.
Hope and optimism are different.
Optimism tends to be based on
the notion that there's enough
evidence out there that
allows us to think things are going
to be better
much more rational