

## **A Message of Tolerance**

**Gregory Mosher:** I'm sure a lot of people in the Columbia community have read Bollinger's book *The Tolerant Society*, in which he makes a remarkable case, I mean a remarkably . . . he has a remarkably interesting perspective on the notion of free speech. And it's not that *Tierno Bokar* or Peter Brook's work is simply a replication of that argument, but they are on the same subject, because there could be no more compelling subject as we move into 2005 than how all of us living all over this globe are going to live together. And for both Tierno Bokar and in his . . . Tierno Bokar's real life, and in the play called *Tierno Bokar* and in Bollinger's book *The Tolerant Society*, tolerance is not an inactive thing, tolerance is not passive—"Oh, I'll tolerate it." Tolerance is an engagement with the rest of the world. It is an active, focused way of looking at people with whom you may disagree. It's a decision you make in your life to be tolerant, and it is not a cost-free decision. Now Tierno Bokar pays with the greatest thing you could pay with: he pays with his life and his . . . and has to reach into the deepest part of his own identity to find out whether he's capable of playing . . . paying that price. But he finds that he is, which is why the play itself becomes so moving.