

The background of the cover is a complex arrangement of overlapping circles. Some are solid black, while others are white with a black outline. The circles vary in size and are scattered across the page, creating a dynamic, abstract pattern. The text is placed within these circles or in the spaces between them.

# Noetic Sojourns

Fragments of the  
Subconscious

Rusty Kjarvik  
translated by Matt Alexander H.

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Rusty Kjarvik was a writer from Arctic Norway orphaned on a Scandinavian immigrant farm in Michigan. He was adopted by an Ojibwe family and learned to write in a dialect of Anishinaabe local to the region around what is now Grand Rapids. In his writings, he fused Sami language with Ojibwe. He worked as a fisherman and wild rice farmer, and passed away at home on the shores of Lake Michigan in early 2021 soon after turning 97.

Matt Alexander H. was born in 1986 in Northampton, Massachusetts by the Holyoke Range and Connecticut River Valley. He was raised in the Atlantic coastal town of Mattapoisett, which, in the Algonquin language, means, “place of rest”. He lives alone by the Sea of Marmara.

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## I

The subconscious can be said to influence daily life by virtue of its pervasive, irrational caprice. Yet, it is as defining for waking consciousness as shadow is to light. The subconscious swirls with inner urges and expresses the imagination of desire. Dreams, thoughts, and other mental phenomena that are below that of consciousness but exist nonetheless, are sometimes realized, whether voluntarily or not.

The subjects of subconscious focus, or emergence, reside at a level of awareness that is a more subtle grade of mental perception than that usually conceived during the so-called “normal” waking state. Dreams have residual impact in daily life, especially considering the repression of emotional responses to their content upon waking, remembering and reflecting through the dense fog of personal obscurity and symbolic knowledge.

Writing dreams as a form of introspective journaling creates a receptacle of the mind through which a person might ease and relieve the burden of their dreams through an outlet, and if published, generate dialogue with others who have journeyed inward and contacted common archetypes.

Dream journalism is a method by which to experience the metaphors of language, by making connections between private, concealed expressions of mind as they peak under the sheet-thin layers of the body at rest, in its most vulnerable state.

\*

While immersed in a transition period in life, for example, when living in an oppressive place that either inhibits or does not allow work or study or any sustainable human activity, the immigrant of consciousness, as between national boundaries, is in a liminal state, not unlike the dream state. He sees the contents of his mind as if he were fully present, however, he recognizes that he does not actually exist, while simultaneously being overlooked by society, which confirms his absence. He is asleep.

He then emigrates from his place of origins. He dreams of glory, and an evolved self beyond that of his humble beginnings. He creates himself anew in this world which is sparked by minds filled with the stuff of dream, with the impulse to go beyond the body, naturally. To dream is natural. Dream, he keeps telling himself. Dream.

He relays imagistic and emotional planes as they are present in his dreams along with his research into dream psychology, and his daily interactions with art in his local environment as they collide and sometimes resonate with his opinions about dreams and their inward nature.

As an artist, musician and writer, he takes the time he wishes to become embedded in “flexing the subconscious” or practicing dreaming, both consciously and subconsciously. Added to that

fact, he lives in the High North, which gets very dark during winter, making it a perfect environment in which to delve deeply into nighttime dreaming. And his bedroom has no windows.

Dreams are convergence points for inspiration; cultural and artistic perspectives. He will draw on his values, which he feels honored to have received on behalf of those peoples and traditions in the world that respect dreams as such.

Finally, his dream writings open new creative space for him to freely associate his current life experiences within the holistic insights of his own mind.

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"You know when you tell me your dreams, I love it!" the dream analyst says to his wife. "Please, keep conveying your dream to me, because they inspire my writing."

"Okay," she says, then smiles.

"And when your subconscious dreams interweave with your conscious dreams, please tell me exactly what you see!" he says.

They embrace.

\*

Caedmon is said to be the father of English song. The first poet known in written English. According to an 8th century monk, Bede, "...he was originally ignorant of 'the art of song' but learned to compose one night in the course of a dream..."

Bede would discuss the source of Caedmon's impact on the collective psyche with passing acquaintances. The earliest English poetry is directly intertwined with a fascinating way to explore or identify what exactly is meant by the word: "dream".

Dreaming is inspiration. When he meets his muse he feels intoxicated, and wrote:

*They under the spell found in the likes of Caedmon's song  
need no other medium  
through which to express their musing,  
not even themselves*

*When the muse overtakes,  
all that's left is pure inspired expression  
cast into history from the seed of a dream*



The original, extant source of English poetry is "dream-speak", which imparts wisdom through poetic expression. By dreaming, we reunite our writing with that initial spark of dream which so moved Caedmon to inspire the entire forthcoming history of poetic expression in English.

The bifurcation of dream into experience and meaning is one aspect of the fall of man. We will continue on this long, endless road of consciousness as a form of involuntary creative expression.

What better place to imagine Holderlin's "abyss" than our own shrinking core of digital language. It makes us withdraw farther into our most hidden, internal corners, into the homes of our distant minds, where our loosely tied knots come undone on the docks of our realism, and we embark, alone, into what Freud called the "oceanic feeling".

Free dream from thought and language. We may enter dream's innocent purity before the existence of ego. We may imagine its refreshing, catastrophic, gorgeous mastery over human intellect; even harness its power, first by letting go of our weakness, that which dreaming demands.

\*

Dream is not the opposite of waking.

The word "dream" is abundant with alternate meanings, as is "art". Etymologically, dream is said to come from the Old English, for "music". It is synonymous with the creative principle. Both words are fastened tightly to the hip of creation at its deepest root.

Dream can be identified as a phenomenon which overlaps waking and sleep. What we normally refer to as "dream" or the subconscious activity of mind while asleep, is broadened in this sense to include the imagination, aspiration, desire, and all forms of creativity suspended in the mind's eye whether awake or sleeping or somewhere in between, outside of both or nowhere near.

To explore the meaning and place of dreamt expression, the idea and practice of "dreaming" must be seamless relative to the presence or absence of conscious identity.

*In purity, dreamless  
Still, mystery pervades*

*Leaving sleep  
And wakefulness*

*Leaving, conscious  
And subconscious,*

*Inverting our self  
into the role of one Dream,  
united with all that dreams*

The seamless expression of dream occurs when the verbal, symbolic, and metaphorical aspects of dreaming are animated by the subconscious, when involuntary psychic activity and the mysteries of its phenomenology are interfused with the conscious and unmistakable urge of a dreamer to create, do, and fulfill the idea of their dream.

Every time a dream is described it conveys the essence of its subtle, liminal experience, while preserving a sense of anonymity by virtue of a lack of volition. The dream itself draws mental connections leading to a single, unified source of dreaming, the underlying dream of all of humanity and of creation, toward oneness and life.

\*

Who are we when we dream?

In my experience, I am the same point of subjectivity, both when dreaming and when awake. Yet, there is a more subtle interplay of consciousness woven through “dreaming”. Its phenomenal effects do not simply end after having woken.

Dreams cross over into our waking consciousness as our lives do into our dreams. The clearer this realization becomes, the fainter the line is between waking reality in contrast to dreaming. Dreaming is a kind of living. Its energy manifests mental creativity, and while inwardly fixated, exaggerating our most natural processes through emanations of myth and symbol, archetype and emotion, dreaming can happen at any time, simply when the mind is conscious of itself to that degree of subtlety. Dream is a finer interpretation of the mundane mind by the human heart.

When dream crosses over into the waking mind, the rest is music, writing, passion, thought, imagination. Life experience nourishes the substance of subconscious dreams, as sleep is the most vulnerable state of mind and body. Immersed in its egoless state, we involuntarily relive personal desires, pursue social obligations, suffer anxious occurrences, and all in the guise of the mind's conceptual spin, yet stripped of normal sensory perception.

When going beyond "lucid dreaming", to interact consciously with a newfound sense of dream, united in all aspects of the mind, whether awake or asleep, that person may adopt strange habits such as going under pseudonyms, or more overtly in simply taking their lives into their own hands, speaking their mind and dedicating their time to what they are passionate about, what unites them with an immortal dream life. That affirmation is at the crux of creation in a profound relationship to something actual, as opposed to appealing to what is currently acceptable, fitting into the concave, boxed-in drudgery of a life lived without dreaming.

Dream is spirit. It is a source of life, and the ground over which all of life is resolved and returns.

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Recognizing the dreams of others is to recognize their whole being, beyond sensual affirmation, or subject-object reasoning. No, to prepare intuition and heart-to-heart communing with the natural creative vibrancy of mind is to speak in a language before tongues, to re-create lifetimes of voyaging across depthless oceans.

The interpersonal subconscious moves toward collective reflection, to see each moment as a new miracle of Earth's creativity, to transcend rote memorization and the habits of thought, extinguished by piecing together a message of interpretive ingenuity in the experience of earthly self-awareness.

\*

There are, at times, allusions to dream in waking life that do not quite settle in the mind, but reemerge during moments of introspection and reflection. Language can become, insufficient, a mere impasse before reflecting on the image-language of dreams.

Dream is an involuntary force, which, with mirror-like accuracy, reflects back onto the dreamer how they've withdrawn from their inner eye, the light of their own unique path to self-knowledge.

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The effects of REM can be said to be similar to that of a film reel. The mind develops a way to conceive thoughts with equal momentum and speed so as to balance their automatic generation with their conscious perception. The underlying idea is to be functional, mentally, in response to the the faculties of memory, to create images, sound and other sensory phenomena while they are experienced. In this way, dream and memory are two sides of the same coin.

\*

Choose Art.

Art is a choice, between perception and dreaming, when both are combined through an act of creativity. The residue of dreaming is infused with an enlightened consciousness, to enlighten the positive qualities of becoming, to increase awareness of and interaction with dreams as an essential aspect of life. The perception of art, then, is like that of a dream within the dream of experience.

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A longer, fuller sleep induces more vivid, more frequent and more discernible dream narratives. What the penultimate scene from Federico Fellini's 1965 film, "Juliet of the Spirits" points to, as does the entire film, is the idea that Juliet, the protagonist, has been submerged in their subconscious urges and preoccupations for too long, that their inescapable manifestations begin to peek out into her waking consciousness as in the stupor of sleep.

The gorge and slew of both inanimate and living tempests swarm about, as a march of assailants in the form of multiple kinds of attractions and diversions. Has she simply been subject to her own delusions for too long? Or has she simply been unable to realize that her very surroundings are incontrovertibly diluted by the anxiety of an unremembered dream or a lingering past, whose burden weighs on her as a traumatic background in her now semi-formed consciousness.

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An image from a dream, a creative work, or pure imagination, floated across the retina of an eye and instantaneously faded.

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There are traditions of dream interpretation in the Amazon. It is said that every indigenous community in the Amazon interprets their dreams regularly according to local traditions. The Achuar say that there are two different kinds of dream. The first is the common dream, the second is the vision.

Dreams are important because they might carry a vision. The dream vision is prophetic, as it speaks of what will occur in life. As Jung said, "Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life, and you will call it fate." A vision is a message from without, while the common dream can be understood as an internal component of one's personality.

The ingestion of ayahuasca is a fundamental tradition in Achuar territory. In earlier times, the use of ayahuasca was preceded by three months of fasting (on a restricted diet), with no sexual relations, so as to suppress negative thoughts. Nowadays, ayahuasca is too often taken as a simple drink, but the ritual components of its traditional ceremonies are a chorus of mind-altering techniques. Too many are drinking the lifeblood of the Amazon, dreamlessly, without a mind for visions.

The Achuar say that in life people have different food. There is the food that people take as an infant, then another kind taken as an adolescent, later as an adult and finally as an elder. Just as in the material context of nourishment, spiritual food changes throughout the stages of one's life. I think this is mirrored in globalized society, as nations move on from dependence on fossil fuels to newer and cleaner energies.

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To aspire, or have an ambition is often synonymous with dreaming. In that sense, the aspiration to communicate with others is perhaps an underlying principle to all dreaming. A writer wishes to craft writing that matters, for example.

A creative person is motivated by the compulsion to grasp the direct spontaneity of their mind as, in essence, an intuition, where, through honing a craft, further significance is placed on the world, sincerely, and without narrow frames of reference.

To follow dreams is to pursue the holism of being, to see and behold one's dreams which only reveal themselves in private, trusted, spirit-bound states. Sleep, as intoxication, or poetry, reflects the unadulterated nature of mind.

\*

If there is a land worth fighting for, dying for, loving for, dreaming for, it has already been taken. There are lands that breed people stronger than the old Western patriarchs, those who resist the brunt of their genocidal ambition, and are alive, telling their tale.

\*

Whether consciously or not, we are always dreaming, and not only in our sleep. The question is not whether or not we are dreaming, but whether we are remembering our whole selves, our dream selves.

The problem with memory is whether the substance of the subconscious imagination is memorable during REM cycles. For certain cultures and traditions from varying times and places, reflecting on dreams is an essential daily practice, perhaps as common to Westernized moderns as reading, watching TV, or recreational exercise.

There is a belief that dream reflections open doors and provide keys to otherwise hidden aspects of ourselves. The history of Western psychology only caught up to the wisdom inherent in cultures that practice and mythologize personal dreams with the work of psychoanalysts Sigmund Freud and especially Carl Jung, who purported to exercise the notion that dreaming is the reality and our waking consciousness is made up entirely of myth, symbol, and such compulsions as are controlled by subconscious drives.

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Understanding the appearance of metaphors in a dream might forecast an external occurrence, or point to a psychological manifestation. But in both cases, it could be argued that deepening

rational and intuitive explorations of subtle mental phenomena eventually reveal how both inward perception and outward sensation commingle. In the history of Western scientific thought, their blur has been synonymous with insanity, as defined by the lack of discernment between what is personally, or privately imagined with common sense experience, or in other words, the individual against the collective.

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Literary fiction is akin to the creative impulses of the subconscious, which are experienced most commonly in the act of dreaming. In that sense, writing prose fiction is a process of self-psychoanalysis, as it has the potential to lift the burdens of mental productivity, both voluntary and involuntary. The sense of weightlessness is natural to dream narratives.

The practice of writing is a non-interventionist exploration into the raw activity of mind, which is a way to describe the nature of mind. Editing is another way to reflect on sources of inspiration. Ultimately, this exercise reaches towards a quickened perception and re-conception of the epigenetic evolution of the human being, and so, it is an essential facet of consciousness in the universe.

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Spontaneous writing is complemented by improvisational approaches to music, which is a traditionally practiced by most cultures throughout the world outside of the Western classical repertoire. Improvisation, spontaneity, and creativity in the name of chance opens avenues by which to emphasize ecological contexts around the unconscious aspects of our surroundings, hinting at insights of awareness through sound, even the subtle voice of thought.

The phenomena of dream are not only visionary, but also logographic, narrative, a chronicle of subconscious metaphors, Jungian archetypes, or the “elementary ideas” of 19th century anthropologist Adolf Bastian, which create both unconsciously and consciously through lived experience, and in the mythical-emotional projections which breathe with visceral life in the realm of dream.

The wellsprings of individual creativity, as unbridled by rational formalism, may take place in all form, and more accurately from the seeds of emptiness from which form issues. Whether in number, letter, or their images, the truth is undefined and the spontaneous instant is where the magic of all life mysteriously prevails and finds its equilibrium of continuity.

While this may read as contradictory to the definition of a theorem (a statement that is true only because of previously established statements), it actually supports the notion of a theorem by positing the basis of proof as the ground of being or the present moment, and previously established statements, as the substance which lies before us, bound by the interwoven presence

of time, memory, dream, imagination, or perhaps put more succinctly in a venturesome turn of phrase, as experienced fictions.

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The generation of dreaming is a door opening from the inside. The spontaneous voice within is a mystery of wisdom, reminding us that, at the moment when the way is clear, it is not we who enter.

In light of the *sama 'a* or the Sufi practice of listening to supernal harmonies through meditative rituals, mostly through music and poetry, the practice of turning the ear to hear the inborn harmonics of spirit, i.e. listening to the one listening, may be an antidote to the psychological sufferings of the modern, individualist artist entrapped by the personality cult of their own, unenlightened, misinterpreted dreaming.

## II

I heard “Silence, Night and Dreams” by Zbigniew Preisner and stopped thinking. I just listened. I had been in a pre-evening slump of energy. I dipped down into a reclining position, to receive the fullness of the musical recording. There was no mediation, no other attention drawn, simply and fully, I became present in the music. And it took me there. The wave-like form of the composed, performed movements called me into my own being. I lay, submerged in pure sonic form. An experience not yet had swept me into a vortex of simulacra, an open mind. I slipped as it were, directly into the centre of the vacuum of extraterrestrial space.

As I lay in my dark room, my eyes sank into the opaque mysteries, such unearthly darkness. The soprano voice melted my heart, and my body of water became like the grandiose demiurge, creating not the universe but the clear renewal of my holistic self-awareness.

Preisner is an adept composer, not only of music but of silence. The conceptual sacrifice of John Cage flits in my mind, and then I hear a celestial song. It is said that the singer, Teresa Salgueiro, of the Portuguese group Madredeus, who learned to read music for the collaboration with Preisner, also, apparently, a self-taught musician himself.

Preisner's compositional style is reminiscent of impressionist landscape painting, just approximating abstraction, at once pointedly accurate to its infinitesimal temporality. In my ear, it ascends skyward beyond definitions of “music”, and, in a sense, becomes like human experience, beyond the expectations of form, the disquiet of artistic convention. For this reason, it personifies dream and leads to a direct rendering of the heart, and its maker’s maker.

The infinity of expression is characteristic of night, its music and silence, its life, its dreams.

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On reading, *The Sheltering Sky*, Paul Bowles' best-known literary work, I was spellbound by the way he wrote of the desert. He challenges the depths of language, the obscurations of literal meaning. His words are like a mirage casting a shadow over the ever-constant reality of the desert wanderer, struggling to see through the inescapable immensity of its emptiness.

*The Sheltering Sky* began with an allusion to dream. The main characters are three wayward American travelers who briefly converse on the topic of their dream before the subject is snuffed out by their overwhelming boredom and the shallow colonialist extroversion that ensued at the dawn of the postwar spiritual tourism boom among 20th century Orientalists.

The travelers seek to surpass the edge of knowability. Unbeknownst to them, to travel in the world is to travel within. Likewise, to travel within redirects worldly travel. As Joseph Campbell wrote in his classic, *The Hero With A Thousand Faces*, “Where we had thought to travel



outward, we shall come to the center of our own existence. And where we had thought to be alone, we shall be with all the world.”

\*

I read *The Sheltering Sky* to ruminate on the life of my grandfather when he was stationed in Oran, Algeria in 1943 as an American soldier during WWII. I was moved by the shifting sands of memory as I reminisced on the fleeting clarity of earthly form, when, as a student in Egypt, I surveyed the mysteries of the open Sahara on foot, on horseback, on camel, in SUVs, encamped, stoned, under a moonless sheath of stars, and under a fully electrifying lunar beam, reflecting on the moonscape shapeshifting quality of remote life in the Saharan wilderness.

I read Bowles with empathetic self-interest, with mutual regard to the author as a fellow American expatriate, even while in colder lands within the greater Mediterranean region. Bowles was first a composer of music. The playwright Tennessee Williams introduced *The Sheltering Sky* by stressing how the book was written by a man approaching age 40, one who had given his mind time to cook, seasoned by ample life experience.

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I began to be interested in Cuban affairs in 2006, when I joined a demonstration in New York City protesting the unjust incarceration of the Cuban Five. I spoke to a woman who invited me to travel to Cuba, which at the time was illegal from the U.S., to provide resources for isolated people on the island in the midst of America’s embargo.

The film, “Amada” by Humberto Solas, draws on the internal breakdown of class oppression in the wake of international pressure and domestic corruption in Cuba. Domestic space is defined both as the country of origin and habitable residence.

The aristocracy implodes by the will of incestuous love from within an adulterous presidential marriage, for the hand of the revolutionary dreamer. A passionate, creative social literacy is at stake as the emotionally unstable protagonist must struggle to emerge from the trappings of her own heart and that of the deviance of her husband's oppressive rule. By the film’s end she walks through impoverished hovels afflicted with yellow fever, as the president’s villa is stormed by hunger strikers from the dispossessed farmers of the countryside.

Hunger strikers are well-represented among Cuban political activists, past and present. And under the post-Fidel government, there is still reason enough for young dreamers to public confront their own mortality in the name of revolutionary justice.

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In the spirit of interpreting dreams as a kind of literary criticism, I have endeavored to interpret a well-quoted line by Arthur Rimbaud, "A thousand Dreams within me softly burn". All know that the saying attributed to Henrik Ibsen, "a picture is a thousand words", refers to the ability of the human eye to perceive new realities through images, toward a mode of internal perception awakening to dreams, realizations, insights, beauty & truth.

Taking into consideration the grim tragedy of Rimbaud's end, I would wonder to suggest that "softly burn" is an allegory on the fleeting nature of existence, which dream-like, escapes as a softly burning wick, where the wick is the body, tormented by the passing of life, in pain, and at once when life is realized as a dream, that passing burn is soft. Memories, awakenings, and visions are of those thousand dream-images through which the mind of the poet-seer burns, within.

\*

A friend gave their first son a Tibetan name after she saw him appear in full bodily form prior to conception, asking if he could be born through her. Is he a *tulku*?

She was a reclusive student of Buddhism, who delightedly entered her initiations into the tradition of Green Tara devotions with a traveling monk named Rinpoche Geshe Lobsang Tsetan. It all began at a chance meeting. In a series of meditational initiations she befriended a forest hermit who then became a lifelong supporter of her work. She has come to believe in *tulkuhood*.

In her readings and meditations, she saw Buddhism as an enlightened practice of seeing in the way that Joseph Campbell saw myth as creative perception, and the way that Terrence McKenna saw shamanistic hallucination as a mode of seeing into the phenomenal nature of human subjectivity.

In other words, she saw *tulkuhood* as the universal expression of a natural phenomenon that she could experience with herself, and anyone, in every moment, together, always. Without having conducted scholarly study on the matter, she humbly reflected on the notion that a *tulku* is simply the discriminating energy of timeless wisdom which resides in all social and personal forms, and within all sentient beings.

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In a Japanese dream narrative recorded and analyzed by Lafcadio Hearn, based on the folklore of Japan, the symbology of insects such as butterflies, mosquitos and ants, reflect the ephemeral substance of dream as the unconscious imagination. Their abundance, shape and behaviors are associated with unconscious interpretations of archetypal imagery.

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Death and sleep, fading pleas of waking form, dissipate under thin sheets of human comfort, forlorn, the pain of reality is a realization that death's blood stains the dying hand.

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There are two lines in Book V of Milton's *Paradise Lost* that speak: "That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream, / Waking thou never will consent to do". They resounded as from a dream of yesterday, in the midst of my burning rage, in the turmoil of my sleeplessness, awake.

The day after the crooked seething of the waking light transformed into a *deja vu*, and under the peaceable contemplation of the homeless sky, observing street life and the empty catharsis of the day's recollections ingathered, I confronted the daemons of my psyche through an entropy of silence, night and dreams.

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In the collection of eleven essays, "Myths, Dreams and Religion", edited by Joseph Campbell, there is a wealth of impassioned research into the literary mystagogues of Western history. Its writings have the power to reveal the roots of a new, universal mythology, offering its readers a window through which to re-identify with humankind, beyond the scientific connotations of our species's literal definition, toward an imaginative individuality, a literary selfhood that merges the oneness of personality with that of social and ecological collectivization.

With essays by Alan Watts, Joseph Campbell himself, and other minds embedded in the culture of mythological literacy, I mainly focused my reading on the traits of human self-identity as it has evolved throughout mythic time.

With regard to dreaming, the essays touched on the subject in the light of religious and cultural references, often comparing Levantine with Indian dream philosophy, as either a visionary or intermediary state burgeoning natural self-transformation, as an acorn, planted in the rough soil of the unconscious by the prehistoric mind of our mysterious bio-archetypal origins.

And the perennial quote, from the final essay by Richard A. Underwood, "Myth, Dream, and the Vocation of Contemporary Philosophy" a reference to Heraclitus' Fragments reads, "Even sleepers are workers and collaborators in what goes on in the universe."

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"Last Night I Dreamed of Peace: The Diary of Dang Thuy Tram" translated by Andrew X. Pham should be required reading everywhere. I read the first half of the book aloud to a friend who was born in Saigon. After listening, she would wake from her night's sleep in crying fits. She could not bear to hear the rest. So, I read the final half of the book to myself, in one sitting.

The communicative brevity in Thuy's voice is indicative of her honesty, and her clear soul. There is a sonic vibrance in her words as printed on the page, imbued with such complicated emotion and sweeping literacy. With references to Soviet, French and Vietnamese literature, she affixes her personalized sentiment in historic immediacy as with the timeless genius of contemplative humanity.

Her anger towards imperialist aggressors, the Americans, is always buttressed by a stern will in defending the fight of her fellow brothers and sisters who, at the time of her writing, are dying around her with the visceral intimacy that only a doctor would be able to elucidate with such clarity. You can almost feel her breath, and indeed, I was moved many times by a whole spectrum of emotions, as her intense character and youthful innocence enlightens even the bitterest soul with universal intention toward human grace.

Throughout the book, she calls on her dreams, both emergent in sleep and her daily life, and from those around her, pressing her into the obscurity of ruined jungles. Her dreams are shared dreams, and in that sense are a constant offering of refuge within, giving reason and stability to her tested mind, fulfilling her with inner community. As the book moves on through her astute witnessing, her dreams become increasingly present as she pours out her uninhibited thoughts with an awe-inspiring magic, reminiscent of the phenomenal dream world exhibited from her inmost reflections, as with the highest ideals of her united comrades.

“Last Night I Dreamed of Peace” is praiseworthy for many reasons; its unprecedented impact on literacy in Vietnam, or the innumerable anecdotes which resonate with masterful purpose in the mind of the reader, as a daughter speaking to her parent with such loving presence, bridged only by the purity of heart among those who listen.

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“The Iron Cage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood” by Rashid Khalidi identifies the Gaza strip as only slightly twice as large as the area of Washington D.C.

It is one thing when a dream can be applied to a cultural context. It is wholly another when the cultural context can be applied to the dream.

Palestinians and Indigenous Peoples face a comparable, even shared plight. Maya Mikdashi wrote as much in her 2012 essay, "What is Settler Colonialism?".

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*“In a nationalist culture we have a recurrent dream that political leaders and experts will get us out of the cycles of self-destruction. That is a false lead.”*

It was money granted in the memory of author Arthur Clarke's late wife, Irma M. Parhad, that sent me to Cairo for my second visit, to conduct a full-scale research project with the refugee communities I had worked with two years earlier.

I had met Clarke on numerous occasions, including at his private home for gatherings of poetry and conversation that rather self-consciously attempted to emulate the mood of an F. Scott Fitzgerald novel if not for the stereotypically sterile ambiance that persisted among Calgary's academic circles.

I had many insights reading his book, "The ABCs of Human Survival". My immediate attention focused on the author's confession that he was guilty of perpetuating old-paradigm thinking, where, as he echoed, "we will perish as fools" in the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as he had never once refused to pay taxes to both the American and Canadian governments during the brutal war with Iraq (including the preliminary imposition of sanctions, which is an act of war).

His recurrently emphatic voice spoke to the ills of militancy and nationalistic ideology, resembling that of an elderly person teaching the facts of life with a dry voice and welcoming candor, planting occasional, mental seeds of perennial wisdom for their interpretive potentiality. It is of this class of intellectual where, with the know-how and the social compunction to organize people, there is proof enough for the possibility of social change. However, the sphere of influence is mastered only where the personality of the actor's face is shown.

With this comes new initiatives to relegate the institutionalization of principles which somehow recall, once again, Roaring Twenties literati, where, with the likes of Herman Hesse and Theosophical Societies, a global call to justice and reconciliation sounds from the bastion of civilization's very corrupted centre.

Still, I am optimistic, as the book exhibits time and again, that optimism is the only way through, and cynicism is the bane of a young society propagating aging youth in this overly materialistic cascade of obscurity; the Western city.

In my mind, it is too easy to focus on global entelechy when embedded in social contexts founded on colonial principles, and it is too easy to focus on local action when fully empowered within an identity officiated and normalized by a national society.

\*

Wikileaks founder Julian Assange laid the groundwork for sanity and clarity, two moral imperatives which become severely deluded in the modern economic infrastructure of global monetary exchange and corrupted international hierarchies with regard to law and policy.

The transparency of state crime is won through the exposure of new facts, and the justice is had in their due measure via civil application on the ground. This is a bottom-up frequency of people-powered intelligence. This is the one and only remaining faculty in an age where the word, and its unforgivable silence, is one of the most powerfully dominating forces, painting such instances of carnage as the war in Iraq with the niceties of workaday mindlessness, aloof, yet proverbial.

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Keep listening.

Repetition is the rhythm of a concordant narrative.

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*"The source of the word alcheringa is Arunta, an aboriginal language of Australia. Sometimes translated as "the dreamtime," it refers to a mythic world that existed at the beginning of time and continues to exist in our own time as a parallel world, revealing itself whenever we dream and whenever someone speaks or sings a myth."*

*Dennis Tedlock, An Introduction to the Alcheringa Archive (From Jacket2, also on Jerome Rothenberg's Poems & Poetics)*

In the first edition of "Alcheringa" a quote reads, "He who loses his dreaming is lost", and it is attributed to "Australian Aborigine". In the opening of the Autumn 1970 journal, the final, "Statement of Intention", reads, "to combat cultural genocide in all its manifestations". That being said, it is curious to read such independently arisen, parallel findings, as in a finding printed in the Australian Journal of Media & Culture (vol. 2, no. 1 1987), where an article by Vijay Mishra entitled, "Aboriginal representations in Australian texts" reads:

Forgotten I lost dreaming  
Country I left forgotten lost

which is epigrammatically reduced, by the translator T.G .H. Strehlow, to "He who loses his dreaming is lost," which is directly related to a failure to perceive the radical difference between oral poetics (the fluid verse translation) and the written text (the epigrammatic reduction). Obviously no one can maintain a total separation of the oral from the written.

Meanwhile, if one searches in the active publications of Australia's Central Land Council, an Indigenous repertoire of activism and scholarship dedicated to principles of sovereignty, there is a very interesting article on Strehlow, the subject of lost attribution in Alcheringa's English translation from, "Australian Aborigine", entitled, "The Strehlow collection of sacred objects", focusing on the repatriation of a sacred object collected by the modern anthropologist, as

opposed, in the case of Alcheringa, the repatriation of sacred letters, collected by post-modern anthropologists of world literature.

\*

*"Here I had the following dream, occasioned, as I verily believe, by our preceding conversation—for it commonly happens that the meditation and discourse which employ us in the day time, produce in our sleep an effect somewhat similar to that which Ennius writes happened to him about Homer, of whom in his waking hours he used frequently to think and speak.*

*My ancestor Africanus, I thought, appeared to me in a shape, with which I was better acquainted from his picture, than from any personal knowledge of him. When I perceived it was he, I confess I trembled with consternation—but he addressed me, saying, take courage, my Scipio, be not afraid, and carefully remember what I shall say to you.*

*...put an end to a most dangerous war."*

*Cicero, Republic  
translated by Francis Barham*

From the final surviving fragments of Cicero's *Republic*, translated by Francis Barham in which Cicero concludes the great struggle encountered by Scipio Africanus or Scipio the African to defend Rome from Hannibal's Carthage, when through his dreaming, he contemplates in himself the rivalries of human glory, outmatched by the revelries of spiritual splendor at witnessing the great battles raging in the firmament above, whose harmonies and glories far surpass the slight human presence on Earth, relatively speaking.

*I could not help casting my eyes every now and then on the earth. On which, says Africanus, I perceive you are still employed in contemplating the seat and residence of mankind. Now if it appears to you so small, as in fact it really is, despise its vanities, and fix your attention for ever on these heavenly objects. Is it possible that you should attain any human applause or glory that are worth the contending for?*

Through a spiritual humility and an intellectual prowess, Cicero aligns with the wisdom of William Blake, where he echoes, "all deities reside in the human breast" from Cicero's prose, "Know, then, that you are a god—for a god it must be that vivifies, and gives sensation, memory, and foresight to the body to which it is attached, and which it governs and regulates..."

\*

I read the unseen. Her eyes are the milk of a hollow cow, branding the misjudged beauty of a new and timely pride in the human self, in all of its fascinating breadth. Her words are a first kiss, bitter, juicy, and the smile that follows.

These were my thoughts after first reading the work of Marilyn Dumont, a Cree-Metis poet who is widely celebrated as essential to contemporary Canadian literature. Her words are bittersweet, and are not given to excessive verbiage. She uses language for its brevity and with singular pausing, announcing the mystic inclination to wonder with a sad grace. One can easily, cathartically empty their mind of doubt when reading page after page of her brilliant humility. Her self-knowledge is evident, as she prints words into the mind of a page with the delicate necessity of breath.

I read from cover to cover, in one sitting. It was like opening my door to a new friend.

\*

In my first year of publishing creative writing, my imagination roamed freely into experimental literature as visual experience. With a mainstay of dream journaling as a root practice in creative writing, and through imaginative reflections on dreaming and its awe-inspiring influence on the entirety of human culture throughout the ages, especially in art, literature and music, I have embarked on a path of creative development as a full-fledged dreamer.

My journal, regularly updated with creative dream fiction and original poetry, features art alongside a complementary form of expression drawn from the seamless worlds of consciousness and dreaming. Inspired by creative insights, reflecting on the wealth of imagery in dreams, whose sensual experiences are pregnant with symbolic mythopoesis, I have endeavored to experience my greatest passion, the act of creative writing, as a visual art form.

What I originally referred to as spatial literature began its journey in the public mind with the asemic writing / post-literature community, where my work was first featured on *The New Post-Literate: A Gallery of Asemic Writing*. After only a few months, I received invitations to ten exhibitions — in print, online and live at local galleries.

The dream lives on in my daily life through the creative work of making new art, and in the unconscious wellspring of raw intentionality, to truly be an example of my art, as a positive and vibrant force of individuality. This is the greatest dream that my art reveals to me.

\*

There are few more mindful of the delicate lucidity of ocean life, and its profound meaning in the interdependent webs of consciousness, subconscious and unconscious education. There are few who emerge from its depths with such memory, to imbue the ground with the animate vibrancy of temporal generation as befits the glorious, epochal bridge of sea life and its significance for the holistic fate of the world, knotted so tightly with human existence that, with almost seamless sight, the waters of our own minds churn with equanimity and tempest.



\*

Jamie Tea Tognazzini's one-woman act, "Mary's Near Death Experience" was like a sincere, belly laugh. The performance was hilarious, and charming. The show expressed a loving concern for the ocean.

Tognazzini enlightened environmental perspectives with a bravura of comic timing and voice acting which grabbed the audience on a journey into the space age, complete with the naivety of a Southern belle with a weakness for religious experiences alongside a jaded Coney Island street worker. Their shapeshifting ventures were spurred on by the dream of a "cosmic wonder-fish" which led Mary to the Moon, to admire spacescapes and woo the audience's imagination with her refreshing, candid attitude.

\*

The anonymous painting, "The Recumbent Vishnu and the Creation of Brahma", created in Guler, Himachal Pradesh, India with pigment on paper sometime between 1775 and 1800 is an illustration of Vishnu reclining on Shesha, a serpent alluding to the meaning of infinity, or Ananta, also one of the many names of Vishnu. Out of his navel, springs the universe, which is Brahma, pictured in the work as multi-faceted. Brahma appears as the dream of Vishnu, dreaming the universe into existence.

The role of Vishnu as the existential dreamer, whose dreaming is the experience of creation gives the mythology of Vishnu profound meaning for artists and creative thinkers. Joseph Campbell describes the role of Vishnu as leading the awe-inspiring traditions of ancient Indian yogic philosophy, towards a recollection of the shattered mirror of thought and creative inspiration, into one yoked unity of enlightened perception, which is seen in its fullness as Vishnu eyes the dream-lotus of universal creation.

\*

*"...like the baseless fabric of this vision,  
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Ye all which it inherit, shall dissolve  
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,  
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff  
As dreams are made on, and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep."*

*William Shakespeare, The Tempest. Act 4, Scene 1*

The painting, "Miranda" (1916) by John William Waterhouse, depicts the daughter of Prospero, who after being visited by a gathering of dancing nymphs, becomes irate before his children and lets out this oft-repeated quote in the final play solely attributed to the great English master of drama, the Bard.

I'd like to imagine that Miranda, alone on the coast of this strange "New World" island, whose fate is enshrouded by the designs of familial power, takes these words to heart, and envisions the catastrophe of human ambition with the same vociferous sight as a sail ship torn in the tempests of the besieging, isolating, and finally, humanizing seas.

I often hear this quote in my head at times, it speaks to me in volumes as voluminous as the Earth's own oceanic body; a truism for the unconscious, subsurface flesh of all earthly necessity.

\*

James Hillman was an archetypal depth psychologist whose post-Jungian conception of the human experience is essentially imaginative. His amoral fluctuation between endurance and immaturity lies nascent in the temporal grains of salt which increasingly line the throats of aging personalities. Written at an old age, the author speaks clearly against any kind of aging therapy, and humanizes the current malaise which treats aging as a virus.

As the author of "The Force of Character", Hillman unwrapped biological naturalism with the psychological bloom of a mind fermented with insightful, though not convoluted, research on the literary and aesthetic character of human aging as a welcoming asset to life, in flagrant contrast to the ceremonial traditionalism of death's demands. To Hillman, preparation for the afterlife is a non-issue, but part of the continuous envelopment of life, as it grows and decays seasonally. As a psychologist, Hillman referred to dreams for their imagistic plentitude on the inward path to bring the holistic human experience to fruition within the infinite round of universal consciousness.

In short, Hillman's psychology is life-affirming, approaching the limits of reason and knowledge-bearing. People have the biological strength to age well and vigorously. It is psychic stress that ages them poorly, he argued. But the tension therein is ample soil for the potential of mental growth, as age is an essential presence in both social and individual contemplation, as a figment of belonging within the unconscious gathering of the old, the triumphant spirit of having aged, and what that means in all of its mythic fortitude and human vulnerability.

\*

*"Kieran of Saighir was the first saint born in Ireland ...*

*Before she conceived Kieran in her womb his mother had a dream: as it were a star that fell into her mouth; which dream she related to the magicians and to the knowledgeable ones of the time,*

*and they said to her: 'thou wilt bear a son whose fame and whose virtues shall to the world's latter end be great [i.e. notorious].' Afterwards that holy son Kieran was born..."*

*Life of S. Kieran of Saighir;  
written by Maurice O'Connor, ship-carpenter, in Cork  
Silva Gadelica (I-XXXI). ed. Standish Hayes O'Grady. Reprint of the 1892 ed. New York, Lemma  
Pub. Corp., 1970.*

Strangely familiar to the origin stories for Buddha, I first read about this aspect of Irish history in Joseph Campbell's book, *Occidental Mythology*.

There are parallels between St. Kieran of Saighir to Mexico's Virgin de Guadalupe, who was seen in a vision, placing the mask of Christian history over the Indigenous face. The true story was likely brutal, covered up by fables of dreams and superstition to align with dominant perspectives that would equate native storytelling with irrational beliefs.

\*

In both Hebrew and Arabic mysticism, the figure of Lilith is the central character for mythic remembrance of the folkloric succubus. Like her male counterpart, the incubus, she is a source of domestic superstition, a root of cosmic evil. The British painter John Collier represented her in Biblical, neoclassical guise for his 1886 canvas, "Lilith with a Snake".

\*

*"We also, when building a relationship with people, believe that they are real. What a psychopath does is they weave a picture of a person that's really a dream. It's a spirit. It's not real...When the psychopath is done with you, they leave. They've never had a bond with you. It's all been a game ... feeling no empathy..."*

*Paul Babiak, psychologist, author of Snakes in Suits, in the documentary film, "I Am Fishead" (2011)*

I showed this film to a friend of mine who worked with large oil corporations. He was fired after mitigating new interrelationships between different interest groups, namely Indigenous Peoples and the resource extraction companies looking to exploit their land. He was not a megalomaniac or a psychopath. But these conditions had become necessary prerequisites for keeping a job in a field defined by human indecency in the profit-driven, hypercapitalist corporate world.

I was then living in Calgary, where oil corporations run amuck. At worse, they are seen as the life of the party. There are Fisheads among us. It is a city ruled by psychopaths, and the status quo lauds them. My friend, mentioned above, described their perspective well, "as narrow as one looking down a pipeline."

\*

*“My version of the American Dream...it’s not about having stuff, although I do have nice things and I like them, what I like even more is time, time not to have to work to pay for a lot of crap that you probably don’t really need that you bought because you think you were supposed to have it. If you don’t have a mortgage and the taxes are low, how much do you really need to keep going?”*

*from the 2012 film, “We The Tiny House People (Documentary): Small Homes, Tiny Flats and Wee Shelters” by filmmaker Kirsten Dirksen*

Sustainable housing and the race to become a homeowner is part of the fundamental underlying psychology of American and Western life. Making the shift is tougher when the laws that govern mass society tighten their hold.

When I saw this film, I lived in an apartment that was 18 (width) x 21 (length) feet. I lived there comfortably with my partner for almost two years, and I look back on those days as some of the best in my life.

\*

The stigma of sharks has been with me since I can remember. In my earliest memories I was only a driveway away from the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. I lived a short sail away from Martha's Vineyard, where Spielberg filmed “Jaws”.

The 1778 painting, “Watson and the Shark” by John Singleton Copley represents the old, now antiquated, adage that sharks are killers and need to be killed. Sharks are not the killers they are imagined to be, and their threatened survival on Earth due to illegal shark fin harvesting is a crucial issue for the survival of the human species.

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*“Myths and legends were told...usually at night around the village fire and the telling was reserved to the “dreamers” or medicine-men, the Oko-jumu...There were three ways a man, and much more rarely a woman, could become an Oko-jumu. One was by “dying” and then coming back to life, for example by fainting or by having an epileptic fit and then recovering. Another way was to be “kept” in the jungle by spirits: if a person showed no fear of spirits, it was believed that they would refrain from killing but they could still keep their victim in the jungle for a while. Yet another way was by talking to the spirits in a dream. The spirits were the dead and any contact with them either killed a person or made him or her into an Oko-jumu.”*

*George Weber. The Andamese. Chapter 23: Myths and Legends*

This study, initiated by early 20th century anthropologist A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, is pertinent to the rites of initiation. The primary function of this social form of belonging is not only intended to bring about the feeling of inclusivity within any specific human group, but with humankind's higher spiritual faculties as cohesive within the subtle, surrounding ecology. This gives us insight into the source of human knowledge, as an intergenerational narrative, and further, represents the role of conflict transformation and the relegation of the aggressive principle in human nature from the "kill or be killed" attitude to more of a "communicate or be killed" mentality.

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The following is an excerpt of dialogue from the 1994 film, "Three Colours: Red" by Polish auteur Krzysztof Kieslowski:

*Judge — "Yesterday, I had a dream – I had a dream about you. You were 40 or 50 years old...and you were happy."*

*Student — "Do your dreams come true?"*

*Judge — "It's been years since I've had a really pleasant dream."*

Along these lines of artistic development, the German poet, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, produced a volume entitled, "Theory of Colours" (1810). While a pseudo-scientific theory of color, as it was not received as proper theoretical discourse by the scientific community, this was Goethe's prideful involution into the realm of human experience beyond the sublimations of intellectual life.

*Should your glance on mornings lovely  
Lift to drink the heaven's blue  
Or when sun, veiled by sirocco,  
Royal red sinks out of view –  
Give to Nature praise and honor.  
Blithe of heart and sound of eye,  
Knowing for the world of colour  
Where its broad foundations lie.  
— Goethe*

\*

*PARTICIPATION MYSTIQUE is a term derived from French scholar Lucien Lévy-Bruhl. It denotes a peculiar kind of psychological connection with objects, and consists in the fact that the subject cannot clearly distinguish himself from the object but is bound to it by a direct relationship which amounts to partial identity.*

*Carl Jung, [1921] 1971: paragraph 781. Psychological Types, Collected Works, Volume 6, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.*

Although Levy-Bruhl later went against his own logic and recanted his theory, Carl Jung continued to affirm his theoretical suppositions:

*He later retracted this term under pressure of adverse criticism, but I believe that his critics were wrong. It is a well-known psychological fact that an individual may have an unconscious identity with some other person or object.*

*Jung et. al., 1964:24. Man and His Symbols, New York, N.Y.: Anchor Books, Doubleday.*

Applying the logic of "participation mystique" to the impact of the mythic first contact between the Indigenous inhabitants of the New World and European colonialists, it can be surmised that 1492 is the beginning time when dream and reality were clearly delineated in global history. Dream being the fantastical riches of the Orient, and pre-contact Eurocentric notions of the world, and Reality being another continent where non-Christian societies were thriving. Both of these two separate European lenses through which the Americas were experienced illustrate the post-virginal spring of earthly delusion, and thus our entire consensual knowledge base, commenced into a temporal narrative.

The idea of the "unconscious identity with some other person or object", has moved from the unconscious to the subconscious of our collective national consciousness, and only fully bloomed in the mind of each individual of mindful conscience.

\*

*"Things of a day--what are we, and what not? Man is a dream of shadows."*

*Pindar's Pythian Ode VIII, lines 92-97*

In the introduction, to this Gutenberg Project, edition, first printed in 1874, the first paragraph reads:

*Probably no poet of importance equal or approaching to that of Pindar finds so few and so infrequent readers. The causes are not far to seek: in the first and most obvious place comes the great difficulty of his language, in the second the frequent obscurity of his thought, resulting mainly from his exceeding allusiveness and his abrupt transitions...*

*The Project Gutenberg EBook of The Extant Odes of Pindar, by Pindar*

I sympathize with this statement, besides the self-proclamation of my being a "poet of importance equal or approaching to that of Pindar", but in his evaluation of difficulty, dense

language, obscure thought and allusive and abrupt transitions. I wonder if this is not a symptom of literature in general, as it proceeds from stylistic moments of density to simplicity. A crucial voice within this topic is the Harvard poet Charles Bernstein and his book, "Attack of the Difficult Poems" (2011), particularly one of its first essays, "Against National Poetry Month As Such".

In dream, as in verse, there is a pop culture of stagnation on the mind. Should we all sing and listen and read easy lyrics and welcoming verse, while the lucidity of literary interpretation and nightly dreams remain ever so evasive in their pantomime mimesis of psychological form? A lucid awakening plays out over the genera of new and renewed creative seeds, blooming as it were, infinitely, maddening as the apex of the mind's most delicate host.

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*"If I think of the storm of my heart, the terrible tenacity with which, against my desire, it used to cling to the hope of life, and if even now I feel this hurricane within me, I have at least found a quietus which in wakeful nights helps me to sleep. This is the genuine, ardent longing for death, for absolute unconsciousness, total non-existence; freedom from all dreams is our only final salvation.*

*As I have never in life felt the real bliss of love, I must erect a monument to the most beautiful of all my dreams, in which, from beginning to end, that love shall be thoroughly satiated. I have in my head "Tristan and Isolde," the simplest but most full-blooded musical conception; with the "black flag" which floats at the end of it I shall cover myself to die."*

*Wagner's Letter 168 to Liszt. The Project Gutenberg Etext of Correspondence of Wagner and Liszt, Volume 2, by Francis Hueffer (translator)*

To find one's peer as an artist is an ideal that few artists truly find. In the artist's magic of self-distinction, and in their magnificent ability to penetrate the heart of all, there is a deep and rich yearning to struggle, co-exist and finally, bond with fellow colleagues in the field.

The artist, however, is sometimes moved beyond the spheres of normalized human contact, and thus falls short in sharing the richness of their life with another through direct experience, except in the case of a briefly encounter with love, endured while in the sweep and momentum of inspiration. The letter above bears such testimony, and the heartened dialogue which shifted the reigns from the mind to the heart in the Romantic age of music has no likely parallel than in the intercourse between Wagner and Liszt which produced such insurmountable passion.

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*Isolde*

*"...Half dreaming melt into the elements,  
When they seem most alive and beautiful :  
To fade into the purple of the west."*

*Brangaena*

*"...Bad dreams are said to augur opposites,  
And bring us joys in weeds of sorrow draped."*

*Tristan and Isolde: A Tragedy. Louis K. Anspacher. Brentano. NY. (1904). Act II*

I first became aware of the special importance of the Tristan and Isolde legend after reading the writings of mythologist Joseph Campbell. The first known literary attribution to the tale is by Gottfried von Strassburg. The incredible mark that this story has made on Western civilization and truly world history is based on the central theme in the tale: Love.

It is love, outside of Christian wedlock, which leads the principal characters towards dissolution. For the first time in history, the cast of collectivism imposed over individuality was broken by a spell of love. Suddenly, the individual appeared at the fore of socio-cultural continuity for the first time and proclaimed an as yet unknown impact on the founding institution of social cohesion.

Love became that attainable gold, graspable by all, even transcending the apex of all human relationship, creative life, sparking and enduring beyond every expression of affection and codependency, enabling the sacrificial character of a new individuality, and of self-knowledge to evolve as the art of life on Earth.

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*dawn is  
them."* *"I know you've been dreaming of me. But don't take it seriously. You know that  
when God visits his devotees. And divides the daily bread among  
them."*

*(1995)* *Spoken by a Sufi Mystic who appears in dream visions in the Iranian film Pari  
by Dariush Mehrjui*

“Pari” was originally adapted from the story, "Franny and Zooey" by J.D. Salinger, without authorization, by the iconoclastic and renowned Persian film director, Dariush Mehrjui. The film was adamantly attacked on all sides, by both Salinger's lawyers and Islamic authorities. It seems that artists are often at work portraying characters and illustrations of their own internal struggle, where in Pari, a young aspiring theatre actress drowns in pseudo-mystic emotionalism surrounded by a family of intellectuals and artists.



Pari, a Persian name meaning “mermaid”, finds herself swimming in deep waters, over her head, a being caught between two worlds, and she wishes to unite with her beloved uncle who took his own life. Truly, the auteur filmmaker, as with all artists who reach the heights of pure self-expression, conceive the focal point of their internal development as interwoven with an external social conflict, as a kind of dreaming, seen through towards the dawn, beyond both the day of social tension and the night of inner turmoil.

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*"This man was in an NGO feeding center, being helped as much as he could be helped. He literally had nothing. He was a virtual skeleton, yet he could still summon the courage and the will to move. He had not given up, and if he didn't give up, how could anyone in the outside world ever dream of losing hope?"*

*James Nachtwey, speaking about famine as genocide in Sudan*

I was a teenager when I first watched "War Photographer" (2001) a documentary about the work of photojournalist James Nachtwey. With an early thirst for truth in filmmaking, I found photography especially endearing, and especially those photographers who followed the photography dictum, "the best shot is often the closest" with unnerving deliberation in foreign countries torn by war.

Soon after, I met the photojournalist Paula Bronstein, a family friend, who urged me to enroll in a school for journalism. I didn't. Though, I embarked on a career in journalism. For a spell, while living in Canada, I wrote for an independent, cooperative media group, The Media Co-op.

In Canada, the nation remembers its fallen countrymen and women who served in war during its memorial day. A veteran and local author, Dr. Arthur Clark, reminds us that we do not only remember our own, but all who have fought and died in war; men, women, children, and the elderly in every corner of the globe.

In late 2012, I began writing a creative non-fiction tract based on my grandfather's life in the 20th century, and his combat experience as an American soldier in WWII. I've found a serious channel by which to investigate myself in relation to war, albeit through an ancestor who was also a friend. It is one of the strongest sources of contemplation in modern life, to remember, with a full heart and a clear mind.

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*"Awake is where the laws of physics are fully operable...I've found by observing sleep, and some of you may recall the motto in Athanasius Kircher...that's chiseled over the alchemist's doorway, I can't do it in Latin but it says, "While Sleeping, Watch."*

*I've noticed that while going to sleep there is a barrier, a place in the process of going to sleep, that is like the mercurial edge, it's a river, it's a zone of hypnagogia...true hallucination...*

*At any given moment on the planet, because of the way the planet is, as a thing, some considerable percentage of human beings are asleep always, and many are awake. And so if the world soul is made of the collective consciousness of human beings, then it is never entirely awake, it is never entirely asleep, it exists in...some kind of indeterminate zone...*

*The real truth that dare not speak itself is that no one is in control, absolutely no one...It's like trying to control a dream, you see.*

*The global vesting of the species is somehow unfolding the logic of a dream. Well now a Jungian would say, no surprise here, history is the collective dream of humanity, it is run by the archetypal energies of humanity...*

*You choose to be asleep or partially asleep or fully awake...if in fact we exist inside some kind of morphogenetic field that is created by the sum total of human minds on the planet, and if in fact in half or more of those minds in any given moment, the rules of the dream hold sway, then it is no surprise that when we make our way into society, or just when we live our lives there is an eeriness to it, there's a fatedness to it, there's a plottedness to it, we are inside some kind of engine of narrative...Greg Egan and others have suggested that this could even be a form of recorded medium...you can see the thumbprints of editors on our reality if you are truly paying attention...*

*...it is the plasticity of historical time and the acceleration, a sense of an out-of-control spin-up or spin-down into new domains of possibility, that is the strongest evidence at hand that we in some kind of dream.*

*The world is made of language...reality can therefore be hacked...if it's code, then it is far more deeply open to manipulation than we ever dared dream."*

— Terrence McKenna

I stared into the posthumous cyber webs of knowledge and insight, uncovered from the alchemical poetry of Terrence McKenna and other renegade pop philosophers of American psychedelia. Listening and reading through the dawn, I touched the cosmic giggle in the meeting of minds, my young sensitivities saturated by the egoless dreamscapes of the oft-unspoken myths of immemorial lifeways in the light of a kind of thought that assumes the entire body of Humanity and the World in a universal freedom of sight and meaning fruiting on the branch of the Tree of Knowledge as a clear and lucid dream of sensual immersion in the core and nature of mind.

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*"Until we get to dreams, there is a tendency to think of stories as 'words.' In dreams we experience stories as structures and patterns that evoke images and experiences, often without words...In dealing with dreams, such noted authorities as James Hillman have instructed us to "hold the image." By 'Holding the image,' the conscious mind can begin to discern patterns and structures that can eventually reveal rich psychic content...Some have said that, 'Myths are cultural dreams.'"*

*from Ontogenic Mythotypes by G. Charles Andersen*

What is the relationship between language and dream? Dream is a language in and of itself. Language is mutable within Dream Language, when traditional dream interpretation is foregone, and creative writing is utilized as a means to "hold the image", as in the concepts of James Hillman. Such psychological import brings to mind the psychoactive artistry of Laurence Caruana and others who have respected the imagination as a prehuman remnant of archaic information.

"The world is made of language" said Terence McKenna. And so, in using that language, we may hear our mythic vocation, a calling towards that which we had never dreamed, unearthed as from the unsaid and unconscious mysteries of our own psychic inventions.

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*Recognise the truth in yourself, recognise yourself in the truth; and in the same moment you will find, to your astonishment, that the home which you have long been looking for in vain, which has filled your most ardent dreams, is there in its entirety, with every detail of it true, in the very place where you stand. It is there that your heaven touches your earth.*

*Arthur Schopenhauer. On The Wisdom Of Life: Aphorisms*

*Schopenhauer suggests that just as your dreams are composed by an aspect of yourself of which your consciousness is unaware, so, too, your whole life is composed by the will within you. And just as people whom you will have met apparently by mere chance became leading agents in the structuring of your life, so, too, will you have served unknowingly as an agent, giving meaning to the lives of others. The whole thing gears together like one big symphony, with everything unconsciously structuring everything else. And Schopenhauer concludes that it is as though our lives were the features of the one great dream of a single dreamer in which all the dream characters dream, too; so that everything links to everything else, moved by the one will to life which is the universal will in nature.*

*Joseph Campbell. What is Metaphor?*

I continue to find cross-references between three great thinkers of the 20th century, now with their source in the earlier precedence of Arthur Schopenhauer. The 20th century's invention of depth psychology discovered transpersonal meanings between self and agency in the will of the world, which substantiated Schopenhauer's philosophical developments.

Joseph Campbell, James Hillman, Terence McKenna, all arrived independently at the same concurrent patterns, in which humanity can be defined as a self-reflective being; including that of character (self), narrative (fate) and dream (unconscious). The most accurate form of self-identification seems to be when we see ourselves as characters. As McKenna said, "We are in some kind of engine of narrative."

The fact that Schopenhauer linked these ideas to dream psychology underlies the mystic identification of fate by Carl Jung who said, "the unconscious exists in our lives as fate." The unconscious, fate, and the narrative engine of character are central to analyzing dream psychology as the major theme which leads humankind to be humble before nature, because, as defined, nature can be understood as the greater mind of collective agency among all that dreams. To know nature is to gain self-knowledge, down to the deepest base of the unconscious, toward a self-willed enlightenment of transpersonal, transnational human identity with all of life on Earth, and universal creation.

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*"...as the separate artistic worlds of dream and of intoxication, physiological phenomena between which we can observe an opposition corresponding to the one between the Apollonian and the Dionysian. According to the idea of Lucretius, the marvellous divine shapes first stepped out before the mind of man in a dream. It was in a dream that the great artist saw the delightful anatomy of superhuman existence, and the Greek poet, questioned about the secrets of poetic creativity, would have also recalled his dreams and given an explanation similar to the one Hans Sachs provides in Die Meistersinger.*

*My friend, that is precisely the poet's work—  
To figure out his dreams, mark them down.  
Believe me, the truest illusion of mankind  
Is revealed to him in dreams:  
All poetic art and poeticizing  
Is nothing but interpreting true dreams.*

*The beautiful appearance of the world of dreams, in whose creation each man is a complete artist, is the precondition of all plastic art, and also, in fact, as we shall see, an important part of poetry."*

*Friedrich Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy (1872)*

One night, I searched for this very stanza by Hans Sachs, as quoted by Nietzsche. I was unable to read German so my research efforts proved futile. After reading Nietzsche's "Birth of Tragedy" a few times within the body of other texts on mythology, psychology, dream and poetry, I found a worthy predecessor to Nietzsche, Hans Sachs, embedded in his monumental philosophical work.

"Birth of Tragedy" is one of the most awe-inspiring tracts of literature. I continue to draw from this work as a kind of lucid understanding of my own inner being, as it has moved and developed since the first pages of history throughout time immemorial.

Such an exhibition of primed thought lures the mind into the opaque night of isolation and longing, yet when nostalgia dissipates the true character of one alone breathes the kind of truth that is our universal whole, a cosmic constancy of holism, triumphant in its lasting mystery.

\*

*"I've been living in the war zone my whole life. It has always been my dream to make it to Kampala, because the National Music Competition is the biggest competition in all of Uganda. I want to win and I want our name to be known throughout Uganda as winners."*

*Dominic, 14 year old Acholi xylophonist in the film, War Dance (2007)*

When I conducted research with refugees in Cairo, Egypt, I engaged the community in a youth music project. One night, I sat listening to the diverse musical traditions of Sudan, exhibited before me with unrivaled emotion. The room filled with traditional incense as we drank *hilo-mor*, a Sudanese herbal drink special during Ramadan. The last words of the night will forever echo in my head, when my friend, a man from Darfur, asked his friend from Kordofan, a young singer, "Why do you sing your traditional music?" He responded, "Because when we sing we remember where we're from."

\*

*"By and by comes the Great Awakening, and then we find out that this life is really a great dream. Fools think they are awake now, and flatter themselves...Confucius and you are both dreams; and I who say you are dreams,—I am but a dream myself. This is a paradox. To-morrow a sage may arise to explain it; but that tomorrow will not be until ten thousand generations have gone by."*

*Musings of a Chinese Mystic, by Lionel Giles, [1906], from the chapter, "Illusions"*

Possessed by a conflict of opposites, reading this quote aloud to my anima, she said, "That is how I feel." She was raised in a Vietnamese sect of Shamanic Taoism. One day, a local shaman saw her hands before she left Vietnam for Canada.

"You have the hands of an artist," said the shaman. As I watch her hands blend with the strings of her instrument, hearing the mystic bent with a staggering heart, wrenched from her music of an emotive immensity so tremendous that I was truly floored at every opportunity to provide her with touches of rhythm, percussive for our in-gathered loving.

Through her music, she speaks, "Listen, and awaken to the root of creativity." It takes a seed to take root in soil, rich with the wisdom of time and its lessons of patience, anticipation. I respond, "Let the spontaneity of life sometimes dry, to await the rain, falling not from our own bodies, but from the intuitive atmosphere of our shared life, that to be patient is a kind of love."

\*

*"Unconscious actions, mass unconscious actions have certain momentums, something that Tolstoy tried to explain more philosophically in the narrative of War and Peace, how the individuals with their own lives could be carried off by history's great forced floods this way or that.*

*He was trying to describe often what I encounter in my study of prophecy, that there is a wave of mass human stupidity that is carrying even intelligent people into its current, that is converging on a collision in the Middle East...what I get wrong also is a helpful study of how the human mind misinterprets a sign with its own expectations and hopes and I think it helped me be a better interpreter as well as a predictor of the future..."*

*John Hogue on Whitley Strieber's "Dreamland: Journeys to the Extreme Edge"*

I first read Whitley Strieber's "Communion", privately, while in high school. It stretched my understanding of non-fiction as a young reader, after surveying a gamut of fiction, history, philosophy, mythology in my family library.

Another genre-bender, who influenced my early appreciation for literature in a way that was more grounded but equally revolutionary, was Jack Kerouac, who together with Allen Ginsberg, prophesied a shift in American social norms through their collective literary breakthroughs. They had noted that in the second half of the 20th century, Americans would move from their conservative, Christian upbringings to a more Buddhistic sensitivity.

Reading both of their writings thoroughly, I soon interpreted within their work an interesting relationship to what we now call prophecy. More than to define prophecy within the highly skeptical sensationalism of conspiracy theory and prophecy, in a more mythological sense, is simply the attuning of the intellect with a certain eloquence, creative evocations of timeless, archetypal wisdom, reattributing them as signs.

More often than not, prophecy, in mystic circles, is not an outward momentum, toward the prediction of mere, profane outcomes, but simply one of the many ways toward self-realization. One is inevitably born of the infinite. Popular prophecy is a heady mix of conspiracy theories or what Terence McKenna called, "epistemological cartoons". In Hebrew mysticism, my understanding is that prophecy has been passed down through numerological inquiry, beheld within the Hebrew language of the Torah, encompassing a unitive vision of interpretive pseudoscientific observation as it meets with spiritual practice.

Recently, I viewed the film, "Rasputin", based on another prophetic figure portrayed within the literature on my childhood bookshelf. I was a young man impressed by the literati, and the eyes of Rasputin opened popular discourse of prophecy to the world stage, especially as regards political intrigue, out into broad daylight. His eyes still transfix.

\*

*One great part of every human existence is passed in a state which cannot be rendered sensible by the use of wide-awake language, cut-and-dry grammar and go-ahead plot.*

*from the opening of the film, "Passages from James Joyce's 'Finnegan's Wake'" by Mary Ellen Bute*

*"History...is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake"*

*James Joyce, from "Ulysses"*

As my sleep cycle changes, I wake later in the day. It is winter. I rise at sundown, fall at sunrise. The sun and I keep a syncopated rhythm of broken and drunken days. My consciousness rains down on my dreams with the lucid bearing of a child at home in the nonsense play of indecision and fear. I listen only to night. I am not a human. I am not adapted to earth. I am not a person. I am not adapted to housed domestication. I am not. I am adapted to mind. I think, therefore I am not.

\*

When tired, listen.  
Music is the breath of life.  
Listen,  
I am tired.

Asleep,

I hear a visual language,  
A deeper mind.  
Music, now.

\*

The body of Johfra Bosschart's monumental career of visual artworks can be seen at the Visionary Revue, a publication by painter Laurence Caruana, which is devoted to the history and future of Visionary Art. Arguably, the most well-known Visionary Artist in America is Alex Grey. His art spurred my fascination with this new wellspring of artistic creativity. A break from surrealism, visionary artists utilize all triggers available to the human body and soul, toward transcendent & transpersonal spiritual unity.

Johfra's painting, "The Birth Dream" ignites the power of noetic states to trigger the breath of novelty into the mind of the seer. Completed in 1945, this painting marked the very beginning of Johfra's career. He is today known as the principle pioneer of painting techniques that today are the impetus for creative gatherings of all kinds, celebrating the sheer breadth of glorified wonder that the Visionary World Soul inspires in and through us all.

\*

*Summer grasses /  
all that remains /  
of soldiers dreams.*

*Interpretation of a haiku by Matsuo Bashō, by Lucien Stryck*

Kannon is one of the spellings for the Goddess of Compassion. Her Chinese name is Kuan Yin, Avalokitesvara in Sanskrit. A statue of the Kuan Yin stands, similarly as pictured above, in my apartment. My anima, a Taoist-Buddhist, cares for the sculpture with a love beyond the appreciation of high art.

Standing behind an attendant bodhisattva, the Kuan Yin is a living recipient of our fleeting, momentary aspirations and our evergreen, immanent longings, as they rise and fall into the sky of the figured form with our sound, breath, movement and speech.

With a physical offering, the life of the seemingly inanimate sculpture gives way to immortal reckoning. The statue has received such offerings as the favorite pleasures of my late grandfather, which included a can of sardines and a cigarette, as well as my Shakuhachi breathings.

\*



*"This morning Munira Sibai, a Syrian-American student with SustainUs, delivered this speech on behalf of young people (YOUNGO). Although many governments could not be bothered to listen to their citizens, civil society was present in force: supporting Munira and each other in a way that governments can only dream of. Onwards."*

*Earth in Brackets BLOG (Dec. 7 2012)*

Tonight, as I drift away from consciousness, I read the latest climate change headlines at *Democracy Now!* Civil societies and liberal democracies are shifting gears for full speed ahead as the human race confronts the most pressing issue yet known to humankind: A Warming Earth.

Reading the latest World Bank Research analyses on the devastating impacts of unheeded climate change warnings, at 4 degrees warmer, the scientific evidence is alarming.

Earlier tonight, as I cycled home, I met a bewildered fox. Scared and nervous, we approached each other. My fear suddenly transformed as I saw fear into the fox's eyes. I glided past carefully. I witnessed this incredible animal confusedly find an exit from the paved city pathways to the nearby riverbanks. I think of Native wisdom sayings that ask, "Who will speak for our beloved animals?"

\*

*"Oliver St. John Gogarty noted that the typical modern writer was doomed to go on talking to himself but that it was left for James Joyce to go one step further and to talk to himself in his sleep in Finnegans Wake."*

*From a biographical sketch of Charles Reznikoff by Milton Hindus*

Internet, technology, modernity, and history, the Joycean nightmare, the daily dream of the silenced voice, speaking in thought, imagining a placeless space of mind, as a hyper-text code of subjective emergency.

I lay half-awake, surfing the viral webs of unreason in my sunless haunt, of trivial whereabouts and soundless frequency. An internal vibration wakes me into a dream of subconscious sleep, the inactive pause of breath.

In the information age, for the modern writer, free speech is a painless bubble of thirst. My words are a mere spidery sleep-talk, spinning the collective web on and on, to perchance catch the insect eyes of innumerable minds, insights unseen, and only felt, as the nerve of a quiver.

\*

*"In the past, politicians promised to create a better world. They had different ways of achieving this, but their power and authority came from the optimistic visions they offered their people. Those dreams failed, and today people have lost faith in ideologies...But now, they have discovered a new role that restores their power and authority. Instead of delivering dreams, politicians promise to protect us from nightmares...But much of this threat is a fantasy, which has been exaggerated and distorted by politicians. It's a dark illusion that has spread unquestioned through governments around the world, security services and the international media."*

*Power of Nightmares (2004), a documentary by Adam Curtis for BBC*

As George Carlin said, "You have no choice, you have owners." Yet, before I heard the words of this comic genius, I had an inkling that America was having its way with me. I desperately needed to get out. When the Twin Towers came crashing down, I was a teenage male, bent up in a corner, with only one response, the one I thought my American family wanted to hear, "I would kill to take revenge."

As I watched the growing stores of books on international post-Cold war espionage supporting the drama of "war on terror" dialectic, I became more and more sickened and disillusioned. George W. Bush's maddeningly insane propaganda machine of backwards language and bad humor turned my stomach. I fled America, to live in the Middle East. I needed to hear breathing from "the other side".

I found human hearts, not enemy minds. I found a camaraderie so naturally human, and so deeply universal that I was fulfilled as one with all people on the planet, and did not need to be "American" at all. With Obama's "war on terror" claim to fame over the successful hunt for bin Laden, I remain ever firm in my convictions. American "terror" propaganda is so deep-seated that it is beyond politics, it is the lifeblood and backbone of American society.

\*

*Who are ye that thus rudely banish slumber from my eyes? What mean these vague and insolent glances? Why this fearful procession? With what dream of horror come ye to delude my half awakened soul?*

*Goethe's Egmont, Opening lines of Act V. Scene IV.*

A play about liberty under the thumb of oppression, my preliminary inkling about the Egmont drama is that it forecasts the oppressive momentum that lives within isolated individuals who support the heroism, the martyrdom, and hypocrisy, of a collective struggle for independence. I have been contemplating the uniquely liberating present that I experience through love.

American and Vietnamese are two countries whose peoples, not long ago, warred, and brutally. I wonder sometimes about our extended family relations. How is it possible that the same blood now joined today by love once was spilt by hatred?

As Goethe wrote in the poem, Gingo Biloba (1819): "Is it but one being single / Which as same itself divides? / Are there two which choose to mingle / So that one each other hides?"

\*

*"I have learned to modify my prejudices. I am ready to believe Hamlet was right when he assured his friend Horatio that there was in Heaven and Earth many things not dreamed of in his philosophy."*

*D.M. Bennett, as orated in the 2011 documentary film, "D.M. Bennett: The Truth Seeker"*

Americans who are curious look to history, and ask questions. "Who are we? Where do we come from? How did we get here? What could have led to this? What is happening?"

Those among us strong enough to ask such questions are motivated to seek truth. While the president weeps for the children of the nation, we must all weep, full of emotion, burning with an intelligent self-awareness towards post-political change. We don't need rhetoric. We need free thought. Disarmament is the new abolition, and as long as guns are indiscriminately accessible, we are all slaves to our freedom.

\*

*...the fear of prisons  
The fear of strip searches leads to  
The fear of being naked in front of other women  
The fear of keys leads to  
The fear of chains  
The fear of small spaces it leads to  
The fear of tears, the fear of dreams, the fear of loneliness  
The fear of being forgotten, it leads to  
The fear of time, the fear of lies  
The fear of metal doors leads to  
The fear of dark empty corridors  
The fear of insanity leads to  
The fear of separation, the fear of isolation, the fear of segregation, the fear  
of being a statistic."*

*Spoken by a female prisoner at the final minute of the 2012 short film, "Beautiful Sentence"*

There is more than one meaning in the word, “sentence”. What phenomenal beauty there is in the regeneration of oral storytelling through writing.

As I re-watch the humbling documentary, “Beautiful Sentence”, on an oft-recurring subject, the impact of poetry on prisoners, I think about the unique predicament I'm in, in relation to the subject of the above-quoted poem. I won't be in an airport anytime soon. I'm staying far away. Although I am not incarcerated, I can feel the fear that this prisoner speaks of in her poem.

\*

*“Only those who truly love and who are truly strong can sustain their lives as a dream. You dwell in your own enchantment. Life throws stones at you, but your love and your dream change those stones into the flowers of discovery. Even if you lose, or are defeated by things, your triumph will always be exemplary. And if no one knows it, then there are places that do. People like you enrich the dreams of the worlds, and it is dreams that create history. People like you are unknowing transformers of things, protected by your own fairy-tale, by love.”*

*Ben Okri, poet and novelist*

I found the above quote on "THE DREAMING", the website of shamanic drummer and creative writer, Lindsay Dobbin. It is such statements from the most brilliantly expressive minds of our time that draw readers in to reflect on the substance of their own nature. That is their creative spark.

Ben Okri, more than a storyteller, writes like a truth-teller. He conveys the subtleties of the human heart with the kind of literary intuition that makes readers feel intimate with his words. The relationship between love and dream is the strongest bridge to self-knowledge. Those who forget their dreams are not awake to love.

\*

The word, “apocalypse” is originally from the Greek, pronounced “apocálypsis” which means, “a disclosure of knowledge, hidden from humanity in an era dominated by falsehood and misconception, i.e., a lifting of the veil or revelation”.

Is there only one here and now, one present? Or are there many presents that amount to a whole presence? All dreams, fantasies, prophecies and revelations ultimately bend time, and bring us back to where we are. Today is always the first and the last day. The renewal of the seasons awakens our senses to the natural light of continuity and the breath of a living voice saying, "It's never too late.”

\*

*Thy wisdom speaks in me, and bids me dare  
Beacon the rocks on which high hearts are wrecked.  
I never was attached to that great sect,  
Whose doctrine is, that each one should select  
Out of the crowd a mistress or a friend,  
And all the rest, though fair and wise, commend  
To cold oblivion, though it is in the code  
Of modern morals, and the beaten road  
Which those poor slaves with weary footsteps tread,  
Who travel to their home among the dead  
By the broad highway of the world, and so,  
With one chained friend, perhaps a jealous foe,  
The dreariest and the longest journey go.*

*True love in this differs from gold and clay,  
That to divide is not to take away.  
Love is like understanding, that grows bright  
Gazing on many truths; 'tis like thy light,  
Imagination! which, from earth and sky,  
And from the depths of human fantasy,  
As from a thousand prisms and mirrors, fills  
The Universe with glorious beams, and kills  
Error, the worm, with man a sun-like arrow  
Of its reverberated lightning. Narrow  
The heart that loves, the brain that contemplates,  
The life that wears, the spirit that creates  
One object, and one form, and builds thereby  
A sepulchre for its eternity.*

*from Epipsychidion (1821) by Percy Bysshe Shelley*

The dying words of my great uncle, who would have been 92 at the time of this writing in late December of 2012, were to "focus on one thing". I've always had multiple affinities. As a creative person, my mixed mediums, cross-genre, trans-disciplinary, multi-instrumentalism, and manifold frames of mind spill and interweave throughout different forms of art and intuition. I often wonder, should I commit to one thing entirely, and from that foundational trunk, branch out into the world of infinite possibility? In my arboreal metaphor, I am a forest.

I think my great uncle might be proud to look back to Earth from beyond the grave, to see that I am not following his advice. For he was an iconoclast himself, through and through. Among the first generations of Jews to seek higher education in America, he was proud to transcend the status quo, the social norms and family values of his time and explore the hard-won science of novelty through physics and chemistry.

Yet, in love, I am elastic enough to disagree with my creative self, and traveling beyond the creative-destructive duality, to see the magnificence of love as an enduring unity. I see only Oneness, that is Love, especially when looking upon the dear face of my beloved.

The late Ravi Shankar exhibited a profound connection to unity in life, which is the focus of the documentary "Raga". The painter and poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti espoused the delights of being a multidisciplinary artist in both poetry and painting in his essay, "From The Gone World". To each their own, to each their oneness, and one for all.

\*

*"Listen: in dreams and particularly in nightmares, caused by indigestion or whatever you like, a man sometimes sees such artistic things, such a complex and actual reality, such events, or even a whole world of events, woven into such a plot, full of such astonishing details, beginning with the most exalted manifestations of the human spirit to the last button on a shirt-front that, I assure you, not even Leo Tolstoy could have invented it, and yet such dreams are sometimes seen not by writers but by the most ordinary people, civil servants, newspaper columnists, priests..."*

*Fyodor Dostoyevsky's The Brothers Karamazov, pp. 751-752*

I read the last masterful work of Dostoyevsky, one of the world's greats of classic literature. The book is a testament to the sheer mental strength and quality of the writer who experienced a mock execution trial, and incarceration in the labor camps of 19th century Siberia. Nearly one thousand pages, I received a copy of this masterpiece from a friend with a peculiar literary collection practice.

Although the two volumes of those copies of the book were printed by different publishers, they began and ended on corresponding pages. The generous friend, while often aloof, was a great literary mentor and companion.

As a final note, for the holiday season, I feel that Dostoyevsky's inkling as quoted above invigorates our lives especially today. The popular cult of the Christmas tree and its European folklore breeds a kind of mundane public dreaming, where the workers of the world unite in myth and imagine a complex world full of reindeer, gifts and traditions fabricated from the ordinary, to the ordinary.

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*"Please, consider me a dream."  
Franz Kafka*

How may we interpret this mysterious quote, passed down through interminable echoes? What, if any, interpretation is necessary? One interpreter said it sums up his life. Can a life be summed up? In the spontaneous trigger of language into the folds of space and listening, when do we hear the contemplative grab of a lifetime thrown into a phrase?

The peculiar relevance of the painting, "Kafka, Separated from the Fire by a Mirror" (1983), by the German artist Paul Mersmann der Jüngere, speaks eloquently to the theme of self-reflection and passion. Self-consciousness, or conscious identity may sometimes block our passage into the spiritual heart of self-annihilation, providing us only with a thin display at which to gawk, and finally, withdraw oneself from participation in life altogether.

It may be more useful, in the interest of psychological wholeness, to identify with the less formal, and more marginal states of mind. Or, as another quote attributed to Kafka goes: "Last night I dreamed about you. What happened in detail I can hardly remember, all I know is that we kept merging into one another. I was you, you were me."

If language is a bridge, we do not always cross it, but sometimes slip beneath, and after speaking in one direction, go our own way.

\*

*"For my part I know nothing with any certainty, but the sight of the stars makes me dream."  
Vincent Van Gogh*

Artists are seers, and so, they are truth-seekers. Yet, human experience blurs the line between seeing and seeking. Certainty is flux, and flux is certainty as form is emptiness and emptiness form. The timeless Taoist adage of dualistic unity confirms the perplexing clarity of distinction in the universe. To the point, and contemporaneously within current societal and ecological trends, human life, and self-consciousness, is further revealed as innately paradoxical. Van Gogh continues by his mad methods of artistry, by saying, "I dream of painting and then I paint my dream."

The wisdom of Van Gogh speaks to Percy Shelly and the myth of monogamy, where Van Gogh speaks of God (Unity) and Love (Diversity). "Love many things," he says, "for therein lies the true strength, and whosoever loves much performs much, and can accomplish much, and what is done in love is done well." Van Gogh confessed, "But I always think that the best way to know God is to love many things."

In the beautiful and powerful 1956 film, *Lust for Life* starring Kirk Douglas, the tormented genius and emotional outcast paints "The Starry Night" (1889), while the narrator's voice is heard saying: "Sometimes I work on into the night. I'm hardly conscious of myself anymore. The pictures come to me as in a dream with a terrible lucidity."

Night and dream are married in a mystical love through the human as artist, animating the spirit of the dream towards a night imbued with the life-giving stars of an empyrean both transcendent and visceral. The dream stirs us awake while asleep, from the lowest of our depths, and reaching toward the greatest of our heights. We are besieged with an all-consuming, all-cleansing, all-awakening, all-encompassing Mystery.

\*

*"Sweet dreams that leave all worries behind you, but in your dreams whatever they be, dream a little dream of me."*

*"Dream A Little Dream of Me" (1931), lyrics by Gus Kahn*

One of my favorite duets by Louis Armstrong is a number titled, "That's My Desire" (1951), with vocalist Velma Middleton. I listened to this duet recording on cassette tape for years, then found a rare video performance. These old Dixieland jazz standards evoke a kind grand simplicity, as understood by the likes of master improviser and jazz pianist Keith Jarrett, who said, "The more experience someone has, the more their simplicity is profound."

Their musical simplicity is spacious enough to offer the needful release of Southern jazz artists mixed up in the lowly roil of American racism. Music is the teacher, and with the intuitive language of sound, speaks to all indiscriminately, "Love is simple."

\*

*"Certainly when a writer has acquired the habit of regarding life as mythical and typical there comes a curious heightening of his artist temper, a new refreshment to his perceiving and shaping powers, which otherwise occurs much later in life...myth is the legitimization of life; only through and in it does life find self-awareness, sanction, consecration."*

*Thomas Mann, in his speech, "Freud and the Future" (1936)*

In this speech by the great 20th century writer Thomas Mann, given on his eightieth birthday, the author of the 1924 novel *The Magic Mountain*, shares masterful insights with which to learn the various modes of self-discovery, as enlightened by the mythic fires of ritualized, eternalized thought throughout the ages. In the ageless struggle towards self-knowledge, psychological embattlements are often constructed in defense of the outer world, or the world, and as an offense against the inner world, or the self.

In the midst of those embattlements, lies an open space. As Rumi says, "Between right-doing, and wrongdoing, there is a field. I'll meet you there."

To explore self-knowledge with regard to the balance between one's place in the world, and choice of vocation, is to embark on an inward journey. Only by recognizing the bare truths of our



life in the present moment, and proclaiming them as such, and in turn, making them an integral part of consciousness, and the waking mind, can we understand the truth about the myths that we live by.

Myth addresses and reveals the ultimate needs of the human psyche. Myth speaks of the search for meaning in the life of humankind. The final lesson of mythology is that the ultimate question about life in the modern world, as with all times, is not, "What is my place in the world?" A more essential question is, "What is the place of the world in me?" Every one is one with the world.

The world is of our own making. We are all co-creators in the aftermath of reason. Work is play, and play is work. Play is the life of the universe at work. These ideas have been conceived in Hindu philosophy as "Lila", which might be translated as cosmic performance.

\*

*"In the age of the rude beginnings of culture, man believed that he was discovering a second real world in dream, and here is the origin of all metaphysics. Without dream, mankind would never have had occasion to invent such a division of the world."*

*Friedrich Nietzsche. "Human, All Too Human" (1878), aphorism no. 5*

There's a great lesson I have learned while writing about the psychology of dream, both as a metaphor and physiological state, reflecting on the role of the unconscious in creative life. Firstly, let it be said that this is a compendium of writings, research and dialogue on the wealth of inner inspiration that all of humanity possesses by the sheer facts of embodiment: we dream.

I've learned this basic lesson: sometimes in a person's life, they must be allowed to rest. Occasionally, every person must be allowed to sleep to bear witness to the whole nature of their lives inside and out, so as to witness the natural course of their consciousness as it dips and lingers in unconscious and semi-conscious states. Are we prepared to trust in the world, and ourselves, enough to perform the transcendent conscious act that is required to fulfill this need?

Truly, depending on the individual, one may require years of extended sleep cycles, to allow the mind to explore the natural caverns of its own self-regeneration through the deep psychic image-language of our internal/eternal life that lies exposed only when the body passes beyond full rest. I can imagine that in more matured human histories and traditions, the seed power of meditation engages the body/mind in a life of inner exploration, even more profoundly restful and intuitive than the subconscious dream state.

As we are not keen, and even unable, to allow the natural course of our inner lives to take hold and draw us inward for much needed psychological rejuvenation, there is imbalance in the world. So, we are guided by the higher power we sometimes call fate, or even the divine, whether

deified or not, but in both realities, there is the seed of our own imaginative creativity, deeply buried, yet receptive to the light of our conscious recognition, reflection and inspiration.

The old, or second world, that Nietzsche refers to in *Human, All Too Human*, has been divided and cut off from human life in an age of serious neglect, ignorance and escape from our own inner natures. Thus, there is imbalance. So, we continue to deny that we are human, all too human.

\*

*"She endured, and to hasten the act she feigned desire; she had not  
for long, except in dream, felt it.  
Yesterday's drunkenness made him sluggish and exacting; she  
saw, turning her head sadly,  
The windows were bright gray with dawn; he embraced her still,  
stopping to talk about the stallion.*

...

*The nerves and the flesh go by shadowlike, the limbs and the lives  
shadowlike, these shadows remain, these shadows  
To whom temples, to whom churches, to whom labors and wars,  
visions and dreams are dedicate...*

...

*The child Christine waked when her mother left her  
And lay half dreaming, in the half-waking dream she saw the  
ocean come up out of the west  
And cover the world, she looked up through clear water at the  
tops of the redwoods."*

*Roan Stallion (1925) by Robinson Jeffers*

I first became aware of the illuminations of California poet Robinson Jeffers while listening to a lecture by Joseph Campbell, "Origins of Man and Myth". Campbell invokes the poetry of Jeffers to describe that which makes us human, the affinity for "a divinely superfluous beauty." I am drawn to Jeffers' poem, "Natural Music".

Some poetry enthusiasts consider Jeffers' work to be pantheist. When I read Jeffers, I indulge in the right to form my own relationship with the world, the Earth, as with that of my mother. Every natural phenomenon calls to a supernatural truth, a divine magic, personified in the ambient face of seasonal change, the drastic force of the weather, or the inner passions ignited. A theme that started these writings recurs in my life, that being a recognition of the wayward allure of exceeding exposure to the night so often accompanying life in the northern climes. Yet, after reading such poetic masters as Robinson Jeffers, I can't help but think that in the opaque cold of

infinite nothingness, there is a mythopoeic field of space, love and silence; the kiss of a goddess in recline.

\*

*"...the greatest amount of erudition, if it has not been elaborated by one's own thought, is worth much less than a far smaller amount that has been well thought over.*

*...much reading deprives the mind of all elasticity, as a weight continually pressing upon it does a spring, and the most certain means of never having any original thoughts is to take a book in hand at once, at every spare moment. This practice is the reason why scholarship makes most men more unintelligent and stupid than they are by nature.*

*...he, that is, who thinks for himself, thinks of free will, thinks correctly he has the compass to find out the right way.*

*...the intellectual acquirement of the self-thinker is like a fine painting, which stands out life-like with accurate light and shade, well-balanced tone, and complete harmony of colour. The intellectual acquirement of the mere scholar, on the contrary, resembles a large palette full of bright colours, systematically arranged indeed, but without harmony, cohesion, and significance.*

*For the perpetual, the real, in its originality and power, is the natural object of the thinking mind, and is able most easily to move it deeply...In the realm of reality, however beautiful, happy, and cheerful it may happen to be, we move ourselves continuously under the influence of an oppression, which has ceaselessly to be overcome; while in the realm of thought we are incorporeal spirits...*

*...how great and how near us is the problem of existence, of this ambiguous, tormented, fleeting, dream-like existence ; so great and so near, that as soon as one is aware of it, all other problems and purposes are overshadowed and hidden by it..."*

*Arthur Schopenhauer, "On Thinking For Oneself" (1851)*

During the course of writing about creativity and subconsciousness, from the inception of my inspiration to the present, I have been exploring a world of my own making. I have sacrificed a worldly career-seeking existence for a deep exploration into the development of self-motivation, self-learning of thinking for oneself.

That being said, while I have risked the mental balance that all face when they dwell profoundly and thoroughly into themselves, I have begun to feel a feeling of being in the presence of the trackless way, or the "pathless" way as the philosopher Jiddhu Krishnamurti has said.

To trust the language of dream entails a daily struggle to remember the most obscure part of ourselves that the world tells us to deny, forget and leave far behind in the realm of sleep and fantasy. When dreaming begins to encroach on our reality, we become fearful, and as modern people, defensive.

The breach of unreason is an affront to all we have been taught. It is the history of our soul. When the words of great thinkers like Schopenhauer begin to make crucial sense and gain a new sense of pragmatism outside of the allures of an enigmatic philosophic tract, the inner world of one's own making begins with an awakening, illuminated by the midnight sun.

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*"The dream of reason produces monsters."*  
Francisco de Goya

The purpose of exhibiting the creative process of artist Francisco de Goya, showing his initial sketch, and final print for his etching, "The Dream of Reason Produces Monsters" (1799), is part of a theory I have developed in relation to the role of the unconscious, and its impacts on the whole life of the individual, encompassing their mental activity when they are asleep and awake.

Firstly, my theory is founded on lived experience. The foundation is as follows: If a person follows their natural sleep-awake patterns, without conscious intervention, the body cycles through an internal clock that is more expansive, or simply different than the twenty-four hour day. What happens is that, incrementally, each day they wake later, and sleep later.

In the course of over a year of practicing this experiment of consciousness, I have found the twenty-four hour clock to be limiting and a mere fixed point around which my sleep and waking cycles orbit, as a celestial body around its true source of gravity.

Is this an effect of seasonal, environmental, or psychological pressures? The theoretical part now kicks in. With the exhibition of Goya's creative process, visually representing nightmare, he is accosted by a host of demons, and in turn, upon waking, those demons become the monsters of reason. So, if we allow the regenerative natural patterns of sleeping and waking to unfold, with complete abandon and in lieu of the normative twenty-four hour clock, we give way to a natural creative energy sourced deep within our unconscious, that nourishes our very life-breath with the heartbeat of self-knowledge. But if we do not, those demons, which are really our unheard or unseen parts of ourselves, haunt us while we are asleep.

With this, the world of dream is merely a doorway, as is a metaphor or a myth, towards a more holistic regenerative consciousness of self-awakening.

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*"I've got to read, I've got to catch up with the remembrance of the past!"  
from the film, Fahrenheit 451 (1966), directed by François Truffaut  
based on the 1953 book by Ray Bradbury*

The principal character, Montag, in the 1966 film adaptation of Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451, by Francois Truffaut, says the above lines before he has a nightmare. After breaking up a sterile grouping of house guests, who on being exposed to literature become fraught with the anxiety of original thought and complex emotions, his work as a book burner turns into a twisted night haunt.

Ray Bradbury may have been alluding to much more than the simple prediction of a neofascist regime, burning books as did the Nazis, and other demented social movements throughout history. (Note: the fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria). How much of our collective conscious memory has transformed into the metaphysical counterparts of cinder and dust? With the influx of new media, we are losing our grip on the greater part of human contact, that with the historical mind, descending with the literature of the ages into the fires of mass ignorance.

\*

It was a Friday afternoon. I called the late filmmaker and environmentalist Rob Stewart to interview him. I had read that the Idle No More movement was quickly becoming global, following the footsteps of Occupy, with equal weight. It was time to dispel my own pipe dreams. I needed to see what may be the greatest current of change in myself.

It happened to be one of the coldest days yet in the brutal Calgary winter when I began to ride my rickety bike south from the downtown core. Not only was it especially cold, but there was record snowfall the day prior. I tread forward, over the blinding snow, into the untended parkland trails ahead. Three hours later, I made it to my previously unknown destination: the headquarters of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Calgary constituency.

When I saw the demonstrators I was immediately shocked with disappointment. I stared, from my bike, over to the sparse crowd, filled with boredom and teeming with weakness. There were only a handful of people. The last time I attended a demonstration it was when George W. Bush visited Calgary. That was an incredible showing, one of the most emotionally exuberant and lively demonstrations I have known in Canada. I left, to ponder.

In the United States, I was a frontline demonstrator in anti-war marches to the Pentagon, "No War" rallies in Boston, and magnificent protests in support of Latin American resistance in New York City. A public demonstration is a place where the old and the young meet, to exchange hearts on a platform of free speech and free assembly with the naked flesh of human freedom.

I stayed outside of Harper's constituency for only a few moments, to place myself in the crowd, and continue on my way to a Metis friend's house to have coffee. The next day, my partner and I attended a crucial demonstration and I wrote about it for The Media Co-op.

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*"The mind was dreaming. The world was its dream."  
Jorge Luis Borges, from "The Circular Ruins" in Collected Fictions  
trans. Andrew Hurley*

The English translation of Borges' short story, "The Circular Ruins" is very much out in the multiverse. This piece of intensely magical literature breathes a truth rarely spoken. Life is not simply a dream, but a dream within a dream. As one may chance on an ancient temple, or its ruins, there is a parallel labyrinth quality of sacred architecture and geometry in life and consciousness.

As we dig deeper into the internal realities of our lives, we find that to dream is more resonant with the truths of our ephemeral existence. More and more, as I live a life of conscious dreaming, I confront the ultimate truth that I am impermanent, and was not made to last. To dream within the dream of life is the beginning of truth-seeking in the creative arts, and in the drama of everyday voice and action. The dream within the dream is the resonant core of our foundation; the heart of our mind.

And finally, we are led into the holy of holies, the central chamber of the temple ruins, where we see through the eyes of a Dreamer who is not us, and yet who dreams our lives. Or, as Borges wrote in a poem of his from 1960, titled, "El Otro Tigre", translated by Alastair Reid, "Let us look for a third tiger. This one will be a form in my dream like all the others..."

\*

*"A single event can awaken within us a stranger totally unknown to us.  
To live is to be slowly born."*

*Antoine de Saint-Exupéry*

Last night, I took to reading the entire book, "The Little Prince" by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. I have been reading a lot into the similarities between Paolo Coelho's "The Alchemist" and Jewish-Algerian folklore, particularly the tale of The Sabbath Lion. With The Little Prince I have now found a third counterpart to the comparative mythology and collective archetypes which these narratives offer. I could go on and on about the engaging metaphorical richness solely within The Little Prince, however I will stick to a fundamental theme within three of these works.

The desert is an iconic symbol for the immense solitude that opens before a life lived for oneself, or as Coelho writes, for one's "Personal Legend". The desert is the ultimate symbol of regenerative emptiness that provides the ground on which the traveler sets out before ending a journey of the soul.

"The Little Prince", itself, closes with a simple drawing of an imaginative desert landscape. That "single event" as de Saint-Exupéry says above, is the recognition that ahead of us lies an expanse of desert. And on seeing the desert open, our dreaming emerges. As de Saint-Exupéry says, "a stranger totally unknown to us" and as Jung says, "that there is someone else in my house". American expatriate writer Paul Bowles also illuminated the desert as such in his novel, "The Sheltering Sky".

\*

*"I'll see you in my dreams / And I'll hold you in my dreams"*

*"I'll See You in My Dreams" (1924)*

*song by Isham Jones*

*lyrics by Gus Kahn*

It was in a downtown French bistro where I listened to the hackery of a pseudo-theatrical storytelling musical showcase on the life of Django Reinhardt. I was expecting a real return on a small investment to witness the life of the Romani Jazz legend through his music. I was disappointed. Genius can never and should never be copied in any way, shape, or form. He made recordings.

I did learn from the storyteller with the gypsy guitar that Django, in fact, means "I awake". The film, "Sweet and Lowdown" by Woody Allen, features his hit rendition of the old 1924 song, "I'll see you in my dreams" an all-time classic jazz beauty. It speaks numbers with the instrumental ingenuity of the two-fingered guitar player, whose myths struck a chord from my earliest days of musical appreciation. It was especially an antique reel that got me hooked on Django. I've been awake ever since.

\*

*Wife*

*"Let's go to Benares. Don't the orators make lots of money?"*

*Husband*

*"We can't go. How can we? This is my ancestral home; how can I leave it?"*

Wife

*"Why not? You were away eight years before. You left me at my father's and never wrote."*

Husband

*"Then I did not know how sweet you are."*

Wife

*"Save your compliments. This is my home, too. But look at it; it's like living in the forest. At night the jackals prowl around. There are no neighbours I can talk to. You are not always here and sometimes I'm so depressed. You won't understand these things. You live in your work. Sometimes you're paid, sometimes not. I had dreams, too, of all the things I would do."*

*Outside Their Door, An Old Lady Beggar Sings:*

*"Those who came before are gone / I am left behind, a penniless beggar / Day draws to its close, night's mantle descends / Row me across to the other side"*

*From the 1955 film, "Pather Panchali" (Song of the Little Road)  
by Satyajit Ray*

I look back to Pather Panchali for words of wisdom on the experience of dreaming, I coincidentally happened on the film, "Beyond" by NYC-based photographers Joey L. and Cale Glendenning. The quote from the classic 1955 Bengali film "Pather Panchali" speaks to the luring effect that the ancient city of Benares commands, also known as Varanasi, one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world.

It is impressive to see the holy tradition of sadhus depicted in the light of modern photography. The final scenes in the film, "Beyond", are touching, as a young sadhu teaches the filmmakers how the world is made for peace, and all must be as the sun, seeing all beings as equals and offering the light of wisdom with an exuberant heart, to all, indiscriminately.

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*"We can dream about anything, no matter how preposterous, topsy-turvy or unnatural it may be."*

*Cicero, Concerning Divination (De Divinatione), 2:71*

The three-tiered modes of consciousness — unconscious, subconscious and conscious — are reflected in the synchronous relationships that exist between dream and memory. This is a daily



experience from which we may understand the depths of mind on an elementary level. All people, and even many animals, are inevitably, involuntarily, transported into the subtle realms of dream; it is part of natural physiology. The three modes are as follows:

1. Unremembered dreams are phenomena of the unconscious. The subtle emotions that the body and mind feel as a reaction to such dreams are only known by those who are most acutely aware of their dreams.
2. Manifestations of subconsciousness can be found in dreams that are had, and known, where the dreamer, on waking, knows they were dreaming, even if they cannot remember any specific details, apart from references to waking experience. At this point, waking and dreaming states of consciousness meld into a noetic dialogue, an introspective order of meeting, wherein the fluid exchange of reason and sense are exchanged with imagination and emotion.
3. Dreams that are remembered vividly, and dreamt lucidly, are part of the conscious realm. Most people are not fully conscious in their waking life, meaning they are not fully aware and actively engaged in their own lives, as in the source of their own lives; spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically. A conscious dream is more than a physiological memory of the natural, instinctual imagination. It is a gift from the transcendent inner world, a gate into our inmost being, where we contact that which seems at once incredibly strange and entirely familiar, our fully exposed, and whole selves.

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*“Dreams which are not interpreted are like letters which have not been opened.”*  
*Babylonian Talmud (56a, 5), attributed to Hisda*

I am a cultural Jew, a secular Jew, an ethnic Jew. As singer Arianne Zuckerman once said, I am "Jew-ish". Yet, I revere the tradition of the Talmud. It is the source of a great wealth of pride in the intellectual strength and heartened closeness to tradition that Jewish people have maintained throughout generations.

But, in my opinion, we have kept our traditions intact because we are flexible. The Talmud is a massive compendium of volumes steeped in argumentation, discussion, rhetoric and criticism on the sacred text of the Torah. The Old Testament is not only old. It is also full of youth, vivified by thousands of years of continuous self-critical analyses and contemplative thought. The Talmud is the tradition of intellectual meditation on the sacred word. No wonder why dream interpretation is honored, as the Talmud is one of the oldest forms of imaginative interpretation known in book form. Erich Fromm discussed these themes, especially in his 1951 book, “The Forgotten Language: An Introduction to the Understanding of Dreams, Fairy Tales, and Myths.”

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*"The best way to make your dreams come true is to wake up."  
"Breath, dreams, silence, invincible calm, you triumph."  
"To enter into your own mind you need to be armed to the teeth."  
"At the end of the mind, the body. But at the end of the body, the mind."  
"A man who is of 'sound mind' is one who keeps his inner madman under lock and key."*

*Paul Valery*

As I continue to write about the sleep cycle I have theories about the natural course of the human experience of time. I addressed these themes while appreciating the art of Goya. Beyond the daily bounds of the 24-hour time bomb, the seer lives to posit the cyclical nature of time in the natural course of creativity as it rises and falls based on the "internal clock" or "the internal orbit" as it might be described, more aptly. Leading through to an experience of time in the 24-hour day as much like the seasons, as at different stages of life, or the year, we are naturally disposed to waking during certain times of day.

To keep a fixed schedule of waking and sleep throughout one's life is unnatural and unhealthy. It also leads to an incomplete understanding of the self in relation to the ecological rhythms of the Earth, and to the nature of being alive. Put more concisely, Paul Valery wrote, "A man who is of 'sound mind' is one who keeps his inner madman under lock and key." So, these prose writings culminate in the formulation of a creative practice so that any person can discover the certain time of day that best suits their activity and temperament.

When left to our own devices, we naturally settle into a certain time of day based on the kind of activity with which we are engaged, maintaining our primary focus in life. For example, to study texts, the hours before dawn may be optimal in terms of the energetic rhythms and environmental harmonies involved in the practice and the setting. This is invaluable as a repertoire of useful information when seeking to balance work and life with optimal efficiency, to stay motivated.

In theory and practice, these ideas are based on certain variables of ecological distinction (the character of a place), individual temperament (how one relates to a certain time of day), and the focus of activity (primary work or occupation). Regardless of personality or type of work, by applying guiding principles, it is possible to enjoy a positive relationship within the tension of time and productivity by being aware of the details of place (ecological awareness), energy (sleep cycles), and activity (work medium).

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*"Is all that I see or seem / But a dream within a dream?"*

*Edgar Allan Poe*

The practice of remembering dreams is one way to practice deep, inner self-awareness. The subtle energies of dream arise from the Source of Emotion. Both destructive and creative emotions are based on momentums of conscious action. Thought begets thought, and action begets action. As the Poe quote reads, so the psychological, subtle phases of our lives seem to be like dreams within dreams.

Emotions are also based on psychological development, through various phases of life. As a child, emotions blur the distinction between self and other. The emotional vulnerability of a child rests in the experience of their lacking discernment between “what is I” and “what is not I”. When a child experiences trauma, they are unable to separate the trauma in their environment from their own thoughts and feelings, which are not yet recognized as theirs. In adolescence, the human being is naturally predisposed to reflect on the content of their inner life, forming and recognizing their unique thoughts and emotions. This phase is often marked by the difficulties in attaining psychological independence from the collective emotions shared by family and community. If the person passes from this stage, they are able to maintain a strong sense of self, and so go out into the world, learning but not assimilating, acting but not capitulating to a fixed definition of reality. These three stages can be summarized as sight, thought and action.

At the fourth stage, there is a marked shift in consciousness. All the previous three stages become indelibly present in life, yet they all become partial to completion through a conscious manifestation of love. In the process of developing a loving relationship, our emotions go through the three phases before they are actualized and fully recognized as the enduring experience of love. In the beginning, the emotional phase of the child returns, where individual emotions become indistinguishable to that of the other within the love relationship. From that stage, thoughts are dominated by thoughts of love, and all action is cautioned by the fact that everywhere one walks now, they are not alone, but with their love.

As with the mystical hierarchy of seven energy centers in the body, as symbolized by the Hindu Chakras or the Kabbalistic Tree of Life, these four phases represent the involuntary (feeling), creative (thought), power (action), and compassion (love). In the fifth stage, the love emotion resonates outward to engage a greater sense of care and joy for a community, nation or people. In the sixth stage, the focus is clear, and the way aligns with a specific practice of devotion to service in light of the accumulated energetic septet of emotional phases of psychological development. In the final phase, sight, thought, action, love, community and devotion unites every phase of emotional development. The completion of self-awareness is actualized from the inmost depths to the outermost limits of human potential.

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*"Poppies have long been used as a symbol of sleep, peace, and death: sleep because of the opium extracted from them, and death because of the common blood-red color of the red poppy in particular. In Greek and Roman myths, poppies were used as offerings to the dead."*

*L. Frank Baum, Michael Patrick Hearn, The Annotated Wizard of Oz, p. 173*

*"Another candidate for the psychoactive drug is an opioid derived from the poppy. The cult of the goddess Demeter may have brought the poppy from Crete to Eleusis; it is certain that opium was produced in Crete."*

*Károly Kerényi. Dionysos: Archetypal image of indestructible life. p 24*

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.  
We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.  
Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.*

*John McCrae, 1915*

The poem, "In Flanders Fields", written by John McCrae, is one of the important war poems in history. Today, it is read aloud by veterans at remembrance ceremonies with solemn intention. The symbol and metaphor of the poppy, as depicted, is especially relevant for the topic of war.

The poppy is a symbol of death. "In Flanders Fields the poppies blow" could then be interpreted to mean that in "Flanders Fields", the dead sleep in peace. The second line further supports this. The last two lines, "We shall not sleep, though poppies grow in Flanders Fields" emphasizes the simple metaphor of the poppy as a symbol of eternal rest, however, in this sense, the poem transcends symbolic import and represents the pride of the soldier as immortal, and sleepless in constant struggle. This is a poem to incite emotion for the dead, and where we might once have believed that they lay in respite from worldly cause, we are wrong. So the poem is a call to action, "Take up your quarrel with the foe".

Further, the poem is a symbol for the poppy as a metaphor for the illusory nature of war, as seen from outside of the veteran's perspective. It uniquely distinguishes the veteran, whether alive or dead, as having an eternal place over battlegrounds, and in the generations of youth to follow.

The poppy is symbolic of our lack of awareness as non-military citizens, as we remember earnest soldiers who have fought so that we don't have to.

And so, in the land of poppies, Afghanistan, the longest war in U.S. history waged. Remembrance, in the metaphor of the poppy, can also fog our vision of the dead, and of their eternal struggle for rebirth in the fields where men are laid low.

Peace author Arthur Clark once said the poppy is a symbol for all who have died in war, not just the soldiers of any one nation, but for every victim of war, every innocent child, mother, elder, the destroyed lives and communities. The poppy is a drug of pride, and like all drugs, while instilling disillusionment, it reveals truths of the human condition.

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*"Hatsuyume (初夢) is the Japanese word for the first dream had in the new year. Traditionally, the contents of the dream would foretell the luck of the dreamer in the ensuing year. In Japan, the night of December 31 was often passed without sleeping, thus the hatsuyume was often the dream seen the night of January 1. This explains why January 2 (the day after the night of the "first dream") is known as Hatsuyume in the traditional Japanese calendar."*

*from Wikipedia*

As in English, the word for dream in Japanese (yume) means both deep aspiration and unconscious visualization. The significance of the post above signals the beginning of an end; the nature of originality. The nuclear age is a sure sign of a paradigm shift in human life on Earth. Until every nuclear arsenal is disarmed and abolished, we are living in an age of mass oppression, global misinformation, and unyielding aggression. Over 2500 nuclear weapons have been detonated since the first two that ended World War II.

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At the time of this writing, I had been a vegetarian for over seven years, and much of that time was spent in the Middle East and Latin America, which posed interesting challenges.

Nonetheless, I stayed true to a time in my life when I was thoroughly exposed to interpretive experience. My mental development was spurred on by alternative living practices, founded on a diet of psychoactive compounds and creative literature. Maintaining an alternative diet has been an essential ingredient as I have lived my life based on the principles of subtle recollection and acute awareness.

Blurring the separation between external causes and their internal effects has become a lifelong inquiry. The experience of how foods have an impact on the subtle realms of dreaming is an invaluable source of critical thinking. As Terence McKenna put it, to "dissolve boundaries" is a

natural step towards creative thinking, and becoming a seer of "true hallucinations" of which dreaming is an integral example.

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*"We have achieved two of the three alchemists' dreams: We have transmuted the elements and learned to fly. Immortality is next."*

*Max More, On becoming posthuman (1994)*

The search for immortality is as old as humanity itself. The earliest remnants of human history, namely, the Epic of Gilgamesh, among others, speak of the quest for immortality, to find the fruit or fount of eternal youth is part of the perennial epic that is the myth of human identity.

*Anu, Bel, and Ea are whispering (wisdom) into his ear:  
Ere thou earnest down from the mountain  
Gilgamesh beheld thee in a dream in Uruk*

....

*Gilgamesh sought to interpret the dream;  
Spoke to his mother:  
'My mother, during my night  
I became strong and moved about among the heroes'*

...

*Gilgamesh said...Tell me, How didst thou come to dwell (here?) and obtain eternal life among  
the gods?*

...

*Build a house, construct a ship; Forsake thy possessions, take heed for thy life! Abandon thy  
goods, save (thy) life, and bring living seed of every kind into the ship*

*from the Epic of Gilgamesh*

Now, it is interesting the way that modern medicine has adopted the principles of "life extension" to the archaic traditions of humanity in the search for immortality. Life Extension is a medical term used to acknowledge the major advancements in modern medicine which have led to the unprecedented increase of the average human lifespan. The logic is that if the lifespan can be extended by some fifty years or so in the last hundred years, why can't we extend life to virtual permanence.

What are the implications of human immortality on Earth? What comes to mind for me are a few major points. For one, there will be an advantage for the founding institutions of modern scientific medicine, mainly in the West. In many ways, this can be seen as the furthering of Western egotism, where, by virtue of colonialism, as just one example, they feel entitled to dominance over all forms of life, embodying the most destructive forms of knowledge-creation

in the world today. It is often ignored how steeped in Western European history our modern science is, that it does have its immoderate faults. Essentially, modern medicine is best at dealing with immediate physical trauma. When it comes to preventive, and long-term medicine, like "life extension" for example, there is less attention to detail.

Outside of medicine, there is a biological component. One of the foremost proponents of "biological immortality", professor in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at University of California, Irvine, Michael R. Rose, PhD, says in the Immortality Institute documentary Exploring Life Extension, "Most people who work on aging do it from a medical standpoint, which means humans, or if not humans, then certainly mammals, and all these organisms that didn't have an aging process were far-removed from mammals." He went on to give examples in non-mammalian life forms, such as anemones, creosotes, juniper, and others that actually do not age. He continues, "...life can be thought of as being divided into three basic stages...that third phase, which has not really been explored by contemporary biology is what interests me now, late life."

With regard to the biological component of immortality and life extension, and the medical egotism which counter-intuits the state of the world, it seems that if we do not co-evolve immortally with Earth's ecology, a spiritualistic sense of medical immortality for humanity would only contribute to the degradation of every source of life that the Earth offers to humanity, which humanity exploits obscenely. For example, if we innovate major advances in anti-aging and life extension, we ought to transpose that technology into the natural world, into the life that not only lives on earth (us), but is the life of earth (fundamental forms of life and life-giving).

Finally, my sense is that in the early epics of oral literature, such works as the Epic of Gilgamesh and Homeric works such as the Iliad, there is a lesson about the human quest for immortality, which is older than our backbone. The lesson is that only in our mortality do we know our immortality. I would say this is also truer to Max More's reference to the alchemical tradition, where in the philosopher's stone there is a psychological mastery of the principles of physical life, yet it is in the psyche where the most enduring trial is overcome. Only in dying, fully conscious and immersed in the ground of immortal intent, are we immortalized, and traditionally speaking, so are the words of the great poets, those of enduring passages and pronounced voices. We carry their names down the halls of human history.

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*"The first question I ask myself when something doesn't seem to be beautiful is why do I think it's not beautiful. And very shortly you discover that there is no reason."*

*John Cage*

The voice is a celebration of sound. After my first year as a writer in visual form, my creativity erupted into the creative visual stimuli of spatial literature, manuscript art, asemic writing. I

record my voice in the silence of my writing. I muse on the imaginative spectrum of space and sight.

On the margins of the vast, interlocking web of technology and nature, with broken instruments (both acoustic and electronic), we are beginners on the road to merging technology with all of life on Earth and in the inner worlds, as a being evolving through consciousness.

We are sitting at the edge of a fire in the raw, teeming wilderness. The forest is thick. The air is heavy with an unbroken gamut of vegetable breathing. Warming our hands by the fire, under cover of starlight and the faint haunts of a new moon, the mind seeps and seethes with memories, dreams and reflections on the world “out there”.

Civilization and its fires of electric madness pour into our brains like an acid flashback. The Earth is still, yet our hands are shaking. So, before you is the music of the muses, the bare wonderment takes its own course into the heavens and hells of your own nature. Through music, the seeker of solitude purges the condescension of electro-social distension. Discordant dissonance marries with harmonic essence as the jeering subtle flesh of mad electricity merges in the mind, hand and heart of one in touch with the strings, blood and fire of creative sound.

Part I - The seeker discovers music as a beginner. The instrument is slightly out of tune, and the playing is imperfect. The melodies are introduced with electronic music, featuring static electric synthetic effects throughout. The seeker gains mental balance by overcoming the first break beyond the shores of civilization into the open expanse of nature beyond, where other, even more trying challenges are to be had in confrontation with the self, exposed and untended.

Part II – With emboldened consciousness, the instrument and its sound are clearer. A fire has been set and night opens to the gorgeous possibilities of the sonic imagination. Electric distension is transformed into unseen beauty. The grandeur of melodic instrumentation opens up with a new strength of diversity. As the clouds above part to reveal pure sky, memory and reflection are enlightened through joining with traditions of seeking, as with the sonic movement into Middle-Eastern influenced lute music, translated to guitar in creative solitude with the empty awe of all-potent Nature.

Yet, the seeker soon realizes this is only the beginning of the journey, and there have ever been nodes of electric distension scattered throughout the night's hearth. By dawn, the celebratory feel becomes more solemn as the seeker attains the first seed of self-knowledge, and understands the need to set one's own pace and prepare certain deliberations before embarking on the pathless sojourn ahead. The music ends with the realization that it is day, and the horizon welcomes ahead.

Part III – Reprieve from the journey, alongside a mountain ascent, beneath a cliff. Cool air from a spring entices the cold march of winter's coming winds to turn and wade in the lush mountain air. Without a fire, music is warmth. Creative passion warms from the inside with the brightest of



flames. At first, blowing hard into the hands and fingers for the warm breath to spread throughout and allow for the wealth of instrumental music to unfold, the seeker stops playing as soon as it begins to rain. As in Taoist tradition, when the rain makes rhythmic motion, and the melodies of the thunderclouds fly with the magical presence of wind, one is to listen, and be humbled by the music of the spheres.

Part IV – Beginning with a light touch of electronic moments, the music glides atop sounds of weather, especially as the seeker gets closer to the ocean. Following rivers, streams and tributaries, faring flash floods and rain-swept gullies, the seeker emerges from the wilderness with a great boon of discovery. A new instrument to behold! Notice, the music approaches harmonies with the natural way of impermanence and unity, as opposed to listening, where creative interaction with nature breeds a kind of musical kinship among humans and all life on Earth. As the seeker sights the ocean, the new instrument is played, ending the music and the journey.

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*"The existence of nuclear weapons means we could potentially create a disequilibrium, an imbalance, on the planet and the atmosphere by the launching of some of these systems, some of these systems. There are 27,000 of these systems. This is more than enough to wipe out the whole planet. You also got people working to say, 'you know you gotta save the planet.' Well you're right, we've got to save the planet. And so the whole environmental effort, as laudable and as absolutely critical as it is, can be for absolutely not in the space of hours if these guys actually went at each other."*

*Lt. General Romeo Dallaire (Ret.), Pugwash Canada*

March 11, 2013 is the two year anniversary of Fukushima Daiichi disaster. Earlier I wrote of Hatsuyume of Peace, with reference to the apocalyptic transition that nuclear energy essentially means for life on Earth. This is an enduring creative metaphor, a source of reflection that begs to be heard and never left in the silent empty ignorance.

For, as the Persian poet and filmmaker Forugh Farrokhzad said in her landmark film to inspire Iranian New Wave Cinema, a groundbreaking force of thought, emotion and impeccable insight, "There is no shortage of ugliness in the world. If a man closed his eyes to it, there would be even more." Farrokhzad's film, "The House is Black" (1962) is about a leper colony, and the humanization of treatment for a disease that simply requires attention.

While the impacts of a nuclear disaster do indeed course through the blood and infect the children of the victims, there is even more recourse to action, to look, and with the kind of remembrance that breathes in the present moment, to see the eyes of the victims as through the eyes of our own children, our own mothers, fathers, and siblings. For there is evidence that it

could be forty years or more to clear up the Fukushima disaster, which is the worst of its kind since Chernobyl.

The transition of nuclear energy as a weapon, the atom bomb, has essentially moved the world from the era of World War, into an era primarily defined by a war over intelligence, post-Cold War. Vietnam is an example where the government authority of the United States actually never declared war, incapacitating the ability to detonate another atom bomb on a human population in Asia. We are now living in the post-scientific era, and the Age of Reason is long past. Our existence is not defined by scientific knowledge, but of technical know-how.

On an investigative bend, I took the time, as part of the research praxis of a literary arts journal, to go to photographer, Arthur Nishimura's exhibition, "Dream Country" held at the University of Calgary during the spring of 2013. In the show, Nishimura creatively interposes landscape photography with prepared or rendered film. I went for the purpose of interviewing others who happened to stroll through the exhibit about the significance of today's anniversary remembrance of Fukushima, not only as a Japanese disaster, but as a world disaster.

What do the photos of a globetrotting Japanese nature photographer say about the remembrance of Fukushima? My questions, and my approach to a conscious public as an experimental journalist fell on a silent room. In the last hour of the gallery's opening, not one person visited Nishimura's exhibition. Instead of heading into abstract philosophical directions regarding the nature of public ignorance, I peered deliberately, patiently and acutely into the breathtaking symbology of a master photographer.

Let me take you through an abbreviated version of the exhibition, and how I related my experience of "seeing" to the memory and lasting impact, and future legacy of Fukushima. Firstly, Nishimura's piece, "The Book of Flatland Dharma - Of Two Religions: Conclusion" (1978) captivated me. It is a juxtaposition of a sacred Japanese temple, a diptych next to a silo in the Alberta countryside. This struck me first, because Nishimura captures the elegant majesty of mystery and beauty all over the globe, yet Japan and Canada have sacred significance, yet the cultural dissimilarity could not be more clear in the way that aesthetics are a reflection of social expression.

Next, in his Homeland Tourist series, "Higashi Honganji Temple (1978) flattened me with its elusive doorway of symbolic insight. The bicycle in the foreground, outside of a sacred temple in the background, emphasizes that while there is a sense of the infinite within us, we are after all impermanent, and as we ride the mundane bicycle of worldly experience to its end, the higher awe of spirituality lives on, with or without us. Finally, while there were others that effected me uncannily, I will leave off with one last one that took even more time to set in than the rest, however after peering into its silvery textures, and its striking imagery, I latched on to a hint of perennial truth.

The work, "Pre-dharma Sentience" (1978) in The Flatland Book of Dharma - The Singularities series, a stone lies in the foreground. In the background, an open landscape, with a path leading to the horizon, to nowhere. What this says to me is that, essentially nature, as with our nature, is fundamentally meaningless. Nature, in its raw, open and original forms do not offer the human heart a rest stop on which the mind may imagine and conceive a reason for being.

The meaning of no-meaning is the great point of flux in realizing our humanity as vulnerable, fleeting, and if at once emergent with direction, also futile and unimpressive. As Paul Valery said, "G-d made everything out of nothing, but the nothing shows through."

On my return home, on an unusually warm Canadian winter day, I read a very short Associated Press article buried in Metro Calgary on the legacy of Fukushima. In the article, 'Outlook bleak two years later' a quote read, "Everyone, from bureaucrats to construction giants to tattooed gangsters, is trying to prey on decontamination projects. And the government is looking the other way," said Nakamura, who refused to give his first name out to the press for "fear of retaliation".

As I reflected on my train ride home through the downtown corridor, passing above rivers of melting ice and the glare of the profound midwestern sky, where the rich sunlight exposes the midriff of an aging humanity, I had a realization. Being human means taking the responsibility that we have as stewards of the land, as a conscious potential unmatched in the known universe. If we do not take responsibility for being human, then there will soon be no more human beings. We do not write the highest law, and we can not speak the highest truth.

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*"So, dear state, you are a very nice word from a dream. There are fine sounds in the word, much comfort and much freshness, you grew up in a forest of words...ashtray, match, cigarette butt, an equal among equals, but why state do you feed on people. Why has the fatherland become a cannibal and the motherland his wife...If the states be truly bad then who among us will lift a finger to prolong their dreaming under the blanket forever?"*

*Allen Ginsberg reading, in 1981, Velimir Klebnikov's "Manifesto of the Presidents of the Terrestrial Globe" (1917)*

After hearing many songs and stories of dramatic sights seen by survivors of the great natural disasters of the early 21st century; tsunamis and earthquakes that buckled cities and civilizations to their knees, I have heard many refer to the reversion to a clear sky.

The clarity of sky is an enduring metaphor for the wildly obscuring potency of modern technological electro-civilization. What has been more subtle, and more dramatic a transition, is how the skies under our human settlements have become opaque and starless over the past century. In my mind, this is more traumatic and in need of reflection.

The stars and constellations are being called into the blinding stretches of the ephemeral; of human memory, abstracted through an archaic imagination. Beginning with the wealth of ecological terror that might strike any human being living in a modern Western city, who looks up to see that not only have they left the stars, but the stars have left them.

We are without higher purpose, the signs directing us to a sense of greater belonging in the universe have since faded into the mindless wash of electro-magnetic consumerism and the ecological disturbance of human egotism; a symptom of our technological worldview.

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*“When your night becomes day, then that which is dreamed is on earth. Do not be too high-spirited, but go, and go alertly.”*

*Australian Aboriginal Saying*

In continuity with my theoretical writings on the natural sleep cycle, which, in my estimation is indicative of a consciousness expansive beyond the twenty-four hour day, especially beyond the programmatic workaday cycle, it is not only the activity of waking activity that defines the energy of the mind and the body based on sleep cycles, but the content of dreams themselves.

We go through cycles of remembrance and forgetting, and this runs parallel to fundamental phenomena in the cosmos, a point that the philosopher Alan Watts discussed via the metaphor of hide-and-seek. Similarly, as this is reflected in our conscious and unconscious experience of life. This is true with respect to the content of dreams. We go through periods in which dreams are not remembered, then after a time, we begin to remember again. These periods of remembering dreams point to an unresolved momentum of energy building up in the psyche as a consequence of either personal or collective unconscious activity, which anyone can become susceptible to, or aware of, in their daily lives.

Until this mode of consciousness is directly confronted and transformed through the creative insights and practical applications of thought, reflection and in the continuities of consciousness, as in imaginative outpourings based on dream motifs, where all suppressed and repressed energies are focused and shifted into full view, involuntary sleep or the unconscious REM continues to emerge and take shape in the psyche through imagination, emotion, intellect, and every exhaustible mode of subtle activity.

Every time a dream is remembered, remembered content, whether imagery or emotional effects, is part of a string of remembrance, leading back to a source of reflection deep within the whole being of both the individual dreamer and the society, encompassing the entire spectrum of history, propaganda, knowledge, media, relationships, etc.

Oftentimes, the strength or immediacy of memory, the lucidity of the dream state as it interweaves through the waking mind, forecasts the urgency of attention to the subconscious. For example, I have experienced lately that the instant I am ready to sleep, as fast as I close my eyes, I begin to see dreams, because my imaginations is teeming with life and energy. It demands to be witnessed, like a victim of silence and darkness, calling out over the margins of consciousness.

The only way to resolve the inception of remembered dreaming is to confront the subtle impulse to emote or inspire a certain inborn expression, metaphorically illustrated by the dream itself. When dream and life are subsumed into wholeness, undivided by the normalization of structured time and analytical thought, the subconscious and the conscious merge into a healthful surrender of the cosmic unconscious, which is the faculty of Being, as the great mystery of self-awareness. As the motto of Athanasius Kircher read, chiseled in Latin over the alchemist's doorway: "While Sleeping, Watch'.

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*"Human soul, should it dream of me, Let my memory wakened be.  
/ Moon, moon, oh do not wane, do not wane, /  
Moon, oh moon, do not wane...."*

*lyrics from Dvorak's "Song to the Moon" by librettist Jaroslav Kvapil*

"There is no freedom, because we die," said Winston Churchill in a fated passage through the subtle imagination of nighttime visions – speaking as the personification of death itself. He emerged from the grave of innumerable veteran crosses and stars over unmarked graves lining an immaculately manicured grassy hillside in neat rows. The cemetery is reminiscent of the dead bodies once ordered with haunting linearity in the aftermath of the countless battlefields of world war.

The realization of human mortality is the psychological maturation of recognizing freedom as a myth. Even in dream there is limitation; the mortal scars of suffering – destructive emotions and negative repressions – continue into the deepest corners of the subtle mind. As in thinking, the natural mode of an animate and intelligent psyche is to comb through the vast interweaving analytic and creative spawns of experience and memory, as they unfold with newfound insights and revelations. Yet, in that process, the evolutionary cycle naturally spurns most content with the greatest psychological defense mechanism of mortality: forgetting. To release, let go or forget the contents of the mind as they build and diminish is part of the natural breathability of discernment that allows every person to function as a rational agent in both human society and in wild nature.

Yet, there is, intermittently, a thought that recurs, as in dream, that reminds us that thought itself and the more subtle activities of the mind and of human experience are intricately linked to the repetitive urges of necessity in the libido, or the gut, for example. When a thought is forgotten, it

was meant to pass, and thus facilitate further emptiness, to clean the slate, or empty the glass, so to speak, so that it may become full with the nourishment of more enduring concerns. Yet, when a thought clings, as with the subconscious content of a recurring dream, it is calling out to be transformed through consciousness. There are many modes of transformation through consciousness, i.e. creativity, reflection, speaking, and action.

Similarly, as the facility of the mind to think filters through generative content towards enduring insights through word, sound, emotion, intuition, and image, the content of dream has like potential as an agent of subconscious “thought”. Yet, where thought is often sound-oriented, as the whisper of words, dream, and specifically dream-writing, its practice entices the mind to reflect on what images endure, and why, through their free-associative interpretation.

Those images that endure from dream into the memory of consciousness and daily activity are as thoughts that recur and beg further recognition. Both involuntary, subconscious – dream and thought – are inceptions of creativity that arise from instinctual mechanisms that the body generates in the interest of self-reconciliation. Recognizing and listening to the inner voice that speaks in the image-language of dream and the sonic subtleties of thought through an internalized intellect form a holistic psychological healing is likened to the regenerative quality of the physical body to heal itself.

Former child soldier and rapper Emmanuel Jal uses storytelling and music for social-emotional learning. He says that peace is “equality, justice and freedom for all”. His triad of concepts that can lead to peace – equality, justice and freedom – will be the basis for understanding how dream becomes thought, and thought becomes action.

While there is no earthly, or worldly, freedom after a full recognition and confrontation with the mythology of human dreaming, both consciously and subconsciously, there is equality. In Sufi mysticism, it is said that all of creation essentially began from an image. In Hindu cosmology, the Self, or Atman, sat alone, and pondering a sense of cosmic loneliness, split into two. Thus, seeing a reflection of the Self gave birth to the world. In other traditions the first creation was sound, particularly in the dominant Western religious tradition, “In the beginning was the word.” In more acute interpretations based on studying original texts and incipient cultural contexts, sound is understood to mean vibration.

From this understanding, great wisdom energy emerges from the fabric of all creation, vibrating with the cosmic equality of being, essentially of one substance, from one origin, and to one destination. Also, when people become competitive and separatist in worldly affairs, this sense of cosmic equality is lost. For ultimately, an individual is not born of their accord, nor is their lot in life prescribed by them, but they are subject to the cosmic interdependence of the I-Consciousness of All-Unity. Deep equality is seeing that there is beauty and tragedy, form and emptiness, sophistication and simplicity in every instant and every aspect, in every individual and independent form of being.

On a deep level, freedom and equality are absolutes. There is no true freedom, yet ultimately all are equal. Justice is relative. Time and the fabric of relations temper justice as it is broken and mended by the conscious action of peoples, animals and all forms and modes of being: ocean and its acidification, mountains and mines, consumers and resources, victims and perpetrators, predators and prey. Freedom is a dream that never becomes real. Equality is a reality that does not extinguish by dreaming, and also a dream that does not extinguish in reality. Justice is a dream that may, or may not become a reality until dreams are made real through conscious action, when waking realities are perceived as a dream.

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*"Whether this satirical inscription [PERPETUAL PEACE] on a Dutch innkeeper's sign upon which a burial ground was painted had for its object mankind in general, or the rulers of states in particular; who are insatiable of war, or merely the philosophers who dream this sweet dream, it is not for us to decide."*

*Immanuel Kant, "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch" (1795)*

When I first read the piece, "in my dreams" by Mercedes Eng, at the magazine Geist, my heart pounded with the animate high of a synchronous intellect, grounded with a feeling of urgency.

This piece illustrates the symbolic intersection of a pipeline as physical obstruction on the body of our Mother, as our body. And to follow, the incarceration and de-legitimization of those voices and lives whose source of energy derives from a place more profound and lasting than those harvested recklessly by government leadership, and the knee-jerk automaton droves of apologists, pessimists and belligerent supporters of environmental crime.

We have traversed the oceans and landscapes with a smothering footprint. In the wake of the wholesale devastation of Indigenous communities across all countries, it is the entirety of humankind that is next on the list of the entrenched ignorance of those who ignore science, who ignore civil society, and who ignore their own innate sense of empathy for the sake of power politics and saving face.

When the source of a disease is unknown — for example, lung cancer when cigarettes were prescribed by medical doctors — individuals die while courts and politicians wade through policies and promotions to effectively prevent further death.

Smoking is an especially useful symbol too, because it exhibits a problem with consuming that overrides even the strength of knowledge and law. People still die from smoking, just as we die from ignorance. Besides the individual death of one person, or even the genocide of a specific group, the extinction of our entire species is at hand when we talk about the continued, unabated burning of fossil fuels.

Ocean acidification is the cause of five major extinctions on planet Earth, and the CO2 levels in our oceans now are rising at an unprecedented rate. Charlie Veron, the 'godfather' of coral and other scientists have been saying as much. The only way to prevent ocean acidification is to stop burning fossil fuels. Yet this time, we are realizing that we are essentially all one body in this fight to curtail the disease of overconsumption, overexploitation of non-renewable resources, and when it dies, there will be no lawyers or politicians left. In the 20th century, we faced the facts and prepared policies to prevent genocide. In the 21st century, we face the extinction of our species, and we are all at fault.

Those who are not aligned to dominant modes of power are marginalized and traumatized.

We can remember the words of JFK, an assassinated democrat, who echoed into the future, "Our children are still taught to respect the violence which reduced a red-skinned people of an earlier culture into a few fragmented groups herded into impoverished reservations." His policies toward Indigenous Peoples were ultimately flawed, but the meaning of his words retains value.

To encourage ecocide is to choose extinction.

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*"No more let Life divide what Death can join together."*

*Percy Bysshe Shelley, Adonais (1821)  
Stanza 53*

"We cannot continue to be recognizable and survive...if everything you know is wrong, then all the problems you thought were insoluble can be framed differently. And there's a way to take the world apart and put it back unrecognizably. We don't really understand what consciousness is at the really deep levels," said Terence McKenna once said in an interview for bOING bOING #10, to hail the oncoming psychic transformation of humanity in the 21st century.

Historically, we have ever been unrecognizable when we look at interrelations between human societies, especially with regard to the European saga of colonialism and the institutionalized racism that followed and continues in its wake. People from every continent, the Native, Indigenous Peoples of the world, including Africans, Australians and Native Americans (from both North and South America), were for a considerable portion of Western history considered an inferior race, a subhuman species likened to earlier primates less developed than that of the European genus.

As we have now begun to recognize ourselves wholly, all of humanity, through science and reconciliation with our inhumane past, the challenge now remains clearer than ever, for it is our own selves, the Self of Humankind that is in need of development, not any other form of life. So,



we might ask, might we grow up from the childish state of irresponsible resource waste and join the community of life on planet Earth, or become extinct.

As the human family becomes recognizable, next the whole of life on Earth must be recognized as our own self, as the body of a relative, and until it does, and we remain unrecognizable to ourselves, there is catastrophe as we straddle the line between dominance and extinction.

Interpreting the above quote by Shelley in the last line of the third to last stanza of *Adonais*, *An Elegy on the Death of John Keats*, essentially reads as "don't let life get in the way of dreaming" where the diversity of life, as it manifests in the human family, a wealth of ethnicities, spiritualities, and physiques can be seen not as a source of division, but of connectivity.

And so, as I write, this the capital city in the state of my birth, Boston, has been bombed. In such times, it is ever paramount to instill the meaning of reconciliation within the human family. Peace studies author and professor George Melnyk recently shared with me the simple notion that "That's what happens in war, you define an enemy." And, so, with our nation(s) at war in the Middle East, and the "enemy" at hand, we can keep vigil with the caution that we should not jump to quick conclusions in our search for vengeance.

The crossroads of human life in the 21st century divides Humankind between himself and the planet; the potential of nuclear fallout and the immanent ecocide with the unabated burning of fossil fuels. The struggle to survive as one, whole being, as a united humanity, is to be fought at our doorstep, and we must remain strong not to waver from our ultimate direction towards peace through reconciliation.

In a documentary by Chris Hedges titled "OBEY", at minute 22 he writes, "Resentment against a disenchanted secular world will find deliverance in the ecstatic escape of unreason." May that incident of terrorism be remembered as an opportunity to empathize with those who experience bombings on a regular basis as part of the American government's foreign policies, as opposed to perpetuating violence through self-pity and aggression.

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After a cumulative process of self-publication, a DIY attitude of writing and publishing often spreads into the realms of experimentation and exploration with all aspects of the creative process and, especially where self-publishing is concerned, into self-innovated and creatively conceived avenues for sustainability.

Art is the "divinely superfluous beauty" as Robinson Jeffers says, however the artist is inherently tied to the whole of life. For this reason, I have decided to experiment as a way to further understand my self-published works and the general field wherein I am situated as a self-taught creative artist active in a variety of artistic disciplines, with special regard for the overlap of media, thought and art.

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*"I had a dream once that I was at an international conference, debating economics..."*

*Gilberto Gil, in support of Xingu+23,  
an initiative to preserve the Amazon and support its Indigenous Peoples*

Dreaming, conscious & active, increases our potential for empathy and curbs egotism. The lucid consciousness of the dream sees from all perspectives through one perspective. The actions and emotions of every dream character are essentially rooted in the dreamer. This is our natural engine of empathy, and our natural organ of humility before the great diversity of human life, and the infinite spectrum of mental expression.

"You want to reclaim your mind," said Terrence McKenna, "and get it out of the hands of the cultural engineers who want to turn you into a half-baked moron consuming all this trash that's being manufactured out of the bones of a dying world."

In the talk from which I grabbed that quote, McKenna went on to convey how people had lost touch with the spirit of chaos, how ancient forms of ego-dissolution, like ecological meditation and entheogenic use, are essentially about the meaning of sacrifice, which is the only thing that will solve our global problems.

Ego will do anything it can to avoid personal sacrifice, the role of contemporary humanity is to realign ourselves to a renewed sense of the diminished ego, and a healthy sacrificial attitude towards the greater reality, which is our immediate moment of earthly presence.

Chaos is within us, known through the act of dreaming, where the mystery-engine of narrative is spurred on through the natural inborn creative imagination, our promised birth-rite. The inner worlds of nature mirror this internal intelligence, which constantly breathes as an inhale and exhale of sacrificial flow, a reciprocity with the spiritual presence of subtle energy, generated through the noosphere.

At once, as there is a crisis bearing towards ecocide and ethnocide, there is also a crisis of what I will call "noocide", or the extinction of our natural capacity to think for ourselves, and look past the egotism of individuated consumer consciousness.

Attention for the contents of the dream narrative allow the mind to reorient within, to the source of dreaming that so inevitably flows outwards with the chaotic madness of global consumerism, along with it a whole slew of energy misuses in the wake of ego-manufactured externalized dreaming.

The inertia of internal dreaming awakens the mind to the archetypal community that all share. Jung said: "Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes." We can break the bonds of our anthropocentric solitude by searching within.

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Here, voiced soundings are mixed with one instrument at a time, to convey a sense of the traveler, whose light pack is ideal for the road ahead, and whose voice traverses the simple grandeur of sonic revelry from a single instrumental accompaniment. Themes of travel are juxtaposed with settlement, both in the settlement of tradition and ecology, and the inner and outer journey to that destination. To settle on one instrument at a time is a metaphor for the inward/outward experience of settlement for the migrant, who eventually becomes an "exotic settler".

And so, the great waters of the Pacific Ocean that separate the North American continent from Hawaii, with its Indigenous heritage, mirror the poetic river offering through the sound of a musical instrument as a metaphoric nostalgic passage across the western ocean.

Beginning with a reminiscence of life in Africa, poetic reflections written on hillsides in rural central Mexico, overlooking a wide lake in a small village, I remembered Africa. The words allude to Africa as the Mother of all Humanity, as Mother Africa, where all people can know their origins in the spirit and matter of our one human family.

Africa has given us ourselves, our poetry, our music, our spirituality, our creative eye, as well as other aspects of ourselves not so likened to evolution such as our politics. Yet in the words I have chosen in "I remember Africa", I ruminate on the spiritual origins, beneath the flesh, "our skeletal humanity" where we are all one, where we are one with Mother Mater.

The second haiku-like oration, "Selflessness is the father of human survival" was written down after an impromptu spoken word over a city bridge, overlooking the grandiose ice sheets concatenate and break into the singular northern landscape. In Canadian Aboriginal folklore, passage across a river is a time of deep meditation in gratitude and honor of its life-giving waters. Traditionally, a sacrificial offering of tobacco, or a ceremonial smoke, is offered to the sacred life source of all creation. Yet, here, I offer the clear smoke of my worded breath, enunciating an egoless passage of heart resonances.

I drew from the barebones intensity of visceral experience re-felt through memory and the act of writing. In that process, the emphasis becomes one of awareness that drives one to act. To reflect, ruminate and contemplate the living significance of Africa in our own lives is to be moved onward in the struggle for life and for our humanity.

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*"Dreamland...Sin creeps in...Trouble begins...Innocence...Getting flighty...Jealousy..."*

*concluding titles in Chaplin's The Kid (1921)*

The penultimate scene in Chaplin's first feature as an auteur filmmaker brings the viewer into "Dreamland" an alternate world parallel to the slums of old America, where all the principal characters from the film are winged angelic humans, swayed by the ear-whisperings of stereotypical devil sprites prancing about unnoticed.

Could Chaplin have been privy to the hermeneutical notion that angels and demons are internalized expressions of our inner nature, mirroring social experience within the self-reflective subconscious, a key to awakening the orphan child within, reuniting with their birth mother, the self? Could Chaplin's narrative insights on film have preceded psychoanalytic depth psychology by seeing the substance of dream as holistic self-projection, and at the same time, maintains unrivaled importance for transforming the collective psyche?

Alan Watts is famously known for relaying the following psychological narrative, an interrogative entry into the presence of mind, as it wanders through the imaginative hollows of two overarching conceptions, past and future, and their nexus of alternate psychic fruition in the netherworld of dream.

*"Let's suppose that you were able, every night, to dream any dream you wanted to dream. And that you could, for example, have the power, within one night, to dream 75 years of time, or any length of time you wanted to have.*

*And you would naturally as you began on this adventure of dreams, you would fulfill all your wishes, you would have every kind of pleasure you could conceive.*

*And after several nights of 75 years of total pleasure each, you would say that's pretty great, and now let's have a surprise. Let's have a dream that isn't under control. Where something is going to happen to me that I don't know what it's going to be.*

*And you would dig that and come out of that and say, Wow, that was a close shave wasn't it. And you would get more adventurous and you would make further and further out gambles, and finally you would dream where you are now."*

Like a silent film, dream is also suggestive. The act of play is a prerogative of metaphorical truth, and finally, where chaos is a principle which reveals Self as the All-Self, Alan Watts, reminds us, "The whole nature of the Godhead is to play that he is not. In this idea then, everybody is

fundamentally the ultimate reality...God in the sense of being the self, the deep-down-basic whatever it is. And you're all that, only you're pretending you are not."

Dreaming is a doorway to a revelation of the nature of self as All, where we confront the play-form of creation as an inner process of personal creativity, as the embodiment of a creative mind.

While we go about our "waking lives" fully immersed in the, "I am not that" attitude, the nightly vigil of our inborn collective life, our subtle creative instinct, bleeds with singular potency throughout the periphery of waking experience. In dream, we remember who, and what, we are: the stuff of play, Lila, in Sanskrit. There is a story of the seeker who goes to a guru and staring into the face of the holy man, is met only with a curious smirk, as the holy man thinks, "Oh! Come off it, Shiva."

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The purity behind vocal sounding is essentially a decision to convey the sexuality of modern techno-culture, and more, to welcome the sounds of the world through its instruments, in coordination with a voice to affirm Earth-bound society in honor of the Feminine - to move beyond what I have called, "monosexuality" a conception in response to our narrowing myopia concerning the infinite spectra of human sexual expression.

I wrote "monosexuality" in the name of all the victims of a sexually repressed society, that being mostly everyone in the modern world. There is an epidemic of masculine dominance. The feminine perverted and repressed through our culture of rape. The lack of feminine empathy extends to the contemporary human relationship with Earth, as PachaMama, Mother Earth. Our birth-rite is to recognize Her.

"monosexuality" was my first published poem. Where poetry is conceived as a feminine art, to hell with the macho patriarchal cultural hegemony that diminishes the authentic creativities of our inborn humanity in favor of entitlement propaganda, figuratively illustrated as the "war on sex". Militarism further exacerbates the repressive/oppressive role that sex, in gender, reproduction, and the act of love, has assumed in our increasingly self-destructive society. As with all dualities, masculinity implies femininity.

While steeped in the act of 'people watching', with a keen eye for the social imbalances in play on any given occasion a special light is thrown on inter-sexual relativity. Anarchical logic, or irrational meaning, has a peculiar significance, with respect to how the formal context of institutional learning delegitimizes the freedom to imagine beyond the bounds of normative thought and reason.

Our creative writing is at once elegiac and at once celebratory, marking a flight from the institutional walls of predictable learning, towards the more experimental and risky, adventurous dream-education of self-knowledge.

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*"Even in our day there are plenty of soothsayers and sibyls, and many people still believe in dreams and omens. It is no wonder that the ancients did so, too. But we should keep well in mind that while these arts are now despised by educated people and ranked with superstition they were an acknowledged part of Greek religion."*

*Martin P. Nilsson, "Greek Popular Religion" (1940)*

*"I woke with this marble head in my hands; / It exhausts my elbows and I don't know where to put it down. / It was falling into the dream as I was coming out of the dream. / So our life became one and it will be very difficult for it to separate again."*

*George Seferis, "Mythistorema"  
translated by Edmund Keeley (1995)*

A hyper-ambient, atmospheric guitar & voice elucidation on themes of the variance between the doer and the doing, subject and object, creation and creator; the vocal sounding contemplates the inner nature of human life as the most provident offering back to nature. Learning reciprocity with the entire universe begins by looking within.

The word is a gift. Verbal metaphor refers to the creative act, in step with the dream-notion, going back to Carl Jung, that, 'I am not the only one in my house', that the psyche is full with collective consciousness, that within us we are all there. All things issue through us by way of conscious intent.

In the creative arts, dreaming and waking often cross paths. Are speaking and thinking similar in psychic variance from that of dreaming and waking? This is the question I am posing in the aftermath of the creative process. The question is meant for all to ruminate with thoughtless meditation, through a constant emptying of mind, towards a renewal of deeper intelligence beyond the egotism of intellect and apparent word-logic.

Word agglomerations draw from the theme of cultural metaphors related to heritage, ancestry and the myths and rites of collective human identity. Beginning with simple muses on the roots of culture, I then embellish a transcendence of nostalgia through a regression of biological metaphors.

The root, with all of its instilled metaphors of stability, truly originates from seed. While reminiscent of the old chicken-egg riddle, the seed is a transient holder of sacred inner truth,

ultimately leading to a grounded promise of settlement. Yet, in exploring a healthy and holistic mind of settlement, i.e. through found experimental writings, the more ephemeral or fleeting reality of origination must be kept close at hand. For, in Buddhist terms, the root is the middle way, yet the seed is that ephemerality from which we come and to which we go.

Wu Wei is a blissful expression, the Taoist philosophy of non-intervention with the flux of being and mind, where, in the allowance of natural flow, seeds grow from their roots to their flowers.

The original Latin meaning of the word stupor is, 'to be amazed or stunned'. My relationship to the word draws from an experience during the Day of Lady Guadalupe in Mexico. The overshadowing presence of Lady Guadalupe breathed the immense breath of the goddess of compassion Kuan Yin, through music, and both protectresses mirrored their gaze, visually and aurally with a searching heart bursting and blooming with the stupefying gift of love. As French writer and philosopher Paul Valery said, "Love is being stupid together."

The seer Jiddhu Krishnamurti said, "It is no measure of health to be well-adjusted to a profoundly sick society." So follows observations and expressions supporting this wisdom of seeing. Many satire personal and collective health related to addiction and nationalism, which both divide and dismantle the health of human consciousness, requiring holism. Complementary themes of travel and history juxtapose subjection with abjection.

Conjuring a sense of the once-roaming herds of mammals that lit upon the open horizons of our once naked landscapes, the frame drum evokes a sacred connection to our mammalian evolution through a heartened soul brethren with large mammals, and our precarious evolutionary stability as one of the most vulnerable types of living creatures on planet Earth.

I speak of the charge of the electric pole of patriotic industry over the breadth of our continent as the sacrifice of ourselves, as a male-female witch, burned on the flagpole of national identity, a sacrifice brought about by the all-devastating silence of voice, speaking of a way of life not bound to the dominant settler society, yet existing now only in negation to the sedentary ecology of consumerism and vacation, with regard to the lost history and memory of our true selves in communion with the deeper movement of life as we once knew it.

I am inspired by the words of Jiddhu Krishnamurti, iconoclastic spiritual philosopher, who said, "truth is a pathless land". Truth lies in the anonymity of place as is, without meaning, as a river is in essence meaningless until commemorated by a name and story, whether of scientific or folkloric mythologies.

In a pathless land, how do we come to know the land, or know what is true, and here? That exploration is eventually culminates in collectivist thinking, to aspire towards a basis of unity evading the muddled institutionalization of creative freedom.

The process of turning over the ashes of the Unnamed commemorates the Indigenous struggles of Latin America. The writing process is based on my experiences in Yucatec Maya communities. The sound of the words follows the tragic cycle of intermittent, and ultimately, futile justice in Guatemala to reconcile its genocidal history.

In nearly every traveller's experience, the settlements of (un)civilization often provide an impermanent, temporal space even for the most autonomous of vagabonds. The piano has been a portal through which my sojourning meets the firm legs of tradition. In this union, both the ephemeral and everlasting are bonded under a greater mystery of the ever-passing, transient truth, elevating us to a higher sense of travel as mutually relative to the foundational ground of human tradition. Memory and history seed the pangs of movement with the brilliant emanations of creative ingenuity and inspired reflection.

So, imagine the traveller, or "exotic settler" chancing upon a piano under the weary heel of an empty horizon ahead, and the spiraling beauty of tradition below. Returning to themes of failure in society, the unsustainable psyche of Western man devolves at an insuperable pace through the mire of good intentions.

Beginning with personal, irreconcilable defeatism in the breakdown of the Western family, towards a psyche of madness and the unwilling expansion of selfish ego into greater realities of the imagination, spirit and creativity.

Yet, each piece reveals and awakes the deleterious mind of foul vanity with a brushstroke of unitive spirituality. The wake of greed pulls back in a tidal rush of release, and so I offer the ingredients of a raft on which to traverse the open oceanic beyond.

We have become unsettled by the music within, the rhythmic unity of creation instantaneously awakening the dreams of exploration to our contented and rooted beings, beyond and before settler intuition. We seek to become the individual at their furthest point from society.

Cast astray by the weary exhaustion of travel and the toil of vagrant survival, at our most distant from any sense of self or environmental recognition, yet the voice within provides a means and path by which we may discover the foundation of life within and without and throughout all places and times.

All faces of belonging in the deep runnel of ground, churning and swooning with each and every step planted firmly before sitting, to meditate on the self as energy, a thoroughfare through which sky and ground meet in the cloudy visions of a creative mind at work, entranced by the muse of his own beckoning, the internal void voices: VOID!

Aloud! The name of a god from faraway lands echoes through the valleys, resonating to beckon the voice, to intone and invoke throughout and within and from, and as the windpipe of the valley itself: All saying ah, called in, where in Arabic, the expression "ya" is used to call out with



vocative interrogation, in this way, to see the meeting place of space and sound, of sky and ground, within the human taste for the call to nowhere now!

I hereby envision, and voice, the foundation of character as Love, the unsettling settlement of dualistic harmony. The holistic fruition of light, boundless, earth-trembling. The boom and flash of awe and rust, coalescing at the frayed tip of the hangman's rope, blooming a new head of lore and myth. Words are eyes from heaven.

I am a practitioner of sound-art exploration on these themes, on the sacred mess of beauty at its core, a seed nestled in the crooked ribcage bust of an itchy nude, breathing the hoarse and callous gargle of a raw touch, the healing blood that runs from a reddened face hot with night.

I have charted the journey of experience, the naturally transformative process of ending a period of transitional residence, to begin to live in one place exclusively. I approach questions of home, travel and what is foreign creatively, through a lens adjusted by self-reflection, leading to my "settlement" within. As I have become more permanently rooted to a specific place, I have realized that earthly geography flows with the transient impermanence of nature itself, that the only true settlement is in one's heart.

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*"Let us arm every song with dreams, in the time of war..."*

Kabir Kala Manch, in support of all artists silenced by imprisonment, poverty and ignorance in  
India and throughout the World

*"Watch carefully,  
Poetry burns quickly  
Spreading like a forest fire.  
Watch more carefully,  
Poetry can stir people..."*

excerpt from Telugu resistance poet, Varavara Rao, written while in solitary confinement in  
Secunderabad Jail 1985-89 - republished in Towards a New Dawn

Poetic practice, as a creative tradition in the life of a poet, opens the doorway to perennial creativity through which one may pass towards great, unseen and yet mysteriously innate gifts of passion and truth, gifts of fulfillment and love. My personal journalism is essentially about one affirmation, that it is right to dream and that Dreaming is a Universal Right, not only of humans, but of all beings.

In the technocratic & plutocratic society of demonic habitual tendencies, towards the mechanization of action, thought and identity, the human qualities of patience, wisdom and

devotion are best revealed in the outrageously uncommercial activity of pure poetic invention. Yet, as in the base & fleshly example of sleep, still the metaphor endures, let sleep sleep & dream dream!

Become dream while the dream is dreamt & known & felt & seen & causing one to rise with the memory of desire & unrest, that the earthly facade of waking is insufficient to fulfill the ecstasy of creative imagination and the waning birth of intuitive creativity, instinctual and whole. Living & ecological self-awareness is the birthright of each human being, as a holistic affirmation attuned to the entire life of all creation, including all of Earth, in one breath, where, especially clear today, as the interconnected & interdependent worldly techno-communing of peoples globally careers through timeless instantaneity.

So, each and every life is equally without circumference as in an omnipotent centre. It has been throughout time. In the archaic sphere of psychic knowledge accessed through inborn trust and the sacred flesh of entheogenic presence, all are to be encouraged and passed through the body of the dreamer.

Eyeless and seen through self-enacted visions of trust in the inward journeying of mind as matter, experience is simply the wave-form space of sensation in the subtle & internal creative nature of all manifest and un-manifest. The dreamer embraces the nameless mystery of sound & light in its pure & transcendent non-duality of formless emptiness, still forming the pathless direction of each individual stepping on self-made ground. In Algonquin, it is called Sakahàn, to light a fire.

Keep reading & sharing perspectives on migrant narratives in relation to indigenous art, theatre-music composition and notes on life as lived by a wildly independent, self-sustaining and vibrant artists of sound, art and love.

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The first ever day of Aboriginal Awareness Week in Canada is full of energies auspicious and serendipitous in its symbolic import as my understanding of its narrations were triggered by an inner voice of resistance while in Washington D.C. where I began to dedicate myself to the literary vocation in light of my own personal development with regards to the commission of truth, addressing political and historical-religious misinformation.

My creative work is in keeping with a lifelong demonstration to voice silenced histories, in honor and recognition of the atrocities committed against First Peoples of the land, whose history, while older and more enduring, while land-based and unfathomably rich, is snuffed out by the dominant settler narratives of media and education that continue to ride the oppressive waves of war, colonization and assimilation in the ongoing struggle for American freedom that continues to this day.

These are soundings directly from the heart, unmediated by the delusional independence of exclusive and exceptional American identity, for an end to the war on being what it means to be free.

As a narrative of resistance, I am re-writing the language of American history, to translate the poetics of protest into the harmony of life. Here, I embark on sound art explorations on the theme of visioning an "exit strategy" in the war for America, to de-institutionalize and reclaim the name of the land through the act of breath and proclamation.

I hear the great conundrum of American life in the sound of modern frame drumming techniques together with an evocation, vocal sounding, on the re-history of colonial ecology into an awareness of self and environment, recognizing, respecting and regarding the singular devastations of American disunity in the wake of 500 years of unending struggle.

Resistance is often most deeply traversed by artists, creative voices, purified in the air of one new proclamation of independence, yet to be heard apparent on the pages of dominant history, and it will not be written, but vocalized, orated, and beaten from the face of a drum.

I've reflected on the initial invocation by Percy Bysshe Shelley from Queen Mab, which reads, "For when the power of imparting joy / Is equal to the will, the human soul / Requires no other heaven."

The meaning of life comes to fruition when an individual promulgates the essential DIY spirit of heartened resistance as the shared co-unity of meaning for all people who identify as "people" and not the maelstrom of mechanized and monetized identities that waver in the brush as the incendiary & violent pages of human history, aflame in the eye of the seer who rewrites himself as the self of all. My words are a critical literary effulgence, bearing witness to the truth that merely to be human in today's world is the main currency of resistance.

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"...Quite amazing, the moonlight that  
Floods this room—  
I cannot even see the moon outside.  
To relieve this solitude  
I draw out my blood  
And transfuse it  
With poetry that is heavy  
With the sound of handcuffs.

Chain them if you will...

The birds of freedom

Will break into flight  
To the sound of pioneer songs."

Varavara Rao, written while in solitary confinement  
in Secunderabad Jail 1985-89

I take refuge in the brilliance of Telugu poet Varavara Rao, whose words resound with chilling truthfulness, directing readers to reflect, even over the muddiest and swiftest, and most inhumane of currents.

Art & writing & all creative activities, while demonstrably flushed with the economic downturn of a costly natural disaster, remains invaluable, and reveals itself as one of the only true & sound Values of human life, beyond the impermanent trespasses of consumption and trade.

Creativity & art & writing & the wisdom that ensues & issues from the blank page of authentic thought and pure action are only strengthened under the taut and tested strings of emotion & trust in the depth of the human soul.

Forced, evacuated from my home, surrounded by flooded streets & the powerless, transitioning from house to house among hospitable friends, I've been unable to find the space & resources to dream up a new original musical, narrative sound art. I remember one peace-loving afternoon among friends in celebration of our presence, in all its magnificence & luxuries of life, breath and harmony. May we all find peace in the ground & space of the moment!

Music, as a predominantly community-based art form, teaches us how creativity & art, especially when facing a natural disaster, so as to reaffirm our basic humanity, teaching us that despite the angry gods, as metaphysical personifications of the superhuman forces of nature, their crashing display of power over death and rebirth.

We overcome from within and for each other, through the human triumphs of creation by our hands, through our tongues and in our shared smiles, languages of communal warmth, embrace & gentle touch of human beauty, grace & Love.

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*"Life is a lying dream, he only wakes / Who casts the world aside"*  
*from the Atsumori Noh Play, 15th century*

*"At birth we woke to dream in this world between. What then shall we say is real?"*  
*Kan'ami Kiyotsugu, 15th century*

*"Two awakenings and one sleep. This dream of a fleeing world!"*  
*Tokugawa Ieyasu, 1542-1616*

*"I know not what life is, nor death. Year in year out - all but a dream."*  
Uesugi Kenshin, 1530-1578

*"...the proud ones are but for a moment, like an evening dream in springtime."*  
Heike Monogatari, 14th century

*My life / came like dew / disappears like dew*  
Toyotomi Hideyoshi, 1536-1598

*"To what shall I compare this life of ours? Even before I can say...it is like a lightning flash or a dewdrop...it is no more."*  
Sengai, 1750-1837

What is that note, tone, breath, voice, play, word, motion, thought, desire, way artists, seers, filmmakers, musicians, and spiritual practitioners alike speak to when they intone the vowels, the grammar, the logic, the philosophy, the imagination, the language, the creation, the way of dream?

Reflecting, ponderous, contemplative in the way and presence of nature, externalized in the wild, flora, fauna, breathtaking skies, landscapes, seascapes and fascinating magic of ecological wonder, all, as is.

To create a place, mode or setting, wherein dream is realized, invoked, intoned, imagined and integrated into life, is essentially the role of the artist, visionary, and seer, as spiritual practitioners of harmony, whether harmony of tradition, presence or ideal.

Often, in the way of the artist, to create a work that truly evokes the magic of the innate powers of dreaming, truly inherent in all of creation, is the final meaning of the artist's path to holism, completion as the conceptual invigoration of idea into creation.

Yet, in such as seers, or spiritual practitioners of a way of being, as the komuso, or "Priest of Emptiness" in Japanese history, who led a life of beggary, without identity, and harmonizing the mind with the *suizen* practice of blowing through a Shakuhachi bamboo flute, dreaming in life is not conceived, or imagined, only led, and lived directly.

For *komuso* life itself is dream, not necessarily solely creative conceptions representing life. And truly, as the *komuso* meddled further in the affairs of secular life, navigating rungs of hierarchical power among fellow humankind, corrupting laypeople and spiritual classes alike, the dream fell into the reality, of the fleeting nature of all things.

So, could *komuso* be translated as "Priests of Dream" who fulfill the order of dream within the waking spheres of existence, so as to harmonize the subconscious palate with a psychic holism of mere being?

Self-prophesied, the world of dream that so invigorated the *komuso* into a unique way of living, being and harmonizing with creation, woke to the lightning flash wisdom of illumination beyond the forms of all-recognition, even to themselves. Yet, there still may be the spirit of the *komuso* wandering about, collecting alms from the wordless eye of longing that still beats the hearts of all things in the nameless anomalies of daily, human existence.

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*"If the development of the Tar Sands has one good thing about it, it might be that it wakes us up.*

*Business as usual is over. We've run out of time. It is the tipping point. It's telling us that everything about fossil fuel economies have changed, in terms of cost, in terms of scale, in terms of environmental footprint. Everything has changed. Now, if as a society we can respond to that and say, you know what, we need to get off this within 30 years, then that would be great. If we don't respond to it, then as a society we will likely collapse, because you can not sustain a civilization on a resource as dirty as bitumen."*

*Andrew Nikiforuk, multi-award winning Canadian journalist, and author of "Tar Sands", in the documentary "Tipping Point: The End of Oil"*

Highway 63 to the Athabasca Tar Sands, past cords of balsam poplar, I am reminded of the old adage from the Second World War. "Bodies stacked like cords of wood."

The puncturing wind howls and slams with a dry heave over the windshield as sixteen wheels burn past, loaded with split trunks. To my right, a comrade of voice and indigenous rights advocate, Gregor MacLennan tells me the green corridor of lush grassy, tree lines are a mere trick for the eye.

Behind them lies the gargantuan tragedy that could only be wrought by the world's largest industrial project. Gregor had visited the Tar Sands with the Achuar people of Peru, who had recently fended off Calgary-based oil company Talisman from drilling on their territory in the Western Amazon rainforest. Not long ago, as a student in Iquitos, the largest city in the Western Amazon, multiple truckloads of logged jungle timber floating along the Amazon basin became a common sight.

First impressions on bearing witness to the immense destruction and its repercussions for local communities along the Athabasca river, the Achuar, Gregor said, were overcome with sadness, and lack of hope from the locals.

Yet, on July 6, as a contingency of solidarity groups, activists, environmentalists, scientists, and First Nations leadership, including Winona LaDuke, Bill McKibben, Naomi Klein, walked the 4th Annual Tar Sands Healing Walk, there was certainly no shortage of hope. Beyond hope, however, there was the sheer presence of strength on that full day of walking to bear witness, pray and heal in solidarity.

The Healing Walk encircled Tar Sands development, pausing for a moment of silence at each of the Four Directions to heal Mother Earth. Together with elders, traditional drummers from the Dene Nation led all who followed in support. At the final direction along the path, having reached the homestretch, I asked one of the lead drummers for an extra drum, as I had forgotten mine, and wished to accompany the rhythm. "We don't have others, it's personal. We each cut our own," he said. As they proudly held their snare-tightened skin-headed drums.

In that moment, I was struck by a revelation. Jokingly, the drummers made affable conversation, to lighten the moment through friendship and good spirits, and I was struck by each of their genuinely unique relationships to their respective drums. It was as if the making and playing of one's drum represented the circular holism of life, and the central role that creativity plays in that sustenance, that deep nourishment of living in the human experience.

As they played on, not with the sophisticated manner of virtuosic world-class music, but with the honest grit and sincere genuflection of direct connection to the spirit of creativity: the heart. And the heartbeat rhythms moved me through the pain and humbling endurance of the Healing Walk. Each step a strike of the skin, a beat of the drum, the rhythm of forward movement, of positivity, of light and love.

The number 4 had especial significance to my experience at the 4th Annual Healing Walk. Not only is the number 4 a deeply meaningful symbol to Aboriginal culture, but also to my own ancestral Jewish culture.

The night before the Healing Walk, the two converged in a momentous expression of joy and harmony. On Turtle Island, 4 represents the directions, seasons, and in the Medicine Wheel of Four Colours (Red, White, Black, Yellow) and Four Lives (Mental, Spiritual, Emotional, Physical).

In my musical life, deeply bound by Mediterranean musical culture, I have given to the Sufi spiritual practice of seeing the numerical symbol 4 as sacred. More closely allied to my blood, in Kabbalah or Jewish mysticism, the wisdom tradition of the Four Worlds symbolizes the spiritual realms.

And so, I dedicate 4 hours of every day to meditation through music, which is a special revelation of Sufism and other world spiritualities.

At Indian Beach campground, around the sacred fire, I drummed on a 14-inch frame drum with Dene Nation drummers local to Fort McMurray, who inspired all present to grace the Earth with a ceremonial round dance. Our frame drums, created of the spiritual womb of Turtle Island and the Mediterranean, danced in unprecedented harmony under the inspiring rush of Dene song.

Their welcome was a moment of incredible significance as I sunk my mind deep into the heartbeat of Mother Earth, to emerge, offering the light step of a dance, the voice of a song, the resonance of a drum.

The drum represents a spiritual and personal expression, where we all move and feel necessary to ourselves and the world, whether on a stage, in a publication, or through a drum, we live our lives with enduring harmony and perennial meaning.

The traditional drumming is in no way redolent of economic ambition, but of an honoring for the ancestral and allied community that warms us and embodies our truth. The drum is the inner life, the spiritual life, the way to sacred holism, to health and healing.

To beat the drum is to impress upon one's spirit the unshakable continuity of the richness that the inner life provides, as to forego the unwelcome trespasses of soulless possessiveness, greedy overconsumption and mindless ignorance. So, in beating the drum we are humbled as we are fulfilled.

I could not imagine a more fitting leadership at the 4th Annual Tar Sands Healing Walk, than the unwavering spirit of the Dene drummers.

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Inspired by the experience of living through a flood, while during a week of taking refuge in the residences of close friends, I committed my mind to an expression, to creatively express the emotional flood of its victims. While the floods of Southern Alberta were nowhere near as devastating in terms of human costs as those that raged concurrently in India, there is a communal trauma, a proven post-traumatic stress that visits all victims of flooding.

This is the result of immature development on a 100-year floodplain, where commercial zeal trumps human life, and we become aware of being entirely objectified as city-dwellers within an intensively privatized, economic existence. Our lives are bought and sold, and Mother Earth reminds us that whether we like it or not, we always return to her. The wise ones say that we can never know where we are going if we do not know where we are from.

We are from our Mother Earth, and we will go back to her. As ever, her children, throughout our lives we consume from her, her sources of life are ours, the milk of her waters. And if we are unaware and ignore the offering of sacred space that recognizes her movement and presence, then we are inevitably reminded that we are ever at her mercy.



Where I lived, in the city of Calgary, one of the most significant commercial centers of the global big oil industry was particularly impacted by flooding during the summer solstice. If we can hear them, Mother Earth sends us very direct, timely and pertinent messages, namely in this case a message to the tune of, "Slow down!" as there was flooding just before in Fort McMurray, home of the dreaded Tar Sands, and as I wrote this, there was flooding in the Petro-State Canadian city of Toronto. Mother Earth was quite articulate that summer.

Beginning with a foray into the philosophic Taoist way of compassion, which enunciates our living with the giving strength and deep humbling of fluid harmony through improvised music, I took a broad step into the humanities of reason and the struggle for justice in the age of outrageous cultural consumption and environmental ignorance.

We know our place in the struggle for human freedom against the institutions that would likely allow human life to be bought and sold as the despicable days of slavery, masked by the post-colonial economic privatizations and revealed by the resurgence of decolonization among the First Peoples of Turtle Island.

Whether temporary, or lifelong, climate change refugees embody the contemporary significance of the common struggle to be human on planet Earth today.

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*"All Balzac's characters," said Baudelaire, 'are gifted with the same ardour of life that animated himself. All his fictions are as deeply coloured as dreams...'*

*Art takes life as part of her rough material, recreates it, and refashions it in fresh forms, is absolutely indifferent to fact, invents, imagines, dreams, and keeps between herself and reality the impenetrable barrier of beautiful style, of decorative or ideal treatment*

*Life holds the mirror up to Art, and either reproduces some strange type imagined by painter or sculptor, or realises in fact what has been dreamed in fiction."*

*Oscar Wilde, The Decay of Lying: A Protest (1891)*

Here, the abbreviated wisdom of Oscar Wilde, writer of voice and ear, the triumph of the great artful listening speaks with the clarity of a wind chime about the honest and natural truth. The delicate interweaving of Art and Life casts a certain mould, from which the divine spark of the punch-drunk imagination breathes with ever-raging glory. That cast is formed of Dream. As such, fiction follows with music, as the pure intent of the human imagination to express the most basic, intuitive sustenance of life at its clearest and most meaningful.

During the past week, I experienced an especially overwhelming night in the overactive imagination of my night-thoughts, as a flood of subtle sensation, burrowed deeply under the skin, an impalpable bitterness, a foreign spiritual strength, outgrowing and boiling over in the silent reaches of sleep. The raw experience did not give way overnight, yet transcended recurrence. The seed of a spirit spoke in dream, of a catastrophic undercurrent, sweeping virulently through the mud of that quaking settlement on Earth known as the city.

River and sun transformed to tower and spear. I woke more tired than I had lain the night before. Yet, with the vigor of independent living and creative meaning, I rose through the art of sound to wake well beyond the confining, artificial binary of sleep and waking; to a spiritual awakening!

And through an outpouring of musical emotion, I stirred my brain with cathartic rhythmic trespasses over the faraway and distant geography of my inner reaches. At one among many; dancers, drummers, singers, storytellers and artist of sound and space, we together climbed the staircase of fiction to a higher reality, to a truth of our own making.

For nights afterward, and indefinitely in the frame of the images spawned in the post-traumatic flash of outpoured nightly grief, there was peace. Nyx bloomed like a sunflower in the hazy morning of calm, human flesh. The rites of Psyche and Morpheus drew from the magical founts of youth and light a knowledge as seminal as birth; that our waking lives are inextricably tied to the dream fiction of our conscious and unconscious lives made whole.

Or in the voice of musician Ali Akbar Khan, "If you practice for ten years, you may begin to please yourself, after 20 years you may become a performer and please the audience, after 30 years you may please even your guru, but you must practice for many more years before you finally become a true artist—then you may please even G-d."

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When the past is not confronted, and is ignored for greed, or lack of honesty in any form, life itself is denied to future generations and to the vulnerable and marginalized peoples at the end of the classist food chain hierarchies of the global market, as per the specifics of history along the multi-tiered colonization of Mother Earth and across the great breadth of each and every corner of the Four Worlds (South-Emotional-Red; East-Spiritual-Yellow; North-Mental-White; West-Physical-Black).

And on, ever deeper into the innate existential confrontation of co-existence, along with the inherent conundrums of reality, we prepare our action. In continuity with the confrontation of mortality, to prepare action is to recognize that we are action. As a basic principle of existence, we all act, and are all intimately involved in every last living and non-living process of becoming and disintegrating.

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*"The other thing I brought up here, which I happen to always carry around, is my corn. My father, he passed away about twenty years ago, he's a pretty simple guy. He was from our reservations. He used to say to me, Winona, you're a really smart young woman, but I don't want to hear your philosophy if you can't grow corn..."*

*I grow corn...it's like us, corn is all different...this is a corn that's called a Manitoba White Flint...our Anishnaabe people...we're the northernmost corn growers in the world. Corn is very smart, it can grow almost anywhere..."*

*Winona LaDuke,  
speaking at the 4th Annual Tar Sands Healing Walk in 2013*

Experientially, the life of waking reality and that of dream consciousness are one, equal. When confronted with the practical evidence of vision, with eternal meaning, a deep mystery of the soul unveiled in the shade of internal belonging, I know.

So, when meeting with mystic voices whose souls are married with the beyond in a harmonious union of the opposites, dream and waking, the mind begins to know the path of the heart, of intuition, love and sound. As such, I revision virtual experience through the lens of my unique self-knowledge, yet in so doing, I seek to inspire visions anew in visitors whose wanderings are never lost to the immediate necessity of connectivity, interdependence, and the shared internalization of the psyche, manifest.

When I heard the humbling voice of Anishinaabe author, orator and activist Winona LaDuke, whose bountiful and beautiful mind I sought excitedly, devoutly to listen to, she spoke of my dream. Her musing answered the image of my dream with a new vision of the Earth.

When she spoke of Manitoba White Flint, the earth fell into the sky, and the sky grew below the earth, the waters condensed into air and the air evaporated into water, and dream became real, reality became a dream. In her hand she held my subtle imagination of nights in solitude; for the unshakeable truth, she grounded my nightly revelation with the fine nourishments of sacred knowledge:

*"In the morning, eat of the red corn," says he, Herbsman. An ear of red corn emerges as with the pleasure of an offering, gift or invocation from the mouth of a ground and tongue of a seed. One kernel, consumed, and my flesh lightens with the bread of fulfillment, and all my wishes humbled with regard to the constant water that flows to the life of all.*

*Cleansed, opened, revived, moved and lifted, I listen, intent with respect.*

*"At night, eat of the white corn." As the morning eye of fire stares into my forehead barely above the horizon, I yet see a vision of the white corn in mind's eye, unknown on Earth.*

*The Herbsman continues to pour the clear-souled water of natural wisdom through the mystic wine of musical friendship over each and every pour with all movements and messages invoked, intoned, and conveyed with brevity, clarity and unity.*

As Winona LaDuke shared with all Healing Walkers, “some things are supposed to stay in the ground”, and so, there are visions, dreams and insights that are meant to stay in the subtle realms beyond memory and imagination, beyond the creative manifestation of personal will and worldly attachment, beyond the attainments of knowledge, beyond the bearing of tradition.

And in the Medicine Wheel tradition, so the dream of the red corn for the morning, and white corn at night affirms the basic principles of the Four Colors within the Aboriginal Medicine Wheel. The color red, and the eating of the red corn, affirms the element of growth, time and developing the mind. Whereas the color white, and the eating of the white corn, would affirm place, achievement, reflection, and spiritual understanding. Therefore, the advice by the Wise Herbsman of Dream, seems a revelation to practice a harmonious way of life, where the morning is equated to growth, and the night to reflection.

More, corn also teaches that rootedness does not oppose adaptability. So, as people of this land, for and of ourselves, we learn to adapt anew, with a sense of rootedness that overcomes the dominant cultural stereotypes of the stale, the old, the past, and the traditional, and instead seeks truth in the likes of our Western imagination, as in the mind of Tolkien, who wrote: “The old that is strong does not wither, / Deep roots are not reached by the frost”.

Adaptable rootedness is the way of the wounded healer, the traveler, the wanderer who, as Tolkien wrote, is not lost, and who instead leads all on with a prayer at each step to the beating blood that flowers in the voice of a pure heart.

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*"Right now is the time when we wake up and start paying attention to what we are actually doing. I've always said we can do whatever we want. The question is what do we want to do. And we need a new definition of progress, you know, toward listening to scientists, and toward elegance and beauty. And so we have to get our philosophy right. What way do we want to go forward? And we need a critical mass of people who care deeply in their hearts about nature."*

*Robert Bateman, Canadian artist from the coast of British Columbia, from the film, “Reflections: Art for an oil free coast”, sponsored by Raincoast Conservation Foundation for an Oil-Free Coast*

One weekend, in Canada, I went a block over from my apartment to grab my usual afternoon matcha. As I swung my head around to grab a coffee cup lid, my line of sight was crowded with the most peculiar, and at once familiar, beauty. Frame drums, doumbeks, and instruments of all

kind, beautifully hand-crafted in the likelihood of natural aesthetics. The clouds of a waking dream parted as I stepped forward to shake the hand of the drum-maker himself.

From Vancouver Island, he had come, as the founding maker of Sylvan Temple Drums boasting specially crafted hand-made local woods just south of the Great Bear Rainforest. At first meeting, the key to my city's grandest music festival was gifted, unceremoniously, and with the sincerity of a true friendship. Before purchasing an alder-wood doumbek, I became privy to the music of such as Alabama Shakes, Thievery Corporation, Cat Empire, Caravan Palace, The Harpoonist and the Axe Murderer, Mamselle, Haram, and on. It was a loud, and riveting weekend. The gift of music breathed new life, and as through the wood of our country, sounds reverberated with untouchable magic into my heart and into the marrow of my bones.

Such as luck would have it, the serendipitous vibe of the exchange revealed the marked truth of reciprocity in nature. Human beings are mere messengers, and vessels of light and wisdom, others more naked and bright than the rest. They who are naked and bright are merely known as generous to us more gross souls. And so, in the Woodworker's Parable attributed to the ancient Chinese text, "The Way of Chuang Tzu", meaning ensues.

After receiving the great gift, not as from divinity, but from the hands of a fellow man. I was moved to wonder on the spiritual nature of the harvest. In such a world as where the sense of harvest has breached sustainability to egregious excess in exploiting the natural resources of the land, where is the sane harvester of life's great gifts of creation? And from the musical instrument of the trees sings a tale of the potent harmony embedded within the forest, within the land. The land is imbued with the music of life, with the instruments of soul, art and meaning.

When will we honor right harvesting, as in those who are traditional users of the land since time immemorial, not mere environmentalists, but as local harvesters who depend on the land for their livelihood? Whether it is in the food or the materials, in opening a doorway to family, community and inner fulfillment, our vocation, role and fulfillment is in the land, offering all a place, as a truly honest way of making each our own living.

Might we see the hidden inner nature of the Earth as not only our source of physical life, but as our source of grounding and flight, as our source of reciprocal creativity, the inertia of magic and play as the source of harmony itself, as a way to growth, promise, and all our relations?

In celebration of the filters of raw earth into breathable air. I stood at the cusp of the Great Bear Rainforest, a place that also signifies an outlying edge of human civilization. So, the sound of the wooden drum, of the local land, is played in conjunction with a Japanese flute made from a maple tree.

The instrument themselves are passages of wind and earth, into the waters of being and becoming, towards a sense of grounding and direction. The vocalization and narrative soundings muse on the exhausting reactionary sense of progress that ensues in the modern world, where

people continue to consume and waste, yet there is a lack of listening, and a lack of sheer creation.

The calamity of today is not one of natural resources, it is our state of mind, and as the musical instruments of the natural world teach us, there is much to learn from the shapes and sounds within. As Chuang Tzu said, "What happened was my own collected thought encountered the hidden potential in the wood. From this live encounter came the work that you ascribe to the spirit."

In poetry, I spoke to the deformed nature of land under the warped perception of consumerist greed and a wholesale corruption of value in life, and unsurprisingly human life. In the interludes between my voice and the silence, I spoke to a frenetic base of experience in the fragmented world of manufactured waste, amid the devastated landscapes that have become the norm, closing our minds and eyes from the truths and repercussions of our noxious way of life.

By mere witnessing, and, in turn, using my voice,, I affirm and re-encounter all my relations through a sense of inner community. Creative language inspires an inward journeying to find the root and nature of mind. The place where our whole selves may firmly take root in the most fertile of soil, in the home of universal belonging, and so give back and become one with the self-regulating, self-sustained renewability of life in harmony with all of creation.

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*"I have found in every word a certain musical value, a melody in every thought, harmony in every feeling, and I have tried to interpret the same things with clear and simple words to those who used to listen to my music."*

*Hazrat Inayat Khan, The Mysticism of Sound and Music*

In the beginning, there was sound, and not only sound - a sound. What was that sound? Was it the sound of one hand clapping? OM? The percussive bang of everything exploding into existence? It was the sound of all sound, the sound from where all originates, the intonation of creation.

In traditional music around the world, percussion begins music, or more accurately, melody. Percussion is the first sound. From the clacking of bones to the taut skin of the drum, the percussive rhythm announces the beginning of music, and so art, language and community.

What is the origin of language? Seekers for the origin of language are mystified and further entrenched in mystery by searching through the very device they seek to derive from its source. It seems obvious that language originated as sound. It would be only logical to presume that language was derived of music, rhythm and song.

Does music influence language, or more intently, the way we speak and what we say? If music is a prime suspect in the origination of language, then it would not only influence the way we speak and what we say — music will cause us to speak. Yet, speech caused directly by music uses the language of poetry, lament, cries of ecstasy and deep reflection.

Speech caused by music is also self-reflective, sympathetic to the transformative creativity within the subjective life. Imagine, the first sound of the universe — a cry — reverberating throughout time and creation as a lament for the ultimate truth — that beginning ends.

In narrative, beginnings are almost always preceded by ends, giving rise to the potential to begin anew. Music is a constant affirmation of the cyclic nature of ending and beginning, as a sound falls and rises, always with the shadow of silence before, after and throughout. Indeed, great music is often a testament to the musician's play with silence.

Silence teaches of right listening. Music is the result of right listening. Music teaches of right speech. Knowledge is the result of right speech. Knowledge teaches of right action. Enlightenment is the result of right action. Enlightenment teaches of right listening. Silence teaches right listening.

In the film, “The Way of the Heart” (2010), Hazrat Inayat Khan's wisdom is conveyed with his prophecies on music, which, as he says, will be the future religion of humanity. Inayat Khan taught how all religious and social disputes are founded in the inconsistencies and ambiguities within verbal language. Yet, in music, where profound meaning is clear and immediate, ideas and beliefs are expressed without conflict.

When speaking is united to the knowledge of music, the silence of listening births a voice to the path.

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My voice transformed into narrative sound art through the trajectory of experimental music. What I said was an explosion of the omnipresence of America juxtaposed with its remoteness. The marginal landscapes of America gave birth to one of the the world's more burning questions: atomic energy. I began searching in the traditional lands of the American Southwest, with its rich history of settlement by the Original Peoples. That history becomes estranged into small-town marginality by the overwhelming shadow of a towering American presence.

Leading finally to the sounds of New York, the sirens of immigration and post-colonial history remove the people further from the true and original history of the land, until, finally, the inside becomes outside, and the electrified modernization of progress displaces connectivity in nature with a sheen of bright lights. The outside has transformed to the inside, and without a way out. All the while, people are terminally trapped by misperception and ignorance.

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*“Moloch in whom I dream angels...Dreams! adorations! illuminations! religions! the whole  
boatload of sensitive bullshit!”*

*from “Howl”, Part II by Allen Ginsberg*

What is it to be an independent in thought and action, to be an artist of heart and mind, and, most radically, to live within one's means in the West?

I live in a city where my next door neighbor makes over a billion dollars a month. I, personally, don't make money. Or, more accurately, my profits are nearly zero. Yet, I live life fully and exuberantly.

On a whim I could splurge on an evening of fine dining, rent a car and go to the mountains, or even purchase a new musical instrument and the latest computer hardware. I am not in debt. I save, and live within my means, though I don't exactly see my money growing as the incessant growth models of Western capitalism would encourage.

Nonetheless, as a city dweller, and especially in the city where I live, which is considered to be a global oil capital, the mean streets of capitalism are hawk-eyed and omnipotent on every corner. As a young, perhaps amateur artist, the very ground under my feet is funded by the turning soil of the most destructive earthquake in human history known as the fossil fuel industry.

Living the majority of the time through physical self-propulsion as a primary means of transportation balances one's perspective as an outsider of marginal and radical import to the status quo. Energy and economy, in their most fundamental and basic meanings, derive from the physique in relation to the sources of life in the ground (energy) and the way of relating to living exchanges through reciprocity and foresight (economy). Happiness is learned when expense is measured in sweat, growth in a smile and dividends in generosity.

Daily, the innocence of play in the mind of art, creativity and community is buried under the debris of an open-pit mine with lightning swift efficiency. Once aware of the mounting genocidal ecocide inherent in the dominant global energy policy, how can one go on knowing that at the end of the day the artists of the world become mere charade, trick and distraction for the bowling force of industrial belligerence?

One of the greatest pearls of wisdom that my grandfather shared with me was what he had learned among his Greek family of immigrants in Lower East Side Manhattan, New York. "We were poor, but we were happy, because we were together," he repeated this axiom like a charm against the malevolent half-truths of Western life, because families separate.



So, often, I feel, as a communitarian-individualist independent-ecologist artist-worker radical-traditionalist of the 21st century and of eternity, that my life is the epitome of what Ginsberg describes above, as in Moloch, and dreaming of angels.

Oral storytelling, family tradition, and cultural literacy are waves of realization that have revealed a sliver of moonlight over the oil-dark sea. I see a way, and directed by intuition, the art of living further breathes a channel of oceanic action towards as yet unseen, inner prosperity. Philo of Alexandria, an ancient who fused Jewish and Greek philosophy at the beginning of the first millennium of the common era, is quoted: "Households, cities, countries, and nations have enjoyed great happiness when a single individual has taken heed of the Good and Beautiful. Such people not only liberate themselves; they fill those they meet with a free mind."

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With ahistorical, contemporary thought, in light of the current need to shift from an industrial to ecological society, I address that first perspective where we stand is the crucial point of change. Perspective is history. Until we transcend the dualistic norms of media consumption and direct experience, there is no way to begin again from a new point in history. The junction of the present and the past affix humanity at a crossroads in time.

Before ascending into the next era of humanity on Earth and traversing the crossroads ahead, each and every last individual will be asked, "Who are you and where have you come from?"

Anishinaabe Elder Dave Courchene wisely advises all people to return to creation, to return to the very beginning of our nature whenever unsure, whenever inundated with a sense of ignorance, confusion, loss. On the path to inner knowledge, light blinds, and the shadows reveal the road home.

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*"I really just want to help people understand you can go and get those things you want [...] you really can ... you just have to be wiling to make some sacrifices and just realize you can do things you've dreamed about doing."*

*Jonathan Starke, vagabond writer and founding editor of Palooka Magazine*

The following essay of mine was featured on the "Book that Changed my Life" segment on The Drunken Odyssey with John King, in response to The Odyssey: A Modern Sequel by Nikos Kazantzakis:

I was 18 years old, returning to my mother's south shore home in Massachusetts after my first few months away at university. It began one evening, at the end of a series of meditations, where,

motionless, I re-conceived the magic psalms of Ginsberg's elemental void, the enlightened palms of Snyder's versified mudras and the delicate alms of Kerouac's prosaic spontaneity.

In the pitch darkness, I wrote, "Tat Tvam Asi" on the wall with my trusty writing pencil. "You are it!" translated Alan Watts, whose English clarity rung through my mind with echoing resonance, reverberating interminably to the next day, when I had read every word on my bookshelf and sought more.

I set out, to the library of my Greek-Jewish Romaniote grandfather; whose literary meditations on the healing properties of the written word had sent him unscathed from World War II to the centenarian desk. There he sat, with a penknife shakily opening letters as his Jewish wife screamed from the downstairs banister. "Take whatever you want!" He spoke over the long-winded cacophony of domestic affairs. In the name Kazantzakis I saw another Greek, an ancestral voice unperturbed by the walled house.

In a moment of intuition, scanning through the compendium of classics, I chose "The Odyssey: A Modern Sequel". Crouched inside my off-white walls, completely bare if not for the Sanskrit scribble and a prized first draft poem hanging deliriously like a whitewashed door of perception. I began reading everything – the copyright date, the ISBN code, and every character in between.

Smashed skulls, bespattered bowels and upended spines weaned my consciousness from a walled indoor adolescence. My mind voyaged onward into the travails of a maturing intellect. Spawned with a Greek flair for disinhibiting fleshly experience, I read with a burning momentum.

I needed to feel each word pulsate its rhythms of modern wisdom into every minutiae of my being. I began reciting, with the quickening taste of the classical orator, moved by the enigmatic grandeur of such literary quality. Soon, it was dusk, and the tired footsteps of my stepfather climbed the stairs to rest his weary skull on a pillow of televised static.

Reading, reciting, orating, on and on and into my pores sunk the blood of the fallen men and raped women, and from my nostrils leaked the icy salt of the Mediterranean seas. I wept with unspoken clarity for the emotional barbarism of modern spiritual greed!

At a break in the violent awe, I spoke sweet lines of sexual camaraderie. Women's voices formed on my dry tongue as the fecund prosperity of mortal despair. In those tempestuous rhythms, my drunken brother stumbled longingly upstairs to lust in the barfly haven of suburban coitus.

Undeceived, unwilling to desist, I read on, with soft muttering in the depths of red twilight as Morpheus, the Greek god of sleep, laid the house to rest. In my empty hollow, I swam to the subterranean netherworlds of the creative subconscious. Emerging, still as ever, with the light of morning, my mother's knock could not startle my ever-strengthening concentration.

I savored each of the 33,333 17-syllable verses as a ripe, freshly picked Kalamata olive, cleansing my palate, as with my cognitive sensibility. The unique versification of Kazantzakis' voice led me onward into the depths of creative literacy, as I relished on his startlingly characteristic use of nouns, at once subjectively descriptive, while aesthetically presented with the definitive tone of proverbial lists.

His "Cretan glance" remains unmatched in modern literature, evoking the spirit of the Mediterranean as an invocation to the deified ancestral hearth of earthly humanity: the book.

On reading the final character, I threw the book into the air and sprang from my narrowing walls before the doorstopper crashed onto an unlit lamp. Visiting relatives, weakly frightened, noticed my sorry state, and their misguided sympathies amplified under the crushing noise of broken glass.

After being handed a Greek salad, to end my bookish fast, I greeted my grandfather, whose smile shone with mutual respect and ancestral fraternity, as two men of pure literacy.

Outside, a childhood friend stood to greet me. We had not seen each other since pre-pubescence. Her eyes, crooked, observed my own downward slant into the abnormal body of creative tradition. I was not mad, I was not sane, and yet, from that moment, her eyes told me what she could not. I was rapt, eternally in the powerful vocation of the word of silence and thought.

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Every fine photographer must become a master of light, and yet, even the everyday bystander is subject to the subtle nuances and grand complexity of light and how the human eye perceives it. In order to further enhance the living experience of our city, we must pay attention to the power and effect of light and seeing. With the right contrast of shadow and light, we can see the way forward.

"Journeys end in lovers' meeting" wrote Shakespeare, in the comedy, Twelfth Night. All the more so when the journeying are lovers of music! And so, the saying, "I'll see you on the other side" is expressed in the pure creativity of Earth and Sky, of rhythm and wind, of bone and breath, wherein musicians enter and emerge from collective realms of collaborative unity to hear the essential oneness of sound as beat, melody and harmony.

A serendipitous connection formed between two lovers of music across the expanse of the Atlantic sea. From Barcelona to Boston to Calgary to Vietnam, windswept and traveling to their Chinatown home as two artist-seers of sound and light, we anchored our minds in the vast breadth of the love that rested and played in our hearts. Improvising on rhythmic influences of African blues, intermingled with Cuban folk and original hymns of Catalonia through the instrumentations of guitar and voice.

I was inspired to reach back through the catalogue of recorded memory through field recordings of concerts, jams, cafe moods and late-night stirrings. Their wealth of emergent intonation in the voice of a flowering mind speaks tales and tomes of innocence and experience, of the extrovert amateur and introspective auteur, of the public artist and private dreamer.

After reflecting on the raw grit of creativity in the burgeoning flesh of a new community, a new movement, an incipient birth of open life, we see the whole society unvarnished. As the economy becomes more and more a blasphemous term of bitter and cold forewarning, the heart deepens and the mind sharpens. Look around. In every corner of the world there are shadows. Gold and oil are the planet's self-destruction, all through a mutual phase-out, blurred by irrelevance.

Each and every one of us has, and are part of, only one life. As I wrote in the essay, "A Modern Odyssey of Vocation": "I was not mad, I was not sane, and yet, from that moment, her eyes told me what she could not. I was rapt, eternally in the powerful vocation of the word of silence and thought."

My writings are an offering of time, for anyone curious enough to explore their inner space of subtle visions and sounds, where the natural watercourse way of existence merges with the choice to be with all of creation; the way of the wise fool, the blind seer, and the musician...of silence.

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*"Last night I had such a wonderful dream. That today, I feel great and satisfied."*

*Rumi, Masnavi*

I performed music for an Afghan community celebration honoring the legacy of Rumi. It was a clear night in Canada. The sun melted over the horizon an incandescent vermilion azure and a mountain silhouette graced the starlit west. I accompanied a dear friend, who plays the Persian santur. The audience was cheerful hearing our unique, globalist musical expression, and our hosts were delighted.

One young woman at the event, born in Canada, proclaimed, "I am from Afghanistan." As the Afghan and Persian languages commingled in a unity of mind and understanding, the political discussion turned to musical appreciation. Music is a common language to all, they agreed. Persians and Afghans also speak a shared language, and, in the spirit of their humanity, they are not divided by the bounds of nationalism, war and custom. Their cultures, languages and music overlap and intertwine into each other.

Education is the lifeblood of culture. Contemporary miseducation conjures cultural remnants still felt, yet which have become practically nonexistent. As the government slashes the limb of theatre and jazz from the roots of culture — our education — it is the artists, and more

accurately, artists' collaborations, that resurrect obsolete forms of creativity. Our art reshapes and polishes the dusty, antique lenses through which other forms of learning, knowledge and truth are remembered and reinvigorated.

Listening in and look. Become the seer of music with a calligraphy brush and red ink on a blank space. Find that blank space around you, nearby, the unused, neglected, under-appreciated, unassuming areas straddling the zones of existence and nonexistence. As a seer, engage with a calligraphy brush and red ink, the acoustic harmonies, the naturalist, vintage aesthetic of your art, meld into its animate life, produce that inner ambiance of memory, culture, history, tradition and nature.

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*“Because perhaps to my misery, I already have my perfect one whom I have without saying a word, served faithfully for a year now. Of whom I dream and in whose memory the adagio of my concerto has been written.”*

Frédéric Chopin,  
quoted in the documentary, “The Women Behind the Music” (2010)

In the memory of such a young genius as Chopin, our cultural continuity is glorified in bygone eras with a creative resurgence only known to that grandiloquent Western opulence. And looking out from the frame of our own window, sparks of desire light. At first, softly, the Earth burns. Then, the air plumes in a haze of smoke.

The bonfire of magic absolves the moon of its light, and the stars become mere smoky displays. Inside, and from underneath, the imagination fires the kindling of co-unity within the mind.

The age-old sound of piano and woodwind hearkens to the unique sonic fusion that is completely unique and characteristic of the land. Especially in the use of a certain types of improvisation, the classic sounds evince an internal discovery, not only of the human soul, but of the soul of those lands known as home.

Today, when war after war knocks at our doors, we can be reminded of the cultural heritage that identifies us as a unified people: through music, the one common language of humanity.

I aspire to that harmony that is basic to all regardless of class, education, ethnicity or religious identification. There is a way to shared harmony, and it emerges through music untrained by the classism and privilege of modern higher education. Whether speech, or instrumentation, the music that is untrained, while in tune with the essence of human life as pain, raw and blunt, is the very timelessness that high art seeks to capture. That timelessness is bred in every interaction and exchange whether within or between us, always.

This very realization is the voice, which carries our experience to stretches of the imagination that are present and transformational.

In writing, I seek to reflect the penultimate phase of psychological, and environmental revolution as a spiritual transformation of my own narrative. That is, as I re-imagine my perspective through the revolutionary act of storytelling. This kind of storytelling reflects personal truths, daily experiences and common points of view with regard to the larger narratives and mythologies that consume unknowing minds through belief, propaganda and pride.

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My creative work is a lifelong demonstration to voice silenced histories, in honor and recognition of the atrocities committed against the first peoples of the land, whose history, while older and more enduring, land-based and unfathomably rich in ways beyond material measure, is snuffed out by dominant settler narratives in media and education that continue to ride the oppressive waves of war, colonization and assimilation in the ongoing struggle for America's nationalist definitions of freedom. These issues, while politicized and born of society, destroy the habitability of the planet. My words are a sounding directly from the heart, unmediated by the delusional independence of any exclusive identity, for an end to the war on freedom.

Inspired by the pre-colonial and pre-revolutionist metaphor for America, "Columbia," symbolized as a Goddess of Freedom, an archetypal myth, proudly personifying poetic optimism through feminine form. Through these writings, I personify the process of myth-making as a dedication to compassionate awe and voiced protest in the historic confrontation with self and nation. The name Columbia was immortalized immediately before the Revolutionary War in 1775 by Phillis Wheatley, the first African American woman to publish her writing, in her poem, "His Excellency, General Washington."

Following a visit to Washington D.C., I wrote a vocal homage to Wheatley's legacy. These chronicles present the life of a visitor returning to his home country, where visitation is defined by traversing an international land border. I represent my struggle to reclaim and recognize my unique voice. I confront the realization that I am, in certain respects, an inheritor of the American way of life. And that inheritance is fraught with the psychological complexities of exile.

In this reclamation, I throw off vestigial principles of experience. I attempt to revision a new way of being through the living temperaments of the written word, and specifically, my own practice of stream-of-consciousness writing. Such revision includes a natural process of self-awareness, whereby self-expression revolutionizes identity as a self-perpetuating, natural source of renewal and life.

Spontaneous word creation, or improvisational writing, is a natural activity of the human mind. There is a power within that endless fount, that when regularly tapped as a spiritual practice, unleashes one's surroundings with an ever-renewing energy. Such a practice motivates one

personally, to interact with one's immediate environment in dynamic ways. The reason for this effect is because in this practice, which actualizes into a way of being, the present moment becomes central. When the present is cherished with just significance, the mundane begins to breathe with new life.

The practice of improvised writing, in this sense, outlines a processional transformation in throwing off sterile notions of self and environment. I have begun by defining the autonomous interactions between myself and my environment (parallel to notions of the "New World" for pre-colonial Europeans and pre-revolutionist Americans). I aim to declare the creation of open, uninhibited spontaneity in my creativity, instilling a diverse awareness around me, in public spaces (so as to align with the current fomentation of creative activity blurring the lines of public and personal art).

The quick hum of the Persian santur danced behind my eyes with the lifted personification of an artist's temptation to unite with the all-breathing life of unity. Yet, nostalgic and principled, remained steadfastly earth-bound to the homely traditions of mother, father, and self.

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In two years, I hadn't seen the ocean.

The epic grasslands of Alberta prairie filled my pupils with life every day and every night. I lived fully and for the present. Answering to no one except Father Sky, Trickster Napi and the Bow River, I moved humbly through the auspicious momentums of friendship, solace, distance, rootedness, and foresight.

The elegant plans of my life incinerated like a vintage map under a lit candle. In the bitter hours, I wore my bone to nothing but pure face. And the ocean called. At summer's end, as the leaves slowly died with bursts of peace in the silent flesh of wood, I broke past the unanswered din of my prairie sky mind.

The expanses narrowed with focus of sight, and the road stretched on through mysteries immemorial: lands of hidden truth and naked passion. The Earth spun on a gamble, and the sea rose.

In two years, I hadn't seen the ocean.

Firstly, through goggles of tires and binoculars of steel, I then moved through mountain fog to sail toward the island shore. Orcas lifted above the snowy crests, as solar rays burned through the misty sky raining a refreshing, and most rejuvenating, beautiful life.

Water flushed my spirits in a spiraling lust, unafraid to lick the clouds, to skim atop the brightening ocean. In the rain, I sang and wept oceans of longing fulfilled. The inner world lost its axis and at a loss for balance whirled in ecstatic harmony with the chaotic ring of Beginning.

As the sky opened, arriving closer and closer to the island shore, my mind lunged with feline prowess over the horizon, to feel my own heart stretch across this watery earth in a divine embrace of superhuman love, of imagination and unity.

In two years, I hadn't seen the ocean.

The cedar hat and drum vibrated with grace, as I remembered the northernmost step I had taken arm-in-arm with the coastal peoples of the Canadian west. How their drum sang with opulent harmonies only so sweet as when filling the cold air above the tear-blending Pacific.

Under the first sun, my friend, a luthier of fine wooden drums led me to meet the Black Bear, wise fool of the gentle, lazy, clumsy earth. We found sacred fungi and cooked and smoked and bore down with rhythmic intonation over their self-built family home.

The forest spoke with a voice to shelter our lives with the hard woods of a door and staircase, of walls and rooms of birth, childhood, adolescence and maturity to the soft woods of art, passion and a work to spell freedom from the burdensome street of poverty, class, race, addiction and anger.

In two years, I hadn't seen the ocean.

The night sky breathed light, streams raged in the subtle beyond as death called us inward to sleep under the reign of the green dragon's tincture, a home concoction of herbal divinity. Sea lions surfaced to the call of the drum skins reverberating madly over ocean stones.

Overlooking the snowcapped island range, we viewed the lush orchestral arrangement of oak, cedar and pine as nearby eruptions solidified into earth-bound communities, moved by the crafting of local life as it etches its place on currents of stone and seed.

And so I left, speechless from the first mountaintop days ago as the journey from Alberta started, and from where it ended. To see the ocean, and to sing with the opening sky. To drum along the banks of the island range, seeing snowcapped mountains stare into the distance, over local life as it thrives and nests behind the silencing waves.

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*"Do we break rules all the time? All the time. Do you stretch the rules, break the rules, all the time, and in the theatre in particular...It's the difference between working against the world we don't want and deciding to work towards the world we do want."*



David Diamond, *Theatre for Living* (2007)

When the seasonal round turned, the leaves of many pages filled with the love of language. Foresight and impermanence intoned many names, all at once, thousands and thousands of imaginations sparked, eyes opened and minds revealed as the clear movement of subtle knowledge — that supernatural creativity embedded deeply within, slightly beneath the folds of memory, as the enchantment of rain through the glass of consciousness, falling with near-silence, full of potent harmony, of life and renewal.

The seasonal cycle returned.

I began the creative journey of visual and literary work, purging from the spiritual gut of my language. The elaboration of dawning abstraction unveiled as the phases of a moon, colored as with the foliage of a cosmic fall from space into the mind of humankind; as formed of ethereal dream creations engulfing and erupting with the pangs of a voracious heart.

As asserted in David Diamond's book, "Theatre for Living", in order for art to be transformational it must break the rules. In dreaming, we break the rules of identity. Everything is us — and yet we are curiously not — somehow bizarrely connected with the inner world of all that dwell in the subconscious netherworld of Spirit.

In my art — visual, literary and musical — I am inclined toward the same effect. Dissolving boundaries is the practice, and the technique is the creation of art that ascends to transcendent heights of unity with the source of creative energy — the instinctual centre, before reason, simply toward the joy, wonder and love of creation.

By making art, I look through the wintry window light into a charged, otherworldly space where the boundaries of inner and outer dissolve, where the moon cycles around and within our perspective, where we can look through and into a realm of potential, where harmony is interpretive and the veil of beauty and truth is lifted to reveal the nude face of raw creation.

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*"We've been told that climate change is a very serious threat, in fact the most serious threat facing humanity today. Groups like UNICEF and Save the Children are emphasizing the particular impact on young people around the world in developing countries, in the Global South..."*

*....[The United Nations International Panel on Climate Change, representing thousands of scientists from 195 countries] have 95 to 100% certainty that climate change is manmade and that we really do need to be reducing the amount of fossil fuels that are being extracted and burned to get us back to that 350 parts per million. We're currently over 400 parts per million."*

*Ben West, from a podcast published at The Media Co-op titled, "Vancouver is debating a resolution to divest from fossil fuels"*

As the snakeskin of nature shed under the turning, cyclical gaze of the heavens, I ruminated steadfastly, and piercingly into the nether reaches of my mind with one essential question. How do we, as humanity, live directly with nature?

How are we to embrace the very source of life from which our every day nourishments and hungers, joys and sorrows, deaths and rebirths have emerged, and to which they will always return? It is a question asked throughout the aeons, and in the Euro-American tradition of thought, also by the Transcendentalists.

Increasingly, people around the world are faced with the question of whether or not to live in a city, as an urban dweller, bound to the manufactured waste stream that devastates as it deviates all from the truths and unities of creation. Simply, we might ask, "How can I live off the land?" This common, even popular self-interrogation is essentially nothing more than an abstraction. We cannot survive without living off the land. It is our relationship to our life that matters, and by our life, I mean our water, our food, our air, our soil, our Earth.

Pre-historically, human life was concerned with physical confrontation. Where, when life is lived directly, we see straight into the eye of death, and behold our own reflection staring back with the quiet and steaming grimace of fate. So, the trials and travesties of inter-human conflict seeded our mind as with the necessities of the harvest. Yet, today, instead of the spear, instead of the omen or plague, we have a curious and counterintuitive socioeconomic phenomenon called "globalization".

Our direct confrontations with nature are buffered by stone and metal walls. Our physical conflicts are transformed into backhanded and conniving corrupted relationships, not only among each other, but with all that we see, feel, taste, hear and smell. The most deviant and malign property of globalization is that it moves to act upon a sixth sense of unreason and ignorance: consumerism.

The objectified Earth, manufactured life, canned and packaged and shipped and digitized, provokes our habits toward overindulgence, not only in the physical, but also in the emotional, spiritual and mental aspects of existence. Our life is one of imbalance when our relationship to the sources of life we depend on are marred by the anxious flux of neoliberal, Westernized, and finally, globalized economic growth.

In the end, I wonder how we might return, or go forth, into a paradigm of holism, where things are not treated as objectified individual separations of the world (a reflection of our own egos), but as representative of one and all in the cyclical round of being, of nature, growth and fulfillment.

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*"My religion is kindness."  
Dalai Lama*

Kindness is essential to the Five Noble Truths of Buddhism, unearthed from the passions of spirit, embodied and heartened by stories and music, passed down, not only as a tradition of sound, but a tradition of respect for all that lives and is, for the strength and truth of work and its potential to imbue meaning into existence, to affirm that what is done is good.

Even if it largely remains unsaid, work is good when it is done in earnest, in confrontation with our innermost and enduring sources of suffering.

Kindness transcended politeness, the mediocre drab of everyday humdrum gives way to an appreciation that borders on spirituality., and when practiced right, resonates and reverberates, and, ultimately, transcends human suffering as surely and directly as the high of a harmonious tune strummed to the effect of an age-old rhythm, not forgotten and passed down through the inward embrace of one's blood.

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*"They too entered the world of dreams — that world in which a third of each man's life is spent, and which is thought by some pessimists to be a premonition of eternity."*

*E.M. Forster, A Passage to India (1924)*

The British Raj and the Indian Independence movement of the 1920s provide the setting for a poignant story between two principal characters in E.M. Forster's 1924 novel, *A Passage to India*.

The lives of Aziz, a Muslim doctor and Mrs. Moore, an older Englishwoman, represent themes of social constraint, in contrast with personal relationship. Constrained by title and culture, these characters manage to relate under unique circumstances. Aziz learns to respect Mrs. Moore unlike any Englishwoman he has ever known, while Mrs. Moore is, at first, captivated with the pride of knowing an endearing local closely.

Mrs. Moore, as with Miss Quested, is captivated by Aziz because he represents something of the "real India", to use the words of Miss Quested. "Try seeing Indians" was the reply of the schoolmaster at the Government College, when Miss Quested asked how one might see their colony in its native authenticity.

There is always room for remiss under the social umbrella of Indian-English relations; whether in the surprising first encounter between Mrs. Moore and Dr. Aziz in the mosque, or the arranged party at the tennis lawns, the tea gathering at Fielding's or the excursion to the Marabar Caves, which, finally, proved more disastrous than any one had expected.

"May I know your name?" Aziz asks to Mrs. Moore, cautiously, in the mosque. His demeanor is one of near-desperation, as someone both protecting his native sphere, as well as struggling to see British humanity. "She was now in the shadow of the gateway, so that he could not see her face, but she saw his, and she said with a change of voice, 'Mrs. Moore.'"

This very revealing sentence emphasizes the obscurity of English presence from local, Indian eyes. In that moment, Mrs. Moore felt safe enough to share her name, the most important object of her title and superiority. Aziz remembers her generosity, as her fitful capacity to speak the truth becomes the apex of her story, truly a minor character in *A Passage to India*.

When after Dr. Aziz stands on trial for the assault of Miss Quested in the Marabar Caves, Mrs. Moore is decidedly frank in her stance on Aziz's innocence. "Of course he is innocent," says Mrs. Moore as Miss Quested begins to question her disillusioned experience of the excursion, all the while Mrs. Moore is quite fed up with India entirely.

"She was by no means the dear old lady outsiders supposed, and India had brought her into the open..." Forster wrote, depicting her as a typical elder, uninhibited by the dramas of youth, and quick to speak the truth, even if it is unwanted. At this point, Mrs. Moore is on her way out of India, and the novel, where she soon dies in transit.

Regardless, Mrs. Moore is immortalized by the groundswell of Indian support for Aziz, who soon finds reprieve, as legends of "Esmiss Esmoor" soon manifest in the appearance of folk shrines in dedication to Mrs. Moore's role in saving Aziz's life.

It is important to add that throughout the entire novel, Aziz is addressed by his first name only, while Mrs. Moore solely by her surname. Mrs. Moore's name transforms when said by Indian voices. "It was revolting to hear his mother travestied into Esmiss Esmoor, a Hindu goddess," thought Ronny, Mrs. Moore's son, whose experience of India remained superficial, or, more accurately, guarded, throughout.

Aziz and Mrs. Moore fail to truly connect in person, because English colonial formalities (and informalities) were too firmly laid beneath the foundations of imperial culture. During a scene of characteristic tension between the colonial masters and their subjects, Forster writes, "Aziz flamboyant, was patronizing Mrs. Moore."

The direct interactions between Aziz and Mrs. Moore are brief and sparse, as they are interceded by English formalities, typically mediation by a male authority – Mr. Fielding in this example. The scene, where Aziz and Mrs. Moore meet in more conventional circumstances, for a tea

gathering at Mr. Fielding's, reveals Aziz's character (and Forster's impeccable prose) as someone unable to speak on behalf of India. The scene also reveals the seemingly adventurous minds of Miss Quested and Mrs. Moore, on their search for the "real India" as a mere surface-level novelty.

Mrs. Moore, although agreeing to accompany Miss Quested on her excursion into the "real India" is soon overcome with the fundamental truth of her presence in the faraway land. As the excursion comes to a bitter close, it is said of Mrs. Moore, "...since her faintness in the cave she was sunk in apathy and cynicism."

In Forster's words, "the wonderful India of her opening weeks, with its cool nights and acceptable hints of infinity, had vanished." While, from Aziz's perspective, "...he agreed that all Englishwomen are haughty and venal." Mrs. Moore is the stereotypical colonial British woman, whose curiosities for the rare and exotic life of India prove ineffectual to satisfy her experience of authentic India.

Their relationship reveals the meaning of liberation in colonial India, where Aziz's fate becomes Mrs. Moore's very undoing from India. For Aziz, he would come to know "...that an Englishwoman's word would always outweigh his own."

Generally, both characters speak well of each other, even if their personal, physical interactions are constrained. Conclusively, such is the larger relationship between the colonial British with India; ideal and positive on paper and second-hand experience, yet up close, absolutely ruinous.

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*"What was in the unconscious, by talking about it, was brought into the conscious mind, and since the conscious mind, Dr. King's already won, the behaviour changes. Wait a minute, what's that mean? Wait a minute, what's that mean? That means that we may be closer to Dr. King's dream than we fear, but we got to keep talking. We've got to keep talking, even when it's uncomfortable."*

*Van Jones, "Rebuilding the Contract"*

The voices of luminaries inspire original writing, so as to echo those who have spoken with compassion, to clarify humanist dream-thinking beyond conceptual idealism, toward the pragmatism of imaginative vision and achievable action. Yet, in light of the exceptional words of Van Jones, a noted public intellectual on green economics and social justice, I wrote a book critiquing the American Dream, and the War on Poverty.

The suspension of my normal work routine led me to seriously question my place in historic struggles, which I have reflected on earnestly, steadfastly into the bitter and stubborn recesses of my young mind to uncover and explore the history that has led me to my current state,

profession, and living circumstances. Simply, I accepted a job to write a book-length work on poverty, which truthfully, paid so little, and asked so much of my time, that it may as well have led me into poverty.

I did the work out of curiosity and an impetus to serve a greater work ethic in the name of fulfilling a position asked of me, the suspended correspondence between myself and the publishing agency has caused unmentionable anxiety. The topic on poverty in the United States, and government programming intended to reduce and eradicate poverty led me to very interesting conclusions on the nature of governance and civil progress in the American context.

The process as a whole has left me with an enduring lesson with regards to the nature of work, one that, honestly, compels me to complete exasperation. Was it vain pride at the chance of writing a book, and being paid for such work? Or, the overall scheme of my life that has led to this point of personal and professional denigration in the name of accomplishment, work and independence?

I have written from the perspective of a young man whose words are the manifestation of his dreams, coming to fruition through perennial dedication to the passions of independence, and creativity.

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*Henry Miller*

*In the last few years one sees quite a few either writings about you or quotations from you about dreams and the dream life and I feel that they haven't really understood what you mean about this. I don't think you want people to be living in a dream state while conscious, do you?*

*Anais Nin*

*No.*

*HM*

*But you mean that dream has its uses, its effectiveness in life afterwards.*

*AN*

*No, I meant something else, I meant that what we could arrive at a state where what we dream at night would be the blueprint for what we wish to fulfill, or to reach, and if we understand the dream then we know what the secret self is and then this secret self we can fulfill.*

*from the documentary, The Henry Miller Odyssey (1969)*

Anaïs Nin, whose literary renown is prolific in her posthumously published diary writing, is also respected and admired for her role in encouraging and stimulating the work of Henry Miller. Her opening preface to the "Tropic of Cancer", Miller's first book, is one of the most incisively written dedications to the literary spirit that have ever been written. Her quotations on dream, are poignant in their truth and magical in their realism, vibrant in their imagination and open in their accessibility.

Similarly, as with Carl Jung, both Nin and Miller drew liberally from comparative interpretations between Western psychoanalysis and the traditional religious learning, thought and practice of Hindu, Buddhist and Taoist cultures. As highly creative minds, who lived richly balanced in heart and mind, stood for a conscientious human being, who through developing thorough self-awareness comes naturally to be a part of compassionate change in the creative universe.

"Dreams pass into the reality of action. From the actions stems the dream again; and this interdependence produces the highest form of living," said Nin, in a comment that affirms the dream psychology of Jung, who considered the dream life, or the life of the imagination, of the mind and of creativity as more real, meaning a more direct form, or manifestation, of experience, than the life lived through the senses. Thus, Nin determines, "Dreams are necessary to life."

Nin would press ever on into conceiving the dream life as integral to meaning, to holism and self-truth. She asserted, "Our life is composed greatly from dreams, from the unconscious, and they must be brought into connection with action. They must be woven together." When woven together, the dreamer, as artist-visionary-thinker-writer, becomes the seer, as in the mystic of unmediated experience, of eternal unity in the present, of enlightenment in non-being.

Ultimately, dreams are part of life, as life is certainly made of dream, and that we, as dreamers, are the substance of dream, as the subtle nature of perception, meaning, truth and self-knowing. In reaching for that transformative potential that is necessary to becoming, or creating, the paradigm shift of dream action fulfilled in daily living, is, for Nin, a miraculous occurrence, likened to the rare and precious goal of enlightenment. She reminds, "The dream was always running ahead of me. To catch up, to live for a moment in unison with it, that was the miracle."

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*"I began to dream heavily, violently, every night, and then I learned how to wake up..."*

*"Consciously or unconsciously, all writers employ the dream, even when they're not surrealists. The waking mind, you see, is the least serviceable in the arts. In the process of writing one is struggling to bring out what is unknown to himself. To put down merely what one is conscious of means nothing, really, gets one nowhere."*

*Henry Miller, from The Paris Review "Art of Fiction" interview, No. 28*

Creation is life.

More, the incipience of creation is the life of the creator. The life of the artist is bound to their creation, in the same way that a mammal survives on each breath of fresh air. As long as the air is fresh, the artist will continue to create, and as long as the authentic substance of heart issues from the core of the artist's own vision, the artist-seer will align and harmonize with all of creation.

To remain true to oneself is to hold fast to the consciousness of one's life source as not merely the beginning precepts of one's physical subsistence, but of the visionary path onto which one is led through to the heights of meaning and becoming.

Proud artists will realize their vision in the instant of a moment, by simply being the processional experience of creation, the ever-beating heart of co-unity with individuality and universality on Earth. To not overthink is the key to strengthening the creative momentum, an affirmation proposed by American author Henry Miller, who described himself as maintaining a Chinese ascetic's nature.

So, by holding fast, an artist and author of self-creation is near-shattered, sensitized by the flood of the fleeting that files down into the materialism and consumerism of an all-pervasive cultural fear, to belittle the uncultivated mind to ignorant non-being and blind negativity. There is an inner sanctum from where the creativity of an artist is strengthened by the water-like ability to be vulnerable, naked, raw and emotive in a full and unbridled formless truth.

All artists are strong who claim the ideas and visions and dreams in their mind and heart and being as they claim their rightful place on Earth. For that creativity, and the imagination of its fruition in life is truth, heart, mind, being, soul, foundation, meaning, it is our nature, our life, all ours. We are it, and proud.

Everyone, as with one mind and one heart, is capable of becoming sensitive to the expression of truth as an unheard source of knowledge that is unique and invaluable, necessary in its tragedy, absolute in its humor, refined in its judgment, authoritative in its experience, wild in its reason, cautious in its aspiring, pure in its love. Create you.



