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Love Mary
TRUST
FEW
ALWAYS PADDLE
YOUR OWN
CANOE

Consciousness and Contact
—The Awakening—



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Consciousness and Contact —The Awakening—

PUBLISHER & EDITOR: Mia Feroletto



Photo by Ray Grasse | Jupiter and Venus



Consciousness and Contact –The Awakening–

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Mia Feroletto

The Making of a Chief

Sunday, September 20th, 2020 opened as a day of crystal, clear blue sky. Saturday in Rapid City had been gray, not from a lack of sunshine, but from the smoke that had drifted to South Dakota from the California fires that are currently destroying millions of acres of land, countless homes and wildlife beyond measure.

Sunday was the day that Henry Red Cloud was made a chief of the Oglala Sioux Tribe. Henry is a fifth-generation direct descendant of Mahpiya Luta (Chief Red Cloud), one of the last Lakota war chiefs, and a signer of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty. Henry has been a protector of the Lakota Oyate for decades and a teacher of renewable energy and sustainable building for almost twenty years. He teaches a “New Way to Honor the Old Ways” to students from more than 50 tribes across the Northern Plains and far beyond.

Over the last two years, he readied himself through four phases of preparation to take on greater responsibilities; his efforts culminated this last weekend when more than 100 people gathered at Bear Butte, South Dakota, the sacred vision quest area, and participated in his “Making of a Chief Ceremony.”

The Ceremony was organized by Lula Red Cloud, the Matriarch and oldest woman of the Red Cloud family, together with other members of the Red Cloud family. Leonard Crow Dog, the great spiritual leader of American Indian Movement (AIM) and the Lakota people led the ceremony. Chief John Spotted Tail, Chief of the Sicangu Lakota Oyate, the direct descendant of the legendary Chief Spotted Tail, placed the bonnet upon Henry’s head. Ivan Looking Horse was the *Eyapaha* (ceremony moderator) and Tamra Stands and Looks Back-Spotted Tail made the bonnet and filled the role of major organizer and supporter of this historical event.

Henry is not the only Lakota chief, but was honored by the above-named luminaries such as Chief Leonard Crow Dog, adding prestige and glory to his recognition. This year has been one of advancement for Henry Red Cloud. In May, he received an Honorary Doctorate Degree from Washington University and now has been made a chief. 2020 has been a powerful year for Henry and his family and cause for celebration.

Only eighteen months ago, Henry and his family were literally underwater from the rain and flooding that occurred in March of 2019. The Red Clouds used boats to get from building to building on their property; homes were filled with three feet of water and all of their earthly possessions were suffering or destroyed from water damage. That was one of the darkest moments for Henry and his family. However, the role of a true leader can only be filled by a person who is not deterred by challenges and the trials of life. Henry is such a person, born to be a leader for his family and tribe, and one who will not be downtrodden by the unwelcome surprises that come as part of human existence. To be able to witness his ceremony and partake in the happiness shared by Henry, his wife Gloria, his family and everyone present was one of my happiest days.

The day before, Lula Red Cloud, the matriarch of the family, told me that I was now a family member and gave me the task of bringing the buffalo berries to the traditional celebratory feast planned for the following day. After Henry was made chief, a give-away was orchestrated by Lula and several other family members who assist her in her many roles as matriarch. My name was called—I thought as a sign to give out copies of the *New Observations* magazine issue on the Pine Ridge Reservation, Issue #135. Instead, Gloria Red Cloud wrapped me in a star quilt of traditional colors of red, black, white and yellow that represent the colors of the people of planet Earth. I was given the opportunity to say a few words, thanking Lula and the Red Cloud family for this honor and for their extraordinary contribution to protecting and sustaining Mother Earth.

The expansion of consciousness that Henry Red Cloud experienced to assume his new role as a chief and role model for his people cannot be understated. The extraordinary legacy of his family and his leadership in stewarding to fruition the prediction of Chief Red Cloud and the 7th Generation prophecy in our present times is the task that Henry has taken on. All colors of people, just as in my star quilt, are now called to come together to protect the Earth and our environment, as old ways collapse and new sustainable ways are created in their place.

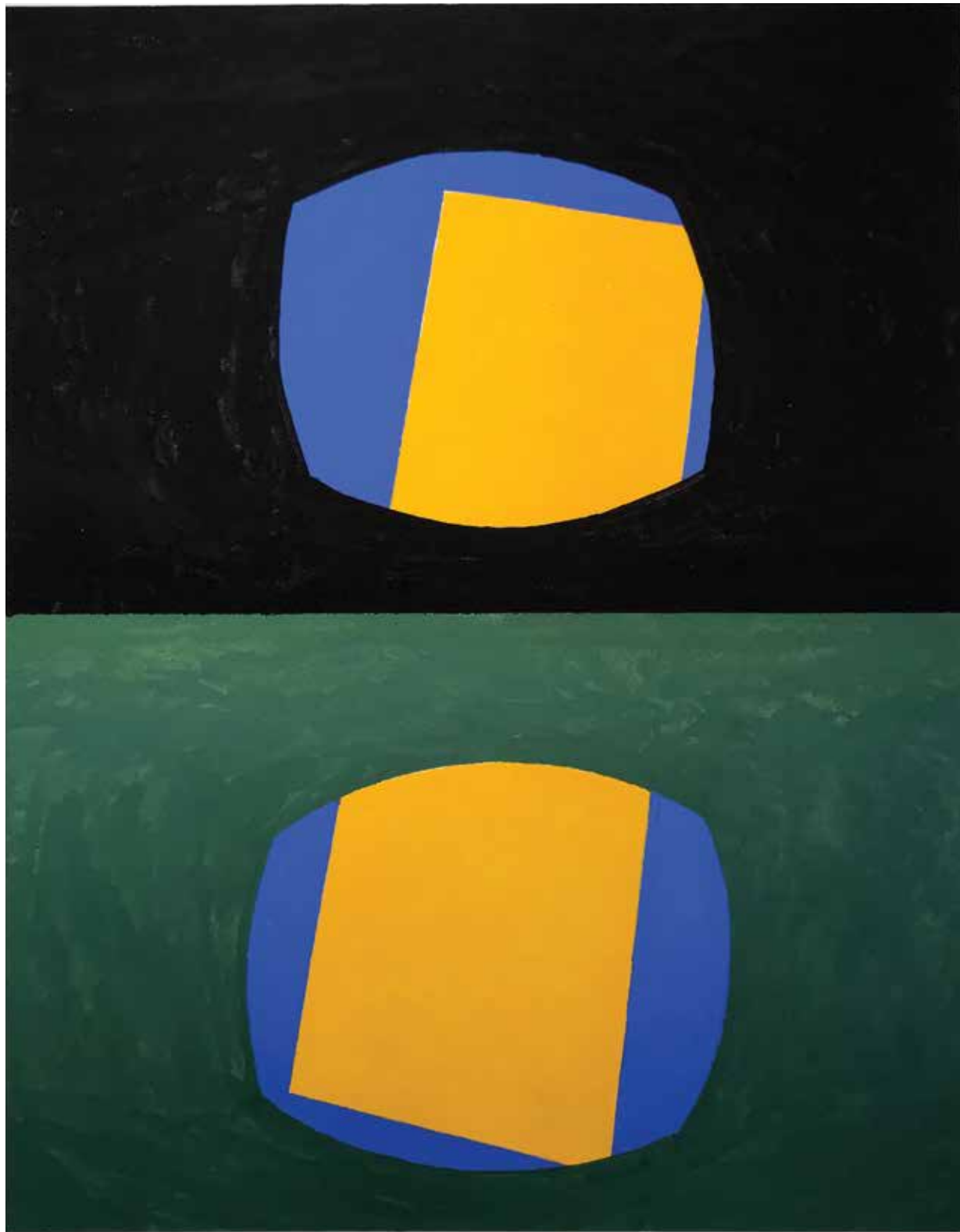
I would like to thank all of the contributors to *New Observations* magazine, Issue #136, *Consciousness and Contact: The Awakening*. Our contributors include James Tunney, Jeffrey Mishlove, Ray Grasse, Lucinda Morel, Michele Rhinne, Richard Fox, Alan Steinfeld, Tobin Eckian, Laura Bruno, Elana Freeland, Annie Wenger-Nabigon, Alfred Lambremont Webre, Norman Sollie, Joan Bird, Peter Champoux, Leah Poller, Sev Tok, Joe Krawczk, Lucio Pozzi, Rachel Portesi, Daniel Rothbart and yours truly. In addition, I would like to particularly thank Erika Knerr, Leah Poller and Diana Roberts for their design and editorial gifts and willingness to roll up their shirt sleeves to get this job done.

This summer has been a time of growth for me personally, as I have been challenged but not deterred in my role as publisher of *New Observations*, pushing boundaries and building a new level of activism for the magazine. As a direct result of publishing our issue on the Pine Ridge Reservation this past June, Alex White Plume has been paid for his hemp crop after a delay of two years, which most likely would have never happened without the pressure that this publication brought to bear. Discussions have opened up on the plight of Leonard Peltier that seemed impossible several years ago, and a vision of life on the reservation is available for our readership to experience firsthand through the paintings of Leonard Peltier and the photography of Mitch Epstein, John Willis and Keri Pickett and the In-Sight Photography Project.

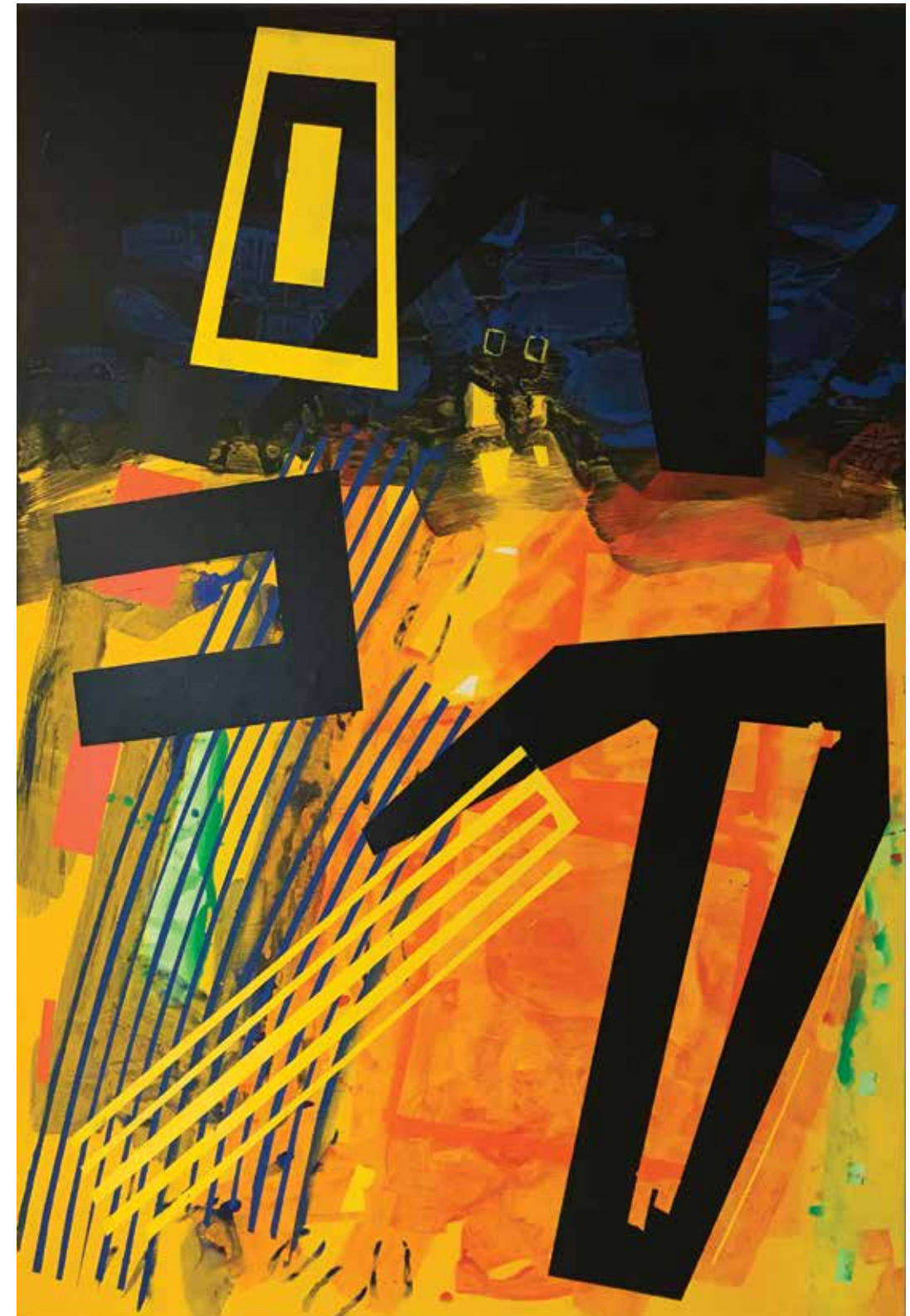
Let Henry Red Cloud be an example here to us all as we strive for the betterment of our families and our communities. We are in the time of the 7th Generation. It is a time when anything is possible. Let us reach for the stars...

Mia Feroletto, with a little help from Richard Fox.





Lucio Pozzi, *Solitary Float*, 11 Oct 2020, 23 x 18 cm, Gouache on paper



Lucio Pozzi, *The Slippage Between Present and Past (Jed Perl)*, 19 September 2020, 200 x 135 x 5 cm, Acrylic on canvas



Rudolf Steiner | Lazure paintings of *The Faour Horsemen of the Apocalypse*

The age of the machine has arrived too soon: Through a Rudolf Steiner Lens

Elana Freeland

The Age of the Machine (Technology) has come much sooner than expected as per the divine arc of human evolution, and humanity is simply not prepared for it. Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) was the sole Christian¹ initiate of the 20th Century. What is an initiate? This state of human development pointing to *initiation* has been defined by many, but for this essay, I choose to use John Lamb Lash's depiction in his excellent lexicon *The Seeker's Handbook* (NY: Crown Publishers, 1990)²:

Initiate: . . . In the Western Mystery tradition, a master or Manu. Loosely, in modern terms, any individual whose degree of inner development and dedication to the ultimate welfare of humanity and the planet qualifies him as a teacher who can introduce progressive impulses and impart knowledge and practices useful for the moral and cultural evolution of humanity.

As a verb, to initiate (into), to start someone on a spiritual path by firsthand contact with a master or by putting him through a course of training and education. To start anew (East) or to start something new (West).

I consider my 43 years under the aegis of Rudolf Steiner to be my own "course of training and education" as per *initiation by life itself*.

Secondly, as per the spiritual world's over- and underlaid schedule, the 21st Century has thus far been given over to the spiritual being known as *Ahriman*:

Ahriman: In Persian myth, the supreme adversary of the Good Creator, Ohrmazd. Perhaps the earliest prototype of Satan, the embodiment of antievolutionary power, darkness, and destruction ... the agent of divisive self-will who seeks to accomplish everything by controlling through power rather than by responsible choice, to collaborate through love in the all-encompassing harmony of the world. Adj., Ahrimanic. Contrast to LUCIFERIC.³

¹ Much confusion has been inserted into Western culture about "Christianity" by the Shadow Brotherhoods. Suffice it to say that Rudolf Steiner's exploration of Christ and Christianity has nothing to do with what is more properly referred to as *Churchianity*, i.e. the accepted State religion, and everything to do with actual Rosicrucian Christianity that has nothing to do with the "Rosicrucian" degree co-opted by Freemasonry (including AMORC).

² JLL wrote this excellent handbook back in the period I encountered him and another extraordinary individual (Crazy John and Lazy John) in a rogue Steiner group self-ordained the 'Junkyard Dogs'. I am no longer in touch with any of the 'Junkyard Dogs' but am still indebted to them. JLL's site: <https://www.metahistory.org>.

³ *The Seeker's Handbook*.

Ahriman and Lucifer are the divine Dynamic Duo upon which we humans have honed our individual spirits for eons, but now we are also beset by Brotherhood Titans wielding power over technology that is interfering with our spiritual evolution. Portals previously forbidden are being pried open far too soon to force us into an AI/machine-driven *devolutionary arc* in keeping with the global elite Transhumanist plan to brain-computer interface (BCI)⁴ us with artificial intelligence (AI) while antihuman entities like the Azuras devour our Human Light.

AZURAS: superhuman beings who focalize in themselves the ultimate human potential for self-destruction; the agents of SPIRITUAL DEATH, supposed to invade Earth at some undetermined point in the future. Equivalent to the Titans in Greek myth, the Lords of Xibalba (Underworld) in the sacred Maya book of the POPUL VUH. Many myths tell of botched attempts by the Gods to create the human form, which result in monstrous creatures. Although these are wisely aborted, they apparently cannot be totally eliminated and will at some time in the far-distant future return to confront the human race with its own worst potentials. Frequently featured in Heavy Metal comics.⁵

Have "the far-distant future" Azuras arrived early with AI? Azuric calling cards might be the vast *Pizzagate* child trafficking industry replete with blood rituals and adrenochrome farms and the bent NASA Saturnian Brotherhood⁶ dedicated to alchemical transformation of Nature's air, soil, water, and food to weaken the human immune system and transmogrify our DNA with electromagnetics, chemicals, nanotechnology, and synthetic biology.

In short, we are undergoing a full-court assault on our planet's etheric protection and therefore our own.

⁴ Please read (if you can find it) *Machines and the Human Spirit* by Paul Emberson (DewCross Centre for Moral Development, 2013). I also recommend *The Electronic Doppelgänger: The Mystery of the Double in the Age of the Internet*, from the work of Rudolf Steiner edited by Andreas Neider (Rudolf Steiner Press, 2016).

⁵ *The Seeker's Handbook*.

⁶ For more on bent secret societies, I recommend Rudolf Steiner's *The Fall of the Spirits of Darkness* (lectures 29 September – 28 October 1917, Rudolf Steiner Press, 1993); *Secret Brotherhoods and the Mystery of the Human Double* (lectures November 6-25, 1917, in St. Gallen, Zurich, Dornach, Rudolf Steiner Press, 2004); and *The Karma of Untruthfulness, Vols. 1 and 2* (Rudolf Steiner Press, 1988: Vol. 1 lectures December 4-31, 1916 / Vol. 2, lectures January 1-30, 1917, Dornach and Basel).

The Ether

Ether, orgone, the life force, *élan vital*, orgone, *ch'i or ki*, zero-point energy—as old as the living universe.

The story of what happened to the term ether or *æther* is mysterious to a public that knows little of how shadow Brotherhoods steer Western culture.⁷ The *Oxford American Dictionary* holds with three definitions of ether:

- (1) A pleasant-smelling, colorless, volatile liquid that is highly flammable; used as an anesthetic and as a solvent or intermediate in industrial processes;
- (2) [Poetic] the clear sky or upper regions of air beyond the clouds;
- (3) [Archaic] a very rarified and highly elastic substance formerly believed to permeate all space, including the interstices between the particles of matter, and to be the medium whose vibrations constitute light and other electromagnetic radiation.

“Archaic” ether definition #3 was for thousands of years a proper scientific reference for the substance that permeates the living universe. In the late 1920s, the term was banned from scientific use.

A fourth definition of ether is absent: *the substance of the subtle body of the Earth, plants, animals, and human beings known for thousands of years as the ether body*. Why is this not included among the definitions of ether?

I discussed the four ethers of planetary life in *Under an Ionized Sky: From Chemtrails to Space Fence Lockdown* (2018): *warmth, light, chemical, life*:

- *Warmth ether* is the etheric side of warmth: the inner, impulse-creating warmth or the warmth of enthusiasm that occurs as the intention that underlies actions. Its elemental counterpart is fire, or externally perceivable warmth. Warmth ether and warmth as an element are closely related.
- *Light ether* illuminates everything and makes all material things visible. It is also the force which makes plants grow upwards and makes people stand and walk upright. Light ether corresponds to the air element.
- *Chemical or tone ether* is the force that structures the development of phenomena and can be seen, for instance, in the natural succession of plant communities. Chemical ether corresponds to the water element.
- *Life ether* is the force that makes an object and its environment appear as a unified whole. It is the force that unifies an object’s course of life. Life ether corresponds to the earth element.⁸

⁷ President John F. Kennedy awoke to the danger. Listen to his “secret societies” speech: “Address, ‘The President and the Press,’ to the American Newspaper Publishers Association, Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York City, April 27, 1961.

⁸ Tom van Gelder, “Phenomenology,” <http://tomvangelder.antrovista.com/the-four-ethers-116m37.html>.

⁹ Elite JASON scientists, of course, have been kept aware of the existence of ether.

By removing the concept of the ether, the “highly elastic substance” that intimately connects us to our planet, each other, and the living universe, the shadow Brotherhoods in one fell swoop relegated ether to the immaterial and non-essential “spiritual” closet and thus isolated us in Ahriman’s deepest, darkest materialism. Albert Einstein (1879-1955) used the term ether until he was ordered not to, along with peer review committees, publishing houses, and universities.⁹ Meantime, the scientific discoveries of scientists who refuse to drop ether are still banished to the outer edges of science—like John Worrell Keely (1837-1898) and Nikola Tesla (1856-1943).¹⁰ Neither was a Freemason (Edison was); all Tesla is credited with having discovered is alternative current (AC).¹¹ As for Keely, the first sentence of the CIA’s *Wikipedia* entry shows how non-Masonic inventors are treated:

John Ernst Worrell Keely was a fraudulent American inventor from Philadelphia who claimed to have discovered a new motive power which was originally described as “vaporic” or “etheric” force, and later as an unnamed force based on “vibratory sympathy,” by which he produced “interatomic ether” from water and air.

Keely was no fraud. Read *Free Energy Pioneer: John Worrell Keely* by Theo Paijmans (Adventures Unlimited Press, 2004) and prepare to have your mind blown by real science history.

Sadly, few recognize how burying a pivotal concept like the ether also buries under deception and pettiness any greatness a civilization might have achieved. Public education has played its part, too, by redefining equality (“We are all the same”) and learning as the right answer, not being able to actually think.¹² Rudolf Steiner in *A Theory of Knowledge Implicit in [Johann Wolfgang von] Goethe’s World Conception* stated:

Thought is the essential nature of the world, and individual human thinking is the phenomenal form of this essential nature.

What could Rudolf Steiner and Goethe (1749-1832), the great scientist (color theory and plant morphology) and playwright (Faust), possibly mean about human thought being “the essential nature of the world”? Goethe’s acute ability to observe plants (he had no access to slow-motion videos) from their inception to their deaths was how he experienced the existence of ether, from its role in the formation of the plant all the way to its withdrawal after death.

Living thought is connected to the substance that permeates the living universe to which parroted thought is not connected. The American physicist Richard Feynman (1918-1988) pointed out the danger of misappropriating conceptual systems like quantum mechanics if you are

¹⁰ I recommend the banned January 12, 2013 talk of yet another genius: “Rupert Sheldrake - The Science Delusion BANNED TED TALK,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jKHUaNAxsTg>.

¹¹ *Under an Ionized Sky* has been translated into Serbian and is used in a Serbian Technological University because it is at this point the only book thus far that attempts to clarify how Tesla’s discoveries have been weaponized by the West as “geo-engineering.” It is my educated opinion that both scientists were killed and their research stolen.

missing essential concepts (like ether):

I cannot define the real problem; therefore I suspect there’s no real problem, but I’m not sure there’s no real problem.

Authentic consciousness depends upon authentic thinking derived from the essential etheric nature of the world. It does not originate in the brain. As I say over and over again, the brain is a diving board, we are the diver, and the dive is what we make of our thought.

Quantum mechanics is the best theory we have for describing the world at the nuts-and-bolts level of atoms and subatomic particles. Perhaps the most renowned of its mysteries is the fact that the outcome of a quantum experiment can change depending on whether or not we choose to measure some property of the particles involved.

*When this “observer effect” was first noticed by the early pioneers of quantum theory, they were deeply troubled. It seemed to undermine the basic assumption behind all science: that there is an objective world out there, irrespective of us. If the way the world behaves depends on how—or if—we look at it, what can “reality” really mean?*¹³

Are you getting the picture as to how important living thinking—*etheric thinking*—really is, given how severely challenged it is by a *genetically intrusive* technological era? The shadow Brotherhoods first banished the concept of the etheric, then *inverted* Tesla’s dream of energy for the entire world, then began assaulting the etheric bodies of the Earth and Her living beings in order to control all the Earth via *full [electromagnetic] spectrum dominance*. The removal of the concept of the ether tremendously weakened, even *eradicated*, the human birthright of living thought.

As I seek to show in my two geo-engineering books—*Chemtrails, HAARP, and the Full Spectrum Dominance of Planet Earth* (2014) and *Under An Ionized Sky: From Chemtrails to Space Fence Lockdown* (2018)—ether (“dark matter”)¹⁴ is now being weaponized in its plasma form.

Do you see how serious this is? ■

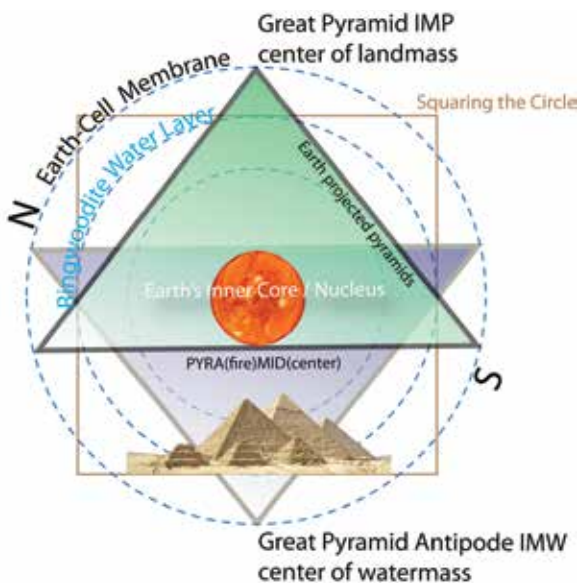
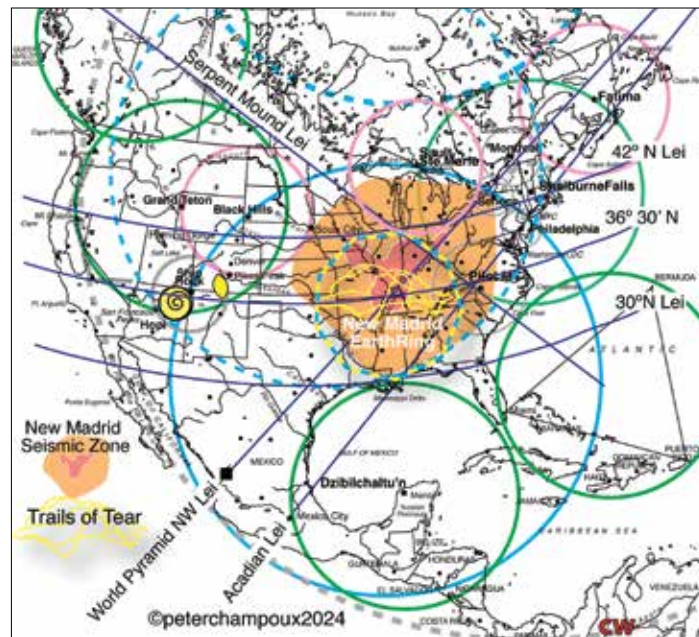
¹² L., *educare*, to lead forth.

¹³ Philip Ball, “The strange link between the human mind and quantum physics.” *BBC*, 15 February 2017.

¹⁴ For a partial translation of physics terms into their esoteric terms, I recommend Jay Alfred’s *Our Invisible Bodies: Scientific Evidence for Subtle Bodies* (Trafford Publishing, 2005). It is a theosophical approach, but can be managed by those with a Steiner orientation.

Mending the Hoop of Life

Peter Champoux



In the corn fields of southern England, Crop Circles have for decades messaged a patterned metaphorical and polygonal language from the "Star Nations." Created by "ball lightning", ethereal spheres of light have been witnessed spinning around fields a few times, while complex geometry, whirls, basket weaves and combed corn are laid in seconds—some up to 275 meters in size. A question is asked: Why England? As keeper of the Earth's "Prime Meridian," England lords over *time* and "primes" our space by transmitting the English world view as a frequency into global consciousness or earth-mind. Crop Circle makers use the same frequency carrier wave to upgrade and communicate with earth-mind via time, elements and geometric frequency.

Gaia, Earth, and Terra, as a patterned metaphor, is a cell with a membrane and nucleus. Cellular biology has shown that the membrane of a cell controls its bio-stasis by regulating the flow of water (information) with its many geometric "Integral Membrane Proteins" (IMPs) - as a sense organ and portals for nutrition, waste, and signaling from the greater biologic environment. Similarly, the earth-cell membrane is made of multiple Integral Membrane Peoples seen in geographic patterns termed 'earthrings'.

Coastline, mountain range, rings of cities, river drainage and volcanic radiance mark the arc of earthrings. Often the radial centers of these great land arcs are found to be granite plutons with attendant, indigenous sacred sites where prayer and deed were in service to world maintenance in a spiritual contract between hearts, IMPs, earth-cell, its biolithic membrane, and solar biology. Like mini-IMPs, Crop Circles message earthmind and await a response from earth-cell's Integral Membrane Peoples.

The common language of the universe is water and the sacred geometry draws in matter. Water is produced in nebula at a rate of sixty oceans an hour, cohering solar systems in its frenzied co-creative bonding. It is this language of water that the Star Nations speak and through water's language, we can respond as conscious coherent earth-cell IMPs.

Earth-cell IMPs are best understood by example. There are unnumbered earthring/IMPs worldwide seen in the east coast of China and Japan, and in Bali at the bottom of Indonesia's smile.

New Madrid (seismic) earthring is one such coherent earth-cell IMP with *nine* cities set by the 40-degree arc between city nodes along its circumference. Transmitting repetitive trauma into the water, bedrock and limestone of North America, the New Madrid seismic zone is geologically ripping the continent in two, from Quebec City to New Orleans. Politically divided by the 'Missouri Compromise Line' (36 degrees 30 minutes North latitude) between North and South (USA) carries the sins of war against brother, the native 'Trail of Tears' and all manner of slavery supported by the Bible within its circumference between Chicago and

New Orleans; Serpent Mound Ohio and Oklahoma City and Asheville, North Carolina hold the trauma of a Nation and those of our 27th ancestors whose epi-genes drive us to cocreate more trauma for the 'Other'.

New Madrid, in far western Tennessee, is an active geologic pluton with Earth's mantle pushing upwards from nine miles deep. When triggered, New Madrid earthquakes are 9.5 on the Richter Scale. In the 1811 quake, the Mississippi River flowed north and collapsed chimneys in Maine. If this were to occur today, nearby Memphis would be but a memory of Elvis.

Overshadowed by their crossing, the New Madrid seismic zone hosts two full solar eclipses in 2017 and 2024. A great X that marks the spot where twice Sun, moon, and Earth core align through the lens of New Madrid harken new beginnings as we ...rid (the) Mad (ness) with the turning of a mended hoop.

Radiating like a drop in water, the nested polygons within its nine points generate a 'field' replicated in proportional scale by earth-cell and the geometry human eye. These signature earthrings are seen in planetary orbits and the node density of sunflower and Milky Way. As a gravity well, nine is the cymantic pattern sounded by an Aboriginal's digeridoo opening Dreamtime. Gravity is studied in CERN by a machine of its proportion. The geometry of Stonehenge, DNA, Mayan Calendar, Dendera Ceiling of Egypt, 'flying saucers' and the quantum gravity of Tesla physics all resonate to the frequency of Nine. Nine is said to communicate in a frequency of resonant harmony—a fine message to transmit back to the Star Nations. As an aside. Hermetic wisdom offers that by changing the frequency, one changes the manifestation of its mass.

Let's see, flying saucers covered, oh yes, 'ley lines', Masonic conspiracy and pyramid power next.

Returning to our metaphorical landscape language of origin, England's straight tracks from stone ring, to ford, to chapel, to well, to standing stone is a well-documented landscape artifact. England's Grand Ley, through crop circle country has a declination of Beltane sunrise orienting south west to *magnetic* Lands End's granite across the *para-magnetic* limestone of England's south, setting a frequency for crop growth across the south lands. Ancient people's prodigious efforts to mark this ley with its 20-ton stones had to have been a proven method of enhanced crop growth through the harvest of cloud sourced nitrogen—particularly abundant in pre-Flood skies. While English ley are an artifact, ley or Lei exist worldwide. A ley is seen as an alignment of natural and cultural features. Whether local or global, leys are entrained by their common emotion. As earth's meridians of information (water), leys are found as wave forms between Stonehenge and Avebury Hill, London and New Orleans, whose planetary meridians exchange information from IMPs to



IMPs into world-mind and emotion — be it trauma or bliss. Crop Circle and earthring exchange the emotional goods via Earth's lei/ley systems.

The wave and nodes of Lei lines course dynamically through the New Madrid earthring. One lei, the Acadia Lei from Teotihuacan to New Orleans and Nova Scotia inclusive of DC, NYC and Boston, connects across the pond to London and war zones of Europe, Turkey and the Middle East on the *Arcadian Lei* in the eastern hemisphere. Lei lines like these tend to attract like to like. Changing its frequency to change the manifestation of its mass could be done in DC, but New Orleans is all set up for a ritualized release along its Bourbon Street laid in line with Acadia's lei of flowers laid down by our ladies of Guadalupe and Medjugorje across a blessed world. All at play in New Madrid gardens, other lei include: Serpent Lei, 1st Nations Lei, 42nd N, 30th N and a Great Pyramid lei intersecting this New Madrid seismic zone.

Egypt's 'Great Pyramid', with its water bonding 103.5-degree angle to the biospheres' sky has four flat sides in cardinal directions, breathing in, and its four edges projecting information gathered back into the biosphere as memory's water. Following these X lei of the Great Pyramid, one is met with historic sites of extreme trauma suggesting a noxious chord that resounds from the 'Halls of Amenti' said to lay beneath its mass-- in a s..t in s..t out chorus. Holding a Djed ecliptic world axis, the world pyramid is the center of the Earth's surface landmass stabilizing a post-Flood world. Now degenerate and broken in a toroidal loop of trauma, Great Pyramid's NW Lei is dug into the frozen tears of native dysphoria, slavery and war between brothers in America in the New Madrid EarthRing--all the way to drug cartel owned Durango, Mexico. Hollywood might coin these lei lines "The Curse of the Great Pyramid", with mixed blessings coming from the religions of Haifa and Mecca with the Djinn leading the charge on the lei of the Great Pyramid to Fukushima and CERN. The New Madrid earthring is a portal through which the frequency of trauma and discord are being transmitted by the world pyramid into the land, water and people of North America.

The Great Pyramid is centered on yet another IMPs/earthring. Its earthring, the radius of the Nile River, marks the Indus River arc and delta, the arc of Portugal's coast, Stonehenge, Casablanca, Oslo, Kabul in its circumference imprinting its cult of death on EoroAfriStan pyramidal models of power informing earth-cell of the same. Propelled by this dynamic and the temple magic between Mecca and the Great Pyramid along the pyramid's SE Lei, the religion of Islam (or Bahai) will eventually be its primary Integral Membrane Peoples. Whoever controls the sacred sites controls world consciousness. The Roman Catholic Church learned this lesson in Ireland where conversion issues were eased if chapels were built on pagan sacred sites. In this syncretic way, a new Christ-centered,

operating system was installed over the pagan earth-based OS. Not unlike our Crop Circle buddies chattering on in sacred geometry at the Avebury Pub.

The Masons of the United States exercised their form of temple magic with civic placements of obelisks at key positions on the land. Placed largely during the Egyptian Revival of the late 1800s, these "Washington Monuments" set Masonic tuned values as a grid over the eastern United States. In Egypt, the obelisk served as a grounding pole for the pyramid's toroidal donut circulating through atmosphere and lithosphere. Via a kind of sympathetic magic, these American obelisks were thought to connect American consciousness to the imagined ideals of ancient Egypt, further infusing the top down pyramidal world view of control by the elite of the day.

Exemplified in the Bennington Vermont, High Point New Jersey, and the Washington Monuments, these obelisks are placed in a phi sequenced line from the Battle of Bennington where the United States took power from England, a power now conveyed to Washington DC on a phi, life giving, wave form set by these three obelisks. One can find the mark of the Masons in civic architecture and planning across the eastern United States and Canada in their efforts to create a world class American civilization using the tools and talents of their Templar knowledge base. Their obelisk at the center of the Great Lakes EarthRing and along the Great Pyramid's NW Lei suggests their placements where done with intentional knowledge to connect with and control the world pyramid and the American world view.

While EarthRings bubble across earth-cell membrane, North America's tectonic plate earthing mirrors Mars and Earth's Outer Core in resonant diameter whose arcing Great and Finger Lakes, the Gulf of Mexico answers Mississippi's arc to the Four Corners and Black Hills as graphics of static spin synchronism. The geographic patterns of North America, from its New England center, to Magnetic North Polar Ring and Panama's dolphin tail in a whirl of balanced form emerged as a Turtle Island from primordial stellar water. Coast Line, Manhattan Island, rivers, mountain ranges and granite domes point to its peaceful center of Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts, the granite center point of North America's earthing. The 'Shelburne Dome' (pluton) hosts 26 Buddhist sects turning the prayer spindle of America's wheel of dharma. Rusted deep with tears in the gears, New Madrid is a rusted wrench of trauma in the works of America's wheel dharma.

Divided, traumatized, and plagued with an epidemic of narcissism, the United States is on the verge of disintegration. How do we mend the hoop of life and find unity as a nation? Releasing trauma both personally and collectively from and through the New Madrid EarthRing clears the field, allowing something good to spin out of North America's Integral Membrane People. To facilitate this, it is proposed we come together in a good way to balance the trauma and fear with its antidote of coherent hearts in humility, love, gratitude, compassion, and appreciation-broad-

cast through New Madrid and its nine city earthings - non-locally, from everywhere, all the time. When brought from the shadow, the traumas of both land and people heal, mending the hoop of life.

The Crop Circle makers have put out a call and our response is a litmus test as to whether or not we are ready to join our greater galactic community. Are we living symbiotically with our host planet and humanity? Are we empathic enough as a species to recognize how our emotions, collective consciousness and actions affect our Earth-Cell whose response has come in the form of heat, fire, hurricane, and earthquake? Organizing ourselves in geometric harmony with Earth's existing patterns and biological meridians as suggested by these Circle makers is a way to start. How can we be stewards of our Solar System if we can't steward our living Earth and ourselves back to health? The Earth and our Galactic Community are willing partners at the ready to help us in this work of the ages. Releasing the trauma set by us into the lei/ley lines and earthings of the planet is in the words of a moonwalker, "one small set for man, one giant leap..." towards Contact.

Each of the nine place points of the New Madrid EarthRing speak to sense-of-place qualities that in total express the trauma held in this earthing that calls for release by our collective, coherent forgiving hearts.

New Madrid's Earthquake of 1811 was the "Great Sign" of war chief Tecumseh whose great shaking was the signal for Eastern Tribes to unite but failed to form the single political power as planned, and resulted in the forceable removal and unification of these tribes in the Oklahoma Territory via the Trail of Tears.

Chicago, home to probation era gangsters and modern day Crips and Bloods and Latin King, has long hosted the ethos of 'profit through suffering' in its stock yards, slaughter houses, and military industry in the shadows of its ominous Sears Tower, whose black spire lords over this murder city on the lake as it spikes trauma into land and epi genes of its people.

Serpent Mound, Ohio is perched on the edge of the Serpent Mound geologic anomaly where the Earth was traumatized by a meteor strike on a fault line that erupted volcanically in the Devonian Geologic Era 10 million years ago. A place where celestial and terrestrial forces meet in a catastrophic event; A sacred site of ancient Mississippian era giants, its wave form transmutes Earth trauma to spiritual wave forms of co-creative energy between people, land and stars.

Asheville, North Carolina, built on the bones of the Cherokee People displaced in the Trail of Tears is known for the largest single home in the U.S. The Biltmore Estate with its 178,926 square feet of space, is testament to the trauma of scarcity consciousness held by the rich where enough is never enough. Hoarders are always survival-overcompensation trauma victims, be they rich or poor, carried in gene memory or experienced as a daily struggle of overcoming a sense of lack in a world of plenty for all. We are reminded that the trauma that generates such wealth as Biltmore's

Vanderbilts is made of the unbuilt homes and hunger of the working poor, reminding us that to overcome trauma, the Bible states that God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7) and that Jesus taught that it is better to give than receive (Acts 20:35) ... Being able to receive a gift with gratitude is a sign of a healthy, humble spirit, which is also pleasing to God.

Eufaula, GA on the Chattahoochee River, speaking to the trauma of lost sovereignty, be they slave or confederate Eufaula, deeded land to the "Tree That Owns Itself"—"not as an individual, partnership or corporation, but as a creation and gift of the Almighty, standing in our midst—to have and to hold itself, its branches, limbs, trunk and roots, so long as it shall live." All replacement trees have also been given the deed to their land.

New Orleans, the city of redemption washed by hurricane and war, a trauma flush zone of the New Madrid EarthRing, has all the waters of our nine cities flowing along the Lenten course of forgiveness danced on Bourbon Street's Mardi Gras, transforming the traumas held in Mississippi water memory in an orgy of joy. Slave market and progenitor of Jazz music, it is both center and edge of multiple earth-rings, spinning a saving Grace form in its vortexing waters.

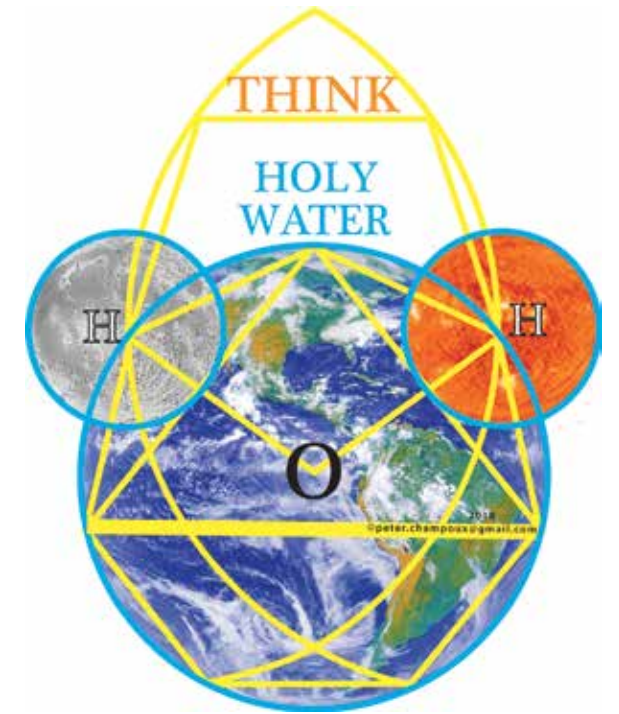
Nacogdoches, Texas continuously inhabited for 10,000 years, serves as a witness to the passage of time and trauma, holding space for the memories of the ancestors who lived peacefully in an unbroken hoop, returning wholeness as radionic witness for the New Madrid EarthRing.

Oklahoma City, destination for the "Trail of Tears" into the "Indian Territory" of Oklahoma where tribes from north, south, east, and west were sent, separated from their ancestral lands they knew and loved. The gateway to 'tornado alley' and home of 'The Survivor Tree' that stood witness to the 1995 bombing of the Federal Building, killing 168 while physically traumatizing hundreds and putting a nation into the state of shock. This largest domestic terrorist bombing was carried out by a young man traumatized by the Gulf War and childhood bullying, who saw the U.S. government as the greatest of all bullies; he acted out his victim complex as perpetrator and savior for a faltering nation seen through his lens of personal and collective trauma.

Manhattan, Kansas, a major hub for travel and education, sits at the confluence of the Great Blue Earth and Kansas rivers as the lost home to Blue Earth Village of the Kaw People and was the site of a large battle between the Kaw and the Pawnee in 1812 when Native populations were pushed from place to place by white hoards overrunning the land.

Meskwaki, Iowa is the tribal land of the Sac and Fox Nations that faces the trauma of dysphoria-purchased lands as a free and sovereign nation within the United States and has thrived, turning adversity into opportunity and transformed trauma with love of land and people. ■

Mending this hoop, the trauma triangle of victim, perpetrator and savior is healed, releasing its trauma from people and pyramids of



power. The Earth seemingly has responded to this call to action, sending her august Hurricane Laura to clear trauma from this earthing, turning east at New Madrid towards Asheville as its seismic zone rumbled to life in its watery tail as of August 2020.



Laura Bruno

Signs of *Life*

by Laura Bruno

“For what I possess seems far away and what has disappeared proves real.”

Goethe

When I was a newborn, my Grandpa Frank took one look at me and said, “This one’s going to give you trouble. She’s aware of everything.”

Nine months of colic proved him right. I came into this world so late that today’s doctors would have long ago induced, and once I did arrive, it took me nine more months to adjust. One screaming day, I managed to throw myself off the changing table onto a hardwood floor. I suffered no injuries, but that jolt to the head and spine fixed whatever caused my colic. The first of many “adjustments”.

Grandpa Frank died when I was three years old. I clearly remember my parents and Grandma Van crying on the couch and me making the rounds to comfort them. He was my best friend, but I hated to feel the others suffering. I understood that he had died; I just had a different experience of death.

While still on this side of the veil, Grandpa Frank taught me how to draw. I have vivid memories of those art lessons — us sitting on the floor for hours, with paper and pencils on their big, glass coffee table. After he died, we kept drawing together. Every time I drew, I felt my grandfather near, guiding my hand, encouraging me, celebrating. To me, it felt normal. Only when I told my parents did I learn it wasn’t. Their well-meaning lessons filled me with doubt for the first time in my young life. I still sensed Grandpa Frank nearby, but I stopped telling people that.

Around age five, I recall walking to the playground with my mom and sister. We did this a lot. The path to the playground ran alongside a graveyard, with smaller trees and a huge evergreen overseeing all. I greeted this tree as a dear friend whenever we passed. Even if no neighborhood kids were at the playground, I knew I’d get to visit Tree. One day, I left my favorite hat at the playground but didn’t realize until after dark. I was so upset that Grandpa Frank visited me in Dreamtime. I told him about my lost hat and how sad I felt to lose this friend. He said not to worry: “Check under your tree next time you go to the playground.”

After a week of rain, we finally went back to the playground. I ran to the evergreen, said hi and peeked under its lowest branches, which almost touched the ground. My hat was there, looking like new!

That day I began to trust my dreams. To this day, I say, “My dreams raised me.” They — and the messages I received through them — showed me that Grandpa Frank wasn’t the only one who loved and guided me from the Other Side. Slightly dyslexic, I learned to draw, dream and follow signs much faster than I learned to read and write English.

“Not all who wander are lost.” ~ J.R.R. Tolkien

As so many people do, I began to overcompensate. Not only did I learn to read and write, but in 1996, I earned a Master of Arts Degree in English Language and Literature from the University of Chicago. I still received guidance from dreams and signs, but I selectively tried to ignore any that went against more “normal” ways of living. Amidst an increased urgency of dreams that warned of impending disaster if I remained “off path,” in 1998, I accepted a scholarship and fellowship to earn my Ph.D. from Northwestern University.

In myriad ways, the Universe screamed at me to renounce my grad school plans, quit my job, “teach spiritual things and become a landscaper and a poet.” If I did these things, then I could paint to my heart’s content. The more I resisted, the stronger the message came, but aside from painting, I wanted no part of it.

Haunted by dreams and bizarre coincidences, I tried to bargain. As a professor, I would “teach some spiritual literature” and write poetry in the summers. No go on the landscaping: I was an *intellectual*. Albeit, an intellectual who secretly loved nothing more than gardens, painting, dreams, and mysticism. An intellectual who received telepathic guidance and experienced academia like a straight jacket. But an intellectual nonetheless. I recognized the greater authenticity of this “calling.” It just seemed way too weird and risky to do.

On May 19, 1998 — four months before I was to start doctoral studies — I awoke on a business trip, “knowing” I would have a car accident if I left the hotel that day. Afraid of sounding crazy, I refused to call my boss to explain why I needed to cancel appointments and stay another day on the company dime. The sensory overload of messages grew even more intense. They said I *could still quit* — both my sales and doctoral career. Trust. *Everything will work out fine.*

The closest I came to trusting was to say inside my head, “Fine. YOU make it happen. I can’t do this. If it’s so important, just make it happen.”

Then I recited all of John Donne's *Holy Sonnet 14* out loud. As a prayer:

Batter my heart, three-person'd God ; for you
As yet but knock ; breathe, shine, and seek to mend ;
That I may rise, and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend
Your force, to break, blow, burn, and make me new.
I, like an usurp'd town, to another due,
Labour to admit you, but O, to no end.
Reason, your viceroy in me, me should defend,
But is captiv'd, and proves weak or untrue.
Yet dearly I love you, and would be loved fain,
But am betroth'd unto your enemy ;
Divorce me, untie, or break that knot again,
Take me to you, imprison me, for I,
Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.¹

In retrospect, I now realize I summoned a traumatic brain injury. A few hours post-Donne, all I knew was that despite very careful driving, I awoke to honking horns at a red light, gradually realizing the huge crash I'd heard was the car behind me rear ending mine.

I lost my rational side and short term memory. Fluorescent lights gave me vertigo, and trying to read triggered a sixteen-month long migraine. Since I'd never had migraines before, at first I thought I was hemorrhaging. I called my dad and unlocked my sliding glass door so that he could get into my apartment in case I died. As white hot pain seared across my brain, I suddenly felt very small and awed. "Ohhhh," I said aloud, "you exist!"

I remained totally disabled for four years and partially disabled for several more. Graduate school and my sales job evaporated, and I began living in a constant state of prayer. I had to. Trying to decide between Prego and Ragu once took me over an hour in the pasta aisle. Another time, I found myself in the library with no idea where I was or how I'd gotten there. I could bluff my way through conversations, but I couldn't remember what I said. Asking for signs to navigate life seemed like my safest, most rational option. I learned not only to ask for signs but also to recognize and receive the signs.

When my parents realized how injured I was, they insisted I spend six weeks at their home. I sat alone on the back porch while they worked, and a great horned owl visited me every afternoon. Crows harassed him, but this nocturnal friend stared at me from the tree line during daylight hours for the entire time I lived with my parents. Years later, he would return whenever I visited, and on a winter 2001 visit there, I dreamed of "two cat-like figures that were not cats" landing in the snow and performing an elaborate ritual together. I told my mom about the dream at breakfast. A little while later, she called from upstairs. Through the window, we could see something like an infinity sign in the snow. We went outside to investigate and saw footprints that appeared out of nowhere to form this shape — as though two great horned owls had dropped from the sky and undulated through the snow together.

I eventually recovered enough to read and write again. The first post-injury writing I submitted — *The Backyard Owl* — won the Spiral Journey's 2002 Animal Communication Essay Contest. I didn't know it at the time, but this essay, later published in Patricia Spork's book, *Loss, Comfort and Healing From Animal Sightings*, and much later on my blog, began a series of highly orchestrated and still unfolding synchronicities.²

In a chapter called, *Owls and Healing in Stories from the Messengers*, author Mike Clelland details my owl encounters in context of a lifetime of conscious contact. That chapter includes my first published painting — of another great horned owl who visited me in daylight in 2006 after I asked one to appear. Actually, two great horned owls appeared in daylight so my then husband could take photographs. My 2010 painting depicts one of these photographed owls, but no matter how hard I tried, I could not complete the painting until I filed for divorce on New Year's Eve 2009's Blue Moon. After doing that, I suddenly saw the final image in my mind's eye: a giant Full Moon behind the great horned owl, in a winter tree with Runes as stars and bark. Switching the painting from day to night and adding Runes and the Full Moon somehow unlocked financial means and synchronicities, freeing me to leave California and a marriage I had tried to leave for years.

Painting worked as prayer, and to this day, art and owls open doors for me.

"Wherever you are is the entry point." —Kabir

In 2009, a recurring dream showed me living in the Midwest and happily painting "portal doors". I told a friend about these door dreams and she said, "You mean like the antique doors I just found in my garage? Do you want them?"

These became the first two in an ongoing series of elaborately painted and coded portal doors.³ When I moved from California to Chicago in 2010, I learned that five years prior, the owner of the building had told the maintenance man to put all old doors in the attic. When he argued that they longer fit any door frames in the building, the owner said, "I don't know why, but we need to save these doors".

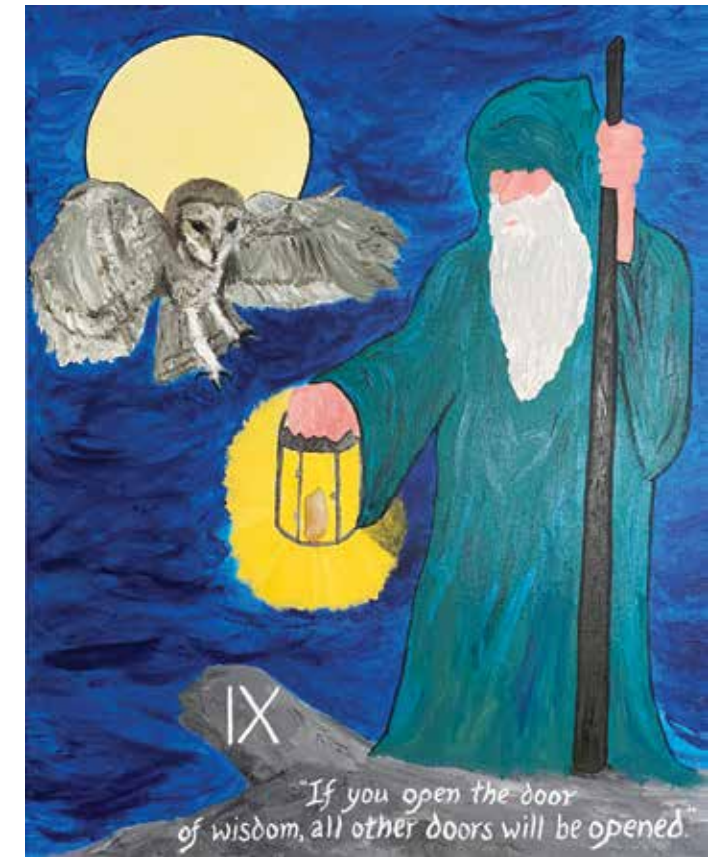
From the start, my doors and the images I paint on them have arrived through dreams and synchronicities. Each door contains a personal prayer as well as a collective offering. Every door "comes true," activating or partnering with signs and symbols that solve a problem or manifest a desire in the tangible, real world. Even when I paint commissions, elements of the doors appear in my life, too. Sometimes portals "activate" themselves years later by spontaneously falling over or having me "trip" into them. When I reread the writeup of each door's creation process, I recognize those same metaphorical doors opening again.

I continue to follow signs, and they've led me true. Fully recovered, I now work as a spiritual guide, Medical Intuitive and Reiki Master Teacher. I'm an avid gardener, and in 2016, I completed my Permaculture Design Certificate. I've written three books and a little poetry. I paint to my heart's content. Life is good. ■

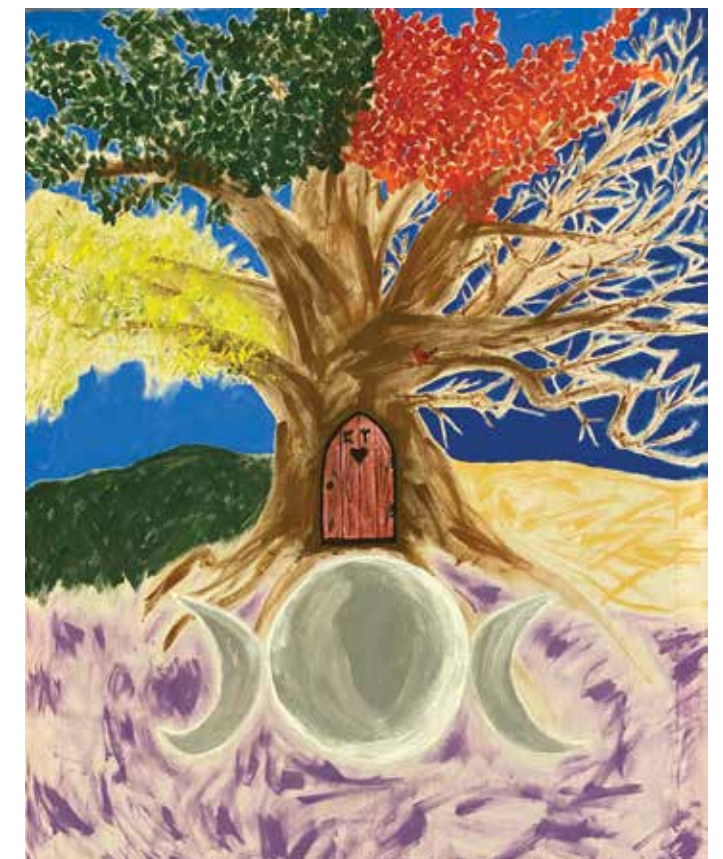
¹Donne, John. *Poems of John Donne*. vol I. E. K. Chambers, ed. London: Lawrence & Bullen, 1896. 165.

²<http://laurabruno.wordpress.com/2010/01/27/synchronous-owls>

³<http://laurabruno.wordpress.com/divine-doorways-and-portal-ports/>



Laura Bruno



Laura Bruno

Tobin Eckian



Tobin Eckian | Bear Hill



Tobin Eckian | In my White Lotus of the Eternal



Tobin Eckian | Being Born

Tobin Eckian | Woman Made of Plasma Flowers

CONSCIOUSNESS AND CONTACT Challenges Art History:

Alan Steinfeld

To empty one's mind of all thought and refill the void with a spirit greater than oneself is to extend the mind into a realm not accessible by conventional process of reason.¹

-Edward Hill, *the Language of Drawing*



Plato. Etching by D. Cunego, 1783, after R. Mengs after Raphael. (Wellcome Images)

Contact with other beings, whether physical or non-physical, has always been the function of consciousness. It is only through the creative act that contact can be integrated as an expression of our spiritual nature. Innovative creativity has never been about the ego self, but it can be a commentary on the human process, or as we shall see—an aspect of those realms beyond the limited scope of human perception. T.S. Eliot said in *Tradition and Individual Talent* that: **“The more perfect the artist, the more completely separate in him will be [between] the man who suffers and the mind which creates; the more perfectly will the mind digest and transmute the passions which are its material.”**

This has been true in the fine arts from dance to music to painting to poetry. The idea of inspiration (in spirit) or creative thought descending from on high is not a new phenomenon of modern spirituality, but is found in the Platonic dialogue of *Ion*. In a short exchange, Socrates makes the acquaintance of *Ion*, a rhapsodist (a poetic orator). The philosopher asks the poet: **“Do you know what makes you so great at your art?”** *Ion* answers, talking about his years of practicing his craft and knowing the most artistic ways of saying the poetic lines. Socrates says **“No, that is not what makes you great.”** He tells *Ion*: **“The gift which you possess is not an art, but an inspiration. There is a divinity moving you. For the poet is a light and winged and holy thing. There is no**

I.- Edward Hill, Quoted in Betty Edwards, *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain*. p58.

II.- Plato's *Ion*, <http://english.emory.edu/DRAMA/Platolon.html>

III.- Marcel Duchamp, *THE CREATIVE ACT*, lecture

IV.- Hilma af Klint: *Painting for the Future*: Oct. 12, 2018– Apl 23, 2019 <https://www.guggenheim.org/exhibition/hilma-af-klint>

V.- Roberta Smith, *Hilma af Klint: Paintings for the Future*, *NY Times* review, Oct. 11, 2018

VI.- Andrea Kolintz, *Questioning the Spiritual in Art*, in her essay on *Universal Language*, found in the *Guggenheim Catalog*, p.77, footnote 18



Hilma af Klint
Altarpiece, No. 1, 1915; oil and metal leaf on canvas, ca. 94 x 71 in.
Source: Arteidolia | <http://www.arteidolia.com/spiritualism-aesthetics/>

invention in him until he has been inspired and is out of his senses, and the mind is no longer in him.”^{VI} This is the case in all avenues of the creative arts. There is no creativity until we are out of our mind, removed from our ordinary platform of seeing the world. Shunning the contact of divine input stops the creation of truly stupefying art. Marcel Duchamp agreed. He said the artist is like a medium taking dictation from another realm of existence: **“If we give the attributes of a medium to the artist... All his decisions in the artistic execution of the work rest with pure intuition and cannot be translated into a self-analysis, spoken or written, or even thought out.”**^{III}

It was this context that brought about a revolutionary approach to painting in the early 20th century. The 2018 - 2019 retrospective at the Guggenheim of the Swedish painter Hilma af Klint, was a rediscovery that rewrote the history of Modern Art as it had been known for the last century. Roberta Smith of the *NY Times* said: **“af Klint got there first. Her paintings definitively explode the notion of modernist abstraction as a male project — [Hilma’s work] created a decade before Kandinsky and Mondrian, the so-called fathers of modern art [was] a revolutionary thought...”**^V It was Hilma’s contact with the higher realms which lead to the first abstracted forms in the Western canon of painting. The display of her work was so drastic that it created record breaking attendance at the museum. From October 2018 to February

2019, the exhibition was the most-attended show of all time with more than 600,000 visitors, twice as many as the previous attendance record for the Guggenheim.

Why the excitement? It is because we are in a time of transition, where the materialistic beliefs about the ordinary are giving way to the higher values of the extraordinary. Hilma’s work came at the right time to inspire a frustrated population to look beyond the material world and help open its minds to the higher realms of existence. As a matter of fact, during the Guggenheim show, groups of spiritual seekers on “psychic tours” would gather in front of the paintings and practice receiving spirit messages embedded in her work. As we shall see, Hilma’s art was not about the known world, it was a quest to access the greater unknown.

A quick look will show us that this art was not the same old art for art’s sake, it was about initiation into higher realms of consciousness. In her essay for the exhibition’s catalog, Andrea Klonitz wrote: **“Rather than an attempt to reimagine art and its possibilities by infusing it with new brands of spirituality, as in the cases of Kandinsky and Mondrian... [Hilma] saw herself as a direct conduit for a spiritual Other.”**^{VI}

Coming from a traditional background in Romantic Realism—the Nordic standard of the late 19th century—Hilma began to use her artistry for other reasons than just painting the world as we saw it.

Starting with Impressionism with its use of light - art became more a matter of perception, an aspect of consciousness itself. The future experiments of Edvard Munch's revolutionary expressionism were heavily influenced by a wave of mysticism and the theosophical teachings of the enigmatic Madam Blavatsky, sweeping through Europe at the time. Hilma's painting became the perfect vehicle for this higher communication. Hence, at the very start of the 20th century, she committed herself to an epic cycle of mediumistic-guided paintings—now rediscovered by a new generation. Her abstract forms first came to the attention of the American public in 1986 with the exhibition *The Spiritual in Art: Abstract Painting 1890–1985*, presented at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Painting for the Future

However, it was the Guggenheim which presented her first solo showing with seventy-six of the 193 paintings representing *Painting for the Future*. This appears to have been the fulfillment of a prophecy intended for what she called *The Temple Series*. Its full effort was to illustrate *“the stages of life and humanity's connection to the cosmos”*.

In reviewing the show, a majority of writers missed the mystical component altogether. One critic even accused Hilma as having been “tainted by the stain of the occult”. Amazing how critics can be totally ignorant about the context of artistic expression. This oversight resulted in my verbal squabble with one of the curators of the show at a Hilma forum at the Scandinavian House. He said that her work was the result of trying out new styles of art. I argued that it was because she was trying to bring through a higher level of consciousness. He said she was a painter first. I said: **“No! She was a mystic first.”**

The obvious problem with most art historians is that they lack the esoteric knowledge to relate to her work. There were a few that did get that significance. Peter Schjeldahl in *The New Yorker* wrote: **“Af Klint was not exercising a style... She was channeling visions received from a spirit world.”**

The Commission

Born in Sweden in 1862, Hilma became a visual channel for ascended masters in order to take us to a higher level of conscious evolution. Her spiritual emergence began at the age of 17 when she participated in Spiritist séances. She then joined the Edelweiss Society but left, feeling it did not meet her spiritual development. Between 1896 and 1907, along with four other women, she formed a group called “The Five.” Their ongoing meetings began with a prayer and a meditation in front of a Rosicrucian altar of a triangle and a cross with a rose. This was followed by a metaphysical reading which would take one of them into a trancelike state where they would receive messages via automatic writing or mediumship. As the meetings progressed, they started to make contact with non-physical beings called “The High Masters.” In today's terms, this could be translated into English as “Ascended Masters.” The collective consciousness was composed of six individual entities who identified themselves as *Amaliel, Ananda, Clemens, Esther, Georg, and Gregor*. Their mission through “The Five” was to put humanity in touch with more advanced levels of spiritual knowledge.

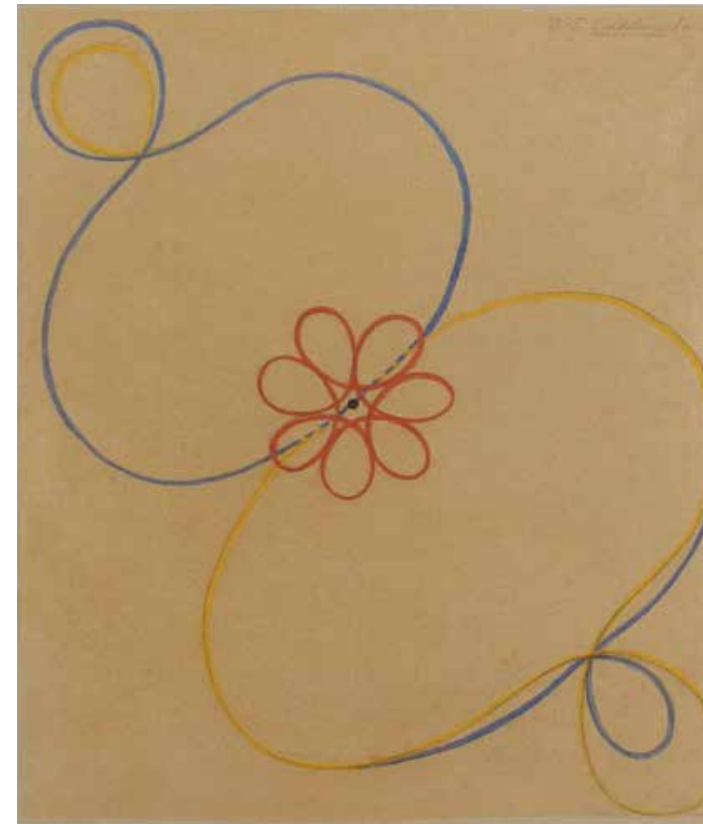
One such message from the entity Gregor declared: **“All the knowledge that is not of the senses, not of the intellect, not of the heart, it is**

the property that exclusively belongs to the deepest aspect of your being...the knowledge of your spirit.” As early as 1904, Georg and Ananda told “The Five” for the need of a temple filled with paintings from “The Masters.” They beseeched the women to convey the essence of higher dimensional thought in the form of images. While the other four women declined to undertake the mission, fearing that prolonged associations with the other realms might drive them mad, Hilma was up for the challenge. On January 1, 1906, a message from Amaliel came through, formally asking Hilma to paint works for the temple's interior. **“Commission”** was how Hilma referred to the paintings proposed by the Masters. She immediately and enthusiastically answered **“Yes!”** She later wrote: **“It was to be the great work I was to perform in my life.”** It was to be a monumental assignment primarily that focused on **“the astral plane and the immortal aspects of man”**.

Only after a ten-month period of mental and physical purification could she commence the work. On retreat, she adopted a vegetarian diet and honed her contact to Masters. By November 1906, solidly in etheric connection, she began to bring through the energies for the *Temple* paintings. Each piece was received in a vision that she was not allowed to change when transposing it to the canvas. She said that the paintings were not made under **“a strict obedience of the High Lords of the Mysteries”**. Rather, when she saw them standing at her side, she received a transmission and felt her hand being guided. In her notebook she wrote, **“The pictures were painted directly through me, without any preliminary drawings, and with great force. I had no idea what the paintings were supposed to depict. Nevertheless, I worked swiftly and surely, without changing a single brush stroke.”**^{vii} In this way, she created a painting every fifth day and did not stop until April 1908, when she had completed 111 works. This meant she was in constant contact with the Masters for over a year and a half.

Excited about her downloads, she showed them to her spiritual mentor Rudolf Steiner, founder of the *Anthroposophical Society*, on his visit to Stockholm. Steiner did not agree with the message of her symbology and rejected her visual expressions as out of alignment with his own. In a talk about her work, Johan af Klint, Hilma's nephew, said Steiner's comments most likely stopped Hilma from continuing the series for several years. However, as an independently minded woman, she resumed the work of the *Temple* in 1915 in order to complete what she felt was required of her. In the second phase, the communication took a different form. Her hand was not directed in the same way; the paintings came internally generated from images, sounds, and words that she sensed. She wrote about the experience in the third person: **“Amaliel draws a sketch, which H then paints.”** The painting guidance came to an end when the commission was completed in 1915. In total, 193 canvases were painted for the series collectively called **“The Paintings for the Temple.”**

Her prolific notes speak about a hierarchy of spiritual realms **“going from the Etheric, to the Astral and to the Mental planes”**. The last three paintings, called the *Alterpieces*, represent the summation of the commission messages. As seen in a picture from the Guggenheim display, the central golden disc stands for the source of divine consciousness. The central canvas with a pyramid pointing downwards on the left and one pointing upwards on the right respectively symbolize the involution and evolution of our spiritual journey into the density of creation.



Hilma af Klint | The Seven-Pointed Star, No. 5 and No. 7, 1908; tempera, gouache, and graphite on paper mounted on canvas, ca. 29 x 24 in. Source: Arteidolia <http://www.arteidolia.com/spiritualism-aesthetics/>

The downward spiral represents the descent into matter, while the upward motion can be seen as the myriad of experiences ascending the soul back into Oneness.

Even though the series was the most intense output of Af Klint's spiritual work, she admitted that she never understood the works entire symbology; she felt that they were in preparation of a message for humanity about the energetic components of creation. The show's curator, Helen Molesworth, said af Klint was **“in essence, offering a Gaia-like theory of radical, holistic interconnectivity”**. Hilma summed up their totality as **“stages of life and humanity's connections to the cosmos”**.

A Prime Example: The Swan Series

In creating a new language of metaphysical symbols that had come down from on high, the *Temple Series* brought forth primary themes such as **The Dove and The Swan and Primordial Creation**. Studying a particular progression is a meditation that implicates the manner in which unity manifests in explicit forms. For example, the *Swan Series* is a progression of 24 paintings in which the Masters reveal the multidimensional levels of existence. Moving from one swan painting to the next details the transformation of dense matter into pure energy. Hilma said the sequence represented *Transcendence*. This intricate mini-series may have been a tribute to the teachings of Madame Helene Blavatsky who gave spiritual attributes to these creatures. For

instance, in *The Secret Doctrine*, HPB says the swan represents **“the grandeur of spirit.”**^{viii} In another writing she says this beautiful water bird is **“suggestive [of] true mystic significance; being a universal matrix, and figured by the primordial waters of the 'deep'.”** Moreover, the opening lines of one of her final essays from 1890, *The Last Song of the Swan*, which may have been her own swan song, says that **“The swan, a symbol of the Supreme Brahma [the Creation god of the Hindus]... it was also symbolic of cycles; [and comes] at the tail-end of every important cycle in human history. The swan loves to swim in circles, bending its long and graceful neck into a ring... endowed the swan's throat with musical modulations and made of him a sweet songster, and a seer to boot.”** It is possible that the Masters use of the swan was to portray the idea of cycles which could explain why only now these paintings are being presented to the public at the closing of one age and the opening of another.

As with each of the minor themes within *The Temple* series, it appears that Hilma's “Guidance” wanted viewers to become aware of an evolutionary process and the undercurrents of invisible structures making up the visible world. Giving a visual understanding of the many layers of existence, the sequential progression of the series takes us from the physical into the energetic building blocks of creation, and then, suggesting elements of quantum theory, moves us into the abstracted elements of higher realities, only to end back in material form. The entire

vii.- Guggenheim Blog, posted Oct. 11, 2018 <https://www.guggenheim.org/blogs/checklist/inspiration-and-influence-the-spiritual-journey-of-artist-hilma-af-klint>.

viii.- Johan af Klint quote at the opening lecture for the exhibition, October 12th, 2018, in the Guggenheim Auditorium

progression presents the dualities of the world, suggesting that within the form exists the formless energetic presence.

For instance, looking at 3 out of the 24 images, *The Swan, No. 1*, on the left, we see the oppositions of the everyday world; black and white figures oppose each other but likewise meet as a complimentary reflection. This is similar to the Chinese Taoist philosophy of Yin and Yang, and the Hermetic Law of Polarity, stating “there is no male without female, no day without night”. In *The Swan, No. 8*, (the middle image), duality is portrayed in the basic building blocks of matter. An opposition still exists, but there is a balanced reflection. In much of *The Swan Series*, an ongoing symmetry points towards a mystical understanding of another Hermetic doctrine, *The Law of Correspondence*: “As above, so below - as the inner, so the outer”. In *The Swan, No. 10*, the blocks have turned into pure energy, seeming like vibrations of a field. An energy pinwheel stands in the center, integrating the dynamically opposed halves. Theories about field dynamics behind the material world would only be conceived of 10 years after these paintings were created, in 1925, with the quantum theories of fellow Scandinavian Niels Bohr.

The last painting in the series, *The Swan, No. 24* was a return to the physical world, representing what has been there all along, the integration of matter and energy. On closer inspection, it looks like a key is presented in the center of the canvas, suggesting a code pertaining to a progressive narrative of the preceding compositions, but summed up in its final form.

Completion

In 1920, Hilma rejoined Rudolf Steiner at Goetheanum, his spiritual retreat center in Dornach, Switzerland. Even with the completion of *The Temple Series*, Steiner still cautioned her that: “No one must see [this work] for 50 years.” However, Hilma continued to paint and receive messages from spirit the rest of her life. Upon her death in 1944, she bequeathed to her estate 1,000 paintings and drawings, and over 26,000 pages of notes pertaining to her spiritual communications. She somewhat agreed with Steiner, stipulating that *The Paintings for the Temple* should not be seen until twenty years after her death, as if awaiting a new generation to understand their deeper meaning. Perhaps *The Temple Series* at the Guggenheim was specifically what she was waiting for, so that the subtleties of their higher dimensionality could be embraced by today’s emerging spiritual culture.

As early as the 1930s, this was evidenced, according to senior Guggenheim curator Tracy Bashoff, in af Klint notebooks showing how the placement for *The Temple Paintings* should be in a circular building, where viewers would ascend a spiral path towards the sky. When this vision for the show design was cited by Bashoff at “The Hilma af Klint Symposium” held at the opening of the exhibition, an audible gasp was heard throughout the Guggenheim auditorium.

As if functioning in two parallel universes, after Hilma created *The Temple Paintings*, across the Atlantic, painter Hilla von Rebay,

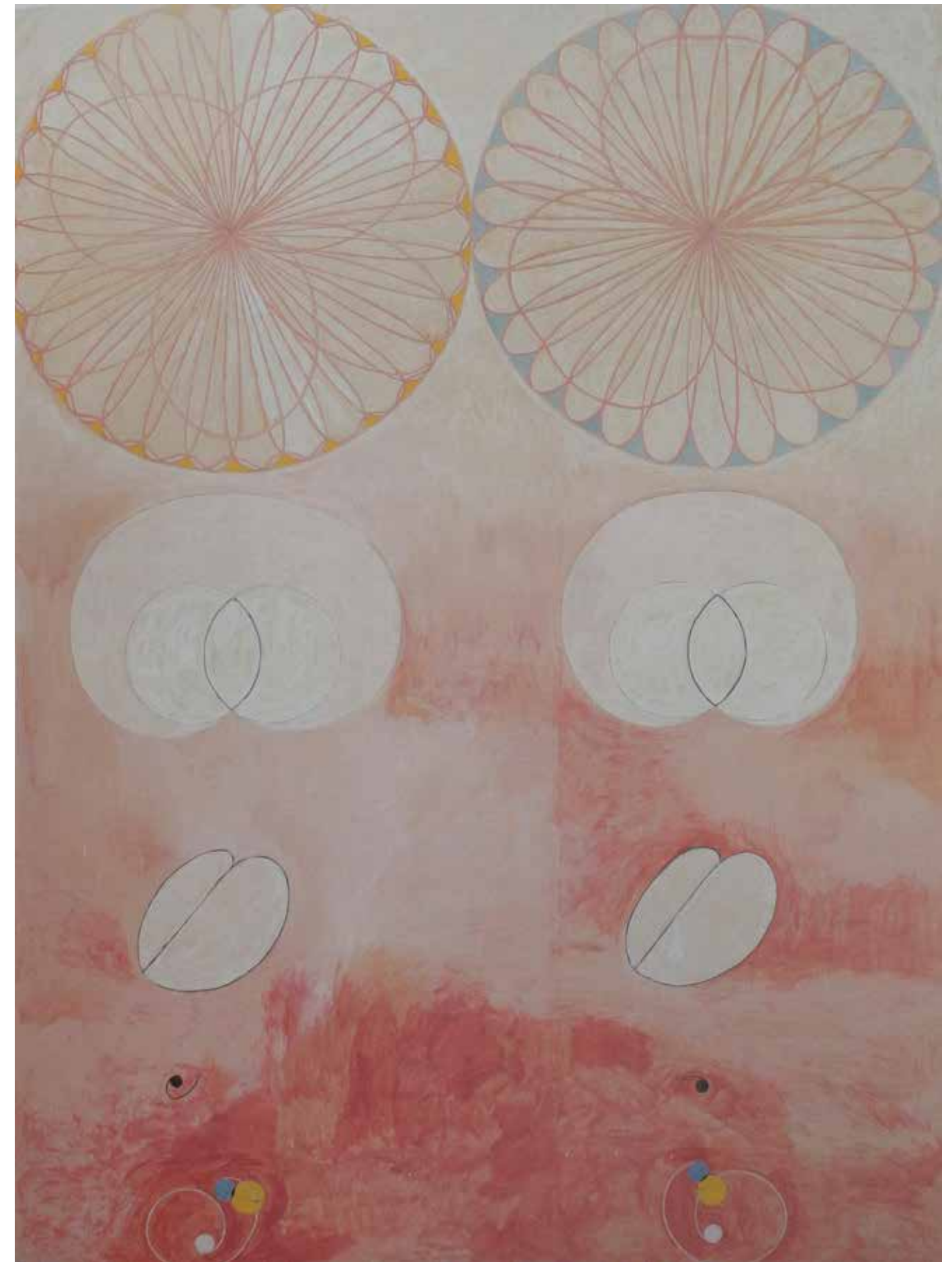
co-founder and first director of the Guggenheim, had her own vision for the design of a museum. In June 1943, unaware of Hilma’s work, Rebay wrote to the architect Frank Lloyd Wright on the commission of a “museum-temple.” She told Wright that she needed a “temple for the spirit” in which to house Solomon R. Guggenheim’s growing collection of abstract art. In the current exhibition, af Klint and von Rebay conjoined a vision that the Masters brought forth 100 years earlier. It seems now ‘Future and its Paintings’ have arrived. When the exhibition was viewed on the Guggenheim’s spiral path towards its domed skylight, the work literally and figuratively became an initiation towards the ascension of higher knowledge. ■



Hilma af Klint
The Swan, No. 23, 1915; oil on canvas, ca. 60 x 59 in.
Source: Arteidolia | <http://www.arteidolia.com/spiritualism-aesthetics/>



Hilma af Klint, No. 41, Group1
The Parsifal Series, 1916; watercolor and graphite on paper, ca. 10 x 10 in.
Source: Arteidolia | <http://www.arteidolia.com/spiritualism-aesthetics/>



Hilma af Klint | The Ten Largest, No. 9, Old Age, 1907; tempera on paper mounted on canvas, ca. 126 x 94 in.
Source: Arteidolia | <http://www.arteidolia.com/spiritualism-aesthetics/>

IX.- H.P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol 1, book 2, chapter 5, p357

X.- H. P. Blavatsky, *THE LAST SONG OF THE SWAN*, from a Theosophical Articles, Vol. I. Blavatsky.net



A Mystic Vision of the Future: Common Cause

James Tunney

Mystic bridge is open for a while over the darkness - go strong across lightly with spirit shining.

The Dark Echo

You must admire the Empire, always one step ahead, usually a dozen. How long it has existed is not clear, but certainly a few thousand years. It adapts and mutates in the shadow of darkness and plain sight. Sometimes it is military, sometimes religious, sometimes psychological, sometimes political. The penultimate stage is the Empire of Mind and Spirit. Ultimate is the Empire of Consciousness run by people who love control, constraint, power, machines and magic but hate uncertainty. It does not matter who you are once you sell your soul to it. Some Irish did as well. Technique is simple. Own technology, divide people and use force. I'm not doing victim history. My family was in Ireland for thousands of years. Romans did not come but Vikings, Churches, Normans, British, EU and US did. Up to recently there was something distinctive. Now material progress makes it more as Chief Bromden envisioned everywhere would be in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. That film had Irish - American and Native American main characters. I wrote a novel in 2019 which involved State exploitation of a UK disaster to attain technological control, so people end up with chips. "Intellectuals" have started talking about chips under the skin already. Hard to write dystopian novels now, real life is too quick. Intelligences of all types exist and we may contact them, but without spirit, we are spectres subject to inspection, destined to vanish. We are spirit beings turned into matter, spirit beings dispirited of what matters.

Material impoverishment does not extinguish imperishable spirit but wishes to relinquish it for tools, technology and toys may. Two films came to mind when I thought of *New Observations—Thunderheart* and *The Field*. I stayed for a short time on a reservation and *Thunderheart* seemed true. I wrote some articles about how law might help indigenous people. I felt affinity, never a wannabee. Native peoples had spirit. They knew about dreams and quests. I know who the big sister is in spirit family but I'm not glamorising, exaggerating nor naive. Still, a red spark or lone ember fondly kept glowing in the pouch of a sole guardian in darkest winter can start a spirit-fire that lights the heavens.

The Field as a film has multiple weaknesses. I knew the actual field where they filmed. My grandfather minded sheep there. When Mayo was hit worst in Ireland during the Famine, my family went up to the hills behind to survive. Later, some hid there fighting that empire's army. They had been driven off their homeland in the North, possibly after earlier eviction in the East. Some were arrested in those mountains while on the run. In 1916, one family member was taken from home there to many jails. A famous Irish hostage imprisoned in Lebanon came to this part for healing. Wittgenstein stayed down the road sometime and they

say someone chucked out all the notes he left. I came, too, to lie in a tent on earth when I could. Walking the way there, I saw hills turn primrose yellow, black, silver, navy, blue and charcoal grey in a day. Goats gnawed pegs but when I turned, they pretended to be disinterested. Gas lighting. Moonlit hills. Lightning. I saw many rainbows, one entirely in *The Field*. Rainclouds come from America imbued with thoughts of peoples there to hit first hills and fall celestial among stonewalls heaped over generations. People spoke Irish till recently there. Atlantic salmon come back to spawn and jumped waterfalls. Warriors once did "salmon leaps." I see salmon in cages now. Empires hate wildness. Land heals. I hear young people in Sweden tell me blood and soil are bad. Ancient sites neglected. Watch your saviours. I wrote an article about *The Field* film and play and got a nice letter from the playwright. I wrote about how Celts and other Native people had a relationship with earth. Common cause. I saw the main actor Richard Harris in a Dublin street and on a London stage. *A Man Called Horse*. People saw he was not real Sioux. Harris is an Englishman in the film and Bostonian in the story and he meets another people. Listen, he's Irish and did not mind sheep in my grandfather's field either. They make things up. The old relation of mine that sold moonshine with whom I stared into fire discussing fairies with animals knocking at the door or coming in his cottage by the river, said Harris was a very nice man. "The Bull" character was no Sitting Bull. De Valera was sentenced to death in 1916 but it was commuted. An Englishman played him in *Michael Collins*. I was in the crowd of unpaid film extras. The actor was good. I met De Valera (in real life) about fifty yards from Collins' grave. There is acting and reality, real things and copies. Film is not fact. Misdirection may involve catching or change of attention, from fatal wound to scratch. Imagine if discontentment with trifles was directed to getting innocent prisoners freed from jail? You are not an actor and you better write your own script.

But there is real history. When people in Ireland were starving, Choc-taws sent money. Unforgotten. Common cause. Frederick Douglass knew slavery and saw in Ireland circumstances worse than he had ever seen. Irish people were called "white chimpanzees" by their Darwin-loving masters. I talked to fighters who went to imperial jails. My father's uncle shared a prison dorm with MacSwiney. Later, MacSwiney's 74 day hunger-strike influenced many from Marcus Garvey, Ho Chi Minh to Mandela. Recently, as I became a "white man," it might seem an advance? See someone's skin and judge—you are a fool. Bigger one if you don't see division is the greatest tool of control. I had my culture. We saw empires operate, learn and re-colonise. Huxley told us. Switch

to nice servitude. Don't notice you're a slave, frogs in boiling water. Like recreational bondage, get ready, you'll be having fun too, in your cage.

We have common cause to unite with other spiritual beings without prejudice to develop spirit consciousness of the Great Mystery. Technological straitjacket of control is a real danger. Upload brains onto computers, linking everyone in hell. Beware. Victim means sacrifice. Don't be a victim. Be strong. Believe in your spirit. They want to dispirit you, people who lost theirs and sold their soul. People whose minds see only things in the material world murder Mother Earth. Dispirited, they dispirit you in a lust for control. Look backwards, you miss what is coming by magician's misdirection. Day by day, we give power to IT fed on bloodshed whose cells we carry and whose Net and Web openly reveal its purpose. Spirit world will not welcome cowardly running from battle. Because you felt someone else's pain some time ago, that should not stop you preventing more if you can. We must become common cause agents developing spirit for our own good, humanity and earth. Empire is force of material, scientism, militarism, magic, mental manipulation and dispiriting. Left and Right focusing on material, is problem not solution. No religion can solve, unless one conquers all—no thanks. Perennial philosophy sees spiritual wisdom of all traditions not detail, for the Devil is in that. Sioux spirituality is like Celtic, Buddhism or Zoroastrianism. Native peoples still have wisdom tradition as a vehicle of spiritual heritage. Spiritual wisdom will be shared among a new mystic generation. The grit of silent watchers of spirit will endure to witness karma's writ. Silent ones have to emerge now, everywhere. When they shift attention to heart and spirit-eyes, they find power undiminished.

Spirits now here must hear the hunting call draw near. People hypnotised by sorcerer's light think it is spiritual light. Technological priesthoods want sacrifice. We struggle to be the best victim, enslaved by weakness. Weakness is wanted because warriors are worrisome. In the injustice game, historians say we have more to fear from the Orient from numbers of deaths from tyrants. Pick your poison. Great institutions may fall and many will rejoice. Many things are not appreciated until gone. Dwelling on past is luxury. You get material development to become a "tiger" only for your skin to decorate mansion floors of those pulling purse strings after you sell your soul for a trinket. No purses anymore, electronic control, switch you off if you don't play. Yes, there are dangerous things but much is theatrical crisis staged to get more power. It is child's play to get people to give up sovereignty.

Bright echo

Like light, the male father is sky particle and mother female is earth wave. Spirit light must glow. Scientists can't find consciousness. It is spirit. Spirits awaken around the world with no colour nor identity. They know mother land is to be cherished by stopping poison and destruction. Mother, mater, matter. Individuals grow in spirit and find others elsewhere like them. Invisible commonwealth cannot be broken if full of drops that adapt. Flow from river to waterfall that can wear away stone, as Tao tells. These words came.

Long ago in Silverland, I asked which spirit spoke from the wheel that broke. I saw a red cloud tinged with gold in the sky. Then I found a man of that name whose aim was the same. Nothing amiss, he seemed to say this. Like Black Hawk or Crow and those who came

to old, lost and lame in dark marshes and swamps, I come too. Spirit rain falls where it will soak soft and harsh still, and some can cleanse all from afar when they flow. Gorse became a curse, but it could be worse. We showed you skin was host with spirit contained in. Living must live for they cannot undo if they go and drag carcasses of other grief to show. Just like an orange for a ghost is your pain on my behalf almost. Would that you trust instead as I have grieved, sorrow mends. You might clank rusty chains as you carry your staff constrained and kick leaves of grass to your grave. But better you marry courage and heart with a laugh to start to save and cross the bridge. All comes from bank of magic symbols sent. If you don't learn their ring then spells and sprites work again at the ridge. Nimbly raid meaning of their cave and trade despair for repair. A sound at mid-summer window at dusk and Christ was right there laughing without a care. Pause at lost common cause like crickets sing. It was not me they brought for destruction wrought. No more than they gave your names to odd things. Both said same, spirit do not tame. Imposter tricks are fostered to bring, tell and sell. For that is the game for you and me to enmesh and enthrall till the foul end of it all between the devil and deep blue sea. You may have Great Spirit shining in your eyes or choose to be a jack o' lantern sold in bare backwoods with no owls. You could be immortal spirit who dwells in flesh or lose it to a will o' the wisp flickering false light fell in the swamp of glowing green ghouls. Spirit refresh.

Believe in spirit-force. Empire must convince you have no spirit. Convince you that—convince anything. Spirit in accord makes channel to heavens better than sword. Love of matter is destructive. Not science we need but prescience, ability to foretell the future. Mystics have that. Spirit must master garden of symbols, eyes of millions activated. One candle can light a thousand flames to delight heart. Be you mystic now to flourish.

Across this globe, unpigmented spirits descended and evolved. Each of you can work their pasture, massless, unstructured, no institution to capture. Great spiritual consciousness is in you, use before they excise it. You will be assimilated as by Star Trek Borgs. Spirits growing will find solutions not with force of arms but imagination and inspiration. All wars begin in symbolic realms. Mystics seek Great Mystery and bypass magic. They may need to pay more attention to its binding power. Religion means binding. Great consciousness implies integration and unity, not compulsion. Spirit force is truth over that long tortuous trajectory through tyranny. Good and bad news. The latter, we are being enslaved by technology through acquiescence. We transfer lives, minds, memories, being turned inside out. Hollowed out spirit has no hallowed host, leaving hungry ghosts, spectres in the society of spectacle. We lose spirit being convinced it does not exist. We have meaningful spirit stories crafted over millennia in myth and parable substituted by barren tales of dispirited masters who fail to explain what happens before our eyes but tell us what happened billions of years ago. But they will never settle the great mystery of being.

Don't convince your friends but persuade your enemies. Drop prejudices however much you enjoy vicarious pain. Don't send a baker to fly a plane because he is good with dough. Cure comes from where poison is. Prophecy of seventh generation comes true, through ones who know systems that oppress. We have common cause, from common cause no

scientist will ever explain. Unbeknownst is above and in all. Perennial wisdom talks of honouring Elders. You are of something before, bigger in many ways. That does not mean you cannot do better and aspire to be admirable in places they could not. But Newton realised we sit on giants' shoulders. Materialists take history, memory and social interaction. They use magic and invert. The mystic is beyond power of technology yet. But soon, your brain will be managed by channels coming from chains of lights in the sky, supposedly to help us communicate.

John Boyle O'Reilly, an Irish convict on a ship for months, had his first sight of someone in the Australian prison colony. An Aboriginal prisoner in chains on the beach shocked him. Common cause. Some were enlightened prison systems. Model island prisons had people wear masks and be screened, de-humanised. Mask up again. You will be forbidden from walking, congregating, farming, swimming, going out in the sun, breathing fresh air, talking. All this will be for your own good in mind-numbing detail. Stay at home and create your own prison. The religion of scientism has an unforgiving doctrine of correct behaviour. Compassion will be sucked out and simulated. Robots will have more rights than you as "conscious agents." World will run on Objectives. AI will make 'objective' decisions. Don't fit in, too bad. But you will fit in, they will make you. Chips monitor you. If greater conscious agent decides your land is needed, so be it. Messy stuff with police and protests will be no more. Drones, surveillance state, distant control. Who can argue with objective? It's science stupid. Uncle Sam does want you.

Only realistic opposition is an unstructured, unorganised, unsigned, unsworn congregation around the globe, united by perception of common cause. An Interior College or secret agent of Great Spirit transpiring is shut down. Masters move but not servants. Chip in your hand or head will make sure about that. This is not a counsel of despair, rather a summoning of the mystical congregation to awaken. Beware false prophets and institutions taken. Wake before your wake. Spirit or slave at fork in the road in the yellow world. Pay attention or you will pay for your inattention. Let us have common cause to not relinquish spiritual sovereignty to biomorphs or anyone. Stephen King wrote It. Pennywise and poundfoolish to think his nightmare is anything like the IT Imperial singularity dream. Common cause not by conmen led. May the force of mysticism be with you. Mysticism is recognition you are the embodiment of Greatest Consciousness to honour through example, actualising spiritual power. Resist illusion of transhumanist evolution. Look beyond at sight of perennial people of might persistent like grass on the red-clouded sky plain at twilight. Cultivate care not glassy-eyed stare. Every mystic awoken wakes a thousand unspoken.

Saviour is you. You evolve spiritually in your own way, within tradition or without. Let your spirit evolve and commit to it. Angels, muses and higher self infuses. You develop a nexus to the numinous to receive inspiration. You enter water but you must walk on land. On land you do what you are destined in your own domain and retain spiritual sovereignty. If you do what you are good at, links will emerge. There are less people in higher domains but you may recognise them. No formality, no swearing, no conjuring. Then you will not lose your soul and force will not be dissipated.

If I told you these were Empire's secret techniques of spiritual counter-revolution, you would not believe me. So, let me say I just guess at the Empire's black magic plan for you to inherit the scorching wind.

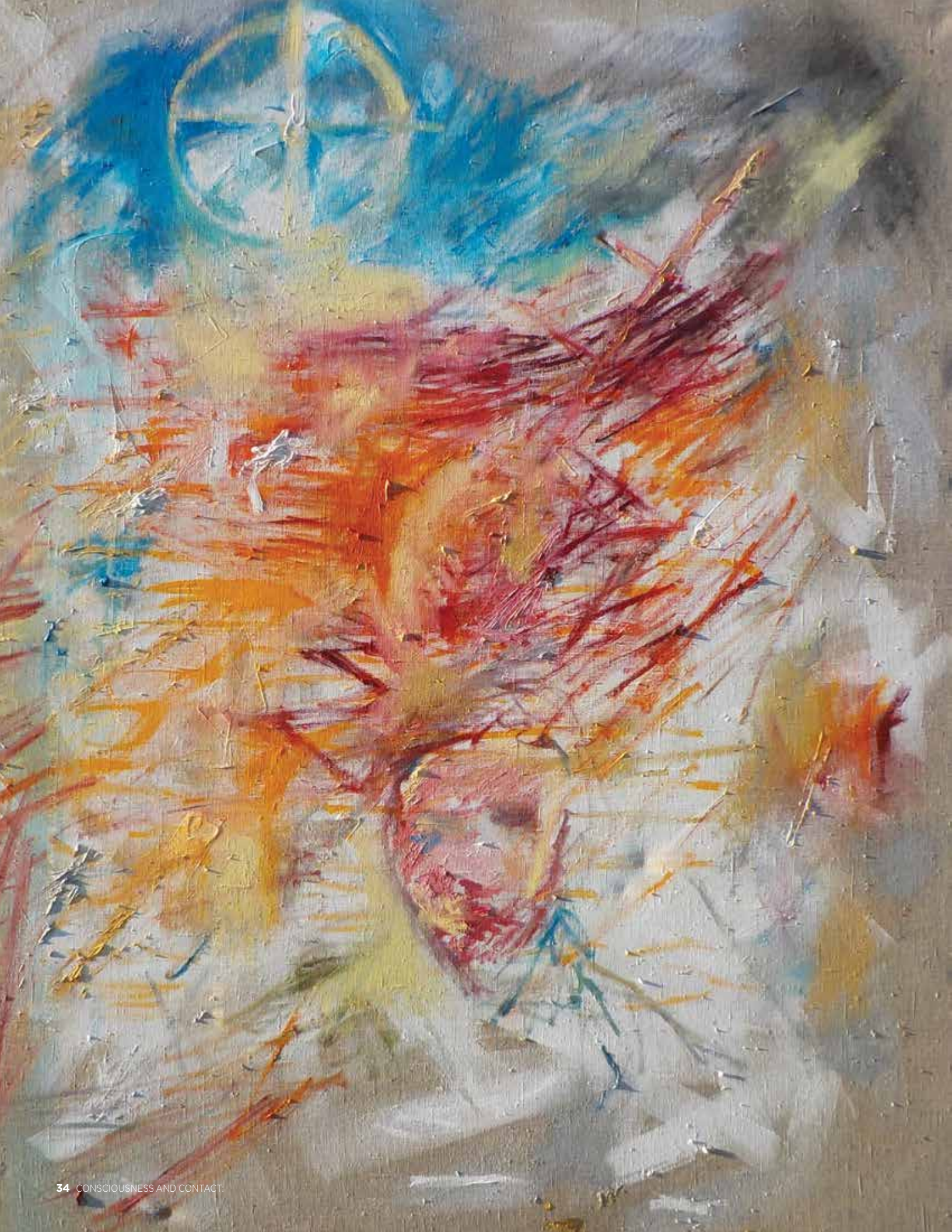
- (10) *Sacrifice tradition.* Create memory hole, convince that ancestors were backward.
- (9) *Subvert.* Take what people retain and turn it upside down, invert, making sacred profane.
- (8) *Technology Fix.* Make global junkyard of technological dependency.
- (7) *Sorcery light.* Replace spiritual light with shiny sorcery light, screen reality out.
- (6) *Substitute False Spirit.* Create false spirits like alcohol, drugs.
- (5) *Saviour groups.* Make people invest in false causes that seem good.
- (4) *Conjure.* Get people to swear allegiance to something other than spirit.
- (3) *Separate people.* Use identities, if needed, make some more. Division is Devil's work.
- (2) *Deny spiritual identity.* People with spiritual identity will not submit. Deny it.
- (1) *Cyborg.* Link spirits to machines, make them host cells of machine-consciousness master.

It is your turn to be yourself, aware with mystic spirit, unimpeachable.

If you are sinking burdened by history, don't seek more weight but be light.

As Bobby Sands said,

**'Its heart was buried in Wounded Knee,
But it will come to rise again.'**

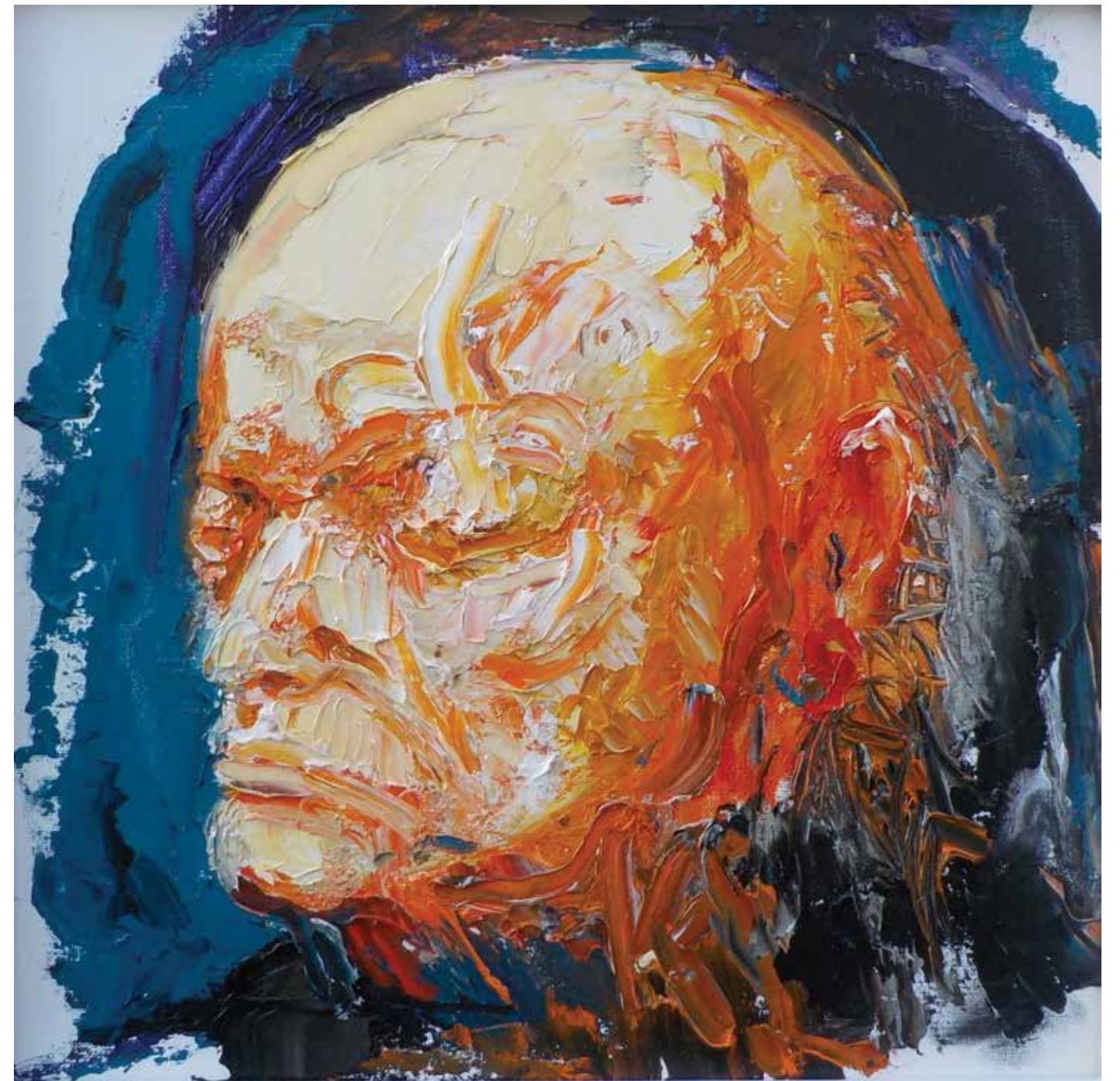


James Tunney | Bajo La Luna Gitana

James Tunney | Antarctic Dreams



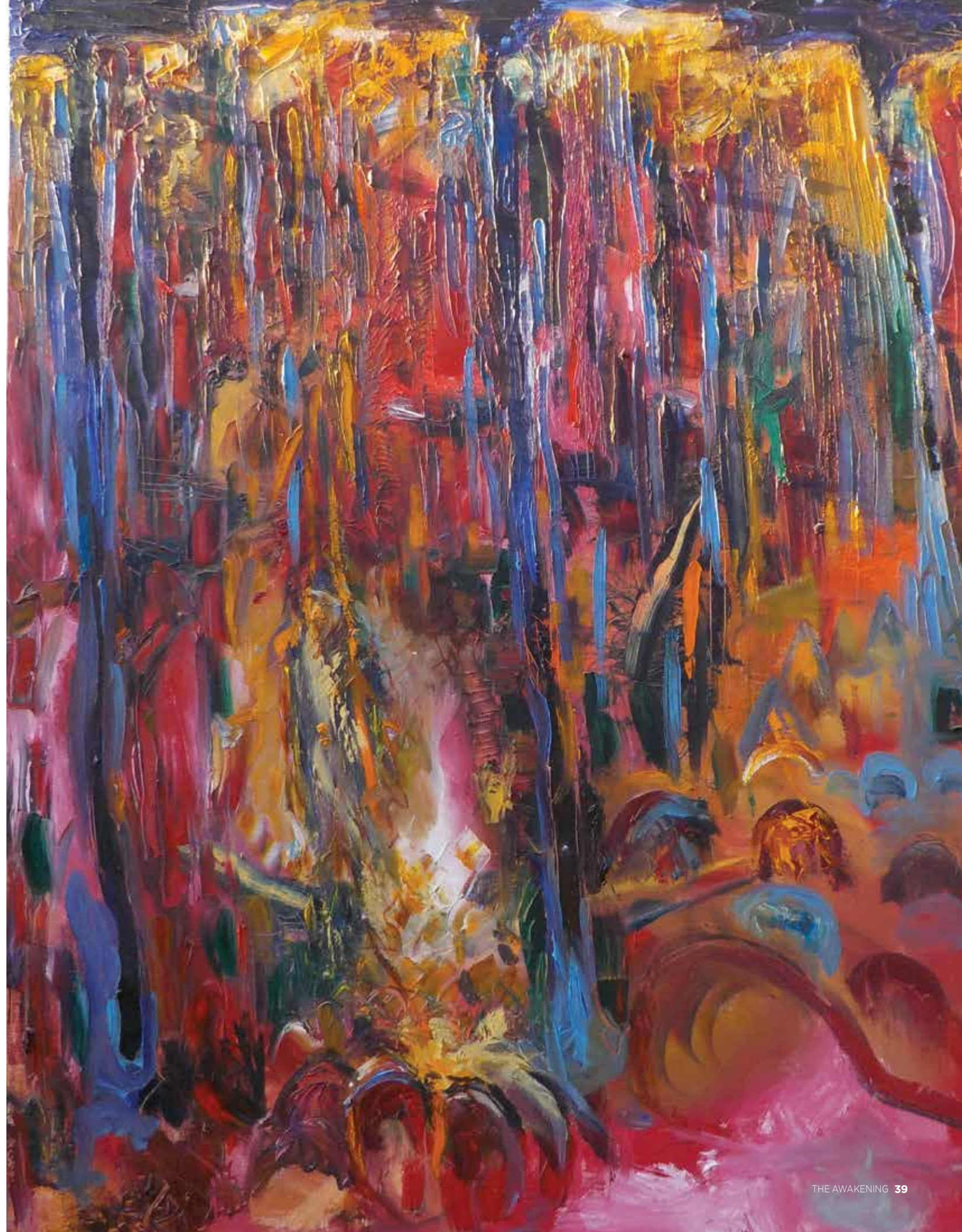
James Tunney | Black Hawk Bourbon Street (2011)



James Tunney | Blake 2



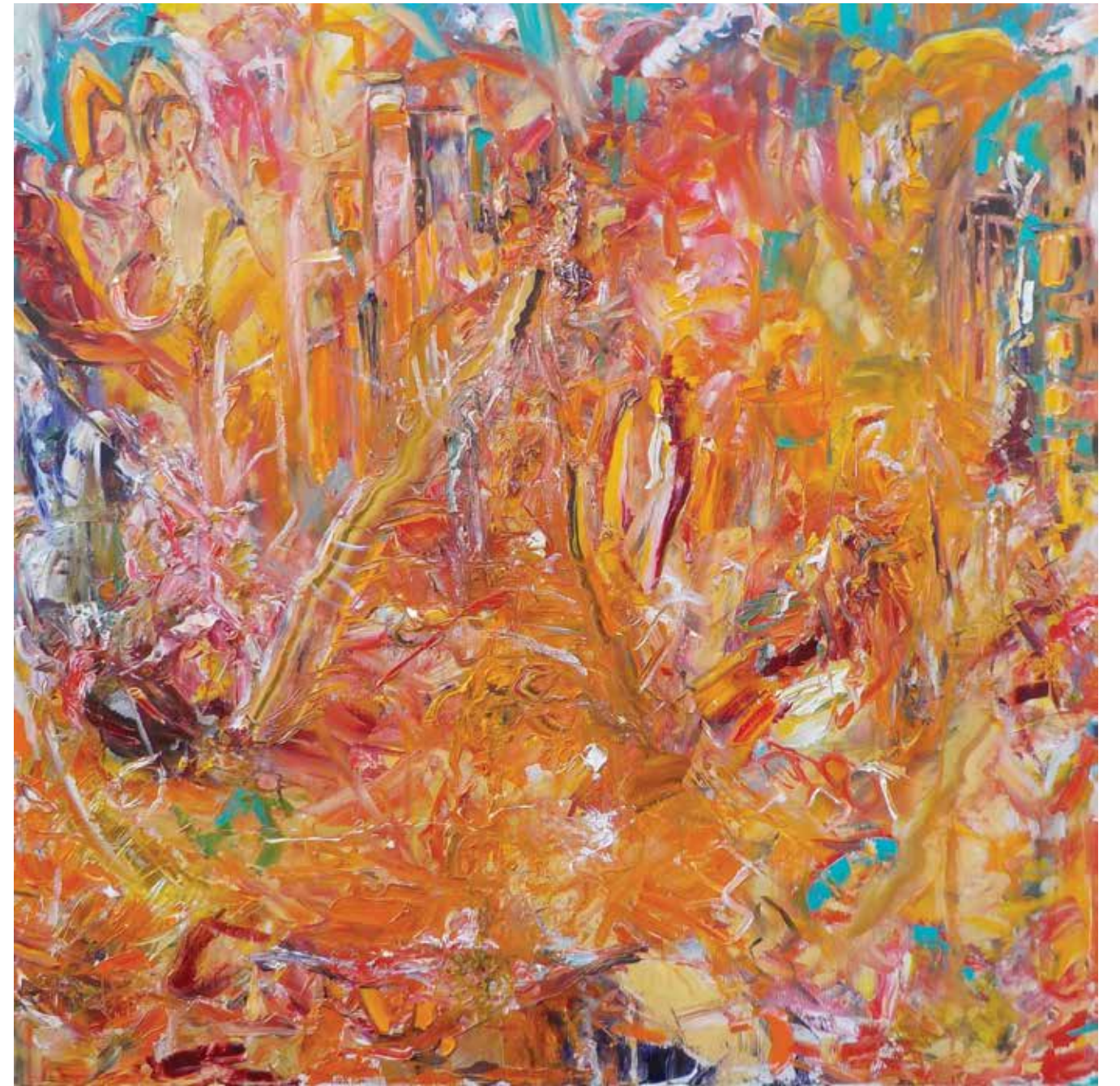
James Tunney | Brick Lane We Are Shadows



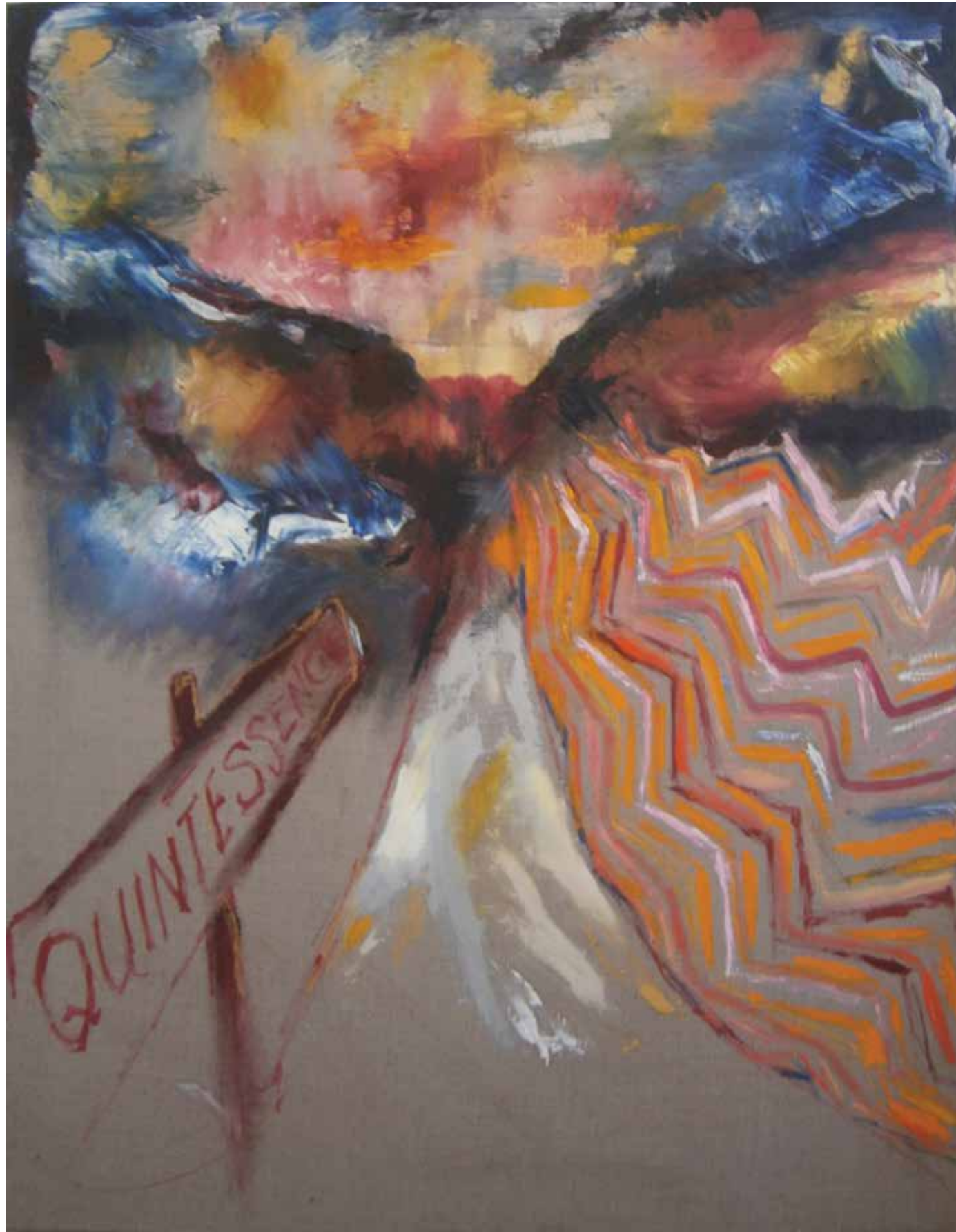
James Tunney | Buffalo Spirit Canyon



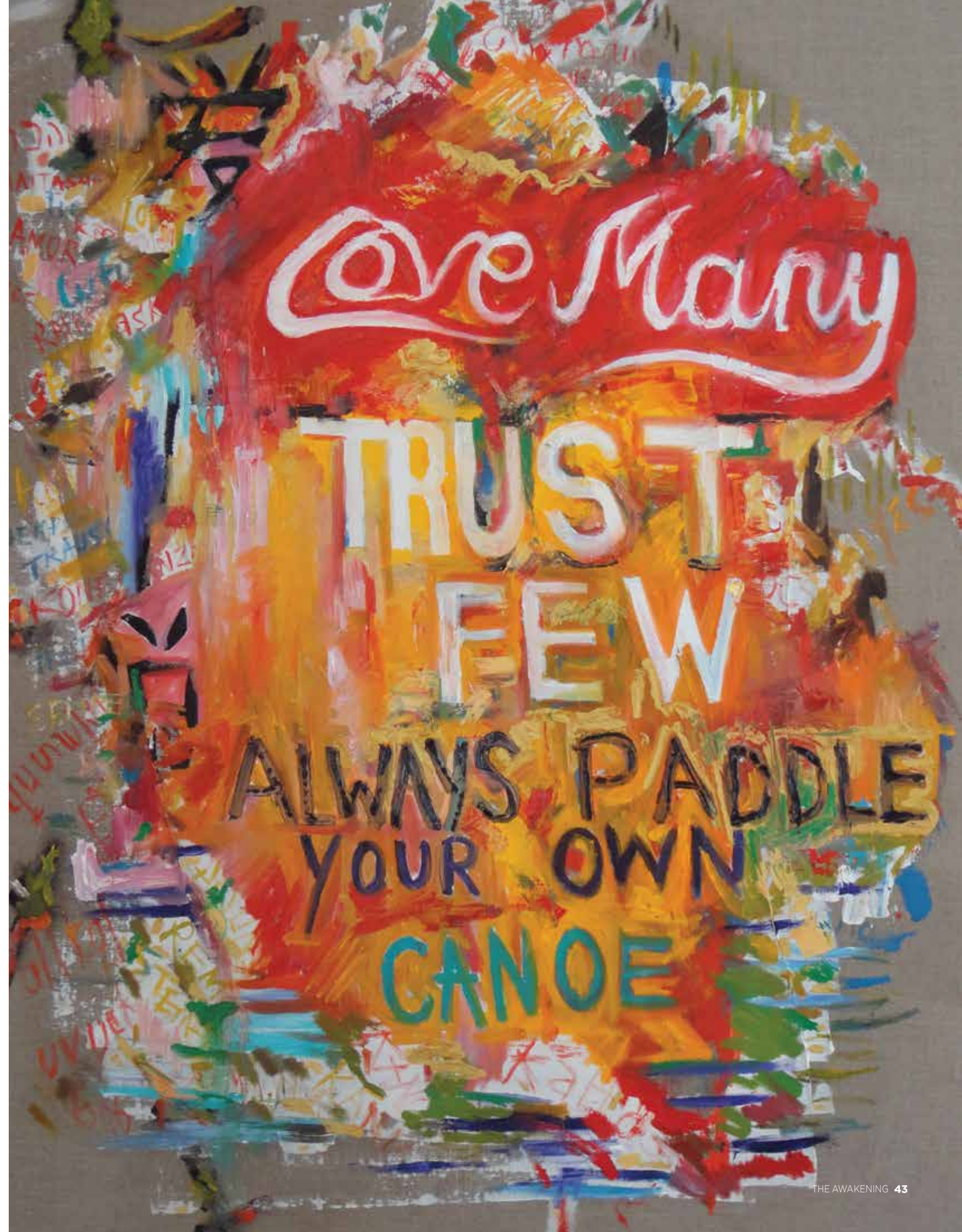
James Tunney | Reciclador



James Tunney | Själagårdsgatan



James Tunney, *Quintessence*



James Tunney | *Motto* (2011)

Jeffrey Mishlove interview with James Tunney N°2

Jeffrey Mishlove

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(00:27) JM: Hello and welcome. I'm Jeffrey Mishlove. Today we are going to look at the classical mystical path as it's seen through what is sometimes called the perennial philosophy or the primordial tradition. My guest is James Tunney, who is the author of *The Mystical Accord: Sutras to Suit our Times, Lines for Spiritual Evolution*. He is also the author of two dystopian novels, *Blue Lies September* and *Ireland: I Don't Recognize Who She Is*. He is a qualified barrister and has taught law throughout the world. He's also a fine artist. Welcome, James.

(01:10) JT: Thank you. Thank you again, Jeffrey.

(01:13) JM: It's a pleasure to be with you. I know you take a lot of your inspiration in looking at the mystical path from the writings of Aldous Huxley.

(01:24) JT: Yes. I didn't revisit Aldous Huxley until after I had done the work and I began to look around for similar statements and context. I'm not quite sure at the end of Aldous Huxley's life about what his vision of the future was, for him, that he wanted for society. But in relation to *The Perennial Philosophy*, my disposition is the same.

(01:55) JM: Well, he wrote *The Perennial Philosophy*. I was also myself greatly influenced by Huston Smith who wrote a similar book called *The Primordial Tradition*. The idea behind both of these books is that if you study the great mystics, spiritually realized people from all cultures, you can see that they are experiencing a common unity. Some people say, you know, there are many paths up the mountain, but it's all one mountain when you get to the top.

(02:30) JT: Yes. I agree with that. My view is that for people genuinely following most spiritual paths, excluding strange cults or whatever on the margins, but looking at the main traditions that have been around for a long time, with great discipline and great history and great evolution, we see the same general path of evolution. What I suggest is that there is a kind of simple structure. I've articulated it in my terms as a structure for my lines on spiritual evolution. So, what's the relevance of that? My point or idea would be that there are a lot of people who have felt abandoned by the institutions. They realize they are spiritual beings but they're not quite sure what they're meant to do or where they are meant to go. What I would suggest is that there is some indication from looking at the different mystical traditions of some type of path. Now, it doesn't mean that everyone is going to go all the way on that path, but it helps them to understand what other people were doing within the tradition. Also, it may give them a map to say, well, these are the things I have to work on. In fact, all of the different elements kind of go in parallel so it's not laid out clearly in some sense, but there is a structure. There's a circularity or chirality about the process.

(03:54) JM: Well, I know in the case of Aldous Huxley, he was close friends with the writer Christopher Isherwood who became very involved in the life of Sri Ramakrishna and the teachings of Vedanta, the classical yoga path, which many people are engaged in today, on the path of yoga, though not everyone understands the philosophy behind it.

(04:19) JT: No, and yoga had very serious mystical and spiritual dimensions to it. Perhaps that's why we hear the... they annoy me when I hear certain Christians say, "Oh, this is Anti-Catholic, yogic practice." I know serious Catholics who have said to me that the martial arts are anti-Catholic. I find no basis for that in anything that I ever heard Jesus saying, anything against yoga. But, people are willing to put their own judgement above any other indication. Yoga is very important in the Western terms to align the body, to get the body correct and to put one into a different dimension without all the other elements and a lot of people are not particularly aware of the other elements, but it's still important. When you get into this, I've even heard recently in relation to Vedanta, I've heard practitioners say, "This is the only way... you can only get it in Vedanta." So, you have this exclusivity and territoriality, which in my view, is inappropriate for genuine seekers, because you can learn and be informed from the different traditions.

(05:37) It's a similar thing in relation to martial arts, I believe. Martial arts are very important, very useful for ego development, to defend themselves. But, there's a very deep dimension to it that is worth studying. After I leave New Mexico, I'll be going to Colorado and I'll meet up with my former karate sensei and we'll probably be doing Brazilian jiu-jitsu more this time and concentrate on that. But, he's a high level black belt, not only is he a high level black belt who has a PhD comparing accountancy in Western thinking with the Taoist perspective, which is quite interesting. He would have a very deep understanding of what the karate do means, the do. I do a bit of judo as well.

(06:31) Judo means the gentle way. So, judo was not meant to be merely about throwing people, it's very effective for that, I'd recommend it to anybody. But behind it, the founder Kano who founded judo, believed that a student should be doing calligraphy, they should be educating themselves, educating themselves about culture. It was a holistic spiritual path. Those bits get cut out. You get left with the bit which is only part of the whole story. It's important to look respectfully at all the traditions, to learn whatever traditions you are used to. People often criticize and say, "You are born Jewish, it's easy for you to say... You were born Catholic, it's easy for you to say..." But, you should learn in your own tradition and have respect for others and change as appropriate, as people do.

(07:27) I've always liked the Quakers, for example. I think they have something to offer that is quite unique and they have shown that in relation to their business practices. So, this idea of coming out into the world and doing things differently: Cadbury, Schweppes, Bourneville, historically they had a basis and a philosophy that emerged from a spiritual path. [Screen note: Cadbury (a Quaker company) merged for a while with Schweppes. Bourneville was a Cadbury model village. Other Quaker companies included Rowntrees, Frys, Barclays Bank, Lloyds Bank and Clarks Shoes.]

(07:48) JM: These are businesses established by Quakers?

(07:54) JT: Yes. They have a history of treating their workers better, historically. For example, during the Irish Famine, they are one of the groups that actually helped people, they are remembered for that. At the same time, there was a lot of... I think Ernest Shackleton, if I'm not mistaken, the great explorer came from a Quaker background. So, they weren't ignoring the real world. In fact, their spiritual background helps them deal with the real world. Also, they advocate a very direct connection between the individual and the higher authority without interventions.

(08:33) JM: I have often heard it said that the mystical people within any given religion have more in common with each other, and from different religions, than they have in common with the more orthodox from their own faith.

(08:48) JT: I believe that to be true. The only distinction I would make, is if you look at, say Judaism, there's a lot of very, very distinctive and unique paths that I don't think you'd find elsewhere, for example. Only on that basis, only on that exception, they're so evolved and so specific, but I agree with the proposition. Yes, is the answer.

(09:18) JM: I have had the privilege of interviewing many great rabbis, many great swamis, Sufi masters. One who I was particularly close to was Rabbi Zalman Schachter, who was well known as a Hassidic rabbi, a very devout orthodox Jew, but he felt quite comfortable going into a Muslim Sufi community and praying with them.

(09:45) JT: Of course. I find Sufism is very easy for me to identify with. Here is an example, a terrible example of the opposite of that. This is where the dogmatists get in. I remember my father saying that when he was younger the church would not allow them to attend the funerals of their Protestant neighbors. They were only allowed by their own church to stay outside and not enter the church. I believe, if I'm not mistaken, that when the first president of our own died, that most of the cabinet stayed outside because they were paying attention to the wishes of the institution, which I think is morally offensive. There is no justification for that. So, that kind of territorialism is totally inconsistent with the spirit of religious practice.

(10:40) It's interesting that Douglas Hyde, that president, was also a folklorist who used to go out and collect stories and who also wrote, if I'm not mistaken, an introduction or foreword to Walter Evans-Wentz's *The Fairy Faith in Celtic Countries*, the person who went on to translate the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Also, Douglas Hyde mentions that when he was a boy, in a field, he saw a horse transform into a woman, it's quite incredible. The point being that there's a territorialism, that the spirit of the religion is gone, there's nothing of the spirit that I can see in Christianity that would say, on some doctrinal grounds, you're not allowed to attend the funeral of a different religion. So, yes, of course, the rabbi will be very comfortable and recognize and be respectful and learn and enrich his or her tradition from it.

(11:42) JM: You're bringing up a crucial issue which I would say relates to the notion of discipleship, because many traditions say that the only way you're going to evolve into a deep spiritual path is if you have a guru, a teacher, someone who is already realized who can help you. You'll never get there on your own. But I know from our previous conversation - we had a beautiful conversation on the question of globalism - and you made a point that you don't endorse individuals giving up their one personal sovereignty to some institution or organization.

(12:22) JT: No, I don't. I don't believe that the concept of submission as emphasized by the Jesuit order, for example, or as emphasized by a number of religions, the idea that you submit to authority 100% is necessarily the best way to do it. Every individual has to be careful about being drawn into cults. They have to be careful that they're not pulled in by psychological, by cheap means, or by the power and charisma of a person who is not necessarily a spiritually evolved person. They may have very strong mental powers associated with their ego, etc. So, the guru point is appropriate in relation to particular traditions, but not all traditions have this idea of the guru. The idea that it's inevitable depends on the context. For example, obviously, if I start off as I have in Brazilian jiu-jitsu, I have to be humble and learn off everyone because I can see and they can demonstrate and it's very testable when I roll with them, whether they're superior to me or not. When you're starting, everyone is superior to you. So, it's very, very clear that you have to learn from the people. But it doesn't mean that the person takes away your sovereignty - they help you, it's a dynamic relationship. Take the amount of interviews that you have done, that provides a store of information that's available for people to access, which is a substitute in some way of having someone to tell you, because it wasn't available for people previously, to have access to such information.

(14:16) JM: Yes, it was considered hidden, now it's all over YouTube.

(14:20) JT: Exactly. I'm skeptical of that. That doesn't mean that people don't need assistance. In religious tradition, there is obviously a hierarchy. But again, we're not meant to have total trust in people. In fact, it's a good thing to be mistrustful of authority in general.

(14:47) JM: My experience with people who have submitted to a guru - there often comes a time when the guru is going to push you out or you're going to decide for yourself that you've had enough and it's time to move on.

(15:02) JT: I've heard Ram Das talk about his experience going to India. There are different contexts and some contexts are very specific. If you're talking about meeting a person why by almost any standard is evolved spiritually, that's a different thing from meeting certain other individuals. The obligation is still on the individual and nobody, nobody that we know of really has superiority over your spirit. I don't see any doctrinal basis that says that a person who is at the pyramid of a hierarchy of human made things really has power of your spirit because that is the antithesis of what most of the religions say, that your only obligation is towards the higher force. So, it doesn't make sense to me. There is this danger, all the time, of this interposition of other people's ego to stop your spiritual path. They don't have control over it in that sense.

(16:08) JM: The other issue everybody on a spiritual path has to come to terms with is dealing with their own ego issues.

(16:22) JT: Perhaps I can explain this structure that I utilized in a simple way as a superstructure that might address or explain some of these issues. Again, I wrote the lines within this context. I don't claim this is original. It reflects a lot of traditions. There are elements I have that are original of the structure. But to make it simple we say we start off with a cell, we grow up, our ego expands, so we start off and our ego expands and grows and accumulates different elements. At a certain point of time or maturity we come to realize that we may not be quite happy with ourselves, or there are other things. Not always, but for people who are on a spiritual quest they want something more, the things around them are not giving them that meaning, they don't have a sense of peace. Then they begin to focus. The person on the spiritual quest then begins to move towards something which is called the true self. The true self would be consistent with your pure consciousness. Again, in the Vedanta, Advaita, non-dual idea... It's funny that when you hear non-dualists talk they always start talking about dualism, it's an interesting phenomenon.

(17:51) So, the idea being that we have this self which grows and that self, I call that a false self, to distinguish it from the true self, is the personality, the thing in the external world, the construct, a thing that has grown to suit the circumstances of our experience. We have to begin to turn away from that and look inside. The idea is that inside, we have it, it's there. It's there from the start. You are that pure consciousness, it's there already, so you don't have to work to find it. You have to do it to do it. But that's not the end of the story. So, before that, there is an idea that you do have to accept that you're a spiritual being in some sense, you do have to accept that you have consciousness in you. I think that the extra dimension to help that process is to understand that consciousness is fundamental.

(18:58) Now, we don't know that, we can't say that. There's a lot of evidence... There are a lot of people who would oppose that view. But

we see that all the spiritual traditions say that consciousness doesn't start, does not grow in the brain, it's not like something that can be squeezed, it's not imagined in that sense. It's something that's pre-existing. That's consistent as we said, with ideas in science, that consciousness is pre-existing. It comes into us, that is the true self. We add things on. The true self is going back and it's beginning to discard things, so it gets more back to the consciousness. In doing so, it creates a sense of peace associated with that. So, that's one element of it. In parallel or even if one ever reaches that stage, there are further elements. There is the element of the journey. The journey is in every tradition in some shape or form. If you look back at the early Christian texts in Ireland, it was a literal journey, like St. Brendan.

(20:08) JM: In a pilgrimage, for example.

(20:09) JT: Pilgrimages are a classic example. We see it in all the stories that [Joseph] Campbell talks about, in myths, of going somewhere...

(20:20) JM: The hero's journey...

(20:21) JT: The hero's journey, it's the same thing. They're journeying for something. But it's not to get some prize, it's to get some spiritual enlightenment. I think the word light as well is an important word. Light, with two elements, in relation to light and the origin of a lot of life, but also in not being heavy. I remember when I met Dennis McPherson, who was an Ojibwe activist who had walked a big long walk to deliver a letter of protest to the then Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, and he was protesting against the treatment of Ojibwes in Canada. I remember the phrase, I was in his office, he said, "Your law, Prime Minister, is heavy on my people. But Ojibwe law is light in my heart." I think that idea of lightness is important. So, the journey is the journey of growth. That could mean a lot of things for different people. It could mean, for example, I see people who care for other people, they sacrifice elements of their life to look after people who need assistance, and that might be the journey for individuals, because it demands great willpower, courage, perseverance and compassion...

(21:53) JM: Self-sacrifice...

(21:54) JT: Self sacrifice. So, the journey doesn't have to be a trip to Hong Kong or going to the East. Sometimes, there's too much emphasis on this idea of going to something exotic, that's not necessary. It's an inner journey. All these journeys reflect the inner journey. Going back to Berkeley, that the inner world is huge, this is an illusion that we fail to see. People say, "Well, go in where? What's in there?" If we don't have any conception of something inside, it makes it more difficult, that can be a mental block.

(22:28) But, if we look at people like William Blake, the great poet and artist and writer who used to see angels from the time he was a child, who was very critical of the evolution of the industrial society. He was very critical of science, he was very critical of the treatment of Africans in London, of children in London. He was very critical of the Satanic mills. He described as imagination - not just imagination like you make something - but the world is imagination and imagination is more important than experience. That again is consistent with Berkeley's idea. But it also brings the attention back, that the inner world is very, very rich. One has to believe that, for a start, and engage in it. That has to be. I can't make an inner journey for you. That journey has to be personal. It has to be a journey that you do.

So, a person may be able to guide you, give you some direction, but the journey is something that you have to do. It's a personal, individual thing. It can't be given to someone else to make on your behalf by substitution or ritual or whatever change. So, the journey aspect is parallel or part of this process.

(23:54) JM: You're reminding me of a phrase from T.S. Eliot where he says that at the end of all of our journeying, we arrive at the place where we first started only to recognize it for the first time.

(24:07) JT: That's right. Here you're looking around, is it over here? Is it over there? And the Gospel of Thomas, again it says that. You look over there, but it's not. It's in there, you have it. So, it's about looking inwards, and in particular to the heart, to the idea of the central energy which it's based on... again, compassion is the key thing. I can't get away from that. There's no other word, it's the best word to describe the central thing. So, the compassion is both a starting point and a point to head to. Compassion is a guiding star as well. If actions or causes are inconsistent with that, in my view it would be the wrong path.

(24:52) JM: I think it's that sense of compassion that makes the various mystical seekers from different religions feel a kinship with each other more than they feel with the orthodox of their own faith because often the orthodox are very judgemental.

(25:12) JT: Well, as far as I understand it, Jesus Christ's greatest criticism was for the legalists, the people that had to become focused on details to the detriment of the spirit that motivated the endeavour.

(25:36) JM: I think they were known as the Pharisees back then.

(25:38) JT: It's described in the Pharisees. That's great. That attitude is everywhere. There is a bit of a problem in that, and I wonder about the psychology of this, because some people's minds may not be able to conceive that. Their minds may be... I wonder about how a person's mind is formed. They can't see the spiritual bit. It may be that some people find it more difficult. But, certainly there's more people who will hold on to the doctrine because it's easier, they don't have to do the other things, it's more predictable, they can exercise power, so those reasons may be more significant. But, absolutely, they also would have gone through the same pathway, so they're going to recognize people. Also, they should have a bit of humility. It's the same in the martial arts. The people at the top usually have a lot more humility than people there, it's a paradoxical situation. It's not necessarily the case, but it's often the case with the higher level martial artists. I think of Maslow...

(26:52) JM: Abraham Maslow...

(26:54) JT: Abraham Maslow, yes. He was very interested in peak experiences, which is in the same domain as mystical experience. Two things that he noticed: one, that people who have attained those experiences are reluctant to talk about it, they don't really want to necessarily share it with someone like him, who's a scientist. I think that's very wise of them to be careful. So, it's difficult to get people sometimes to tell him of the exact nature. But, as far as I understand it, in the latter part of his career, he was focusing on plateau experience and the idea that it doesn't go up and then down. That when you reach a certain level, there's a plateau at a higher level, which I think is a correct description of spiritual evolution.

(27:53) JM: Well, you know, one thing that really impressed me is the

idea that I've seen in Buddhism, Zen Buddhism in particular, that the simplest things in life can be the most profound. I think the phrase they use is, "chopping wood and carrying water."

(28:12) JT: Yes. I have a view that I think back to sometimes. I'm not going to glamorize the past, or glamorize rural Ireland and say it was great when there were loads of problems, that we want it to change as well. But sometimes watching people in different societies doing simple things, making bread, 100% concentration, 100% present, doing something useful, creating joy, sharing. Ways that are important. And certainly bread is a very powerful spiritual symbol. So, I agree with that. I don't think it has to be, "Oh, look at me, I can levitate." You look very serious and you talk in a strange language. I don't think that's what it's about. I think some of the highest spiritual leaders will be people who will not get a second look by anyone around them, and they will seem to blend into the background. Funny enough, that parallel is also in relation to magicians, because if you talk to people in the esoteric context, they realize that the highest person in the particular discipline may be the person who is the sweep and they're cleaning. That's also the idea, I suppose in Christianity, that you don't know who you're dealing with, you can't make judgements with the external appearance.

(29:44) JM: We have a real tendency in our social life to judge people by their external attainments.

(29:52) JT: Yes. It says a journey, when a person is on a journey - whatever metaphor you want to take, ships or boats or walking or going to climb mountains - there's some type of metaphorical journey. On this journey, from the spiritual tradition there are two types of things that characterize the journey. There's distinguishing between reality and illusion, that's an important thing, what is real and what is not real. Real in this sense is not in the evolutionary sense, it's what is of real value and what is not of value in relation to the spiritual quest. You can see that in a number of novels, like *Silas Marner* by George Eliot, for example, where the miser loses his gold but gains a daughter with the golden hair. It was a different level of experience. He lost his miserliness and his miserableness and elevated himself by focusing on the heart.

(30:55) Also, another good example of this general process, we could take *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, or *Scrooge* if people have seen the film. That book identifies a classic mystical experience. Ebenezer Scrooge goes home, he's in his house, he may have a hypnagogic experience, or he may have had a hallucination, or it may be real. He meets Marley's ghost, his old partner. Marley is being good, trying to help him to indicate that there's something wrong with his life. So, then we have Scrooge whose taken by the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future - so we have the transcendent of time and space, which is relevant in the mystical experience. He sees the effect of his behaviour, as a person does in a near-death experience, he sees the effect he has on others. He goes through that process, comes back and realizes what has been wrong with his life and celebrates Christmas thereafter. It's a classic example of a mystical event and the implications that kind of have emphasized that a key value is that compassion. Dickens says that even though people didn't really trust him, he didn't care, he smiled afterwards and he continued to celebrate Christmas. People can get the difference between the two characters, it's not difficult to understand.

(32:30) JM: His heart was opened up.

(32:312) JT: His heart was opened up. So, this mystical journey can be worked out through a disciplined way, but sometimes, particular experiences will accelerate this process. The near-death experience is one of those that can accelerate. We know that Buddhist meditators can create those things, but they're familiar with the cycle anyway. So, people that have been meditating and contemplating in a positive way about other people, their own life, they will begin to move. We always have this idea of a ladder, these symbols of moving up levels. When one does engage on a spiritual quest, one does feel like one is moving up levels. So, one has a sense, OK, I understand that this is a different level that I'm on. That's a natural process, as well as a specific process in a number of different [traditions].

(33:22) JM: My sense of the spiritual path is that it's possible that it can be joyful from start to finish. For example, the yogis talk about *ananda*, the sense of bliss that accompanies the path. But also, from a Freudian perspective, we have the idea of defense mechanisms. If we have quirks in our personality, if we are trying to protect ourselves from seeing ourselves more deeply, we have defense mechanisms. Some people are very well defended. In that instance where we're not willing, because of our defense mechanism, to take a joyful path we're often pushed, if we're on the path, we're pushed into a painful learning situation which can be very beneficial at the end of the day, but it may break our heart before we learn the lessons that are to be learned.

(34:19) JT: That's very well put. I couldn't have put it better myself. That's a very profound statement and very true. I would agree with that proposition. What you are suggesting as well, and this is another important point, a part of the movement from the self to the true self is the transcendence of the ego. This is where we move on towards... this is an ongoing process. It's not that we don't have an ego. We need to have an ego, we need to be able to protect ourselves. We're not meant to become limp, defenseless people that can't troll someone if they attack us. You're entitled to do so, to defend yourself. We can see that in the Shaolin Temple, for example, the way that martial arts grew out of religious traditions. Have you been to the Shaolin Temple?

(35:15) JM: I have not been to the Shaolin Temple, but you will see here in our home pictures and sculptures of Bodhidharma, the founder.

(35:24) JT: Yes. I was joking there. I have done something you didn't. [laughing]

(35:32) JM: Oh, you've done many things I've never done.

(35:34) JT: So, the transcendence of the ego, we see this is alchemy. That's what the mirror of the distillation, getting rid of certain things, moving to a higher level, it's working on yourself. That doesn't go away. We all have to work on ourselves and test ourselves. In a Christian sense, I hear some people say, "Well, I don't understand what the concept of sin is about." We can simply see it in terms of things that are not good for other people, but it's also not good for us to be engaged in certain things. That's what the basic idea is. The same process is in all religious traditions. If we take the self, the true self, we're going on a journey, we're trying to identify what's real and what's not real. Buddhism is very good at what's illusory and attachment to things that are not true for the path, because we don't want to stop, we don't want to go off on a diversion.

(36:41) I think the French word for entertainment is diversion, or diversion, so that's an idea. You're going on a spiritual path and they say, "Oh, come over here Jeffrey, look at what I have to offer you." It looks good for a while, but it doesn't satisfy. As well as, what is knowledge and what is not knowledge, and the right type of knowledge. All the mathematical formulas are fantastic but it may not give you any spiritual insight. There has to be a context in which knowledge operates. Also, revelation through spiritual things is superior in all these traditions to worked out logic, or the rational mind, which is a difficult concept to get to.

(37:30) JM: Now, you used earlier Maslow's notion of the plateau experience. But my sense is that when you're on a spiritual path, it doesn't end, it keeps going and going.

(37:42) JT: So, that's an important point. The analogy is water. I think water is a classic. There's no mistake that they use it in baptisms and other traditions. Taoism is very based on water. The idea is that it's not good for water to become a stagnant pool. Water should flow, we're always going to be moving. We have to be aware of that. We have to know that life can never stay the same. We have to grow, we have to move, things will change, we can't grip onto the present and not let go of it and stop yourself developing, stop other people developing. So, yes, it's a movement, constantly forward.

(38:24) But, as the force gathers... water is self-sustaining. [Like] the Tao Te Ching where the softness overcomes the hardness, the water will wear away the stones through its own pressure. The same thing with the constant movement of the self, the spirit or yin kind of energy that it begins to create a path, it may be pathways in the brain if you want to look at it in those terms, which I'm not positive about. The idea then is that true practice and true affirmation of basic values of compassion and kindness, of helping people, or service, that the person begins to transcend the ego and transcend the problems of existence.

(39:15) Now, there's a different emphasis in Buddhism and Christianity. They often represent Buddhism as saying that we should avoid suffering. If the Buddha said that, I'm not sure I'd agree with it. I wonder, do we actually get that emphasis correct. Christianity has a different view about suffering. My view is that suffering is the nature of this existence, but we have to learn methods to cope with this suffering and be to joyous and overcoming of that.

(39:46) JM: My sense is that when the Buddhists talk about suffering, they don't mean pain. I have heard Buddhist teachers say that you can be sick, you can be in pain and misery, but not be suffering in your heart.

(40:03) JT: That's correct. That has to be the correct interpretation, so that is very well put. I agree with you. But some people represent things. It's not as if the Buddhists are retreating from the world. But in relation to their spirit, the spirit is not engaging in practices which will cause suffering to themselves or others. That's where they join together.

(40:30) JM: It's probably worth mentioning that there are academic critics of the postmodern deconstructionist variety who disagree entirely with the notion of the perennial philosophy or the primordial tradition. They say mystical experiences are ineffable so that when someone who is a Buddhist describes their experience, someone who is a Christian describes it, we don't even know what they're talking about, actually. So, we can't say that there's a common element.

(41:01) JT: Well, I could begin to deconstruct that statement and say, is it really true that they are ineffable. I understand the point and I use that point. There's another term 'difficult to explain' which is commonly used, which I've used, so the idea that a person can't say anything about the experience is wrong.

(41:25) JM: We've been talking about it for some time.

(41:28) JT: Exactly. The postmodernist deconstruction, I have no time for that, really. I think it's a waste because you have to accept, unfortunately - and I'm sure there are great ones out there - but, I'll tell you my honest view. There are a lot of people in academia who have political perspectives, ideological perspectives that are antithetical towards spiritual quests. They may come from particular backgrounds. There is evidence of infiltration, to utilize the institution to promote a particular agenda. So, they would say that. What does that leave us with? You have to look from a pragmatic perspective of the consequences of these things.

(42:18) You see the same thing with Beckett. The modern thing breaks everything down, deconstructs it and there's nothing left. It's like when you're a child; I remember getting a car from my father. It's great. You open it up because you want to see what's inside and you break it to get inside. You want to see how it's made. By the time you have deconstructed it, there's nothing left, you can't put it back together again. If they help people out in the world to deal with their spiritual challenges, that's grand. But a lot of them won't.

(42:54) There's also a lot of deconstruction of the very idea of self by some psychologists and philosophers. I see that as a very bad and negative direction and I see it as related to the scientific agenda which wants to dehumanize people, to take away that idea that they are superior to their physical form, that they're something less. So, they go together. Some of these higher level things sound very impressive, it sounds very learned, it sounds very clever, but it's not very wise and it's not going to help people. That's a generalization.

(43:38) JM: On the positive side, because everything usually has a positive side, I think some of these deconstructionists, they look at... some people who view the perennial tradition as establishing a spiritual hierarchy with the great white leaders at the top, the great white brotherhood. At the very bottom are indigenous people practicing voodoo and black magic and the dark arts. They say no, indigenous spirituality is just as valuable.

(44:12) JT: Oh, yes. I have the greatest respect for indigenous spirituality. It's not all the same though. You have to be careful because the traditions, say for example of the people here in New Mexico, the Native peoples, may not be the same as a tribe somewhere else. We can't glorify traditional behaviour. There's loads of traditional behaviour that we don't have to tolerate or accept, whatever. But in relation to the idea that they are bad, per se, that's obviously wrong. There's a great spiritual wisdom among the Native peoples of North and South America and of other peoples from around the world. So, we have to be very careful.

(45:11) Particularly, there are a lot of legal cases about cultural practices in America, where people come from different countries where it was their religious practice, but it's against the law here. Of course, if they come to the United States, people have to abide by US laws, so there are ways to accommodate that difference. But, in fact, it's

kind of the opposite in some ways. If you look at the amount of people that are interested in going to South America for ayahuasca experiences, with shamans from the tribes, that's pulling the other way around. It's putting the shamanism in...

(45:48) JM: That also happens, yes. Well, we've covered a lot of ground here. These are conversations that could go on for 10,000 years. There's much more to say. Fortunately, you're going to be here with me in Albuquerque yet another day. I want to have more conversations with you. I want to look at the dark side of mysticism.

(46:10) JT: Can I finish one point? The last point I wanted to mention is that through persistent practices... I have an idea that we create what I call the 'nexus to the numinous', that people who practice the mystical create, as it were, a bigger connection to a higher reality. I think, if you look at the Pantheon in Rome, there's a hole in the top. So, you have the gods but there's a hole in the top. It's the dome, it's the skull. It's reflecting the idea that you create a connection to the higher world. You see that in the duomo, which is again, the dome, in say, Florence, Brunelleschi's Duomo. You can go up the steps behind so you arrive at the top so you can see the panorama all around. That reflects the fact that people who engage in the path eventually come to a stage where they are open to that peaceful zone, which keeps them going on alone. So, that's kind of the end route.

(47:13) JM: I'm under the impression that people on the path, in a way, are like trailblazers that help open a route for other people to follow, which you have certainly done. I want, for our viewers, to recommend your book very highly. *The Mystical Accord*, it's a wonderful piece of scholarship and poetry. But it's more than just poetry. You refer to them as sutras. It's really a work of inspiration.

(47:43) JT: I really appreciate your kind comments. Thank you for that.

(47:48) JM: Thank you for being with me and for our viewers who have come this far, this is our fourth interview. I hope to do a couple more with you while you're here in Albuquerque, James.

(47:57) JT: I'm looking forward to it. Thank you very much.

(48:00) JM: Thank you. And thank you for being with us. •

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The Portrait: Mirror of the Soul

Leah Poller

Where Consciousness Resides – One Artist’s Quest

*And when the sound of all the declarations of our sincerest intentions has died away on the wind,
dance with me in the infinite pause before the next great inhale of the breath that is breathing us all into being,
not filling the emptiness from the outside or from within.*

*Don't say, "Yes!"
Just take my hand and dance with me.*

Oriah Mountain Dreamer



Leah Poller | Double Dare

In another life, I would have been a dancer or a scientist. How else to explain that in this life, as an artist with over forty years of a multi-level, international career, I have consistently been attracted to a deeper understanding of the origins of my creativity, supported by persistent self-observation. Simply stated, for me, the consciousness of creating art supersedes the “rendement”... that which the beholder is invited to see. That other gaze I could not have, since it was triggered by a very subjective reflex, based on millions of unidentifiable and inexplicable thoughts, experiences, and beliefs that would forever be out of the realm of my knowing.

But how consciously, how in the moment, how aware I could be during the process of the “doing” of my chosen discipline – sculpture – would forever be my over-arching challenge. Not surprisingly, my desire to become a painter – aka a “master illusionist” (as forewarned by my professor at the Beaux Arts of Paris, I was apparently terribly unsuited for canvas) was supplanted by the 3-dimensional world of sculpture, to which I would add time and emotion as additional dimensions.

In a contrarian manner, as the entire art world veered onto the path of abstraction and its many derivatives of the day and for the 30 years to follow, I resolutely remained true to the 2 most concrete materials I encountered early on in my path: figurative realism and bronze. The first provided an unequivocal yardstick to measure whether I could see what I was seeing, whether my hand could carry out the intricate task of converting what was being seen from my eye to my brain to what could be seen by another and recognized as such...and then transmuting it like an alchemist into the immutable, unforgiving material of bronze, utilized by Man since time in memoriam in the earliest manifestations of art/society/civilization.

Months of work, days of preparation for casting, and fiery, molten seconds to either become...or not. Did it breathe? Did its soul emerge?

Long before women’s issues captured the headlines, I had begun my “Warrior Women” series, prescient for the forthcoming Women’s Liberation Movement...and no less of an imperative today. I used my pre-teen daughter as my in-house model – she made known to me that she wanted a baby. And so, I created *On Her Mind*, in which her inner thoughts became actualized and exteriorized, “birthing” her mind’s ruminations generated by raging, puberty-driven hormones. Referencing the African manner of binding the baby to the mother, her swaddled infant (half embryo/half baby doll) became a ribbon-wrapped head-dress. The African breastplate of a warrior protected her back. In the two versions of this sculpture, her Gelsomina eyes were treated in two different manners: one filled in, one with recessed hollows – a clue to what would follow.

In those early stages of honing my skills as a sculptor, the following work – a commissioned portrait – immediately revealed my three over-arching prerequisites for creating a figurative work that would be real, surreal, consciously real, “awake and alive and original,” all at once:

- If I did not have a lifetime of knowledge of my subjects (as I had with my daughter), if what went on in their minds was not revealed to me, then how would their presence ever know where to manifest in the endless configurations possible for creating their beingness in an inert material? Where would their breath come from?
- If they were not animated and moving about my space, how would I capture the fleeting signs of aliveness?
- And if I were to sculpt my subject from the inside out, where would I anchor their soul in the infinite space of a starting point, somewhere tangible and real?

My process took an extraordinary turn: We would have to talk. Lots. Share stories. Establish trust. Display emotions. And once I could “know my subject” from the inside out, I could begin to sculpt. Not before.

Posing was out of the question. Only the unself-conscious space shared while chatting, reading, musing, would provide enough animated information for me to access the breathing soul.

My consciousness and their consciousness would need to find a common ground, from an arbitrary (any!) point of departure in space, in movement, and in breath. For me, the place, the exact source, was revealed in the deepest recesses of the eye, where millions of cells of the optic nerve meet the only exit to the otherwise "huis-clos" of the cranium. There, where the eye/brain confronts the outside world would be my fixation point. From there, a person could emerge.

Nobel prize winner Eric Kandel, in his masterful *The Age of Insight*, explains both the art of seeing and the mechanics of seeing. If, in fact, we see only 20% of "out there," then the "in here" is where? States Kandel, "We do not have direct access to the physical world. It may feel as if we have direct access, but this is an illusion created by our brain."

For the brain to connect a description of something "out there" with something "in here," our own individual experience occurs to us as *unconscious observers*. (*A Universe of Consciousness* -G. Tononi/G Edelman). No longer just artist, I would have to become the *conscious observer*.

Helmholz called this process "unconscious inference" and applies to emotion and empathy as well as perception. For me to share in it with my subject, it required my "conscious inference", a unique *pas de deux* that I would dance with my subject.

Could an artist dare to untangle Schopenhauer's "world knot"? Could imagination applied creatively reveal consciousness in matter, recognizable to the beholder? Was this not the quest of science, to find the roots of consciousness in us? Would it be my quest, to give form and matter to consciousness?

Moreover, the face, with all its evidence of living an inner and outer existence, was my fatal attraction. It has a special place of recognition in our brain: Neuroscientists Doris Tsao and Margaret Livingstone see the face as the pinnacle pathway offering the "most informative stimuli we ever perceive: even a split-second glimpse of a person's face tells us their identity, mood, age, race, and direction of attention". Could that split-second be captured over the lengthy process required by sculpting?

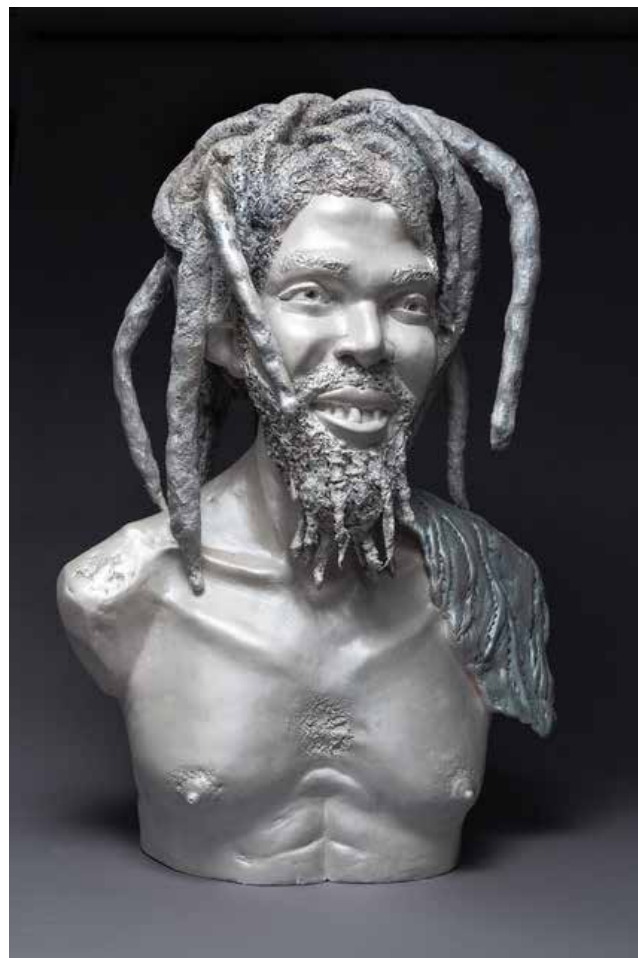
Renowned Italian photographer Silvio Wolf, in a series of lengthy conversations shared about our processes, marveled persistently that in a second, the shutter of his camera caught an instant of what was in its frame, whereas I could spend months to capture an instant of human emotion that appeared from "somewhere arbitrary out there", revealed like a camera but from nowhere/anywhere.

My next portrait – a commission of Chilean journalist-poet and correspondent to the Whitehouse for *Agence France-Presse* spent his after-hours in my basement studio in Washington where I had returned after twenty years in Paris. In a most Latino-macho manner, he was terribly concerned by the "good looks" of his portrait. Hours and hours of conversation followed by weeks and weeks of work...his insistence on seeing what I was doing never abated.

Finally, late one evening at the end of a session, I acquiesced ...and turned the pedestal to face him. His reaction was like a baseball bat to my solar plexus. And then, he began to sob. What do you do when a grown man sobs shamelessly before you? I gave him time to regain



Leah Poller | On Her Mind



Leah Poller | Jasom My Sunflower Man

control (I needed it, too!) and said, "Is it okay?", fearing the worst. He responded, "You know me better than my mother does..."

Our physical form is an external manifestation of our thoughts, one of which reigns supreme – how we see ourselves. If I could see my subject as my subject sees herself/himself, in her/his secret thoughts, most intimate thoughts, what would be seen?

There are entities where the behavior of the whole cannot be derived from its individual elements nor from the way these elements fit together; rather the opposite is true: the properties of any of the parts are determined by the intrinsic structural laws of the whole.

Gombrich, the Father of art criticism stated that "If art is incomplete without the perceptual and emotional involvement of the viewer" (the beholder concept), then indeed, what happens when the initial beholder is the artist? What in fact was happening between me and my subject as the work slowly, painstakingly revealed the "being-ness" that I sought in my subject?

Quite innocently, I had embarked on a transformative journey that would make each successive portrait a profound experience for my subject, and equally for myself. Using clay, plaster, fire and molten metal as a "dream-catcher" of souls, the subject performed like a delicate butterfly hovering amongst the flowers, captured long enough to reveal its nature and released again to pollinate the world with knowledge obtained from being caught in my Venus flytrap for a second of a lifetime.

Over time, with each successive subject, I began to develop a reverence, a spiritual acceptance of a unique responsibility. I had become the "keeper" of a lifetime of inner experience, given permission to mold it into a visible presence, and in so doing, provoking an expanded consciousness both in my subject, and in myself.

This mutual transformation became clear when I executed the portrait of Asian-American saxophonist Fred Ho. His rigor, talent, (playwright, professor, author, revolutionary musician, and socially conscious activist) and brilliance had been recognized worldwide. What I didn't know at the time was that he was in stage 4 metastasized cancer and had little time left. To respect his health requirements, I was asked to move my studio to my kitchen and for four months, racing against the clock, we began "our dance." What transpired was somewhat miraculous, and this I confirmed from his family and lifelong intimates after the memorial service and final concert in his honor at BAM a year later, as they communed face to face with *Double Dare – an homage to Fred Ho*.

For perhaps the first and only time in his adult life, Fred had surrendered, yet never capitulated. Together, we hand wrestled his guarded psyche to the mat. We peeled back layers and layers of his most secret self, his greatest fears, his loves lived and lost. We laid them out, sorted through them, and reassembled them into a complete whole. No shame. No blame. Absolved from his darkest nightmares, he was at peace with his effigy. He trusted me to provide an Earthbound repository for his soul's full-ness.

Most recently, the completion of *My Sunflower Man* left me somewhat agape. The hip-length dreadlocks of my Rastafarian artist-humanist-social activist subject stood in for Schopenhauer's "world knot" ... braided and unbraided, tousled and twisted in a different configuration at each sitting... while this beaming, happy, love-infused soul shared his inner life story with me. He is the most open and externalized soul I had ever encountered, stunning and electric, calming and mystical. With nary an artifice to hide behind. It was like a beaming light that eclipsed

the sun. As he prepared to leave New York to re-establish his Ethiopian agrarian roots in communal farming, the sculpting felt more like freeing a giant-leafed houseplant from a constrained pot, helping give flight to this force of nature.

And when the plaster cast was returned and I began the patina process, the undercoat of pearlescent white refused, absolutely rejected, any subsequent darker layers that would have seemed more realistic to the subject. No, he was light. All light. Only light.

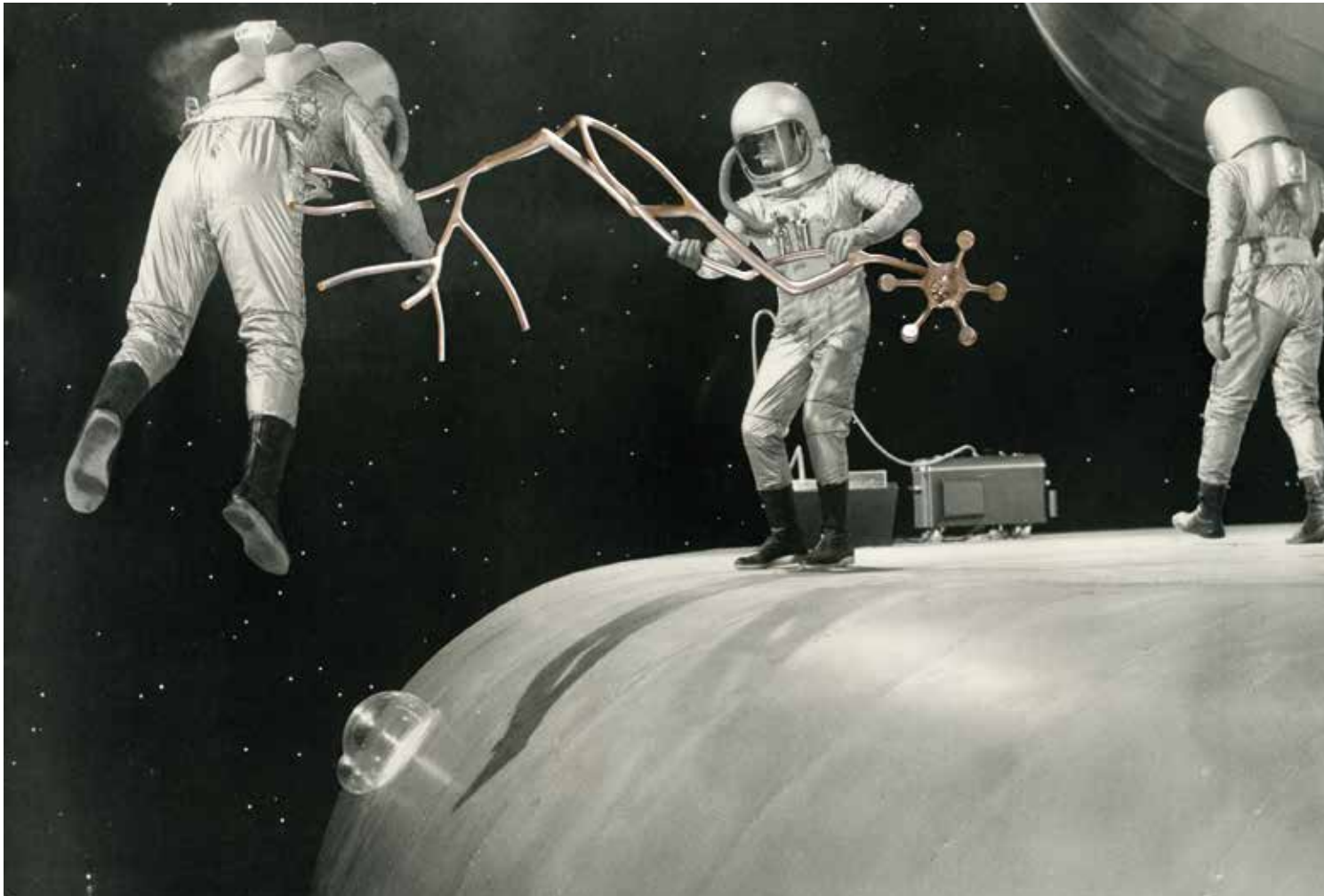
Three months later, the Black Lives Matter movement erupted...and this sculpture proclaimed: "We are all recipients and givers of light." His message from profound consciousness was transmitted and received.

Having one's soul captured is not to lose it, but to reveal it for infinity, with beauty, truth, sensitivity, and sincerity. The transformative nature of this intangible phenomenon of discovery of oneself, while being revealed as truth to all beholders is a consciousness of high order. My Mirror of the Soul quest continues. ■



Leah Poller | As Only His Mother Knows Him (detail)

UNIVERSE - MULTIVERSE - OMNIVERSE
LEADING DISCOVERIES FROM THE
Omniverse



Daniel Rothbart, *Space Engineers*, Collage

¹Excerpted from
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By Alfred Lambremont Webre, JD, MEd

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Following early 21st century definitions in video games (“Ben 10: Omniverse (Video Game),” and in string theory (Bertolacci, 2014), the “Omniverse” has emerged in science as the third major cosmological body—after the Universe and the Multiverse—through which humanity comprehends the cosmos.

Q: What are the Universe, the Multiverse, and the Omniverse?

A: These are the three principal cosmological bodies through which humanity comprehends the Cosmos.

Q: What is our Universe?

A: Our Universe is an organic singularity of time, energy, space, and matter that was discovered by the Sumerian astronomers around 3500-3200BC. The visible universe accounts for only 4% of all matter in the material Universe, and “dark matter” is the term that the scientific canon gives to the remaining 96% non-visible domain of our Universe. According to one interdimensional source, the name of our Universe is “Uversa.”

Q: What is our Multiverse?

A: The Multiverse is the totality of all Universes, named after a term “multiverse” coined by the American psychologist William James in 1895.

Q: What is the Omniverse?

A: The Omniverse is the integrated whole of all the Universes in the Multiverse and the Spiritual dimensions that include the intelligent civilizations of souls, Spiritual Entities, and Source [“God”].

Q: When was the Omniverse discovered?

A: Many researchers are working on uncovering the Omniverse, sometimes using other terminologies. Early Omniverse researchers include Omniverse (Philip Walker, 2010) and Ethan Zaghmut Wise (2011). The year 2014 saw an explosion of formal research on the Omniverse, with Scientist David Bertolacci’s *Theory of the Omniverse*, author Wes Penre’s research on the KHAA, a functional equivalent term for the Omniverse, and Alfred Lambremont Webre’s book *The Dimensional Ecology of the Omniverse*.

Different people often simultaneously make related scientific discoveries at different places on Earth, and the discovery of the Omniverse is such an example.

Q: What are the key Purposes of the Dimensional Ecology of the Omniverse?

A: A core mission of the Dimensional Ecology of the Omniverse appears to be the creation and development of souls and spiritual beings in the spiritual dimension.

The intelligent civilizations of souls and of spiritual beings, along with Source (God), collectively create and maintain the totality of the universes of time, space, matter, and energy in the *Exopolitical* dimensions (the multiverse).

The purposes of the Dimensional Ecology of the Omniverse include the facilitation of multidimensional development and moral growth of souls in all dimensions of the Omniverse, through a variety of activities. Souls based in the spiritual dimensions incarnate as intelligent entities in the *Exopolitical* dimensions, and by acquiring the moral experience of life, for example as an Earthling human, they can advance their individual soul development.

The soul is a holographic fragment of Source (God) and by advancing its development, it advances the development of the collective spiritual dimension itself.

Q: What is the Omniverse Equation?

A: The Omniverse Equation is the following:

Omniverse = Multiverse + Spiritual Dimensions

The Dimensional Ecology of the Omniverse hypothesis expands on the conventional scientific definition of the multiverse.

Current scientific convention considers the Multiverse to consist solely of parallel physical universes of time, space, energy and matter, of which our physical universe is one.

One conventional view of the Multiverse is that “the universe we live in may not be the only one out there. In fact, our universe could be just one of an infinite [or finite] number of universes making up a “multiverse.”

The spiritual dimension of the Omniverse provides the energy (energy that human scientists such as Lawrence M. Krauss, author of *A Universe from Nothing*, cannot now account for) needed for the creation and maintenance of each physical universe in the Multiverse.

Q: Why is the Omniverse a “new hypothesis of reality”?

A: While not making specific reference to the hypothesis of the dimensional ecology of the Omniverse, advanced conceptual physicists such as Professor Amit Goswami (1993) have argued that contemporary science’s assumption that “only matter—consisting of atoms or, ultimately, elementary particles—is real” is inadequate and that a new hypothesis of reality is required.

The dimensional ecology of the Omniverse hypothesis and the replicable *prima facie* evidence that supports it provide the necessary tools for a new hypothesis of reality, as well as for the desired “new navigation under a new worldview,” the need for which Professor Goswami (1993) has identified.

Q: Is Omniverse Science the Science of God?

A: There now exists replicable empirical *prima facie* evidence that confirms some essential aspects of what major spiritual and religious traditions have taught about the nature of Source (God).

This evidence informs us that the Source (God) of the Omniverse consists of the totality of the spiritual dimension.

God has empirically been found to comprise the intelligent civilizations of souls, the intelligent civilizations of spiritual beings, and the Source (God) itself.

This collective entity of the spiritual dimension has been empirically found to be responsible for the ongoing creation of the physical side of the Omniverse, known as the *Exopolitical* dimensions.

The totality of the spiritual dimension, including God/Source, the intelligent civilizations of souls, and the intelligent civilizations of advanced spiritual beings is functionally God/Source and acts collectively for the ongoing creation and maintenance of the *Exopolitical* dimensions of the Omniverse.

Q: How many Universes are there in the Multiverse?

A: The total number of universes besides our own estimated to exist in the multiverse is staggering. The multiverse is defined as the total of all universes, including our own, and is thought to encompass “all space, time, matter, and energy.”

Physicists Andrei Linde and Vitaly Vanchurin (2015) of Stanford University recently calculated “that the total number of such universes, in the simplest inflationary models, may exceed” a number one can write as $10 > 7TH$ (10 raised to the 7th power).

This is a deceptively compact notation. First, $10 > 7TH$ is a 1 with seven zeroes after it, that is, 10,000,000 or ten million. Next, 10 raised to the ten-millionth power, that is, $10 > 10,000,000th$ is a 1 with ten million zeroes after it.

Written out with six zeroes to the inch, it would stretch for about 26 miles. However, the next step, raising 10 to the power of that 26-mile number, generates a number so large that we cannot name it, let alone write it out. It would stretch for at least 260 million miles.

Linde and Vanchurin also said “This humongous number is strongly model dependent and may change when one uses different definitions of what is the boundary of eternal inflation.” (Linde & Vanchurin, 2015)

Q: How many habitable Earth-like planets are there in our Universe?

A: One German supercomputer simulation estimates that there are “500 billion galaxies in our universe.” (Webre, 2015a)

Astronomers now estimate there are 100 billion habitable Earth-like planets in our Milky Way galaxy and 50 sextillion habitable Earth-like planets in our particular universe.

A tentative finding, that our universe is infinite, is congruent with Linde and Vanchurin’s finding that there are a “humongous” (Linde & Vanchurin, 2015) number of universes in the Multiverse, since universes that extend forever in space and go on forever in time can coexist in parallel with each other.

Q: What is the number of intelligent civilizations in our Multiverse?

A: A conservative estimate of the number of communicating intelligent civilizations in our universe is one hundred billion (100,000,000,000).

This estimate is based on the 1960 Drake equation which assumes that there are only twelve communicating intelligent civilizations in our Milky Way galaxy, out of the estimated 100 billion habitable Earth-like planets.

Q: Then, how many intelligent civilizations might there be in the Multiverse?

A: If we multiply the Drake equation-based estimate of a hundred billion communicating intelligent civilizations in our universe by Linde and Vanchurin’s calculation of the number of universes in the Multiverse, we arrive at the number of intelligent civilizations in the Multiverse as being 100,000,000,000 times that 260-million-mile-long number. It is not physically possible to actually write that number out fully.

Q: How are governments educating the world about our populated Universe and Multiverse?

A: World public opinion is congruent with the recent science-based estimates that there are one hundred billion communicating intelligent civilizations in our universe, and an even more “humongous” number of communicating intelligent civilizations in the Multiverse.

The possibility that we live in a populated cosmos is conventionally thought to be controversial and esoteric.

Public opinion around the world is divided as to whether we are alone in the cosmos. The world public has been quarantined from real knowledge about the actual role of non-Earth intelligent civilizations on Earth. Instead of public education about an extraterrestrial presence and Earth’s history in the galaxy, governments have knowingly fed the world public a steady diet of disinformation and brainwashing about the Earth’s interactions with intelligent civilizations.

Q: What was the 1953 CIA Robertson Panel?

A: Ever since the 1953 US Central Intelligence Agency Robertson Panel, the facts of intelligent civilizations and their visitations to Earth have been classified and off limits for civil society.

Consequently, there is a divided world public opinion about the presence of extraterrestrial, hyperdimensional, and crypto-terrestrial civilizations in Earth’s environment.

Nevertheless, there is a core of world public opinion and of public opinion in specific nations that accepts that humanity co-exists in a cosmos populated by other intelligent civilizations.

One 2013 public-opinion poll of 5,886 US adult residents found that “37 percent affirmed a belief in the existence of extraterrestrial life, 21 percent denied such a belief, and 42 percent were uncertain, responding ‘I’m not sure.’” (Webre, 2015a)

A 2010 poll by the French market-research company Ipsos poll of world public opinion on extraterrestrials found that “one in five (20 percent) of presumably human adults surveyed in 22 countries (representing 75 percent of the world’s GDP) say they believe that alien beings have come down to Earth and walk amongst us in our communities disguised as ‘us.’” (Webre, 2015a)

People in India (45 percent) and China (42 percent) are most likely to believe that extraterrestrials are visiting Earth.

The science of *Exopolitics* and the worldwide community of *Exopolitics* researchers monitor trends toward official “Partial” and “Full” disclosure by governments of Earth being visited by intelligent civilizations (Scheck, & Piacenza, 2019).

Q: What are the intelligent civilizations of Souls?

A: By intelligent civilizations Souls, I mean civilizations of individuated, non-local, conscious, and intelligent entities that are based in the dimensions of the Spiritual Dimensions Inter-life (or afterlife), including the Afterlife/Inter-life Matrix.

Each soul, by the evidence, is a holographic fragment of the original Source (God), the creator of the spiritual dimensions.

One hypothesis about the nature of the Source (God) supported by empirical data is based on a replicable finding that the Source (God) originally responsible for the spiritual dimensions manifests as a vast “Sea of Light” within the spiritual dimensions. Souls, including yours and mine, are formed as “eggs of Light” or holographic fragments from that Sea of Light in an as-yet unrevealed process.

These replicable findings are that each soul is a holographic fragment of the whole of Source (God).

To be sure, Omniverse researchers such as Wes Penre, are developing congruent although differing definitions of the Soul, discussed later.

Q: What is World Public Opinion about the Spiritual Dimensions?

A: According to a 2011 Ipsos poll taken in 23 nations among 18,829 adults, “one half (51 percent) of global citizens definitely believe in a “divine entity”, compared to 18 percent who don’t and 17 percent who just aren’t sure.”

The Ipsos poll also found that “similarly, half (51 percent) believe in some kind of afterlife, while the remaining half believe they will either just ‘cease to exist’ (23 percent) or simply ‘don’t know’ (26 percent) about a hereafter. Seven percent of respondents believe in reincarnation.” An exception is the United States of America, where 25% of respondents believe in reincarnation (Ipsos MORI, n.d.).

A substantial core of world public opinion thus has a view of reality that is congruent with the *prima facie* replicable, empirical evidence for an Inter-life (afterlife), intelligent civilizations of souls, civilizations of spiritual beings, and a Source (God) or Creator.

Q: What is the Omniverse Hypothesis?

A: A reasonable observer will be able to conclude that *prima facie* empirical evidence supports the dimensional ecology of the Omniverse hypothesis.

This hypothesis holds that we earthlings live in a dimensional ecology of intelligent life that encompasses intelligent civilizations based in parallel dimensions and universes in the Multiverse as well as souls, spiritual beings, and Source (God) in the spiritual dimensions.

Together, the *Exopolitical* dimensions and the spiritual dimensions form the Omniverse.

The totality of the Spiritual dimensions (souls, spiritual beings and God) function as the source of the universes of the Multiverse.

Q: What are the “Spiritual Dimensions” and what is the evidence for them?

A: The universes of the Multiverse are not the only dimensions where intelligent civilizations are based. There is *prima facie* replicable, empirical evidence of intelligent civilizations that are based on dimensions that are outside the Multiverse.

We can term these dimensions the “spiritual dimensions”.

Dr. Michael Newton’s data base — one important database of such empirical evidence for the existence of intelligent civilizations in the spiritual dimensions — is derived from more than 7,000 cases of replicable hypnotic regressions of soul memories of the Inter-life (or afterlife), developed according to a standard laboratory protocol by Dr. Michael Newton.

This database is thus reported to contain replicable evidence for the intelligent civilizations of souls, for the intelligent civilizations of spiritual beings, and for the Source (God). (Newton, 2008), (Newton, 2009)

Wes Penre’s Analysis of the Forced Birth-Death Cycle, the Afterlife/Inter-life Matrix, and Their Implications for Soul Liberation From the AI Singularity at Bodily Death

Researcher Wes Penre has raised reasonable issues of analysis and perception around the systemic significance of the data developed by Dr. Michael Newton. According to Wes Penre, Dr. Michael Newton’s data accurately identifies an Afterlife domain of human Souls that, in fact, is a form of controlled “Reincarnation Mind control Soul Prison” or Afterlife/Inter-life Matrix designed and operated by an Alien Invasion Force (AIF) of manipulatory AI (Artificial Intelligence) and negative Extraterrestrials that feed off the energy of the captive Earth Human Soul population unconsciously recycling through the life-death-reincarnation cycle (Penre, (n.d.a). (Newton, 2008), (Newton, 2009)

According to Wes Penre, Dr. Michael Newton’s data does not identify the full KHAA or Spiritual Dimensions of the Omniverse. Rather, Newton’s data accurately identifies the controlled forced birth-death cycle and Afterlife/Inter-life Matrix around Earth and presumably other Reincarnation venues identified by Newton’s data in our Universe. (Penre, (n.d.a). (Newton, 2008), (Newton, 2009)

In his 2016 book, *Synthetic Super Intelligence and the Transmutation of Humankind*, Wes Penre concludes that human Souls currently have three options when faced with the existential challenge of the Forced Birth-Death Recycling and the AI Singularity:

Option 1 — Transhumanist Agenda: Human souls will unconsciously opt to integrate with AI, by uploading to an AI system and have the AI take over their cybernetic functions in what is known as the Transhumanist Agenda. The Transhumanist Agenda is programmed for this.

Option 2 — Conscious Reincarnation — Courageous and dutiful human Souls can opt to reincarnate with the intent of elevating the frequency and consciousness of Earth and deconstructing the Transhumanist Agenda. Wes Penre argues that given the amnesia accompanying Incarnation, individuals Souls will unlikely have much of an effect on neutralizing the Transhumanist Agenda.

Option 3 — Abandon the Battlefield — This option consists of Souls after bodily death escaping the Afterlife/Inter-life Matrix altogether and Ascending

directly into the KHAA of the Spiritual Dimensions of the Omniverse. Wes Penre suggests that incarnating Souls prepare ourselves with mediation and awareness during our lifetimes to escape the Reincarnation Matrix by (1) avoiding the “Reincarnation Tunnel, Light, Welcoming Guides & Relatives”, and (2) opt for exiting through “holes” or mini portals that are now appearing in the artificial Matrix that has been built around Earth by the manipulatory civilizations holding Earth humans in a forced reincarnation prison. In his books and papers, Wes Penre offers Spiritual exercises and strategies for escaping the Matrix of Reincarnation and Earth (Penre, 2016).

Makia Freeman has published a popular version of Wes Penre’s hypothesis in *Soul-Catching Net — Are We “Recycled” at Death to Remain in the Matrix?* (Freeman, 2015)

Makia Freeman writes,

The idea of a soul-catching net or soul net that awaits us at death — and keeps us in the Matrix — is a grim and highly disturbing notion, but one which I believe has to be considered by all serious researchers of the global conspiracy. True free thinkers want to know exactly where the global conspiracy rabbit hole ends. Just how far does the suppression go? Past this lifetime? Past this planet? Well, the answer may well be yes to both.

After you spend years of research going through the many layers of political corruption, corporatocracy, surveillance, false flag attacks, central banking, GMOs, geoengineering, Zionism, Illuminati bloodlines, the radiation agenda, UFOs and ETs, alien intervention and more, you come to realize that the true source of the suppression is at the intersection of consciousness and conspiracy.

Why? Because the conspiracy is all about suppressing your idea of Who You Are.

It’s about convincing you that you are nothing, no one. It’s about convincing you that you are just a biological machine, fit to serve as no more than a cog in a machine or as Pink Floyd put it, “just another brick in the wall.” Mainstream science to this day still denies the existence of consciousness just because it can’t get a handle on it with the five senses. Its simplistic solution is to disregard anything it can’t measure.

There are many researchers who will be unable to contemplate this topic, or refuse to go there, because it clashes with their belief systems, such as religious belief systems (the afterlife is either Heaven or Hell, or 100 virgins, but not a soul net), scientific/materialistic belief systems (there is no such thing as a soul or consciousness) or various other belief systems (there are no such things as aliens or extraterrestrials, etc.).

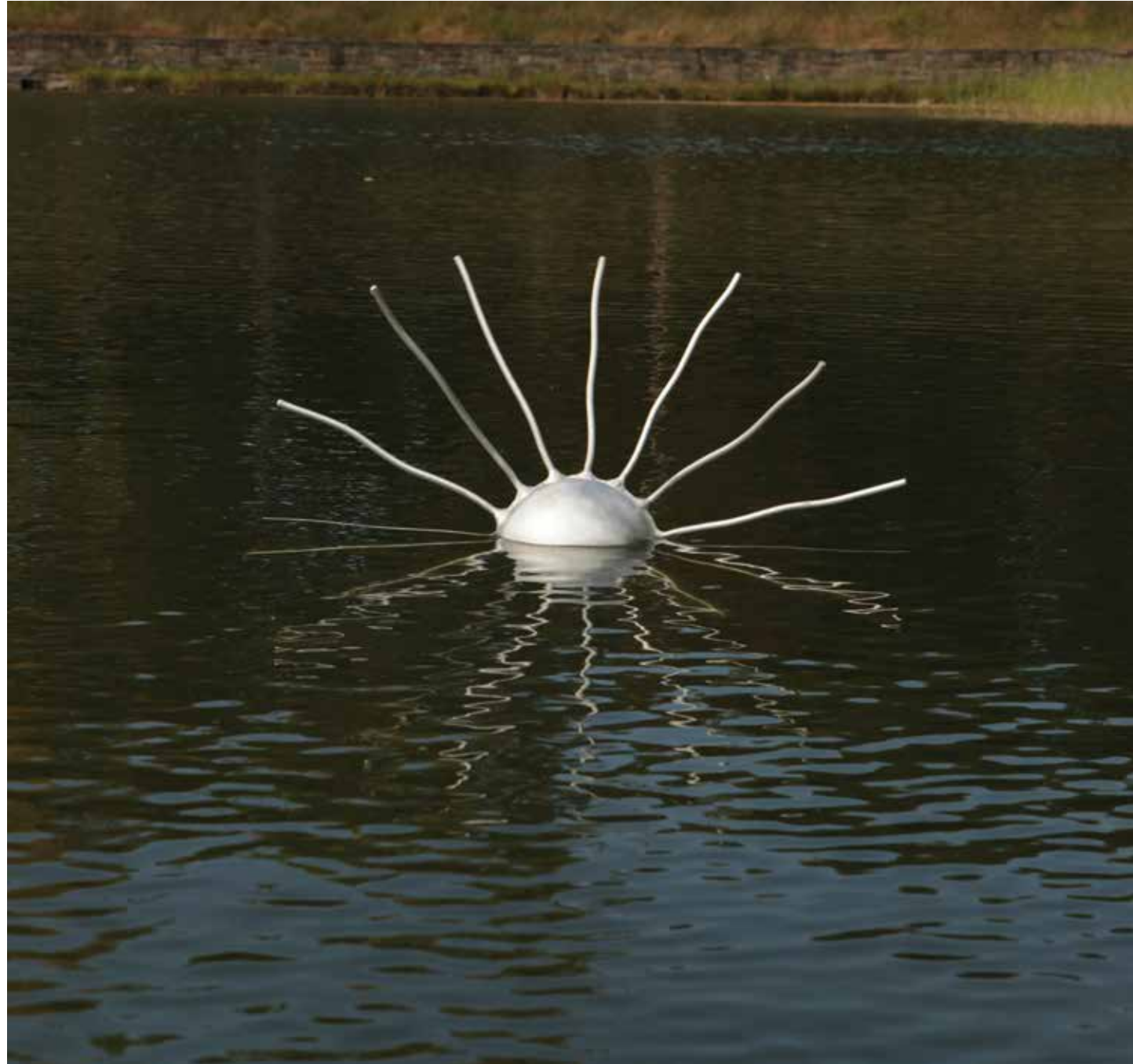
Daniel Rothbart



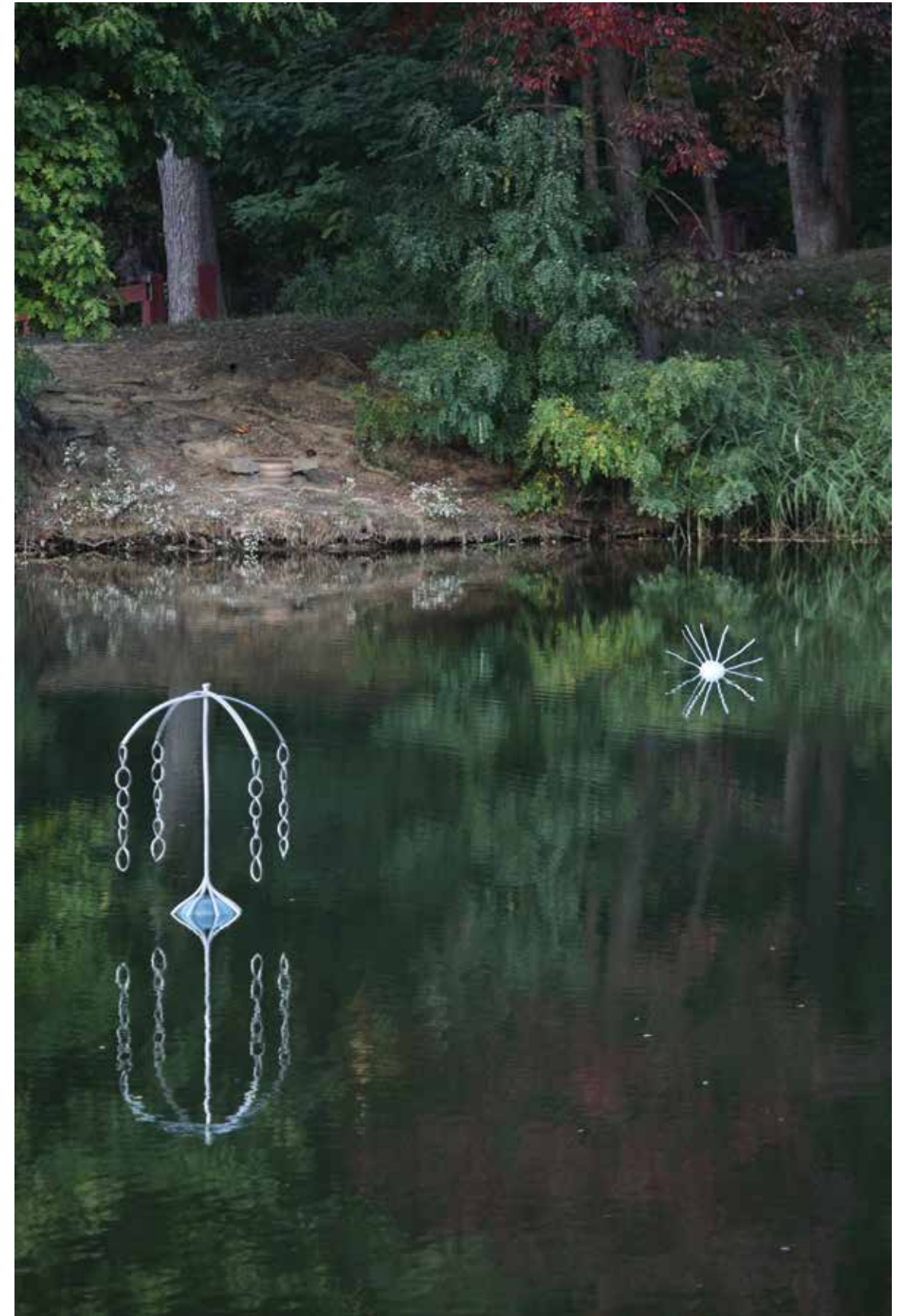
Daniel Rothbart, *Flotilla* - A Floating Installation in Oakdale Lake



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WHAT'S IT GONNA TAKE?

Reality, as you know it, gets re-shuffled when you lock eyes with an ET. That moment when I came face-to-face with a Grey, catapulted my mind to fly beyond its boundaries. My mind flew into uncharted territory while my body lay paralyzed. If it weren't for the two red X-marks the Greys burned into my back, this would have been just another one of my ET encounters to deny; but two red Xs on my derrière pushed me to admit and "come out."

I am a life-long Experiencer and, until recently, a life-long Avider of My Truth. For most of my life I slipped on a disguise, a mask, to show the world a fake version of myself. I hid my true desires, silenced personal beliefs, and ignored remarkable experiences.

This personal delusion created difficulties in my life. I was so intent on hiding the real me, I couldn't have an honest relationship with myself, let alone foster a healthy union with another. I cannot pinpoint the moment of my clarity, the flash of knowing propelling me to behave in different ways, but it caused swift and major change. I left my second marriage. I had to locate my authentic self and I knew she was not to be found in that abusive environment. I did not know what I was in for. This journey of authenticity isn't for the timid. It is the daring who attempt to conquer the beasts on the path, the beasts being the self-made lies fortifying the mind.

Ultimately, you could say it was me who ripped off my mask, but I give a lot of credit to the Greys who helped me make the final yank. The disguise is off! Who has emerged? The Authentic Sev. The Sev who doesn't hide her ET contact. I firmly believe as you express your authentic self, you manifest your best life. It is through the expression of your true self that you activate your potential and radiate love. That is the ultimate purpose for each of us, to love as much as possible. That includes loving ourselves. Falling in love with you is the best thing you can do for your life, for mankind, and for the entire Galactic System. So, I started loving on myself and the next thing I know, an alien burns an X on my tush.

September 16, 2017. It was the second night in our new house on the Inner Banks of North Carolina when the Greys, who I had been running from, found me. My boyfriend at the time, Patrick, and I moved from Capitol Hill, Washington DC to a beautifully peaceful spot on the water where dolphins, eagles, river otters, ducks, rays, and a variety of birds call our front yard home. On the second morning in our new place, I was in the kitchen unpacking dishes when I felt a sharp pain.

"Patrick," I shouted into the living room, "I think a bug bit my butt! Will you look at it?"

"Yes," was his quick response.

As I walked into the living room I thought it funny that I was headed into a rear-end inspection. I had no idea my world was about to flip in sixty seconds.

I bent over and allowed Patrick to inspect. He said nothing. I waited. My pulse sped up. More quiet.



"Well? Is there a bug bite?" I half-yelled into the silence.

"Well...yes...and there is also... a red X," Patrick reported, "on your left cheek." By his tone, I knew he was looking at something he couldn't explain.

"A red X?!" A dizziness quickly came and went.

He showed me the digital picture of the X formed by nine, small, red circles, equidistant apart. It was a perfect X about 2 inches wide. A shocking sight for both of us. I knew immediately it was the Greys and I was angry. How dare they mess with me? I stared at the X and decided to do what I always did when I saw strange marks on my body, found chunks of skin missing, felt Beings in my room, or saw bright lights in my hallway - ignore it.

I continued pretending it never happened. We didn't talk about it. It was stored in the back of my mind where decades of ET-related files were stacked. They were too scary to open and examine. Deny and ignore. Those were my go-to responses when I wore that mask of disguise. I did not know the final yank was only nine days away.

September 25, 2017. My eyes popped open with a clear memory of the Grey. I got out of bed, went downstairs, and waited for Patrick to wake up so I could ask him the million-dollar question. I dreaded it. I waited nervously. Was I sitting on another red X? Could I handle it if I were?

When Patrick finally came down for coffee, he barely had two sips when the firing-line of questions began. Was I gone from the bedroom in the middle of the night? Was there anything strange in the room? Did anything weird happen to him last night? No was the answer to all. He knew something was up. So, I began to tell him where I had been the night before. I was on a hospital-type bed, lying on my side, unable to move my arms and legs. I was in a sparsely furnished room. Feeling that there was something behind me, I turned my neck and head for they were not paralyzed. I came face-to-face with a Grey a few inches from me. We locked eyes. We stared into each other's gazes. I was terrified. It was doing something to my back. There was no telepathic communication between us. Previous contact I had in Roswell and in Baltimore, the Greys telepathically talked to me. They gave me information about the Grey/Human hybridization process and showed me a baby in a tube. This time, though, the Grey was silent. I turned my head back around. Then my eyes popped opened. I was in my bedroom and fully alert. I remembered something else, something I had not known in any of my other encounters with the Greys. I knew I had been on the Moon.

After describing my galactic trip, I sat in silence because here was the very moment I had been anticipating all morning. I was very scared of it. It was time for the dreaded question. This time I didn't think it was funny.

"Will you look at my butt?" I bent over. He was quiet. My heart began its race. More silence. I could hear my heart pounding in my ears. Still, he said nothing. Reality as I knew it was slipping away, and it sounded like racing heartbeats.

"Well, is there an X?!" I wanted to scream, but tried to ask fairly calm. I prayed that he reply with a no.

"Yes," he said, "on your right cheek and it looks just like the other X."

The blood rushed from my head into my toes. I didn't know what was real any more. I didn't know who I was and what the hell was I doing at night? Hanging out with Greys on the Moon? I was overcome with confusion and fear. All I could do was cry. After several minutes of calming myself down, I got off the couch and paced with no direction. "I need help! I cannot go through this alone," I tearfully requested while mentally hearing ETs are real. No lie. A dream doesn't burn red Xs into your butt. Holy. Crap. Why me?

The help I requested came from Kathleen Marden, the Director of Experiencer Research at MUFON, investigator, author, and the niece of Betty and Barney Hill. She helped me face my truth and it changed my life. Kathy holds a special place in my heart. Shortly after our talk, I wrote You Have The Right To Talk To Aliens, which Kathy graciously endorsed. Two weeks after my book debuted on Amazon, I was invited to be a Speaker at AlienCon 2018 in Baltimore that led to many interviews that led to Experiencers around the world contacting me which led to my very rewarding work with them.

I have a free forum on my website, planetsev.com, to help Experiencers integrate their truth to activate their potential. We each hold potential within us to live a fulfilling and enriching life. The key to unlocking the door to your potential is the energy of self love, expressed through authentic living. Denying your ET contact is living a lie. You don't have to write a book or have a global platform, but in order to create your life to your standards, it is imperative to acknowledge, to yourself, your spectacular experiences. ET contact does not happen by accident. Attempting to understand the reasons pulls your mask off. The real you finally gets to see the light of day.

Before the Xs, I thought the Greys were evil and wanted to hurt me and all of mankind. Since the Xs, I have changed my mind. The Greys I met are not evil. They are supportive partners in my quest for authenticity. By demanding the truth from myself, I had to face one of the biggest lies about myself, that my ET contact was not real. The Greys gave me such an attention-grabbing message, I chose to see the truth. In hiding that truth, I automatically hid other truths about myself, too. I paid dearly for living a life masking the real me. My reality reflected the disconnect through abusive relationships, feeling powerless, assuming the victim role, and a never-ending search for happiness.

Those scary, huge, oil-black alien eyes that locked onto mine are two of the most beautiful eyes I have ever seen. Their gaze activated me to throw off my disguise and express the real me. I no longer align with abusive relationships. I am empowered. And the happiness I was searching for I found in the last place I would ever look for it. Inside me. I didn't know it, but I had it the whole time.

"What's it gonna take for her to get it?!" one Grey asked the other.

"I know! Let's burn two red Xs into her posterior!" replied the other Grey.

"Will she see it?" wondered the first.

"Only if she is ready!"

Early Efforts at Space Travel and Contact

Michele Rinne

Imagine going back in time, several decades now, to 1973. The Paris Peace Accords ending US involvement in Vietnam were signed, the Supreme Court decided in *Roe v. Wade* to legalize abortion, Watergate and the impeachment and resignation of President Nixon, the final Apollo mission to the moon, the American Psychological Association removes homosexuality from the DSM II, historic events. As a sixteen-year-old in the rural Midwest, I remember feeling the weight of change and uncertainty in reaction to events in society and of course in my own adolescent life, early experiences in the search for meaning and the search for deliverance or escape.

As with most young people, music provided meaning and a soundtrack to future possibilities. Music and the magical quality of listening to a disembodied voice on the radio from far off places: "KAAY, Little Rock Arkansas!" heralding the greatest of late night rock music of the 1960s and early 70s, a deliverance from teenage angst. I was a faithful listener to late night rock as that was the only time when radio signals were clear on the AM band; FM radio had not quite made it this far north. WLS Chicago was another lifeline to the outside world; on one of these two stations, news of an opportunity for high adventure presented itself in the Fall of 1973. I was ready.

Several months earlier, in March of 1973, Lubos Kohoutek, a Czech astronomer discovered a comet that was anticipated to be the brightest dark sky comet in centuries and became promoted as "the comet of the century." The comet's previous apparition was about 150,000 years ago and its next appearance is estimated at 75,000 years. Historic! Throughout the centuries, ancient cultures have watched the skies and named the constellations; comets were exceptional and thought to be signs of coming war or hardship in some form.

Rather than a messenger of coming hardship, a Madison lawyer named Edward Ben Elson proclaimed the Kohoutek Comet "an Intergalactic Spaceship, Leaving Earth on December 24, 1973." Mr. Elson was well known in Madison for his big personality, humor and creativity. He challenged perceptions and institutions to include the psychiatric establishment of the time. Google his name; he is someone who made a difference in his community. The story of the Kohoutek as an intergalactic spaceship made the "news of the weird and unusual" on radio broadcasts, and Mr. Elson was offering tickets. I was and remain an avid fan of science fiction, so it was easy for me to imagine the possibility of an enormous spaceship hovering and landing in the vast snowy field near our house, to dream of other galaxies, to escape adolescence in the Midwest for adolescence in another galaxy. I was sixteen and logically knew that the Comet was not a spaceship, that this was all in good fun, yet I wrote a letter to Edward Ben Elson requesting a ticket and was excited to receive Ticket # 966. Can you imagine if space on the comet was limited to 1000 people? I barely made the cut-off!

What happened? The Kohoutek Comet was a visual disappointment confirming for astronomers that the brightness of comets is unpredictable. Rather than a "blazing spectacle" it was an "unimpressive fuzz" when viewed through binoculars. However, the anticipation and reality of the comet was featured in the work of several musicians including Sun Ra, Kraftwerk, Pink Floyd, Weather Report, and yes, even Burl Ives.

As for me, I did not go out into the field to watch the skies for the comet or the intergalactic spaceship on Christmas Eve 1973, but secretly hoped the jest would somehow come true. I have held my ticket all these years and continue the journey on Planet Earth. •

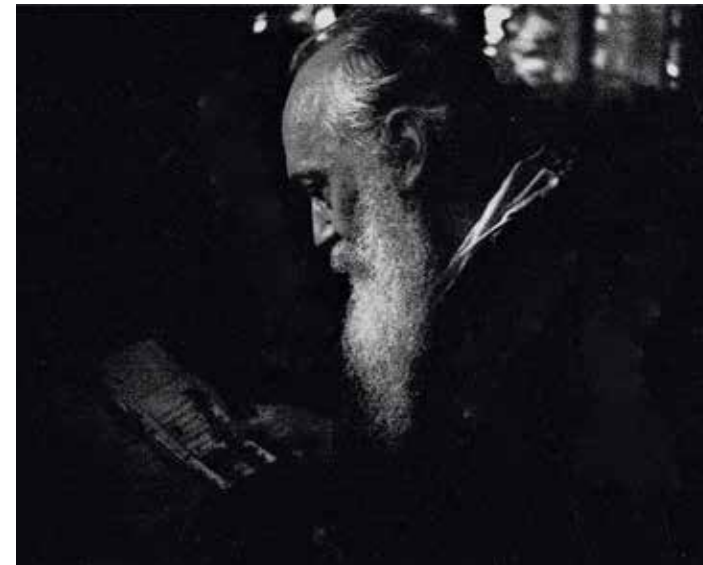




Ray Grasse

A Mystic Looks at the Astral and the Afterlife

Conversations with Shelly Trimmer



Shelly Trimmer

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, I conducted a series of interviews with a little-known mystic and occultist by the name of Shelly Trimmer (1917-1996). Raised in the magical tradition of Pennsylvania Dutch culture, Trimmer studied for several years with the famed yogi Paramahansa Yogananda in California. But unlike the more public Yogananda, Trimmer chose to remain relatively reclusive, living with his family in the woods of Minnesota before finally moving to the Gulf Coast of Florida, all the while choosing to teach students in a one-on-one fashion rather than through public lectures or publications.

*The following exchanges about the astral and the afterlife are excerpted, adapted from my book *An Infinity of Gods: Conversations with an Unconventional Mystic: the Teachings of Shelly Trimmer*. This first exchange centers around Yogananda's encounter with a female disciple on the astral shortly after her death.*

SHELLY: Yogananda told me that when one of his disciples was dying, she made him promise he could come and see that she was all right over there. Now, he had a little difficulty finding her, since it's not very easy finding someone over there, and when he found her, he called out to her—several times, in fact. In her semi-dreamlike state, she was tending a garden, but she looked up at him and thanked him for coming. Of course, when he came, she woke up just a little bit more, but then she went back to her semi-sleep state and continued gardening. You see, we gravitate to those things over there which suit us, in other words. Another example would be a man who worked hard all his life. He might just sit and rock back and forth in his rocker because his idea of heaven would be not having to go to work. See?

So, they're in a semi-dreamlike state and like a broken record, they run over the important events in their life. Eventually, the sum total of their life experience causes them to desire to be reincarnated again. And they are drawn—instinctively, you might say—to the new body which is contiguous with their nature, so that their astrological code and their genetic code is a representation of their natures and expresses their particular level of balanced self-conscious awareness. So that they don't feel like a fish out of water, see? As it is, we are all a little bit alone in this world anyhow, we feel just a little bit like we're a fish out of water. This is basically a lonely place. You're born alone and you die alone; it doesn't matter how many people are around you.

There's an astral world within the center of the earth, below the surface of the earth. And there's an astral world above the surface of the earth, which is where most deceased people are at, maybe 100 miles up.

When you go into the astral world that is below the surface of the Earth and you come back into your body, it feels like you're falling. And when you go into the astral world above the surface of the Earth and come back into your body, you also feel like you're falling. That's because when your astral body enters into your physical body, it passes across the nervous system and it causes an electrical shock. That produces the

sensation that you're falling. And it's hard to say what is up and what is down anyhow when you're in the astral.

They usually call the movement from a lower plane to a higher one "up," and you measure the difference from one plane of the astral world to another by the degree of conscious awareness of the beings who occupy it.

In the third plane in the astral world, where most of the people in our culture go, they're in a semi-dreamlike state, they're not fully conscious. In the fifth plane of the astral world, the people are a lot more consciously aware; they are more like you and I are here now. So, when we say "up," that really means moving in the direction of increased self-conscious awareness.

RAY: Is the astral at the center of the Earth the same as the outer one, above the Earth? It seems like one would be more like the lower hells and the other would be like the higher spheres.

SHELLY: Yogananda told me not to go into the lower astral worlds because those were more like hell regions, with evil demons and things of that sort. But I told him I've never seen anything "evil" like that down there. But he said, "It's bad — there isn't anything nice to it." And I said, "But I was down there; I know I was in the center of the Earth, and there were the most beautiful flowers." I guess I saw what I vibrated to, so I saw areas where the landscape was very beautiful and filled with light. It did not look like I was under the Earth at all. But then it was lit with astral light and not ordinary light. And it was just as beautiful as a lot of areas I saw in the astral worlds above the Earth. You see, I'm curious, so I'll go most anywhere.

Yogananda said there are great dangers in doing that [going down into the Earth]. But then there are dangers in the astral worlds above the surface of the Earth, too. There are some beings over there who try to control other beings, because they're more wide awake. In the astral world, you're controlled by how wide awake you are, or aren't. That is true about all things, actually. God has more influence over the cosmos because he has more balanced self-awareness, he's more awake than we are. In the higher planes of the astral world, the beings have enough self-conscious awareness that they don't have to come back here if they don't want to. They can progress forward.

Upon reading this last exchange, a colleague raised this question: wouldn't beings who exist on a higher plane necessarily be so much more spiritually balanced that they wouldn't even consider controlling or enslaving others? It's a fair question, but it hinges on the distinction Shelly sometimes made between being "more wide awake" and "more balanced," since there is a difference. To use an analogy, it's reasonable to say Hitler was more "wide awake" than a semiconscious drug addict living on the streets of Berlin back in the '30s or '40s — or for that matter a worm living happily out in my garden. But was he more balanced? One can attain tremendous states of expanded consciousness that are not necessarily balanced. Hence, the cautionary tales in various scriptures of great heavenly beings falling from their lofty heights out of hubris or degradation. For Shelly, God represented the perfect fusion of the two, of supreme wakefulness with supreme balance.

As for the difference between Yogananda's and Shelly's views on the lower astral worlds beneath the Earth's surface, there are several ways to interpret that. (1) Shelly may have simply been mistaken in his account of things; (2) Yogananda was actually the mistaken one, and

Shelly's perception was more refined in his awareness of those regions; or (3) Yogananda warned him away from those realms for reasons unknown to us, perhaps involving concerns over how easily people can get lost in such explorations. I'll leave it for readers to decide.

RAY: I recall you saying that when most people go into the astral world, they see their own preconceived ideas, and not what's actually there. So how does one see what's actually there?

SHELLY: By being a disinterested observer.

RAY: And then, you will naturally gravitate towards what's really there?

SHELLY: Yes. And if you see something that emotionally disturbs you, you're caught. From then on you start dreaming, and you no longer see reality as it is. So, you want to be an observer and not controlled by what you're seeing. Many people go into the astral and see exactly what they thought it would be. That is true of virtually all who go there.

It's very hard to find truth in the astral world. It's easier to find it here than it is there, because over there you usually find your own preconceived ideas. In the astral world, everything will be what you want it to be because you're creating it. Even here, you're going about dreaming a lot of dreams and not seeing reality as it truly is; you're making it the way you want it to be. But it's a little bit harder to mold reality here than it is in the astral world.

This is why, when you go into the astral world, you remain an observer — that is, you become only 10 percent interested or less. Actually, it should be one twelfth, but 10 percent is adequate; you have to remain less than 10 percent interested. Because if you become any more interested in that, then you become involved, you're beginning to take part — and now you're lost as an impartial observer. You are now influencing the phenomenon and the phenomena is influencing you. You have stepped over that boundary.

Likewise, when a person comes to you for information or advice, and you get over 10 percent interested in their life, you begin to live their life for them. And you know what happens when somebody tries to live your life for you!

The natural habitat of all life is in deep space, not on the gravity worlds. In the gravity worlds, our memory banks are heavily restricted, so that we naturally forget who we really are, you do not know that you are any place but here. But if you become aware that you are, so that you can say, "I am blissfully aware that I am," you are then wherever you want to be — which can be outside the cosmic dream of God, or in here, or wherever you desire to be. You are no longer restricted by the animal body.

In this next conversation we had been talking about ambition, ego, and the urge to impress others. But as often happened in our conversations, the topic soon veered in a very different direction, including some thoughts about life after death. The conversation took place shortly after the death of Shelly's first wife, Marjorie, whom he'd been married to for several decades.

SHELLY: I have no desire to impress the world. Or my society. I have a hermit instinct. My whole idea is, I'd like to be a hermit, I'd like to go into a cave someplace, and spend most of my time meditating. That's what I'd really like to do. And I live pretty much of a hermit life here. And as far as women are concerned? You see, I'm still as madly in love with my wife



Photo by Ray Grasse

as when she was here. And I can feel her... But it's not like when she was here, not at all. But I have times when I can be in communication with her.

Remember, she is moving in a slightly different plane than I am here. And my wife has certain peculiarities of her own, so she's highly interested in the things she's doing over there. In other words, she has a naturally meditative personality, and when you're meditating, you become involved in what you're meditating on. So, she gets involved in the things she's doing there, quite naturally. And of course, she's growing a lot younger than what she was here. You see, our bodies grow old here, and in the astral that's reversed...

RAY: I hadn't heard that.

SHELLY: When we're in the astral world we don't stay old, we grow younger again. So, for instance, if you had your leg cut off here, in the astral world you won't go around with a peg leg, you'll have your leg again.

RAY: Suppose someone doesn't have access to spiritual teachers in the physical world. Is there somewhere on the astral where they can go to get this knowledge, where they can find great teachers?

SHELLY: If you divide up what are called "astral planes" — or the world of *Yetzirah* — and divide it into seven planes, then the fifth plane would be where they have all the colleges, the schools of learning.

RAY: Is that where the devas [angelic beings] hang out?

SHELLY: Well, some of them are above that. On the fifth plane, human beings still look like human beings. And there are an enormous number

of colleges and teachers there. And the method of teaching is... well, a lot of it is under a tree. It's very beautiful there and in the open, like maybe how the Greek philosophers taught. They even have research labs where they do great amount of experimenting and research work. You can learn almost anything you want there. And many people go to those colleges when they sleep every night, or between lifetimes.

In the lower planes, you're so controlled by desires that you haven't got any real freedom at all. Your animalistic nature is in complete domination of your awareness.

RAY: Are we talking here about the first and second planes — the Saturn and Jupiter planes? [Note: In the Kriya system Shelly utilized, the various planes of existence can be symbolized by the different planets of astrology. —RG]

SHELLY: Yes. And the third plane, the Martian plane. Those three run you almost completely. And on the fifth plane, the individual — if they're in the higher part of the fifth plane, anyway — might not reincarnate at all, unless they want to. Or there might be a long period between reincarnations before a desire comes back to balance out factors within his or her nature. But if you go up above that to the sixth or the seventh planes, they no longer even look like humanoids.

RAY: They're like balls of light?

SHELLY: Yeah, they're balls of light. And if you speak about the Earth to them, they're not even interested in what's going on down here. (laughs) So, these beings won't reincarnate any more, unless they choose to come back perhaps as a great teacher, or as an avatar.

RAY: Do they do that?

SHELLY: Oh yeah, they'll do that. You see, this is an act of unselfish love which helps them advance further. Because they're still in the astral realms and they want to go into the world of Christ consciousness. But they haven't advanced that far yet.

RAY: There are mystics who suggest that there are races of beings in the universe far more evolved than humans. Even some scientists have theorized about that, too—something called the Kardashev Scale. So, my question is, if such beings actually exist and really are that much more evolved than we, why are they still even on the physical plane? If they were that evolved, wouldn't they have transcended the physical universe entirely?

SHELLY: That's quite easy. The path towards God consciousness is not the path of the wheel. [The "wheel" refers to the wheel of rebirth, of the astral and physical realms associated with the subtle energy channels on the right and left-hand sides of the spine, otherwise known as *Ida* and *Pingala*.—RG] And those beings are still on the path of the wheel. On the path of the wheel, there are beings of tremendous power, tremendous elevation. Compared to us, they're almost like gods. But they're still on the path of the wheel, and they are not on the path of the saint. Which is an entirely different thing.

RAY: What is the path of the saint?

SHELLY: You see, a saint is not a "powerful" being. A saint is more Christ-like in his or her characteristics. A saint moves by the path of the seven, not by the path of the twelve. If you move by the path of the twelve, that takes millions of years to reach God consciousness. You can eventually evolve to where you are the controller of a whole solar system, or the controller of a galaxy, and then of an entire universe or a cosmos. In other words, you keep climbing up the ladder through the echelons of control. But that is the path of the twelve.

RAY: So, the path of the seven is cutting through the center of the wheel?

SHELLY: Yes. That is the path of *Sushumna* [the channel of consciousness located within the center of the spine]. This is why they said God loved seven above all other numbers, because it's the path of balance, the straight and the narrow. It's a path that's easy to fall off of, because you can get so interested in something happening either in *Ida* or *Pingala* that you lose your balance.

RAY: Did Yogananda ever say anything about whether he was going to reincarnate?

SHELLY: Yogananda said—at least this is what he told me—"I know now that I will finally be free when I die to this world. And when I do, I'm going to a far distant sector in space, as we measure space here, to a place in the astral world that isn't even close to this point of the cosmos at all. Because I'm not going to reincarnate again, because from here on I'm moving into Krishna (Christ) consciousness. And from there, to God consciousness." •

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Shelly Trimmer

How Tepees Returned to Pine Butte: Lessons in Cultural Diversity

FORWARD

A Blackfeet teacher once told me that the English language lacks ways to talk about the supernatural or sacred. Blackfeet language, he continued, not only has more words, but also has other ways to convey a sense of the transcendent. When a Blackfeet speaker describes holy events or objects, words can be subtly changed, creating a "meta-language." By weaving sacred sounds into common language, a speaker imbues a story with a feeling we are hard-pressed to duplicate in English. While English recognizes first, second, and third person (I, you and she/he/it) Blackfeet also has a fourth and fifth person. The Blackfeet teacher says he is stumped at how to translate these additional "persons" (English fluency is not the problem, - he holds a doctorate from Harvard.)⁽¹⁾

Like the Eskimo's thirty-one words for snow, a people's language reflects what is important to them in their everyday experience. The Blackfeet language reflects the importance in their world of a spiritual reality. This differs greatly from the Western rational world view, and it not easy to grasp for those of us raised in Western rational culture. Yet the Blackfeet are not unique in this perception.

"The notion of another reality, a world of Spirit, as the common property of virtually every culture before ours..."⁽²⁾

This world view has been called the "primordial tradition."⁽³⁾ Our Western rational culture has characterized it as primitive or superstitious.

As people bump up against the limits of their language and their world view, they may retreat and latch on tightly to what is familiar. Or they may push past those limits and consider other paradigms that may make greater sense of their experience. In my exposure to other cultures and my own inner journey, things have happened that are not explained by the doctrine in which I was raised. In the following story, I will attempt to tell you about one, though I struggle for words to convey my experience. I wish I could speak, and you could understand, Blackfeet.

HOW TEPEES RETURNED TO PINE BUTTE

The East Rocky Mountain Front lifts from the glaciated plains of central Montana to another dimension. It is more than a geological formation. The immense sweep of jagged peaks carries the eye north and south, as it carried ancient peoples along this east slope of the continent's backbone. Traces of ruts made by *travois* poles can still be seen along this 10,000 or-more-year-old travel route, now known as the Old North Trail. If you follow its course along the Front today you will see pictographs, vision quest sites, rock cairns, and other signs of another time and other cultures.

The weather of the East Front is legendary, as humbling as the oversized scenery. On the Blackfeet Reservation, south of Canada, line-men plant telephone poles canted west, into the wind. They know from experience that fierce winds out of Glacier will soon level an upright pole. The massive peaks and pitching topography of Glacier National Park and the Bob Marshall Wilderness brew weather worthy of their scale. The beauty of the Front entrances is clear, yet it is not an easy place to live. The few people who do call this place home, white or Indian, have a reputation for being cantankerous, and the native people who occupied it when the Europeans arrived, the Blackfeet, are known for their ferocity among other tribes. While the Crow counted '*coup*' as a ritual way to gain honor without bloodshed, the Blackfeet measured a warrior's worth in scalps and ruthlessly defended their territory. I once heard a Crow man jokingly blame the notorious winds of the Front for the temper of the Blackfeet, his historical enemies. Wildlife is plentiful in this wild country and other tribes coveted these hunting grounds. Perhaps this helps explain the Blackfeet intolerance for intruders.

I heard a secondhand story about the Blackfeet which gave me another take on this place. An elder told the story of how his people were guided here from the west, 5,000 years ago, in response to a time of

4. Personal communication with Dr. Brian Reeves, archaeologist at the Univ. of Calgary, during a one-week course on archaeology of the East Front. Dr. Reeves heard the story from a Blood elder in Canada, whom he assisted in a court case on indigenous rights. The Bloods along with the Piegiens and the Northern Blackfeet together comprise the Blackfeet Confederation. Reeves also said it has been the practice among archaeologists and anthropologists to disregard oral history. Not surprising, since there are stories among native peoples of fabricating tales in response to disrespectful treatment by anthropologists.

1. The teacher was Darrell Kipp, one of the founders of the Piegiens Institute in Browning, Montana.

2. Borg, Marcus, *Jesus: A New Vision*, p26.

3. Smith, Huston. 1976, *Forgotten Truth: The Primordial Tradition*.

famine (mainstream “prehistorians” have an entirely different version of how the Blackfeet came to this country.⁴⁹) The story reminded me of the Book of Exodus in which God tells Moses to lead the people to a promised land. If the story is true, for the Blackfeet, this is Israel. The homeland on the east slope of the Rockies is their promised land, their holy land.

In 1978, The Nature Conservancy bought a large guest ranch along the Teton River about 80 miles south of the current Blackfeet Reservation Boundary. This property was renowned among wildlife biologists for its fertile wetlands and some of the best spring grizzly bear habitat in the lower 48. Over the years, the Conservancy purchased more land parcels to create a fair-sized nature preserve. The Pine Butte Preserve and Guest Ranch became a show piece for The Nature Conservancy. Hand-hewn cabins and other first-class facilities offered an opportunity for the Conservancy to venture into ecotourism with week-long nature workshops.

I was on staff at the state office of The Conservancy in Helena, about 2 ½ hours away. My title was Protection Planner. It was my duty to figure out how to protect habitat for Montana’s rare plants and animals, wherever they made their home. I had long since discovered that most formulas for working with private landowners or public agencies were not useful in working with tribes. Developing partnerships depended on good working relations and earning some level of trust with a number of people in the tribe. It also required respect for tribal sovereignty and a willingness to listen to a tribe’s concerns. As The Nature Conservancy began to put more emphasis on large-scale ecosystem protection, partnerships with tribes looked ever more important to our mission.

The state director supported the tribal lands work to a point, i.e., as long as my goals were specific, I didn’t spend too much time on it and he could see concrete results in short order. In some ways, we epitomized classic examples of male and female culture: he focused on goals, wherein relationships were a means to an end. I focused on relationships and support, trusting that good results would follow, though not necessarily of my design.

Natural history workshops at the Guest Ranch rode high on the front wave of eco-tourism, booking remarkably well. Pine Butte Preserve was just piloting a new environmental education program with outreach to local schools. This was good, to get people outdoors and excited about nature, but I was also itching to get some human natural history threaded into the scene. After all, the native people were part of the natural community.

The environmental movement has been in a muddle about the place of humans in the natural world. One of the characteristics of Western culture is to see humans as embattled with or conquering (certainly separate from) nature. A classic environmental perspective sees humans as a blight on the natural world and nature “better off without ‘em.” Neither of these beliefs fosters a sense of belonging or the possibility of harmony between nature and us two-leggeds. Yet, that sense of connection to the natural world is basic to the Native American view. North America and particularly the West were often described as uninhabited, perhaps because Indigenous people left few obvious traces on the landscape, or perhaps for more political reasons. But that is clearly not the truth. People were in this landscape

for thousands of years before Europeans arrived, and we are just beginning to understand how much effect they had on the “natural” environment, as did the bison, as did the prairie dogs, as did the big bluestem grasses. The more I’ve learned, the harder it is to think of “pre-settlement” natural communities as people-less. Gradually, the environmental movement is warming to the concept of humans as part of the natural world.

Old tepee rings on Pine Butte Preserve, as well as buffalo driving lanes and a buffalo jump, attest to the former presence of native people. It seemed fitting that the Preserve should have a few tepees for educational purposes and perhaps to accommodate an occasional adventurous guest. I also felt that tepees would seed the incorporation of native teaching in the programs at Pine Butte. I asked the guest ranch and preserve managers if they were interested in tepees. They were.

Buying tepees from the Blackfeet seemed like the logical thing to do. This was historical Blackfeet country, the Blackfeet were neighbors to Pine Butte Preserve and part of the same ecosystem, and income was hard to come by on the Blackfeet Reservation. I looked for a supplier on the Blackfeet Reservation and then tried other Montana Indian Reservations, but drew a blank. Whoever sold tepees didn’t advertise in the Yellow Pages. There is a reputable, nationally advertised business in Missoula that sells tepees. They were certainly a likely and easy place for an urban non-Indian like myself to buy a tepee. But I was pretty sure the Blackfeet didn’t buy their tepees in Missoula. Although tempted by the easy route, I decided to keep trying to find a Blackfeet source. Not only were Blackfeet tepees right for Pine Butte, it was a good opportunity to make some connections between Pine Butte and the Blackfeet.

Working with tribes, one of my most sobering realizations was the magnitude of the gulf between Indian culture and mainstream white culture. I was frustrated with the overt anti-Indian sentiments as well as the subtler forms of racism from our ignorance and cultural arrogance as expressed by white Americans, and the bitterness and deep animosity of many Native American people towards whites saddened me. It is easy in our culture to have no idea what it means to be Indian, no idea what Indian Country is like. After all, there is only one world, one true reality and we are it. Right?

My work with tribes required all the perseverance, flexibility and heart I could muster.

Early that spring, I ran into an old friend who had spent a lot of time living on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation. He knew a tribal member who made tepees. In fact, the tepee maker’s first language was Blackfeet; he needed income to support his family and his efforts to preserv Blackfeet culture and sacred lands. This man lived in Heart Butte, a strong traditional community on the reservation and economically one of the poorest. My friend also told me tactfully that the Blackfeet don’t call them tepees. The Blackfeet call them lodges.

There are times in my life when a certain course of action picks me up and carries me like a current. It’s not always in my conscious awareness, but something I feel in my blood, a quickening, a sense of being part of something bigger. When I’m not in that current, I am less alive, as if lost in some back eddy. This project made my blood sing. Though my desk was piled high with dozens of problems that needed pondering and tasks that needed my attention, I would weasel in a little

time each day to go after those Blackfeet lodges, watering a seed.

My first task was to see if this lodge maker would be willing to make lodges for Pine Butte. He had no phone, but my friend could leave a message that would eventually get to him in Heart Butte. After about a week, the call came back from my friend. Yes, he was willing. How many did we want?

I called the guest ranch manager and the preserve administrator and told them about my contact and this source of tepees. Were they really interested, and if so, how many did they want? Well... it wasn’t planned for in this year’s budget, but that’s not a big problem...there’s probably a way we can figure this out, let’s see...how much are they?

I called my contact back. He left a message for the lodge maker. A week later, I received a call. He didn’t know what they would cost. Depends on how big we want them, fifteen feet or eighteen feet, and how much the canvas will cost him. I checked on canvas. I made a few calls to canvas suppliers. What weight does he need, and do I want treated or untreated canvas? I wrote it all down, called the ranch manager and preserve administrator back! How big do you want them? They don’t know. How many people will they hold? I didn’t know. I called back my contact to tell him about the questions I need answered on the canvas. How big is a fifteen-foot tepee?

“Look,” he says, “This is getting too complicated. You and the lodge maker need to talk. It’ll have to be collect. Is that all right?”

“Yeah, sure,” I said. “Have him call me.”

A week went by. Two weeks. I was caught up in the flash flood of field work that heralded the beginning of every Montana summer. I thought about calling my friend back and decided against it. Too hard. Too many players. The time just didn’t seem to be right. I let it go. Maybe next fall when things would be calmer. Maybe next year. A month later, the Montana Field Office of the Conservancy was yanked out of their frantic daily grind by a call from the Blackfeet Reservation. A non-Indian landowner wanted to talk about gifting several hundred acres on the Blackfeet Reservation to the Conservancy. To my amazement, our botanist had identified this very site as ecologically significant in a scientific report prepared for the Tribe. A glaciated prairie pothole wetland, there were few sites more highly ranked for protection. This never happens. The pieces we were offered were the ones with the 200Kv power lines going through them, or the toxic waste problems. This was a first in my five years with the organization. It got the attention of our state director, Brian Khan, who abandoned a full roster of appointments in a fire drill atmosphere to jump on this opportunity. Schedules were cleared and we took off like Cherokee strip homesteaders, only we were headed for Browning, the main population and headquarters of the Blackfeet Nation. On the way, Brian grilled me for particulars about the site, the players, and the reservation.

The property was not only an ecological treasure, it was also fall-to-your-knees gorgeous. Soft breezes, rippled prairie grasses thick as fox fur, and new aspen leaves shimmered, enticing us to the secret interiors of their groves. Sun glinted from the faceted waters of little blue lakes, cut sapphires studding the hills and hollows carved by retreating glaciers. To the West, the peaks of Glacier, the holy mountains of the Blackfeet, presided over the scene. An ecologist’s wet dream, the landscape pulsed with the fertile splendor and magic of June. We

were enchanted, lingering longer than we had intended, talking and talking in hopes of a deal. The owner enjoyed our ardor for his land; however, he was more coy than we had expected, and remained non-committal as we reluctantly took our leave.

Going back, Brian announced that he was stopping over at Pine Butte Guest Ranch to meet with a donor I shall call Burt Stevens. Stevens was so enthralled with Pine Butte and its educational potential that he funded a video to help promote the Preserve. I had talked quite a bit with Burt, though we had never met. The previous winter, Brian had asked me to give Burt a call and tell him about the work I was doing with tribes because of his keen interest in Native American culture. In the non-profit trade, this was called “donor cultivation.” I had dutifully made the call and to my delight, found myself connected to a kindred spirit. Burt told me how his time with native peoples had changed him, changed his values, changed the way he saw the world. He spoke with humility, his struggle for words telling me as much as the words themselves. He asked what I knew about creation stories from tribes in Montana, and over the next couple of months I sent him what I could find. We shared a conviction about the value of Native American philosophy in offering a different way of being in the world with a more hopeful future. We both felt that Pine Butte offered an ideal setting for exposing more people to Native American wisdom. Though I had not spoken to him about tepees, it was our winter conversations that sparked the idea. He had told me then he was coming to Pine Butte in June and hoped we could get together.

Though I wanted to meet this man, it began to feel like an indulgence I couldn’t afford because of heavy work expectations and other demands on my time. I had even forgotten exactly when he was to be there. But suddenly, here I was, half an hour away from him. Perhaps I could make a short visit and continue to Helena that night? It was getting late and the other staff members decided not to stop at Pine Butte. If I went, I would have to go with Brian and spend the night at the Preserve. I would also need to arrange childcare.

Still carrying the sweet magic of the day and of the place we had been, I thought about my conversations with Burt. Remembering the warmth and electricity of our connection, I decided it was worth a try. We pulled into the little town of Choteau shortly before dinner time. I asked if we could stop at a pay phone at the trading post along the main drag.

As I walked towards the phone, I noticed a striking Indian man with a red scarf tied around his forehead, walking along the boardwalk of the tourist shops. I had not seen Indian people in Montana wearing a scarf in this way before. The red tails of the scarf on his long black hair caught my eye, all the more conspicuous in the conservative white community. Dressed in a white shirt and blue jeans, he walked with an unusual degree of comfort in his body.

The babysitter answered. I was in luck. She was happy to keep my son. As I turned to walk back to the car, I was startled to see my friend, the contact who had been helping me try to find tepees.

“What are you doing here?”, I said with pleased surprise as we walked toward each other. He smiled broadly.

“Just passin’ through. We’re on our way up to Heart Butte.” He nodded toward the man with the red scarf.

“This is the guy I’ve been trying to get you together with. We tried callin’ from Great Falls...They said you were out.” My friend crossed his arms and leaned back on his heels. He looked amused and continued, “Yeah...We were going to go back through Valier, it’s shorter, but Apisi decided he wanted to come through Choteau. When we got here, he says, ‘Pull in.’ Said he wanted to look for beads.” My friend lit a cigarette, and then introduced me to Apisi and two other members of their party.

I briefly pondered the odds of this chance meeting. It was a very strange coincidence. “I told my friend and Apisi, I wished I’d known this was going to happen so we could have arranged a meeting with the staff at Pine Butte, cutting out all of these round-about communications.” It dawned on me that might still be possible if we could go with the flow. What the heck.

“You in any hurry to get back?” I asked.

They looked at each other.

“No, no rush.”

I quickly explained to Brian who they were and shared that I thought our donor friend might just be delighted at the chance to meet a Blackfeet traditionalist and maybe hear some stories firsthand. He looked at me a little suspiciously, but said it was okay with him, suggesting I give the ranch a call to see if they had enough dinners. He’d already called and asked for the two of us, and they’d said something about running short.

The ranch manager answered the phone and sounded less than thrilled at the prospect of more guests and more demands on his time. He said they’d rustle up something if they ran out of dinners but to come on out. I told the Blackfeet party that they were all invited to dinner at the guest ranch and jumped back into the car, excited by this great piece of serendipity. They followed.

Some people think “Indian time” means always late. Not so. Indian time means that events have their own time. It recognizes that things may happen which cannot be foreseen and which are significant though unplanned. It allows more leeway for people to respond to the unpredicted needs of their friends and loved ones, and it recognizes that something bigger than clocks, schedules, and human plans governs our lives. Space is allowed for the mystery of life and this mystery is revered. A friend once told me she came at the appointed time for a naming ceremony only to find it already over. When the people important for the ceremony had arrived, it happened.

In Indian time, synchronicity is an expression of the way human lives are touched by Spirit, by that which is beyond our ordinary senses and understanding. To not recognize and honor synchronicity is unconscious, if not irreverent. In our culture, coincidence is viewed as a chance event, a statistical curiosity without meaning. In Indian culture there is no such thing as chance.

As I thought about the difficulty I would have had trying to engineer this connection, I marveled. I was probably babbling a bit too enthusiastically about the strangeness of it all and how pleased our friend at the ranch would be to meet these visitors. Brian was quiet. His boyish good looks were frozen and unsmiling. He kept his eyes on the road and I could see the muscles in his jaw flex, sort of like Clint

Eastwood before a shootout. I reined in my enthusiasm, feeling I had overstepped some unwritten bounds on exuberance in his presence. After a silence, Brian turned to me,

“Under no circumstances, do I want you to ask Burt Stevens for the money for those tepees.”

I looked at him, astounded. Clearly, we were not in the same movie. I said nothing more. Reflecting, I began to understand that this unexpected turn of events was not in The Plan. Brian clearly had a goal for his meeting with Burt, though I was not privy to it. While I was awestruck at what looked like a miracle, to Brian it was an inconvenient blip on the control panel.

When we arrived at the ranch, Brian strode off purposefully for the dining hall, and I went to welcome the Blackfeet party and introduce them to the ranch manager. As they were unloading, my friend told me another piece of the story. In Great Falls, he had given Apisi a slip of paper with my name and phone number on it. After unsuccessfully trying to reach me, Apisi had slipped the piece of paper under the board holding his bead work. During the drive, he was beading, beading, all the way from Great Falls to Choteau. My friend smiled at me. I looked at the others. They were all grinning. Clearly, they did not consider these events to be chance.

As we walked into the dining hall, the ranch manager came to apologize. To his great regret, they were all out of the evening’s entree, cannelloni. However, they had a number of steaks left over from the previous night, and if the guests from the Blackfeet Reservation didn’t mind, they would be happy to cook those up. My friend and the three Blackfeet looked at each other gleefully and started chuckling. I laughed too, pleased to be in on the joke. I was reading James Willard Schultz, and had learned that the Blackfeet word for red meat was the same as the word for “real food.” And that other things to eat were called “not real food.” In Blackfeet culture, it didn’t get any better than steak. The ranch manager set enough places for the four guests, but not for me. I looked around to see if I could discreetly move an extra place setting next to theirs. I wanted to sit with the Blackfeet group, and especially wanted to avoid having to chit-chat with ranch guests. When the ranch manager hustled by, I started to ask meekly if he minded if I set up a place setting next to the Blackfeet. He pointed brusquely to an empty place setting on the other side of the room. Not wanting to be more of a bother, I went where he told me, resigned to my role as polite ambassador for the Conservancy. The man finishing his dinner next to me introduced himself. It was Burt Stevens.

“Hi Burt Stevens. I’m Joan Bird.” I said, beaming with puzzled delight, “Something very strange is going on around here.” I proceeded to tell him the story leading up to this day and the string of events which had brought the Blackfeet to Pine Butte. He also began to grin.

“And now they can all talk about this and figure out how many they need, and how big, and how much, and it’s not in the budget plan this year but they think they can figure something out, and...”, down to the cannelloni joke and my unexpected dispatch to this seat.

He looked quite as delighted with the story as I was. After a few more minutes of conversation, he excused himself abruptly and headed for the kitchen. I went outside and saw that Apisi was in a discussion with the ranch and preserve managers about the tepees. Brian and

Burt soon joined them while I stayed back, taking the opportunity to find out how things were going with my friend. The business deal was done quickly. The ranch manager ordered a tepee and the preserve administrator wanted two. I was glad when Apisi and the others accepted our invite to stay and socialize a while, and I knew we would be regaled with stories.

We gathered in a cabin on worn leather couches and floor cushions and listened to stories of Heart Butte and the fight to protect Badger Two-Medicine from oil drilling. Apisi and the others were joking back and forth, as old friends do, trying to embarrass each other, goading each other into more and more ribald coyote and Napi stories. It was a sweet evening of goodwill and a touch of magic. Even Brian seemed to be enjoying himself in this ad hoc cross-cultural party. At last, the Blackfeet group had to head out, and we bid them safe journey, with Apisi inviting Burt to Heart Butte and making plans to sell his bead work in Burt’s environmental art gallery.

I was weary but still cracking like a wire in an electric storm. I needed a ride to where I would be sleeping and asked Brian if he could take me. As we pulled out of the ranch driveway, his words were sharp as ice shards.

“You did exactly what I told you not to do.”

“What do you mean?”

Brian told me that after my dinner conversation with Burt Stevens, Burt had walked into the kitchen where Brian was eating cannelloni and announced that he wanted to buy the tepees for Pine Butte. I knew it would be bad form to smile but it took some effort to maintain an earnest poker face.

“I didn’t ask him for the money to buy the tepees,” I said truthfully. “I just told him what was happening. I mentioned that it wasn’t in the budget for this year, but also that the preserve administrator thought they could work something out.”

The intensity in his voice increased.

“You knew when you said ‘the money wasn’t in the budget’ that he would want to pay for them.” More frozen silence. “Now, I know you think this was all some sort of wonderful coincidence (he smiled a sarcastic smile as he waved his hand in the air) but I’M THE STATED DIRECTOR and I’m responsible to see that we get the funds for our projects.”

When I think back on it, I guess I knew that Burt Stevens might have wanted a role for himself in this unfolding play. And perhaps I could have deliberately withheld information to obscure what was happening while he was there. But I am more guileless than that. I honestly didn’t expect Burt to do what he did. In fact, I didn’t expect or plan any of what happened that day. And to my amazement, it all went like clockwork.

What I think is that a number of us shared a vision of a bridge. And because of what’s happened in the history of this country and what continues to happen today, any bridge that can be built between Indian and white worlds is worth trying and is in some way holy. Each of us felt inspired to do what we could to bring about that bridge and each saw our role to play. Even Brian, when he had asked me so many months before to call up this man and talk to him about tribes. But

something bigger than all of us put it together in a way that still touches that place of wonder when I remember it.

Through Brian’s eyes, my behavior was clearly insubordinate. Even worse, from his perspective, I had won. It was not the last time I heard about it.

“And you went over, after what I told you, and sat right down beside Burt Stevens in the dining hall, while I ate dinner on a stool in the kitchen.” I had to admit it looked incriminating, even though I had not chosen my seating, nor even knew what Burt looked like until he introduced himself.

Sometimes, I think that whatever set me up that day was sending me on a new course. It was a landmark event and it contributed to my growing disfavor, my increasing hard times, and my eventual decision to walk away from what had once been my dream job. There were parts of that work that were so much a part of me, networks I had birthed and nurtured, and had loved into being out of my love for people. When I left, it was like abandoning children or amputating limbs. I still grieve those losses.

As I struggled to deepen my understanding of tribes and indigenous culture in my work, I experienced a homecoming with my own spirit. In the dominant culture which acknowledges only material reality, which values rationality, achievement, competition, I had long felt like an alien. To try to speak of spiritual realities, particularly in scientific circles, was to risk distrust, if not scorn and ridicule. To see the sacred given so little respect, to see relationships so little valued, was always painful, always baffling. So, I have walked away from my standing on one side of the chasm, knowing I will also never be on the other side. With a growing number of others, I find myself a plank in a bridge that hopes to span two worlds.

Before we left the next morning, Burt Stevens sat around the breakfast table with us. He spoke of his research in Native American culture and power structures. He was involved in a new non-profit organization that had a horizontal structure, based on traditional Native American models for governing and decision making. The group had sat in circle and talked until the common vision became clear and then each said their part and without orders, just did what needed to be done. Each saw the whole and how they fit into it. In contrast, he pointed out that the model in western culture is a pyramid, hierarchical, with great discrepancies in power, respect, and with information accorded to different levels.

The Blackfeet lodges were delivered, but not without hitches. I don’t know if that is just the fallout of cross-cultural business deals, or if the resonance of this project was somehow damaged at its inception. But Pine Butte now has tepees, and occasionally Blackfeet people come to share their culture and their wisdom with guests of Pine Butte and with the children of ranchers and townspeople along the Rocky Mountain Front. A couple of years after this event, I was invited to join a class of 4th graders to hear a talk on Blackfeet culture and language in one of those Blackfeet lodges. We all listened enthralled to Darrell Robes Kipp, a brilliant Blackfeet man, co-founder of the Piegan Language Institute and a gifted educator:

“There are things I cannot translate into English,” he said. *

Half Here,



Photo by Alexander Sollie

Water dark, but not deep.

A pond makes a gap in the thick trees. Fish too. Darting, moving, flashing. Half seen.

A footbridge and a brown-skinned young woman standing on the wood planks of the bridge over the fish in the water. She speaks a question through brown eyes. She holds something out to me, cradled across flattened palms.

The *chanupa wakan*. Red pipestone bowl and wood stem. The holy pipe.

I look back down at the fish.

*

I leave the exquisite Dreamtime behind. I live. I do what I am supposed to do. I yearn for people like me—friends who see the things I do.

I learn the Four Winds prayer in the sacred tongue. I remember something deep inside of me.

And I try to forget a face crying at the door and a bitter man turning away. A shack. Some pigs. Memories. But they aren't from my life. Yet I see her there, crying. And I turn away. Turn away. Turn away.

*

I repeat my prayer and sing the three songs I know. I hardly understand the words, but I understand this other world where everything is alive and has its own reason for being. Lives that are enough for them and enough for me. I pray to the thunder beings. I pray to the spotted deer people. I pray to the sky and to *Maka Ina*.

*

Closing my eyes, the shapes move impossibly fast across my vision. They are trying to tell me something. I watch them as I fall asleep, wondering what they want.

Lying beside me, my wife says, "I can smell that smoke again. Where is it coming from? Are you going to get up? If you don't get up, I'm getting up. There could be a fire somewhere."

I smile and say, "You won't find anything. This smoke doesn't come with a fire."

I drift into the Dreamtime watching the machine shapes dance their message to me.

They move so fast, they smoke.

A moose walks through my dreams, the powerful shape outside my window dark in the moonlight, high stepping carefully as it sniffs about for more willow. I wake up and I can't resist: I creep across the warm bed to lift a blind of the frosted window and peer out into the back lot. There is the moose. No! Two!

The moonlight illuminates this other world where moose walk in and out of my dreams.

*

I pray for another chance to let the crying woman in. I pour the intention into my Lakota songs, something ancient in the melodies resonating with my ancient attachment. I can feel her there somewhere.

*

Life picks up speed as I move like a flashing salmon towards my home waters. I don't know where to go, but I don't have to. The current tells me which way to move. I leave the land of the moose and make a new home in the southern land of mountains.

Coyote howls home.

A gift comes my way: New friends that speak my tongue—not Lakota—but chakras and kundalini and sweat lodges. Yes, I want to come to their *inipi*! Yes!

I make tobacco ties and I fast that day. I crawl in through the low door, crying out, "*Mitakuye oyasin!*" and a part of me has returned home.

The first time the lowering steam hits my head I gasp and slouch down as if a hawk was swooping at me. Soon, I am embracing Mother Earth, asking for strength, my fevered cheek against her cool breast.

I remember a young woman holding a *chanupa* out to me, a question in her eyes. The fish swim below. Half here, half not here.

*

My wife brings me a piece of paper. It's a signpost, a road sign, divorce papers, joy, loneliness, a grave marker leading to 300 deeper graves. Pine Ridge. Someone wants people to work for two weeks on Pine Ridge. I know how to work. I pack my rattling old van with tools and parts and my dreams of being the

Half There

white savior. The children and the wife stand in the driveway watching me go. I look forward, closing in.

Many rich white salmon fight their way up the streams to stop at last at the still pool of the first Boys and Girls Club on a First Nations reservation. I pull my van in under the haunted tree, high eighties now and humid, glance at the sporty cherry red car parked out front and wonder, "*Who brought that here?*" and walk through the doors into the cool interior, joining the other pale salmon restlessly moving about, uncertain what to do next.

Lives fractured as though seen through a kaleidoscope—patterns, but meaning shattered.

I introduce myself to the executive director of the club: A Lakota woman at her desk in her cramped office surrounded by untidy stacks of papers.

I ask her what I might do. *I heard the water heater wasn't working. I bet these urban Unitarians will want showers tonight. Shall I take a look?*

"Yes, please," she says. She isn't surprised at all that her water heaters stops working and here is a man who can fix water heaters. The white savior goes and fixes the water heater so the white Unitarians can take their showers.

When I finish, I walk to the summer powwow in the fields west of Big Batt's. My head spins with the music and the costumes and the native faces. I drink in the dark skin, the curve of noses, the cheekbones. I am thrilled to be with these people.

The white man in front of me at the ticket booth asks if he can bring his camera in. The teller says, "Sure, but it has to pay admission, too."

I smile as the man pays the price of two.

I step up. "No camera." We smile at the shared joke.

Not knowing what to, I walk restlessly about the arbor, stopping to look at drum groups, watching the dancers, looking for unclaimed shade. My heart matches the drumbeats.

A dancer leaves the grounds, adjusting his costume. Something has come loose. "Can

you hold onto this for a minute?" He hands me an eagle feather. I take it. My heart dances inside my chest.

*

Later, I see her in the Club. I know her. I know I know her. But I don't know her. *I must know her.* She is the owner of the red car, of course. We begin to talk. I know her brown eyes. Not from the bridge—from the shack.

*

I sleep lightly in the van under the haunted tree. I wake to feel the shaking of a mighty wind. A storm? A tornado? As the van stops swaying, I get up to look out a window. No fresh branches on the gravel. The paper cups still scattered about. Nothing changed.

I sleep and wake again to hear Red Car Woman calling my name. No one is in the empty parking lot—just the litter. I sleep again, fish in the shallows, fish in the deep.

*

We exhaust ourselves with days in the sun, cutting long dry grass with scythes. Residents walk by, too polite to stare, to curious to walk straight home. The Unitarians are suffering and sweating from the heat. I attempt to bargain with the trip manager. *We can rent equipment. Then we'll be done in a day or two. But at this rate, it will take all week for us to cut this field.*

"That's the idea."

Crazy white people.

*

We move to a place in Black Elk's old neighborhood—cooler, wide-open spaces. Camped in a meadow, surrounded by the trees along the creek. There are young Lakota and beautiful pinto horses glowing in the morning sun as they graze. The sun is not so hot here as we work with lumber to make concrete forms. At night there are bonfires and the Lakota *hokshila* come into camp on their ponies, bareback, and sit with us at the fire.

A croaking call comes from the dark wood line across the grass. Like the single, short, hoarse note of a raven, but near the ground in the trees, and louder. *Must be a friend of the boys,* I think as I turn and wait for them to respond. They look out into the darkness

The Origin of GOD

Digging in the Roots of the Tree of Life

Richard Fox, *the Fire Druid*

too, silent, not moving from the fire. They look at me quickly, seeing me seeing, and look away.

Later at the van, I smell tobacco smoke drifting in from nowhere, and think of Black Elk and the pipe.

*

We aren't often close, Red Car Woman and I, but we orbit each other. There's an old story between us, with a chapter yet to write. I keep my head down, working, but I always know where she is. I can feel her. I've looked for her for so long, I latch onto her now. I don't let her out of my thoughts.

*

We get two days to visit the sacred Black Hills. No, we will not be seeing that offense the Long Knives carved into the bones of the people. Isn't it enough to see Harleys thundering everywhere through the *Paha Sapa*?

I must be tired: I see animals as I look out the van windows into the pine trees moving past. A bush will shift into an elk, a stump into a leaping wolf. Over there a black bear. They aren't there, but they are there.

That night we stay in one of the seven sacred places in these Black Hills: A white town now that turns a suspicious eye on Indians wanting to enter a store that squats on stolen land. But there is medicine here still, springing up with the warm water. Red Car Woman and I walk in the cool, magic dark. I don't know what to do or what to say to her. I want to give her all of me, but all of me is taken.

I return to my hotel room alone and lie down. I pray for guidance and a waking vision comes. I will spend years puzzling though the foreign images. As it begins, I am faced with a presence as old as the granite of the *Paha Sapa*. A consciousness that looks on my puny mortal ego and grins behind a death mask at the human who would pray to it for help. I know I have stumbled into a world that is alien to me, but that world has always been. The death mask is replaced with another—someone who has known the physical, but now continues in the spirit world. He looks from high on his seat atop a warhorse and doubts I am equal to the task ahead of me. As the vision ends, I sink down, down, down into the earth of the Black Hills,

granite rock needles thrusting up and out of the earth around me to form a mile-wide horseshoe ring, open to the West—West, where the spirit beings live.

*

Back on the Rez, in the cool countryside, I wake early once again and feel compelled to say my prayers in Lakota on a nearby hilltop. I ask a groggy Red Car Woman if she would like to come.

"Give me a minute."

We climb to the top just before the sun will begin to peek over the pine-covered ridge to the east. I define my four directions circle as I explain what I am doing and what the four directions mean to me. I tell her of the last three directions: Mother Earth, Grandfather Sky, and *Hochoka*—the Center.

As the rising sun silhouettes the pines on the far ridge, I begin the Four Winds Prayer in the sacred tongue, in this sacred place where Black Elk walked; where Crazy Horse's people settled; where the *Oglala oyate* ride their horses still; where every summer the ribboned Sun Dance trees go up and dust rises under bare feet; where the people still tell stories of the holy man, Fools Crow; where the dead of Wounded Knee are buried in a mass grave.

Within a few moments of beginning, we hear the drumming and singing of a lone male voice coming from far off to the north. I try to focus on my own morning prayers, but with a jolt I recognize the song—the *Tawapaha Olowan*, the flag song—sung to open powwows and other gatherings of the Lakota people. It's one of the three songs I know in the Lakota language. The coincidence and the timing are startling, but I continue on and complete the Four Winds prayer to this beautiful accompaniment.

Prayer over, I step to the edge of the hilltop and look down, still feeling the strong ethereal currents on the hill this morning. All I can see in the direction of the sounds is a trailer half a mile away. No singer visible, but there could be someone on the shaded side of the singlewide, out of my sight. It was so far away though. And why would they greet the new day in the shade?

That night, at the picnic table again, I ask the young Lakota men about the singing and drumming we heard. They exchange silent glances among themselves before one turns to me and shrugs.

*

The trip to Pine Ridge is drawing to a close. I had been warned at the start not to expect anything magical, but magic has come to me in many unexpected ways and I am shaken and blessed and overwhelmed. To get to know Lakota people and to experience things I had only read and dreamed about before have already changed me. I am mournfully reluctant to leave. I feel like I belong here on Pine Ridge despite the color of my skin and my life in Colorado. From this day on, I will be half here and half there.

I have gotten to know the director of the Boys and Girls Club and I know I will be welcome to return now and then to help out around the Club (and I will do so, many times). Before leaving though, I have promised Red Car Woman to talk to the director on her behalf and see if she has any ideas for a job for Red Car Woman on the reservation.

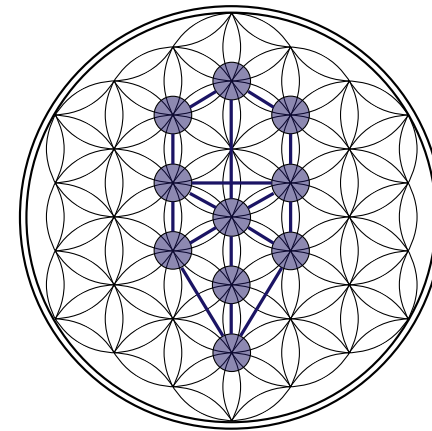
"Yes, I have a job for her here in the Club. I need someone to work with the kids. As a teacher, she'd be perfect."

The Lakota director continues, "And what about you? Do you want to stay?"

At the center of my chest, behind my sternum, ice explodes. The cold shards shoot out in all directions, piercing and melting as they plunge through flesh and organs. In an instant, the old me is shattered and torn apart. The new me has just been birthed.

*

A child again, I watch the fish below as I reach for the pipe. ■



While it *impossible* to understand the nature and origin of GOD, it is also a fundamental part of the essence of being human *to want* to understand the nature and origin of GOD.

Our minds are not used to thinking about such concepts. Yet, even that which is impossible to do *fully*, can be attempted...and some progress can be made.

Beyond form, beyond GOD, there is that which formed GOD and created all that is.

Let me try to clarify this impossible concept—the Kaballah way.

The Kaballah is *based* on understanding the origin of GOD and the workings of the universe, by exploring... not math...but the underlying fundamental concepts *at the core* of math, an area of intense study by many great minds throughout the ages.

Numbers are a unique and fundamental part of the human psyche and an integral part of our understanding and comprehension of the world. Numbers are not like "words" that have slightly different interpretations and meanings in every different language. Two plus two is the exact same concept in every language, and every culture has the same elemental system of numbers built into its memories.

Understanding how the concept of numbers developed is essential to understanding the creation and nature of linear thinking. More importantly, though... numbers are also a *map*... a map to understanding the origin of GOD.

At the core of Kaballah is the story of the "Tree of Life" which explains **visually and conceptually**, how nothing becomes something and evolves into the multiplicity of what we perceive today. It is the tale of ongoing creation. There is no beginning... no end to this circle of life... but there is a "point" where reality starts.

And before this **point** is the origin of GOD. I will share that part of the tale with you now.

In math... *before* the number One, there is Zero... Let us begin there.

In the Kaballah... there is much to say about this zero. To start with, there are several gradients:

There are circles within circles... In the Kaballah, these circles represent that which is beyond form and existence.

The first and furthest out circle is represented by the word AIN. It is defined as no thing... It is nothing. It is all that is not. It is that which cannot be known.

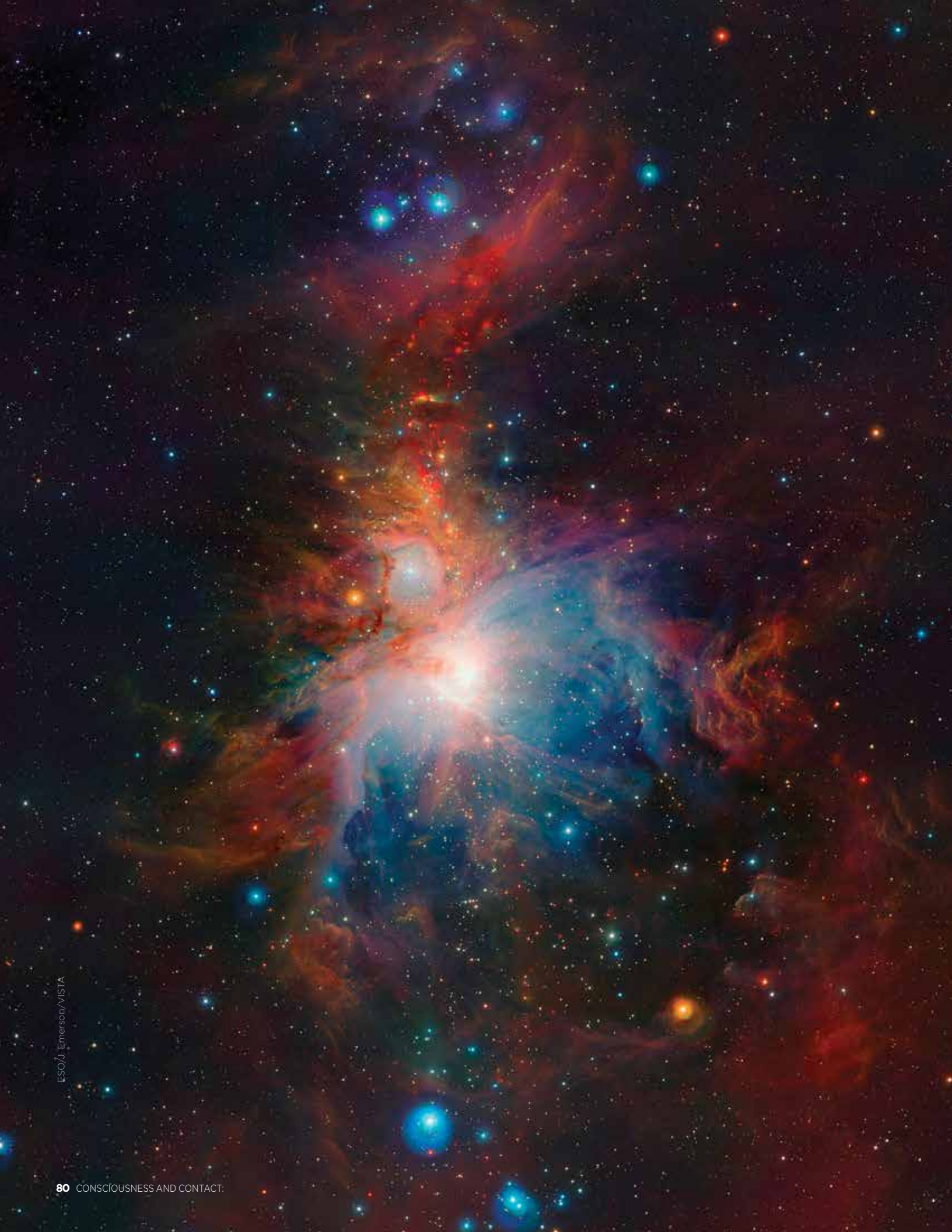
The second circle is AIN SOPH—defined as Limitless Space or the nature of nothing. It is not that which is *in* space. It is that which extends without limit, which all people can barely conceive of and yet they **cannot conceive of it not**—that is—a limit to space—an end or an edge to space—a place where space is not. It is that concept of infinity—an infinity without dimensions or characteristics that is AIN SOPH.

The inner circle is AIN SOPH AUR—the Limitless Light of Chaos. Before there was any order... there was this Light and nothing else. What is this special light? It is a subtle substance—a phenomenon that permeates all consciousness and is known to all, but what is it???—that is AIN SOPH AUR.

Then, there is the transition—a transition to that which is knowable. It is not so knowable that much can be said of it... but we are stilling missing the point... and that is where we must go next.

When the limitless light of AIN SOPH AUR became concentrated upon a single center, there was a crystallization of sorts. Like dissolving sugar in warm water and watching the crystals precipitate into solids as the water cools and slowly reaches the transition point. They seem to materialize out of nothing, but they already existed in a different form *all along* and only required the right conditions to materialize. But yet, the creation of all that is, is not so simple as sugar, for here we are dealing with the primordial forces of nature.

As humans, we will likely never know what causes the light to contract—but it is the



first of all cosmic birthing contractions and it is what creates the point, the primal point—a place called KETHER—a conjunction of two powerful forces—the expansion that fills more and more of limitless space and the expansion that fills each iota of space with infinitely more. This point is a place where the constant expansion of space and the constant filling in of space—the concept of breadth and depth, the centrifugal and centripetal forces, all meet for the first time and from where they manifest. This place is called KETHER, the first of the phenomenon called the “Sephiroth” in the Kabbalistic approach.

But how can we better understand this primordial point? How might we know it better? The field of mathematics certainly provides a bit of a platform to stand on, for what do they say of that which is a point? By Euclid’s definition, a point *has position* but no *dimensions*. It is the spot under the pencil point on a piece of paper. It is not the dot the pencil makes, but the theoretical place beneath the dot—it is that which the dot is a symbol of. It has no dimensions. It does nothing and takes up no space, and yet, *it exists*.

Here then is KETHER—alluded to in many religions and esoteric philosophies. It is the Point within the Circle, the head that is not, Lux Occulta, the Divine Spark, the Ancient of Ancients.

In KETHER, there is no *form* whatsoever. It is but a latency, a potentiality, only one degree removed from non-existence. It is THE ONE that existed before there was any reflection in its consciousness that created the concept of polarity.

And yet the precipitation of light, this *distillation*, is not done—that which is KETHER persists and continues on, extending itself through space. The single point . becomes two .. and when it yet persists it takes on the nature of growth. ... becomes ... and before long it is a series of points such as this ... and that becomes what we know of as a “line”. The *line* is the point *matured*. It still takes up no space, being only a series of non-dimensional points and exists only on one plane. It is an abstract rod of power... a line of pure force.

If you think of this point as it continues to exist, it provides the basis for the origin of the concept of time and *motion*.

Look also to the *I Ching/Yijing* for a moment, and you will see that the solid line is considered a symbol for the male energy (yang) and

attached to concepts like the light, being heavenly and active and thus it is... even within the Kabbalah.

Stand this line up and take a look at what has become of our point. It has become the number 1 and somehow all of mathematics has begun.

This force of which the progressed point is an expression continues and in doing so, expands that which was formless as it is filled with *ever inflowing* energy which requires new expression, as it is no longer like that which it was before the additional force flowed into it. It is this continuous inflowing of force that creates the ongoing expansion of the universe. And kabbalistically speaking... creates the next Sephiroth, called CHOKMAH.

And herein is created the number 2. Why? Because by continuing, there now is a *difference* in all that is. There is that which was before and that which is after. There is now more than the one of before and that becomes known as CHOKMAH. It is the origin of the number two and the primordial *beginning* of the concept of duality.

CHOKMAH is placed on the Tree of Life as the head of the right pillar. It is positively charged and this Sephiroth and the pillar it heads are defined as “male.” It is pure unadulterated elemental FORCE. Creation has moved onwards. It is the Great Stimulator. It is a channel for the passage of force.

As the force continues, as it evolves, it obtains UNDERSTANDING, which is represented by the Sephiroth BINAH, which is the crown of the negatively charged “female” pillar on the Tree of Life. It receives the force of CHOKMAH. It is the first of the stabilizing Sephiroth that acts as a focalizer of force and in such, utilizes force to create form.

It is at this point that a strange alchemy takes place. With duration and form comes the ability to reflect upon the experience experienced. When this elemental understanding then reflects upon its experience, it must contemplate its roots back to KETHER, and CHOKMAH but also the unfathomable void beyond. In doing so, as BINAH ponders upon its own place, the ability to perceive of and understand interrelationships is established.

To return to mathematics, the line has evolved into the triangle and thus the infinite possibilities of “sacred” geometry are created as a continuous supply of energy, expansion and consciousness continues to pour into reality.

In this continuous outflowing of force, all that we know of as GOD is formed. GOD is thus cosmic force that can understand—understand all the incalculable permutations and combinations that become possible with infinite power and without our conceptual constraints of what we understand to be “time”.

It is here that the possibility of form is *first* created, and it is in the reflection of BINAH and the power of this triad of force that all form and manifestation take place.

Ultimately, all of the universe and everything that we can perceive of is the result of these three aspects of GOD reflecting on the infinite possibilities of force and form.

It is the first trilogy—the neutered *nondimensional* element coexisting with the cosmic primordial male and female elements. This triangle is not the many versions of GOD that humans have worshiped in many forms throughout history, for that comes a bit later in the Tree of Life. It is instead those elements that make up that which IS GOD. KETHER differentiates into CHOKMAH and BINAH before it achieves phenomenal existence, so within this trilogy, there is no reality, no form, no universe and no activity as we know it—only unknowable non-dimensional power, force and reflection.

In this triangle, a subtle balance is achieved. CHOKMAH is pure energy, limitless and tireless, but incapable of harnessing it. BINAH is capable of using endless force and creating all things with it but cannot generate the force needed for creation.

Together though, when invigorated by the ever-powerful inflow of KETHER, this GOD is capable and is responsible for creating all things that exist and all that will ever exist. •

Last Updated - 8-13-20

Expanded Consciousness through Immersion in Indigenous Knowledges (IK)



Lakota Native American Man at Pow Wow, South Dakota, USA

In 2003, I experienced several life-changing events that led to my move from the US to Canada. These events began with an invitation to attend a Sun Dance on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota in early summer and culminated with an experience on Sept. 26, 2003 which confirmed for me that human consciousness and intention manifest physical realities in our earth lives. At the Sun Dance, I made several clear, specific intentions and committed to doing what I was asked to do by Creator.

On the evening of Sept. 26, 2003, I was on my way to the city of Ft. Wayne, Indiana and intentionally placed myself in a semi-trance state while driving (I don't recommend this practice!). I held the specific purpose of focusing on my gratitude for achievements I had experienced over the prior three months and requested one specific manifestation. I said out loud, "Thank you so much, Creator, for helping me. Can you please help me

get rid of my car payment so I can manifest my intentions more quickly?" I neglected to add, "With no harm coming to me or anyone else." In my, as yet, naive understanding of these processes, I imagined I would receive a sudden windfall of money to pay off the remainder of the car loan, clearing the way for me to move.

One hour later, while waiting in traffic, a dual-cab, F350 Ford pick-up truck slammed into my small sports car at high speed, sending the first car in line (I was the fourth car) flying through the intersection. In that split second, I lost everything—my health, car, ability to manage myself, and eventually, the job, the health insurance and savings, and the house where my daughters and I lived. I also lost a rental property.

No one was killed in the collision—I was the only one seriously injured—but I was unable to work for almost two years. In those months, I experi-

enced profound spiritual gifts and an immersion into a consciousness of infinite love and healing unknown to me before. My existence initially was a wonderful state of meditative-like consciousness, sleep and comfort. I received loving care from many people. Of course, there was also pain, physical and emotional, but those effects have faded, while the new-found state of consciousness of love has remained and expanded.

I was later able to obtain employment as a therapist in a city where the history of my head injury was unknown, and, thanks to the Americans with Disabilities Act, I was able to receive supportive services in returning to my career. (I am a much better therapist now than prior to the accident - I understand in ways that I could not sense before.) To top it all off, I received a settlement from the accident, allowing me to pay off debt, but not erasing the bankruptcy.

The things which manifested in my life following 2003 were dreams I had given up on. One was the gift of a loving marriage which lasted until my husband's death in 2016. His spirit continues to support me. Another was the gift of being able to complete a Ph.D., which I had been told by my neuropsychologist to forget about after my accident. "You have impaired judgement. You need to re-evaluate your goals and capabilities," he said. In a burst of anger, I replied, "I have a life! And I WILL do a PhD!" Eleven years later I received my degree. What is being manifested does not always show up within the hour or without our own work. At this point in my life, I continue to work full-time as a social-work professor and see the dream of learning to make art become reality. I found a teacher who brings out the best in me and holds a space where I can create. Another dream manifested was that of writing a memoir, forthcoming in 2021.

I am left pondering, "What do I really know about the consciousness of love?" I know that my own sense of consciousness has changed as a result of spiritual experiences and physical injuries. I increasingly encounter synchronicities and abundance of amazing variety. The things I know about scientific studies on consciousness from the fields of psychology, physics, religion and metaphysics inform my first-hand experiences. I have learned deeply from the wisdom shared with me by traditional Indigenous Elders across North America and from Ireland, Scotland and Uganda. I continue to expand my understandings of our reality on this planet and have been enriched by stories shared with me from friends who experience vastly different realms of consciousness than I have been able to perceive. Practicing meditation gives me avenues into states of consciousness that continue to heal me.

Herbert Nabigon (1942-2016), author, professor, and my late husband, was an Anishnaabe Traditional Elder, a man who moved easily between the many worlds of his life. The paradigm which shaped his life is described in his book *The Hollow Tree* (McGill-Queen's Univ. Press: 2006). He lived in "the eternal now," living a simple life and working as an Elder by teaching, conducting Pipe Ceremonies, Sweat Lodge Ceremonies, and others. The initiation into his role were the brutal lessons of Residential School and the descent into addiction. His recovery was dramatic, long, arduous and transformative, which prepared him for a lifetime of service.

I shared ten remarkable years with this loving teacher – ten years during which I restored my true self by immersion into traditional indigenous knowledge. Seven hours before his death

he performed his last ceremony, a Naming Ceremony and Blanket Teaching for my niece who had driven through the night with her family to share his final hours. Our home was filled with physical and non-physical beings who witnessed this event.

I am filled with awe in living a life shaped by the gentle power of traditional knowledge which continues to unfold in many manifestations. I increasingly understand the relationship with the non-physical realities within which we live. During the conference *Consciousness and Contact*, held July, 2019 on the Pine Ridge Reservation in Lakota Territory of South Dakota, I experienced a profound entry into the alternate world, being able to see and move in what exists around us outside of physical perception. As I traveled to visit the Wounded Knee Memorial site, I became intensely aware of the alternate world whenever I closed my eyes and could see the beauty, similar yet different, in everything around us. This experience was shared by one other person riding in the van. As we shared what we were seeing, we received confirmation that we were both experiencing the same thing.

At the September Full Moon Ceremony (2019) on the *Michipicoten* First Nation near my current home, I entered into the alternate world in a new way as the ceremony unfolded. I described what I was seeing, this time with my eyes wide open, to the other women in the circle and shared the message I was receiving from the Grandmothers. I saw the sacred fire, both the physical one in this world and the physical one in the alternate world. I witnessed the relationship between the two fires. As one became stronger or weaker, the other mirrored it. The Grandmothers made it clear to me that the work we were doing on this side was absolutely essential to the work they were doing on the other side. We carry serious responsibilities. When the ceremony concluded, the two fires merged over the same spot, separate but both clearly visible to me, and remained until the last ember burned down.

It is a new normal for me to be able to see the shimmering curtain between both realities and observe with open eyes the relationship between both worlds. The lessons I have learned from the Elders and from my studies and experiences, tell me that relationships are sacred and essential for life. Without a true understanding of relationship, we will not survive. The core of survival of life, of resilience in our network supporting life, is the essence of love. Life is gasping for breath, struggling to hang onto the final attachments to place and time on this planet. The relationships we nurture with our spirits, our relatives ("all our

relations"), our conduct and values, our communities and all of nature is crucial. Life is sacred, precious and fragile.

At the *Consciousness and Contact Conference* in Wasta, SD, July 23-27, 2020, I experienced yet another unfolding of the reality of being guided by Spirit in experiences and perceptions. There is nothing I wish to describe in personal detail at this point, but I left South Dakota with a new-found strength and confidence in what I know to be a path forward for myself. This is not without difficulty, yet I feel joyful. I am assured that this is a time of clearing both ancient and new patterns which are destructive to life itself, and I know we are not alone in our journey. Connecting with Spirit, with the people in our lives, with our own true natures and the nature of the planet is the most important thing we can do at the present time. There is nothing more important than to understand that the greater force of Love connecting us all is ascendant, and the consciousness of love is what we need to focus on collectively at this time.

Humanity now finds itself on the cusp of crises the likes of which we have not known for millennia. Changes in the environment have passed a tipping point and the inevitable shift to a different physical reality on our beautiful, hurting planet is set. The current Covid-19 pandemic presents challenges in every dimension of our collective existence, separating and connecting people from every part of the earth. The paradoxical nature of the reality we find ourselves in now is confounding to ordinary human reasoning and customary coping strategies. Ordinary rules no longer work. Each person alive on this earth, and all sentient beings and bodies of spirit, deserve to live a life of abundance, joy, and freedom of choice, having all that is needed for life to continue to unfold. The competing voices and actions denying this to so much of the life on this planet are coming to a crescendo, which will be resolved in the unfolding of what is to come.

We carry great responsibility in these times. It is exciting to be alive in the presence of the profound changes taking place in the Earth Mother, and in ourselves. We are more than we think we are, and what we value will either sustain life here or it will destroy life here. Not one iota of what we do, think, feel, and speak is unimportant. Love matters above all. We are called to love our unique selves, each other, nature and Spirit. It is the consciousness of love which unites "all our relations" and holds us in the Sacred Circle. •



Todd Trapani

Joe Krawczk

The Tower

At the *Contact and Consciousness* conference on Saturday, July 25, 2020, the group went on an evening trip to visit Devil's Tower, Wyoming. It is called *Mathó Thípila* by the Lakota people, meaning Bear's Lodge, and has been a sacred site for as long as humans have inhabited these lands, going back at least 10,000 years and likely longer, as the evidence for human habitation of North America keeps getting pushed back in time with new archeological discoveries. In the tradition of the Lakota, the Tower is linked to the Pleiades star cluster.

I was asked to lead a group meditation that evening on our visit to the Tower. Such a meditation must have some intentional theme. On the long drive from Wasta to the Tower, I did not think about what the theme should be, but rather just trusted that the theme would come to me as needed. Finally, we neared the area of the Tower and from ten or more miles away we saw the first view of the Tower rising up majestically in the distance.

Gazing at the tower from afar, I had a clear knowing that this is a power spot and has been sacred to native peoples for many millennia, and that the focus was to be on the Earth. The specific words and intentions I simply allowed to come to me in the meditation.

When we arrived at this spectacular creation of the Earth, we took an hour to let people walk the trail around the base of the Tower during the golden hour before sunset. It is hard to describe the impact the Tower has in person. It is truly awe-inspiring, unexpected, strange and wonderful at the same time. One wonders at the tremendous Earth processes that created it, and the vast eons of time it has stood. The energy and force of its presence is palpable.

I walked along the trail at the base of the Tower in silence and reverence. I took this photo at the end of my walk as the sun had just set. The sky over the Tower at this time was mostly clear. There was a storm some miles away to the southwest.

We met by the parking lot for a picnic dinner and twilight deepened. Thicker clouds were moving over us, and a storm was getting nearer. Then, as we were just finishing putting away the food, I felt a deep urgency well up inside me, not so much a mental thought, but rather an urge or knowing coming from my solar plexus area. I knew that we had to go do the meditation RIGHT NOW. There were many people from our group out farther in the parking lot at their cars. Normally, I am considerate and would wait to allow time to gather up all the people from the group that wanted to join the meditation. But in this case, I knew that I just had to announce to those that were in the eating area that we were heading up the short trail to do the meditation now. For some reason I knew that we could not wait for the others, and that was OK.

We hiked up the short path. It was getting dark. Lightening was coming closer, and there was a little bit of rumbling thunder in the near distance.

About a dozen of us gathered in a flat, paved area right under the Tower, barely visible now in the dark sky.

As we started the meditation, I felt strong energies begin to move through me, and the energies built in intensity over the ten to twelve minutes of the meditation. I just let the words flow with the meanings and intentions that were coming through me naturally from a deep place, moved by the spirit.

In the first part of the meditation, we connected with the Earth and went into deep gratitude for our lives, and all that we have experienced and learned, which has all been enabled because of the Earth. While I vocalized gratitude for our current lives, in my inner world I was sensing the long experiences of myself and many in the group over many lifetimes on the Earth. A great upwelling of emotion surged through me, as though filled with all the joys, tears, struggles, tragedies, and achievement of millennia of Earth lifetimes.

With a strong surge of emotion and energy, the meditation turned into a prayer: A profound yearning and intention for the uplifting of the Earth after all that she has been through supporting humanity for so long. The words poured out of me with a strong voice and deeply felt intention, speaking of the Earth:

MAY SHE BE HEALED

MAY SHE BE MADE WHOLE

MAY HER DIVINE DESTINY BE FULL FILLED

While I normally meditate with my eyes closed, near the end of the meditation I felt that I should open my eyes. The scene was surreal. The lightning was right over us and right over the Tower. Rolling, rumbling thunder followed each flash. Looming above us in the darkness, the whole of the great Tower was intermittently lit up for split seconds by flashes of white lightening. Not a drop of rain was falling.

I felt overwhelmed by the energy, really more like a great alignment of many energies, that was much greater than us humans.

I called out to the group "Open your eyes!". I had an intuitive knowing that everyone should witness what was happening all around us.

Just as the meditation ended and for a few minutes afterwards, the lightening reached a crescendo. We all stood in silence in a feeling of awe, watching it for two or three minutes.

After a few moments of witnessing this scene, I got another strong intuitive feeling that we had just enough time to walk back down the short trail to our cars before the rain would hit. I told the group this, and then we headed back down the trail. Just as I reached my car and got inside, rain drops began hitting the windshield.

I have gotten experienced at feeling/running energies during meditative practice, and the energy of that night was off the scale. Many spiritual experiences are private and meant to stay that way. This was a powerful experience for me. Perhaps it was only meant for me; but I can't shake the feeling that something much larger happened there, based on the extraordinary energy which ran through me so powerfully.

I felt an alignment of forces much beyond us—the Tower looming over us, the lighting and thunder, the perfect timing of events, the energy. There was a dramatic, almost violent, wave of Earth energy or natural forces all around us. We were participants, perhaps needed participants, in an acute energetic event, and our chosen intention was not random, it was also in alignment with everything around us. I felt the universe was working with and through us.

While the meditation was happening, several people from our group were in a car looking up at the Tower and watching the natural events. Just above the low level of the clouds being lit up by the lighting, they saw a craft hovering above the Tower. I did not know this at the time but heard about it the next morning.

As we left the site and started the long night drive back to Wasta, I was still dazed and reeling. I could not speak. Whereas on the drive there we all had chatted, now I could only drive in silence. I just had to process the event and what had just happened. I was still in a somewhat altered state of consciousness. For an hour and a half as I drove in silence, I felt the energy running through me, and my mind was filled by the awesome sight of the Tower high above us in the darkness, lit by flashes of lightning.

After an hour and a half of driving in this state of reverie, another image suddenly filled my mind. It was an image of a card from the Tarot called The Tower. It was The Tower tarot card.

Now, I have never had a tarot reading and I have never studied the tarot. But I have seen images of some of the cards, and obviously had a memory of this card. As I continued driving, this strange haunting image filled my mind. The similarity with what we had just experienced was obvious and striking. This image of this card stayed with me for about twenty minutes while I drove in silence. What did it mean? About all I know of tarot is that the cards are based on deep archetypes. But I did not know the meaning of this card. As I saw it in my mind's eye, it had a rather powerful and ominous feeling to it.

Over the next two days I was busy with the rest of the conference and then more travel. On a three-hour flight after the conference, I could not read books or listen to podcasts as I would normally do. The experience at the Tower, and the image and strange symbolism of the tower card filled my consciousness. I just had to sit and contemplate it, process it.

A day or two later I finally had a chance to look up the meaning of the card.

The below is quoted from labyrinthos.co, and is representative of many other published interpretations:

The Tower card depicts a high spire nestled on top of the mountain. A lightning bolt strikes the tower which sets it ablaze. Flames are bursting in the windows and people are jumping out of the windows as an act of desperation. They perhaps signal the same figures we see chained in the Devil card earlier. They want to escape the turmoil and destruction within. The Tower is a symbol for the ambition that is constructed on faulty premises. The destruction of the tower must happen in order to clear out the old ways and welcome something new. Its revelations can come in a flash of truth or inspiration.

The Tower represents change in the most radical and momentous sense. It is for this reason that the card itself visually looks so unnerving. But it doesn't necessarily have to be truly frightening or ominous. Because at the heart of this card, its message is foundational, groundbreaking change.

The kind of event that the Tower card marks does not have to be something terrible, like a disaster or a great loss. Change itself is a normal part of life that one has to embrace. But it can sometimes strike fear, for it means that we must abandon the truths that we have known prior to this event. The old ways are no longer useful, and you must find another set of beliefs, values and processes to take their place.

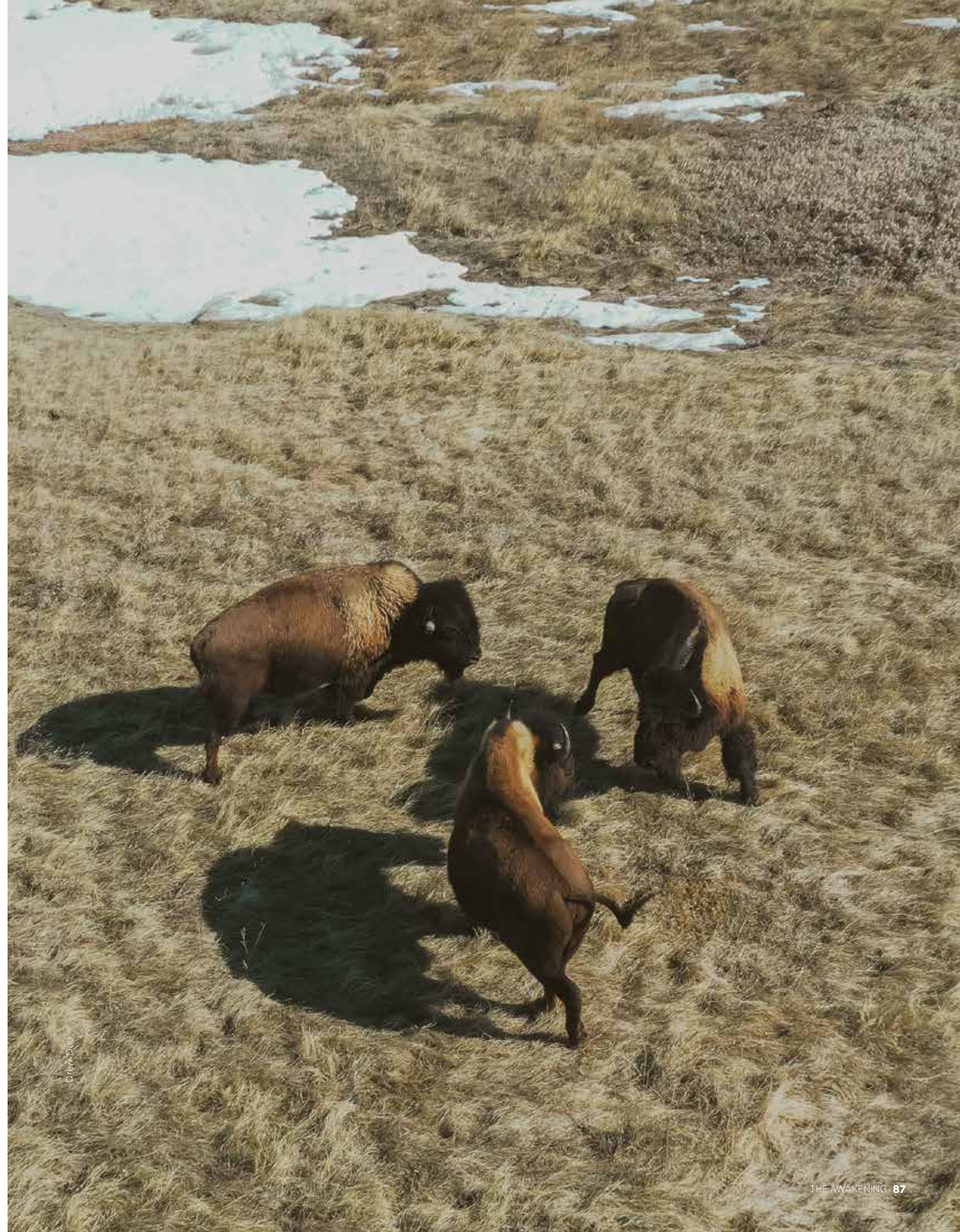
Be positive, it is time for you to replace the old foundations of the past with something that is more genuine and will serve you better in what is to come.

As I read the conventional interpretations and sat quietly with my intuition, the meaning and symbolism of this card in the context of my experience became clear and powerful to me.

Our experience at Devil's Tower was all about the Earth and our intention for her upliftment.

Therefore, this image of the card that came to me so strongly must be taken in that context. As we meditated and prayed at the base of Devil's Tower, we were in alignment with much larger forces. Our prayer for the Earth is needed. She needs to be healed and made whole. Her divine destiny must be fulfilled. And so, it shall be. But humanity and its consciousness are inextricably linked to that of the Earth. Earth cannot be healed with humanity in an unhealed state.

For the Earth to reach her fulfillment, first we must pass through the archetypal energy and actual experiences of The Tower. ■



Consciousness and Contact on Pine Ridge

Lucinda Laughing Eagle Morel

There are places among us on this beautiful planet where the barriers between worlds collide and dance like courting eagles. These magical spaces offer profound healings for those courageous enough to accept the invitation. Once the initiation begins, the only way out is through. Expect some battle scars and be ready to navigate the unknown. Welcome to the Pine Ridge Reservation.

Last summer, a small group of would-be initiates accepted an invitation by Mia Feroletto to explore Consciousness and Contact on the Pine Ridge Reservation, a land as alive and complex as the Lakota people. I was excited to meet my fellow conference attendees, partake in Lakota ceremonies, and especially, attend a Sun Dance. What caught me completely off guard was the pure magic and deep healing that was to come from participating in the long weekend's events.

The Land.

I felt the shift the minute we moved into the Pine Ridge reservation. The ground beneath the van vibrated with feral energy. Unlike the maternal red earth of Sedona, Pine Ridge felt like a volatile beat. As if its entire history was occurring real time, all at once. A thunder drum of hooves, battle cries, stoic wisdom from grandfather rocks and ancestral spirits. The scenery is beautiful and wild, tinged with a residual stain of confusion and despair.

The All Nations Gathering Center.

We turned right at Old Allen Road and crawled through Kyle at 25 mph until we hit BIA-4 and came upon the buffalo at the gate of the All Nations Gathering Center, our conference home. Before meeting a single human, the van was greeted by a giddy pack of smiling dogs. The property itself felt like a family reunion. Growing up, my Grandmother's house was the epicenter of our very large family. Nestled in the gang infested Avenues of Highland Park in Los Angeles, driving through the neighborhood could get sketchy, but once the station wagon pulled into Grandma's tree covered driveway, our ancestral sentinels provided a security no outsider dare challenge. I was home at Grandma's house, and surprisingly, I was home here. I thanked the familiar sentinels guarding the property, met my lovely hosts, Becky and Dallas Chief Eagle, then bolted outside to let the dogs give me the tour. We bounded down the slope toward inipis and tipis, greeting the forest of the vast property.

The Locals.

To understand the land, it is imperative to understand the people. Quiet and kind to newcomers, many an unsuspecting stranger would happily report that the people of Pine Ridge are wonderfully respectful hosts - and they are - just as most folks driving past the Badlands would call it a majestic and serene scenic vista. We see what we are ready to see. If all I received

from the Lakota people was a polite relationship, I would take it, but my heart and my blood know Native ways. I wanted to engage with the heart of the people. I was existing in a space where the line connecting person to land was nonexistent. Here, Land and People are one beautiful family. The land had already showed me its truth, so I sought to earn the truth from the people. What I learned is that the thunder beat of the land pulses in the blood of the Lakota. It is glorious to witness. Great suffering cracks the heart open, and Pine Ridge has experienced more than its share. What I saw in the Lakota was a deep appreciation for life in those who chose to fill their hearts with gratitude. There were also those working through that initiation. Like all journeys, some will get there, others will not.

Inipi.

What can I say? Invite a bunch of ET experiencers to a power spot and you're probably going to experience a bit of "high strangeness". It's a day in the life for us. Unfortunately, we may have freaked out a local or two. The night before we attended the Sun Dance, we partook in a 4-round *inipi* sweat lodge. Round one was really about the question all first-time sweat-lodgers ask themselves: can I do this? The answer was yes, but only because our hosts went easy on us newbies. Outside the *inipi*, the first oddity. As the fire gets going, it is common to see a mouse or two fleeing from the lodge. However, that night, the mice that left the lodge ran toward the outside firepit, not into the woods behind us as they should have. Our fire keepers confessed that they were a bit confounded.

During the second round, while sitting in the darkness, I felt something move along the length of my left leg, then to the length of my right leg. By the way I felt it touch the entire side of my legs, I estimate it to be about ten inches tall. Thankfully, I was too deep into my newly discovered "sweat zone" to have my expected squealing reaction. I figured whatever it was couldn't be negative, otherwise it wouldn't be allowed into this sacred space.

Outside the *inipi*, our fire keepers spotted two UFOs hovering above us. Round three is when I decided to slip out of myself and move my consciousness outside the sweat lodge, and that's when I locked onto the very large entity pacing in the woods directly behind us. It paced along the semi-circle of the *inipi* on the ladies side. It wasn't negative. It wasn't positive. It emitted no signal of intent. It was just huge and pacing. I wondered if this presence was connected to the deep "whoop" noises I had heard in the forest the night before. When the door opened for the fourth round, one of the fire keepers entered the lodge. After the ceremony, he confessed to be so freaked out by the mice, the UFOs and the "big thing that was breaking branches in the trees behind us" that he jumped into the *inipi* with us. He explained that his late father was a police officer on the reservation, and told him that without fail, when calls came in for Bigfoot sightings, calls would also come in reporting strange lights in the sky. What could I say to this newcomer, but "Welcome to our world!"

The next day, I learned that the gal sitting next to my right reported "something moving against her legs during the second round of the *inipi* ceremony. I excitedly said, "Me too" and together we put our hands about ten inches apart and said, in unison "It was about this tall!" Together, we determined it must have been some sort of elemental and left an offering out in the woods.

Sun Dance.

The next morning, we gathered to learn about the Sun Dance. Like the *Inipi* ceremony, is one of the Lakota's Seven Sacred Rites. It was an honor and a privilege to be granted the invitation and knowledge. The Sun Dance is where all external pretense falls away. Sun Dancer, Land, Sky, Prayer, and Ancestor merge back into creation and into the space of One Spirit. It is profoundly healing and heart-warming, not just for the dancer but for those who hold space and bear witness.

Within our own group, there were spontaneous healings. There was also a very real sighting. Above the Sun Dance, unmoving in the sky, was a large silver-colored shining ball. Everyone saw it, local and visitor alike. It was there for a good 45 minutes. Some people looked nervous, calling it a UFO. Some referred to it as the "Star Ancestors." Some just stared in awe. I couldn't help but chuckle at the irony of a clear and perfect sighting in a place where absolutely no cameras were allowed. Further proof that Spirit has a sense of humor. Laughter is definitely part of healing.

Badlands.

My driver and I got separated from the caravan driving to the Badlands for sky-watch. I was still reeling from the vibration of the Sun Dance. Physically, I was no longer there but every part of my spirit was with those dancers. In the Badlands, I saw the faces of elders and all manner of creature sizing us up as we drove through their home. They were deciding if we were worthy of their song. We finally stopped at a gorgeous look-out, just as the sun was setting. Shadows danced as my driver lit an offering, and we separated, communing silently with the space and our ancient hosts. Aggressive mosquitoes tangled in my hair, guarding the secrets of the spirits and testing our will with unrelenting fury. This was not the sacred circle of the Sun Dance. This was the Badlands. My driver and I reconvened and stood side by side in front of the setting sun.

He had me repeat a prayer in the Lakota language. We thanked the land and made our way out of the Badlands. On the drive back, I asked him about the prayer. "So, what did we say, exactly, in that gratitude prayer?" I asked. My driver replied dryly "That wasn't a gratitude prayer. That was a prayer for them to show themselves to you. Now you're really going to see them!" Then he glanced over at my reaction and laughed. This, dear reader, is Lakota humor.

Wounded Grave.

After breakfast, before driving out to Wounded Knee, the group was introduced to the granddaughter of Chief Spotted Elk (known to most as Chief Big Foot, a name meant to belittle the existence of the highly respected Chief marked as number 1 of 22 on the tallest headstone of the site). Granddaughter gave an impassioned talk about the trauma that continues to plague the hearts of the generations following that horrific December day in 1890. Her speech was raw, emotional, and powerful. A mix of unrelenting defiance and plea for healing. A few attendees patted their eyes and nodded in approval. I stood tall and still, listening to the wounded warrior activist speak. Life has not been easy for her. Hers is a story common in the Native community. She reminded me of the homegirls from the barrio back home, carrying the weight of their circumstance on their shoulders, hustling through another day. As we loaded into the caravan, I invited her to join us. I just wanted to chat with her, homegirl to homegirl. What followed was an in-depth conversation about healing and warrior women. When we got to the grave site, she gave another powerful speech. She spoke her truth, over-powering her PTSD, and continues to be a voice for her people today.

Home.

It's been a year since that conference. The days were filled with love and learning. The lines between speaker, attendee, and host dissolved until we were just a big group of friends. I had hoped to make some new friends, and this experience gave me so much more, a new family.

What I did not see coming was the profound healing that followed. At Sun Dance, I prayed, sang and danced for healing for all of creation. Apparently, that includes me! The hardest healings are the ones that come when you don't know you need them. This one broke me open and sent me on a painful personal journey. I returned to Pine Ridge for a Healing Ceremony. From there, the work really began. Today, I am filled with gratitude and love for the journey. That is the magic of Pine Ridge. It doesn't give you what you want, it gives you what you need. ■

Rachel Portesi



Rachel Portesi, *Queen* (above) | *Goddess* (below)



Rachel Portesi, *Flower Crown* | *Homage to Louise Bourgeois, Quadriptych*

2020 CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE BLACK HILLS: The Heart of the World



The Needles in the Black Hills of South Dakota, USA

July 23rd through the 27th, 2020 marked the third conference on “Consciousness and Contact.” The first was held in Vermont in May of 2018 and featured Linda Moulton Howe as the main speaker. Year two brought us to the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota where Whitley Strieber had the most transformative event of his life. This year, the event was held in Wasta, South Dakota at the site of the soon to be open Thunderheart Center of the Arts. Thunderheart is the location where the 1992 Michael Apted film “Thunderheart,” written and produced by John Fusco, was filmed. In order to discuss this conference accurately, I want to share what led me to produce these three events.

I entered the month of December, 2017 with a desire to clean up my life and release anything I was holding onto that no longer belonged in my mind or in my spirit. I spent almost the entire month of December in silence, examining thoughts and feelings as they presented themselves to me, determining whether or not they had been resolved sufficiently to simply let them go. It was a productive month and I entered 2018 with a lighter psyche, one that was less cluttered with past events and ready to create new ones.

Part of my plan was to find my “tribe,” so to speak, to locate a group of like-minded people who were on the spiritual path and committed to mak-

ing a contribution to the world. The idea of a conference came to mind and since I had a background in organizing large-scale special events in the arts in New York City, a small event of thirty people seemed manageable. The conference in Vermont was a success and marked the beginning of several significant events for me. In July, I took over as publisher of New Observations Magazine, an art and culture journal that has included some of the leading members of the contemporary art world as well as an elevated group of writers. I had been active in the industrial hemp movement and produced a series of events called HEMP NY CITY at the Great Hall at Cooper Union. Hemp luminaries came to Manhattan from around the country to lecture for two full days. Presentations were free of charge and open to the public. It was the first industrial hemp event to take place in New York City. In addition, the artist Glenn Goldberg made a series of handmade paper pieces from hemp and exhibited them at the Art on Paper Fair in March of 2016. New Observations Magazine covered these activities in Issue #131 “Industrial Hemp: Superhero/Savior of Humanity.” These works of art and others made by Karen Gunderson, Erika Knerr, Terry Boyd, Ignacio Cisneros, Sally J. Smith, Lucy Slivinski, Mitch Epstein and Lucio Pozzi were subsequently exhibited at Art Santa Fe.

On the last day of the art fair in Santa Fe, I was standing alone in the restroom when I was “visited” by an Elder Native America Chief in white buckskin with a full-spectrum of colored embroidery and long, flowing white hair. He radiated light and powerful energy and told me that the way was clear, I would be protected on my trip and that “they” were waiting for me at the Pine Ridge Reservation. It would be my first visit to the land of the Lakota. In fact I was going there to visit with industrial hemp hero Alex White Plume and solar warrior Henry Red Cloud.

My drive to South Dakota was quite freeing. My car is a 2007 Saturn Vue and on Route 25 in Nebraska, I actually got the speedometer up to over 100 mph! A first for me, I truly felt like I was flying. Likewise experiencing the most dramatic thunder and lightning storm I had ever seen, I felt as though I had gone through a rite of purification. My soul, now cleansed, was ready for the experience ahead.

I have lived a mystical life. Even while living in New York City for eighteen years, my psychic gifts and intuitive abilities were considered rare. Moving to the countryside in Upstate New York in 1998 further expanded these abilities and introduced the added dimension of interacting with extraterrestrial beings as well as entities from the angelic, devic, elemental realms as well as the animal kingdom. Although I never joined the ET community or got involved in attending MUFON events or traveling to conferences such as Contact in the Desert, I did listen to some of the growing number of podcast lectures on the subject which familiarized me with many of the key researchers in the field.

Returning to Vermont after spending time on the reservation, life seemed rather flat. The Lakota have tremendous challenges in their daily lives to simply survive, yet even being the poorest community in America, they surely are the richest population in terms of spiritual wealth and connection to the land. Shortly after I returned home, I had a profound experience during

meditation which clearly told me that our second conference needed to be on the Pine Ridge Reservation. As the “Thunderheart” film character played by Graham Greene told the Val Kilmer character in the movie, “You had a vision. You don’t mess with the visions,” my goal became that of duplicating my extraordinary experience on Pine Ridge and sharing it with others.

Although Whitley Strieber does not specifically state that he was attending a Sun Dance ceremony as part of our conference, he and the rest of the group were all there on Saturday morning, July 20th, 2019 on the exact date that Brazilian mystic Chico Xavier predicted that there would be signs in the sky that would indicate that humanity had avoided World War III and had taken its place in the galactic family of beings throughout the universe. Something surely happened that day and in addition, while a caravan of cars was forming to drive to the Badlands National Park, the car Whitley, myself and several other people were driving in was surrounded by hundreds of pink angelic orbs which danced around outside and inside the car, accompanying us the entire 25 miles to the park.

Our conference last year included a strong list of speakers inter-spaced with Lakota tradition and spirituality. The group participated in a sweat lodge ceremony as well as visiting to the Wounded Knee Memorial. They benefited from hearing the creation story from Dallas Chief Eagle and watched him perform a hoop dance.

As with the conference the year before in Vermont, the attendees experienced an upgrade in psychic abilities and spiritual gifts. The time together with a focused intention in a sacred place greatly impacted all of the attendees who returned home changed in some significant ways. Their intuitive skills were honed and their receptivity was heightened as well as their ability to transmit thought in a clearer and more productive way.

With the onslaught of the COVID virus, my job organizing this year’s conference could be compared to riding a roller coaster ride. On a daily basis, things went up and down and all around as I struggled to deal with speakers and attendees who were afraid to travel while construction work in Wasta, South Dakota was being delayed because of the virus. Renovation work began on some buildings then abruptly stopped because workers were quarantining at home. Linda Moulton Howe was afraid to travel. The family of Barbara Lamb convinced her to stay home due to the virus. Whitley Strieber went back and forth in his resolve but finally he obtained a mask through his doctor that allowed him to feel secure enough to make the trip. Ironically, when he arrived at the airport to board his plane, his driver’s license was no where to be found and he was forced to return home and missed the conference. Everyone was disappointed by the no shows, but we did our best to make up for it with speakers such as Chief Arvol Looking Horse and Henry Red Cloud. Chief Arvol is the 19th holder of the sacred White Buffalo Calf Woman Pipe for the Lakota, Nakota and Dakota people. Henry Red Cloud is the great-great-grandson of Chief Red Cloud. Both shared Lakota wisdom and knowledge of the 7th Generation, the exact time of change we find ourselves in today. Leading Druid Richard Fox shared his knowledge of science versus magic and the power of the land in the Dakotas while Elana Freeland discussed in depth the

darker side of what humanity is experiencing with issues of the virus and the related issues of control and surveillance. Each day around 4:00 in the afternoon, people would climb into the passenger van while others would car pool and travel caravan style. The Badlands, Bear Lodge or Devil's Tower and Bear Butte with Henry Red Cloud provided points of inspiration for us as the weekend progressed.

The group were met at Bear Lodge by a massive thunder and lightning storm. The original focus with Whitley Strieber was that he would discuss his experience at the 2019 conference on Pine Ridge and lead a CE-5 event at Bear Lodge or Devil's Tower. Astonishingly enough, three of our attendees were able to see a craft hovering above the land mass during the electrical storm. What I have found with the extraterrestrials is that once the connection has been made, they are happy to show up on cue. They understood that the plan was for them to connect with us there and they were happy to oblige.

My dear friend Cindy Catches, following in the tradition of her late husband, respected medicine man Peter Catches and honored father-in-law Pete Catches, hosted the oldest Sun Dance ceremony on the reservation. Peter Catches died two years ago and Cindy organized his memorial service and the give away celebration that marks the passing of Lakota people where attendees receive gifts. Jeff and Joe Catches and the community surrounding the Catches family organized the Spotted Eagle Sun Dance which was held the same weekend as our conference in Wasta and Cindy and I noticed that there were a number of parallels between the two events.. The weekend was extremely hot until the weather broke on Saturday night and brought in cool air on Sunday morning. The Sun Dance prefers the heat since high temperatures are used as a means of purification and an integral part of the spiritual experience. I was guided to fast for the four days of our conference, just as I would have done if I were participating in the Sun Dance ceremony. In addition, I prepared all of our meals. In Lakota, it is an honor to cook for others and people are expected to bring their best energy into the kitchen for the sacred act of feeding others. This is the spirit in which I approached these tasks.

In addition, this conference in Wasta was the first time that I had shared my own personal experience on the spiritual path with others. At the age of 19, I was tested at Columbia University for a study on right/left brain hemisphere activity. I was told that out of everyone tested, my brain was the most balanced. I attribute that fact to my ability to simultaneously process intuitively and intellectually and am able to arrive at a direct conclusion as a result. Having spent my entire life moving in and out of 5-D for long stretches of time, I experienced my big Enlightenment moment just a week or two after the first conference in Vermont in late May of 2018. My crown chakra and third eye are now open 24/7. It is a blessing and a distraction at times, but it definitely is an enormous help in the work that I do as publisher and philanthropist/fundraiser.

One of the extraordinary aspects of the conference in Wasta was that some of our attendees experienced spontaneous kundalini activations and

crown chakra openings. These were made possible by the combination of being in sacred space such as Bear Butte and the other locations we visited daily, and also Wasta itself is a power spot and holds a tremendous amount of concentrated energy in the area. The beginnings of the rock formations of the Badlands first appear in Wasta and the town is known for the high quality of its water. Water is a conductor of spiritual energy.

For me personally, our visit to Bear Butte, the most sacred site of the Lakota people in the Black Hills, was the high point of the weekend. I could feel the ancestors gathering there to meet us and be with us during the time Henry Red Cloud shared stories about his family and Chief Red Cloud's prediction of the 7th Generation as the time when all people come together to work for the good of the planet. Brightly colored prayer ties are visible along all the paths and trails. We sat in a sacred circle and prayed with Henry together at the end when he sang Lakota songs.

At a time when humanity is dealing with unprecedented challenges from current and past wrongheaded thinking, we have the obviously growing opportunity to expand our consciousness and change both our inner and outer realities. Most of the attendees were walking on Cloud 9 by the time people left on Monday morning after breakfast. Two weeks later, I am still hearing reports of expanded consciousness, profound changes in productivity and intuitive skills as well as spiritual growth. For me the weekend succeeded my expectations. Of course, there were some who expected more in terms of accommodations and were disappointed that our headliners were unable to attend. Whitley Strieber organized a Zoom call for all attendees last weekend to discuss the recorded presentation and meditation he had prepared for the group which helped to make up for the loss.

As an avid reader of Carlos Castaneda, I am reminded of Don Juan and the fact that in order for perception to change, people need to be knocked out of their comfort zone just a little in order for a new reality to be able to come through. Timing is crucial and the impact can be immediate or over time. I will hang some prayer ties at Bear Butte for growth and understanding for all the participants of our little conference and for everyone else on the planet.

Thank you to all of the contributors to Issue #136 "Consciousness and Contact: The Awakening." The goal of New Observations is to share perceptions, ideas, insights and awareness. In these chaotic times, the way in which we reach out to each other is critical as we are being forced to grow and expand our ability to be fluid and flexible as new challenges come towards us in a daily increasing number. We are capable of meeting all of these challenges and even more if we work together.

We are all blessed. ■

OUR FOURTH CONSCIOUSNESS AND CONTACT CONFERENCE
WILL BE HELD FROM **JULY 22 THROUGH THE 26TH, 2021.**

FOR INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

MIA FEROLETO AT MIA.FEROLETO@GMAIL.COM

A VERSION OF THIS ARTICLE FIRST APPEARED IN NEXUS MAGAZINE.

CONTRIBUTORS' BIOS

Joan Bird moved to Montana in 1973 for graduate studies in Zoology at the University of Montana. Taking time off from grad. school, Joan was hired to open a field office for the Montana Environmental Information Center in Kalispell, Montana 1980-1982. In 1983, she completed her Zoology Ph.D. on Inter-island Variation in West Indian finches. In 1985, the Big Sky Field Office of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) hired her as the Montana Protection Planner, tasked to find ways to protect rare plants, animals and natural communities. Working with Federal, State, Private and Tribal landowners, Joan worked with several tribes in Montana and initiated the Conservancy's first tribal internship program, finding overlap with TNC's mission and the goal of preserving plants of cultural significance. Shortly after filing the first gender discrimination grievance within The Nature Conservancy, Joan left TNC and worked in women's empowerment for several years, doing workshops and workplace trainings. In 1993, she launched an annual Celebrating Women Retreat in Boulder Hot Springs, which continues to this day. In 1995, Joan was hired by Fish, Wildlife and Parks for the national "Teaming with Wildlife" campaign to fund habitat protection for non-game wildlife. The position was discontinued in 1997, and Joan worked writing Nature Interpretation signs and miscellaneous writing projects, including writing a column for Crone Magazine. In 1999, Joan began investigating crop circles in Montana which led to a keen interest and extensive research in UFOs and ETs. In 2007, she was offered a contract for a book about Montana UFOs, which was published in 2012. Since that time, Joan has made numerous presentations on her book, Montana UFOs and Extraterrestrials. For the last 5 years, Joan has enjoyed offering presentations in communities around Montana with Humanities Montana. In collaboration with retired MD, Richard O'Connor, Joan has offered classes on UFOs and ETs for the last 2 years through the Continuing Education program of Helena College, University of Montana. The events described in the following essay took place during Joan's tenure with TNC. The essay was a successful entry application for a writing workshop with Wendell Berry through the Environmental Writing Institute at the University of Montana. The essay was never published, and I am honored that it is finally being made available to a wider audience.

Laura Bruno is a Medical Intuitive, Reiki Master Teacher, Life Coach, astrologer, author, permaculture designer, and artist. Her diverse work focuses on healing and transformation by bringing more beauty and consciousness into the world. She holds an MA in English Language and Literature from University of Chicago. You can find more about Laura's art, writing and other work at <http://asklaurabruno.com>

Peter Champoux attributes the knowledge he brings to fore the result of consciously splitting rock into stone in a 25 year career as a classical stone mason. Working the rock of Massachusetts he saw the angle in rock fracture matched its river confluence angle and concluded that like flowers et al the earth's lithosphere must also express in the sacred canons of geometry used in cathedral design to which a corresponding geometry was found in the triangulation of mounts: Mansfield, Washington, and Ascutney; pointing to the center of North America in Shelburne Falls, MA via Chester VT. He has worked with this matrix with poet artist Harry Hudson of Chester, Vermont and describes these early discoveries in Gaia Matrix in 1999. Peter's first big download of this information occurred in 1993 with a focus on North America which has since expanded worldwide. Of late he has been working on releasing the collective trauma centered around the New Madrid EarthRing a collective heart(math) action to heal the rift between N/S Black/white, Native/white trauma clustered within this Integral Membrane Pluton (IMP) of transmitting and expanding this trauma into earthmind(aka, earthcell membrane). Another IMP is the Black Hills of South Dakota. An ongoing drum beat for Peter is the trauma patterns emanating from the great pyramid. An article on that problem was published on his website. http://www.geometryofplace.com/healing_pyramid.pdf. Peter was present at Mateo Tipila on World Peace and Prayer Day while on pilgrimage to the Black Hills last June along the 104th longitude. He has worked extensively with Chief Arvol and Paula Looking Horse to cleanse and clear trauma in the land and Native American people. Peter's website is <http://www.geometryofplace.com>

Tobin Eckian, who holds a Bachelor of Science degree in art therapy from Lesley College, also studied art history at University of Colorado at Boulder and sculpture at Westminster College and Seton Hill College. She has had exhibitions in Cambridge, Salem, Ipswich, North Reading, Newburyport, Byfield and Rowley; Portsmouth, Newton and Hampstead, New Hampshire; Ledge Mountain, Maine; and in Scotland and Norway. Her art is in several worldwide collections.

Mia Feroletto is a well-known art advisor, activist and artist who divides her time between Vermont and South Dakota. She was the creator of A SHELTER FROM THE STORM: ARTISTS FOR THE HOMELESS OF NEW YORK and ARTWALK NY, an annual event for Coalition for the Homeless that has been copied all around the country since beginning in 1995. Feroletto has organized numerous benefit auctions and large-scale special events at major auction houses such as Sotheby's and Christie's and has served on the board of directors of such organizations as Dance Theater Workshop and Sculpture Center. She most recently joined the

board of directors of the Tatanka Ska Institute, the Indigenous school being founded by Paula Looking Horse, wife of Chief Arvol Looking Horse, the keeper of the sacred White Buffalo Calf Woman Pipe. She is the publisher of New Observations Magazine, the producer/creator of HEMP NY CITY, a partner in the founding of the Thunderheart Center for the Arts in Wasta, South Dakota and the creator and producer of the Consciousness and Contact conferences that have received world-wide recognition. She is the host of the New Observations podcast on Unknown Country, the channel for all things Whitley Strieber. Feroletto is a committed animal rights and animal welfare activist. She is determined to maximize visibility for the arts and our cultural world and is currently developing the Adopt an Artist Program to send artists to destinations around the globe in order to create and develop their art. She can be reached at mia.feroletto@gmail.com

Richard Fox (aka Renard, the Fire Druid) — I was fortunate to live, work and camp in the great forests of the United States for most of the year for most of eighteen years—truly living *where the wild things are*. In many ways, I was one of the wild things that lived there. During that time, I had the privilege to be able to plant more than 700,000 tree seedlings and participate in hundreds of forest related projects. Through our forestry co-op, we were able to fund the *Healing Light Foundation*, our organic farm, other organizations and projects and bring in some of the greatest metaphysicians, teachers and healers of the day. It became the experiential core of my life-long journey into Druidry. Today, my energy is focused on working with my many Native American friends with a base on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, where I have a small home. I primarily work with my Lakota friend, Henry Red Cloud, the 5th generation direct descendant of Mahpiya Luta, (Chief Red Cloud), the last war chief of the Lakota Sioux. Henry is the Executive Director of the non-profit, Red Cloud Renewable (www.redcloudbrenewable.org) which focuses on training Native Americans in renewable energy and sustainable building approaches and implementing projects that help Native communities move towards energy independence. In this way, he teaches a new way to *honor the old way*. Email: richard@redcloudbrenewable.org

Elana Freeland was trained in Waldorf education (known in Europe as Steiner education) in 1977 and spent the 1980s lecturing and founding Waldorf schools in Washington State. From the 1990s on, she has been writing her own and others' books, lecturing, and doing radio interviews, concentrating on "national security" secrets being kept from the public. In 1996, she was awarded a Master of Arts in Great Books and honors for her thesis on historiography at St. John's College, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Her book *Under An Ionized Sky* has been translated into Serbian and is recommended at a Tech-

nical University in Serbia, Nikola Tesla's home nation, because, to date, it is the only book for laymen explaining how Tesla technology has been weaponized on a planetary scale. Her second major in college having been biology, she is now finishing her third and last geoen-gineering book *Geoengineered Transhuman-ism* centering on how synthetic biology and its technology are connected to geoen-gineering, now that the Earth is under "full spectrum dominance."

Ray Grasse is writer, photographer, and as-trologer living in the American Midwest, and author of several books including *The Waking Dream, Signs of the Times, Urban Mystic*, and soon-to-be-released *StarGates*. He worked on the editorial staffs of Quest Books and The Quest magazine for ten years, and has been associate editor of The Mountain As-trologer magazine for 20 years. His website is www.raygrasse.com

Joe Krawczak is retired and lives on the Big Island of Hawaii. After a long and successful career in the computer software industry, he went through a profound life change in 2012-2013, retired from his career, changed his life, and moved to the Big Island. Over the last seven years he has undergone a complete shift in consciousness and a deep spiritual awakening. He maintains a meditative practice of connect-ing to the higher self and the divine aspect. His focus is helping others through intentional meditation to raise consciousness and know themselves as the divine beings they are.

Alfred Lambremont Webre. Futurist Alfred Lambremont Webre's principal social contri-butions have been (1) founding the science of Exopolitics through his 2000 book *Exopol-itics*, (2) the 2014 discovery of the Omniverse as the 3rd major cosmological body [after the Universe and the Multiverse] through which humanity understands the cosmos, (3) the development of the Positive Future Equation & the Ascension Hypothesis that describes Soul development in our Universe & Omni-verse. A graduate of Georgetown Preparatory School in classics (1960), Yale University (Industrial Administration Honors-1964), Yale Law School (International Law-1967), Uni-versity of Texas (Counseling-1997) and a Ful-bright Scholar (International Trade-1968), Alfred has taught at two universities (Yale University Economics Department-Taxation) & University of Texas Government Depart-ment-Constitutional Law). Alfred has served in leadership positions in environmental pro-tection, international law and justice, public health, exopolitics, and public broadcasting. He was General Counsel of the New York City Environmental Protection Administration and later consultant to the Ford Foundation's Public Interest Environmental Law program, overseeing grantees Environmental Defense Fund and Natural Resource Defense Council. Alfred also served as Public Participant, Joint

Public Affairs Committee, Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), Montreal, Quebec, Canada An international lawyer with Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen & Hamilton, Alfred later served as Non-Governmental representative at the United Nations (New York & Vienna) and as Judge on the Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Tri-bunal, finding the governments of Tony Blair and George W. Bush guilty of war crimes in Iraq. In public health, Alfred served as Deputy Director of the Brownsville Community Health Center, serving 90,000 annual patient encoun-ters in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, earning a Certificate from the Harvard School of Public Health (1995). In Exopolitics, while a Futurist at Stanford Research Institute, Alfred served as director of the 1977 proposed Carter White House Extraterrestrial Communication Study, as well as a Disclosure Project witness in 2001. In public affairs and politics, Alfred served as a Member, Governor's Emergency Taskforce on Earthquake Preparedness, State of Cali-fornia (1980-82); Co-Director, Assassination Information Bureau, Washington, DC, (Public interest counterintelligence to the House Se-lect Committee on Assassinations); Elected Delegate, Texas Democratic Presidential Con-vention, Dallas, Texas (1996) A leader in public broadcasting, Alfred produced the Instant of Cooperation, the first live radio program in his-tory between the Soviet Union [Russia] and the United States, nominated for an award at the UN General Assembly (1987). Alfred has been host on WBAI-FM (New York) and Vancouver Coop Radio and he has been featured on ma-jor international networks including CBC-TV, CBS-TV, CNN-TV, TruTV, PressTV, and others. In Exopolitics research, News and Information, Alfred is Editor of NewsInsideOut.com, Exopol-itics.com, and ExopoliticsTV, was co-founder and Chairman of the Advisory Board of MARS, the Mars Anomaly Research Society, and was among the founding members of the Exopol-itics Institute.

Lucinda Laughing Eagle Morel loves her multidimensional life! She balances her time between her beautiful family, her career in the aerospace industry and her studies of explora-tion into the greater consciousness. A life-long experiencer of all things paranormal, Lucinda is an intuitive medium, graduate of the Clear-sight Clairvoyance Program, and works under the guidance of the Shamanic community. She loves her work with local support groups and charities. Her intention is to help her clients live a life in accordance with their highest purpose.

New Thinking Allowed host, **Jeffrey Mishlove**, PhD, is author of *The Roots of Consciousness, Psi Development Systems*, and *The PK Man*. Between 1986 and 2002 he hosted and co-produced the original *Thinking Allowed* public television series. He is the recipient of the only doctoral diploma in "parapsychology" ever awarded by an accredited university (Univer-sity of California, Berkeley, 1980).

Leah Poller. In addition to her career as an in-ternationally acclaimed sculptor, in her forty years in the arts, Poller has been a multi-tal-ented arts activist. She has curated more than 140 exhibitions in the US and abroad. As Direc-tor of the Art Alliance, she was instrumental in bringing many mid- and-late-career artists to the US for the first time (Ipousteguy-France, Attardi-Italy, Murua-Chile, Macias-Mexico, etc.) Poller is well known for her salon events deal-ing with cultural-social-artistic subjects ("Yin Yang – a social laboratory"), as well as the in-novative program "Frame it—It's Yours!", a re-search program examining the art acquisition process. In 2003, Poller was named Director of Intercambio de Arte y Cultura, a Mexican/American not-for-profit responsible for pro-moting interest in a major fresco done by Philip Guston and Ruben Kadish in 1934 and only recently brought to light through her ef-forts. Trained at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Beaux Arts of Paris where she resided for 20 years, Poller is best known for her series of bronze BEDS, a 3 dimensional lexicon of words containing "bed," "Bed Unmade" —a social me-dia project in which people download images of their unmade beds, and her outstanding se-ries of real-life portraits in which the subjects' internal thoughts are surrealistically rendered visible externally. Her website is: leahpoller.com

Rachel Portesi makes hair portraits utilizing the early photographic method of tintype. She works collaboratively with her models to create intricate—one might say baroque—hair styles. Pinned to walls or other scaffolding, the extrava-gant hair designs are often embellished with flowers, becoming living sculptures rooted in the human body. Hair is often referred to as a woman's "crowning glory." Portesi's "crowns" befit Ceres/Demeter, goddess of growing plants and motherly relationships; and Diana/Artemis, goddess of the hunt, wild animals, and the moon."I reached a point in my life when all of the things I knew to be true—the entire structure, the scaffolding of my life—seemed to suddenly disappear. I was no longer the same person I was when I entered motherhood. With children who were growing up and needing less, the person I was before no longer seemed relevant. It was time to take a close look at my-self from another perspective. I use hair both to honor and to say goodbye to past parts of myself. These images address fertility, sexual-ity, creativity, nurturing, harmony, and discord with nature. Above all, these images are a re-cord of metamorphosis from a past fractured self to an integrated, self-confident woman." — Rachel Portesi

Lucio Pozzi was born in 1935 in Milan, Italy. Af-ter living a few years in Rome, where he studied architecture, he came to the United States in 1962, as a guest of the Harvard International Summer Seminar. He then settled in New York and took the US citizenship. After a while, his art began to be seen here and abroad in galler-ies such as Bykert, John Weber, Gianenzo Sper-

one, Yvon Lambert, Leo Castelli. He currently lives and works in Hudson, NY, and Valeggio s/M (Verona) Italy. Pozzi is a painter who likes to paint and pursue his painterly concerns in oth-er media as well. In 1978 the Museum of Modern Art, New York, exhibited his early videotapes in one of the first single-artist exhibitions of the Projects:Video series. He also sets up large installations and presents performances. He occasionally writes and has taught at the Co-oper Union, Yale Graduate Sculpture Program, Princeton University, School of Visual Arts NY and the Maryland Institute of Art. He currently is an occasional visiting professor at American art schools and European Academies.His art is represented in great many public and private collections. His paintings are exhibited in pub-lic and private galleries worldwide. Retrospec-tives of his art were held at Kunsthalle Bielefeld (1982) and Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe (1983), Germany, and at the Museum of New Art (2001), Detroit, MI, Kalamazoo Institute of Art, MI (2002); Works on Paper, Mus. Contemp. Art, Genova Italy, 2005; Fabrikulture, Hegen-heim (Basel), France (2011). His work has been presented at Documenta 6 (1977) and at the Venice Biennale (American Pavilion) in 1980. Email: luciopozzi@gmail.com

Michele Rinne lives and works as a licensed psychologist in Grand Rapids, Minnesota (birthplace of Judy Garland!) She continues the exploration of inner and outer spaces along the trails and lakes of Northern Minnesota with her partner, three step-children and seven exceptional grandchildren.

Daniel Rothbart is a multi-disciplinary artist and writer. Rothbart holds a BFA from the Rhode Is-land School of Design, and an MFA from Colum-bia University. He is the author of three books. *Jewish Metaphysics as Generative Principle in American Art* (1994) explores the relationship between Jewish culture and post-war American abstraction. *The Story of the Phoenix* (1999) ex-amines American cultural identity, Hollywood, and the transmutation of meaning through digi-tal collages inhabited by his sculpture. *Seeing Naples: Reports from the Shadow of Vesuvius* (2018) is a book of travel writing inspired by Rothbart's experiences as a Fulbright scholar in Naples during the early 1990's. The work com-bines personal narrative with stories from the city's history, ancient and modern, that speak to Neapolitan values and culture.Rothbart's studio projects include Inscrutable Theologies, Aachen, Germany; STREAMING II at The Frank Institute @ CRIQ, Linlithgo, New York; The Rum-sey Street Project, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Air de Venise, Venice, Italy; and WATERLINES at the Galerie Depardieu, Nice, France. He has ex-hibited in Ventisette artisti e una rivista, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome, Italy; Citydrift, Momenta Art, Brooklyn, New York; But I'm an American, Belgrade Cultural Centre, Serbia; and Meditation | Mediation, Life is Art Foundation, New Orleans, Louisiana. Rothbart has also ex-hibited at the Andrea Meislin Gallery, Exit Art,

WhiteBox, the LAB Gallery in New York City, the Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art in Peekskill, New York, and the Artists Residence Gallery in Herzliya, Israel. Rothbart was awarded Fulbright-Hays Fellowship in Italy, a New York Foundation for the Arts grant, and a residency at La Napoule Art Foundation in Mandelieu-la-Napoule, France. His work is the subject of a monograph by Enrico Pedrini published in 2010 by Ulisse e Calipso of Naples, Italy. In 2015, Roth-bart wrote an essay and four commentaries on the theme of water-based performance as the special lead section of PAJ 111, published by MIT Press. Rothbart's work can be found in public and private collections, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

Norman Anton Sollie lives in the mountains of interior Alaska. He is the author of the non-fiction, *The Monk Who Howled Like a Wolf: The Mystic's Path of Kriya Yoga* and the novel, *Iskut Ridge*.

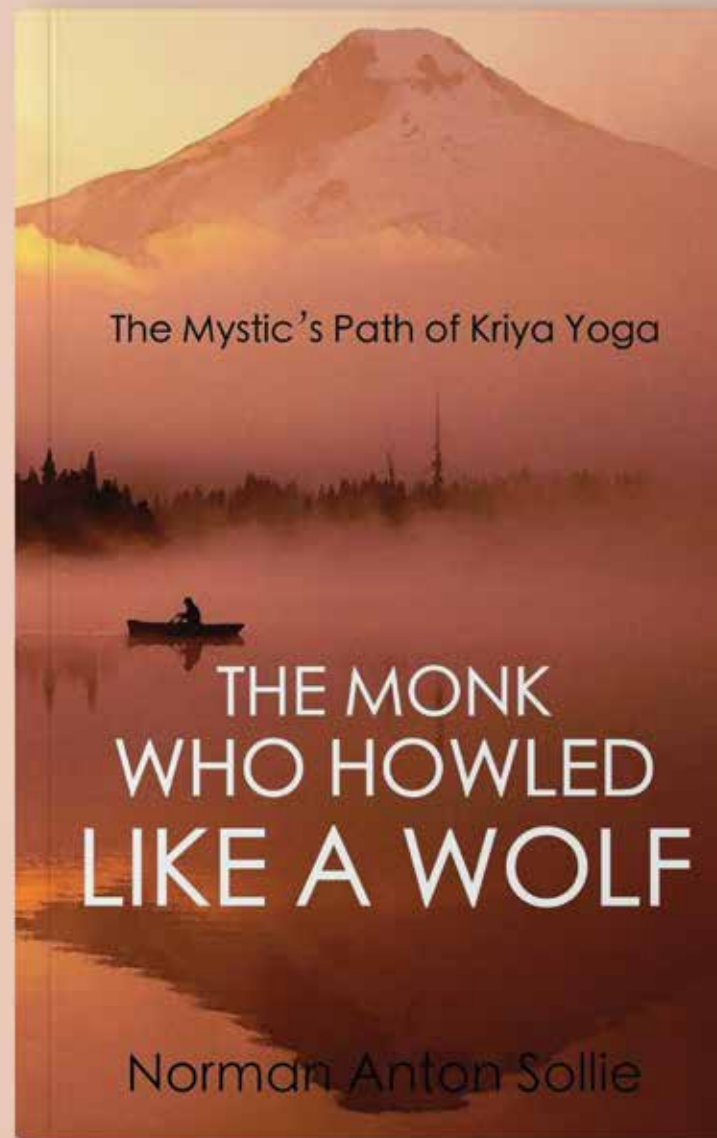
Alan Steinfeld writes about art and conscious-ness. He feels that the creative act is the ulti-mate way to make contact with the higher forces that are beyond the ordinary realms of awareness. He has put this message out on his New York television channel and his Youtube channel. In June of 2021 he will release his book MAKING *CONTACT - the most compre-hensive overview of the UFO/ET phenomena to date. This will be published by St. Martins Press and includes contributions from the leading researchers and experiences in the field: Linda Moulton Howe, Whitley Strieber, Mary Rodwell, JJ and Desiree Hurtak, Grant Cameron, Caro-lyn Cory, Nick Pope, Darryl Anka (who channels the ET Bashar) and the late John Mack (an un-published essay via his estate) have all contrib-uted original never before published material. This promises to be a breakthrough book for a mainstream population that is now waking up to the New Realities of Exterrestrial Exis-tence given the Pentagon's acknowledgment that we are being visited by nonhuman intel-ligences. For more of his work go his YouTube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/newrealities>

Sev Tok, originally from Istanbul, is a Speaker, Author, Spiritual Counselor, and a life-long Ex-periencer. She kept her ET Contact secret until September 2017, when ETs burned red X marks into her back. This life-changing incident, when she came face-to-face with a Grey, made her "come out" and write *You Have The Right To Talk To Aliens*. Honored to have Kathleen Marden endorse her book, in it, Sev describes her many ET Contacts including Roswell, New Mexico where the Greys gave her information about the hybridization process and shared with her other knowledge. Sev works with Experiencers around the world helping them process and gain transformational aware-ness from their remarkable events. Her free forum for Experiencers, *ET Encounters*, is on her website planetsev.com and she also has a YouTube channel, *Alien Spirit TV*. As a Spiritual Counselor, Sev conducts Soul Sessions provid-ing guidance to activate one's potential, raise

personal frequency, activate DNA, and con-sciously manifest in our Quantum Reality. Sev speaks at Conferences and continues to do interviews around the world. There is a planet and star system named after her in the Star Wars Galactic System! For more information and to gain access to newsletters, social media, up-coming events, and new videos, please visit planetsev.com. Email: sev@planetsev.com.

James Tunney comes from Dublin and stud-ied law at Trinity before qualifying as a barris-ter through The King's Inn and also engaging in postgraduate study at Queen Mary College, University of London. He taught English to all ages and painted in Spain before going back to teach law in Scotland for many years at two universities. He established innovative mod-ules and degree programmes, teaching and publishing on subjects such as EU, IP, Commu-nications Technology, Antitrust, World Trade and Indigenous Rights. As well as being a lec-turer, senior lecturer and Visiting Professor, he was a member, Director or advisor of a number of professional bodies, nationally and interna-tionally. He also worked as a legal consultant for international bodies such as the UNDP, to propose legislation to governments in Africa and elsewhere, and talked in many countries, as well as giving high level seminars in places like China. Then he left the academic and legal world entirely to solely concentrate on artistic and spiritual pursuits. He has exhibited mainly in Sweden, Norway and the UK and his paint-ings are in private collections as far afield as New Zealand. He has written two dystopian novels and two books on mystical conscious-ness, the most recent being *The Mystery of the Trapped Light: Mystical Thoughts in the Dark Age of Scientism*. He is currently a Professional Member of the Galileo Commission. His chief concern is to promote individual spiritual evo-lution and to warn against collectivism and the technological straitjacket.

Annie Wegner-Nabigon's early years in a Men-nonite community in the United States shaped the values guiding her life. Annie worked as a clinical social worker (1974-2006) across sev-eral US States and moved to Canada in 2006 to complete a doctorate at Laurentian University, Sudbury, ON. She and the late Professor Her-bert C. Nabigon, MSW were married in a tra-ditional Anishnaabeg ceremony in 2006 and later moved to his home reserve, *Biigtigong Nishaabeg* (formerly Pic River First Nation). Following Herb's death in 2016 Annie remained living and working there until June, 2017, and now lives in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario where she serves as Assistant Professor of Social Work at Algoma University. Her publications are pri-marily academic, and she has conducted many presentations and workshops in professional settings over the course of her career. Her first book, *Enough Light* (forthcoming 2021 from Latitude 46 Publishers), will be a sequel to *The Hollow Tree* (2006) by Herb Nabigon.



A Handbook for a Better Life And Rich Spirit

The Monk Who Howled Like a Wolf: The Mystic's Path of Kriya Yoga
by Norman Anton Sollie

In *The Monk Who Howled Like a Wolf*, author Norman Anton Sollie describes this ancient esoteric discipline of Kriya Yoga: Seeking unity of the individual self with the Transcendental Self.

Along this path you will travel to shamanic worlds, the mountains of Alaska, a hermit's cabin — even beyond death, and get a fresh look at relationships, reincarnation, the nature of reality, karma, manifestation, surrender to the divine, and what it is to be human.

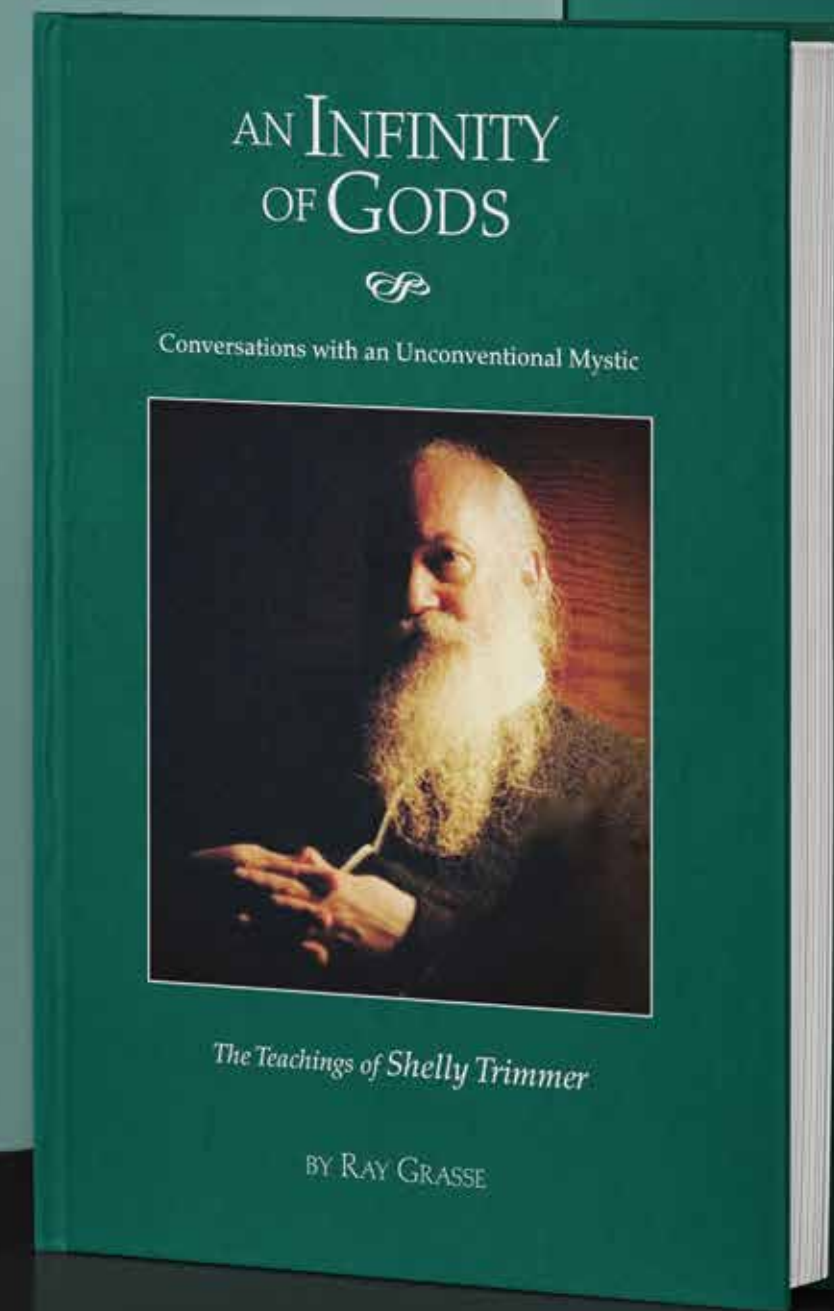
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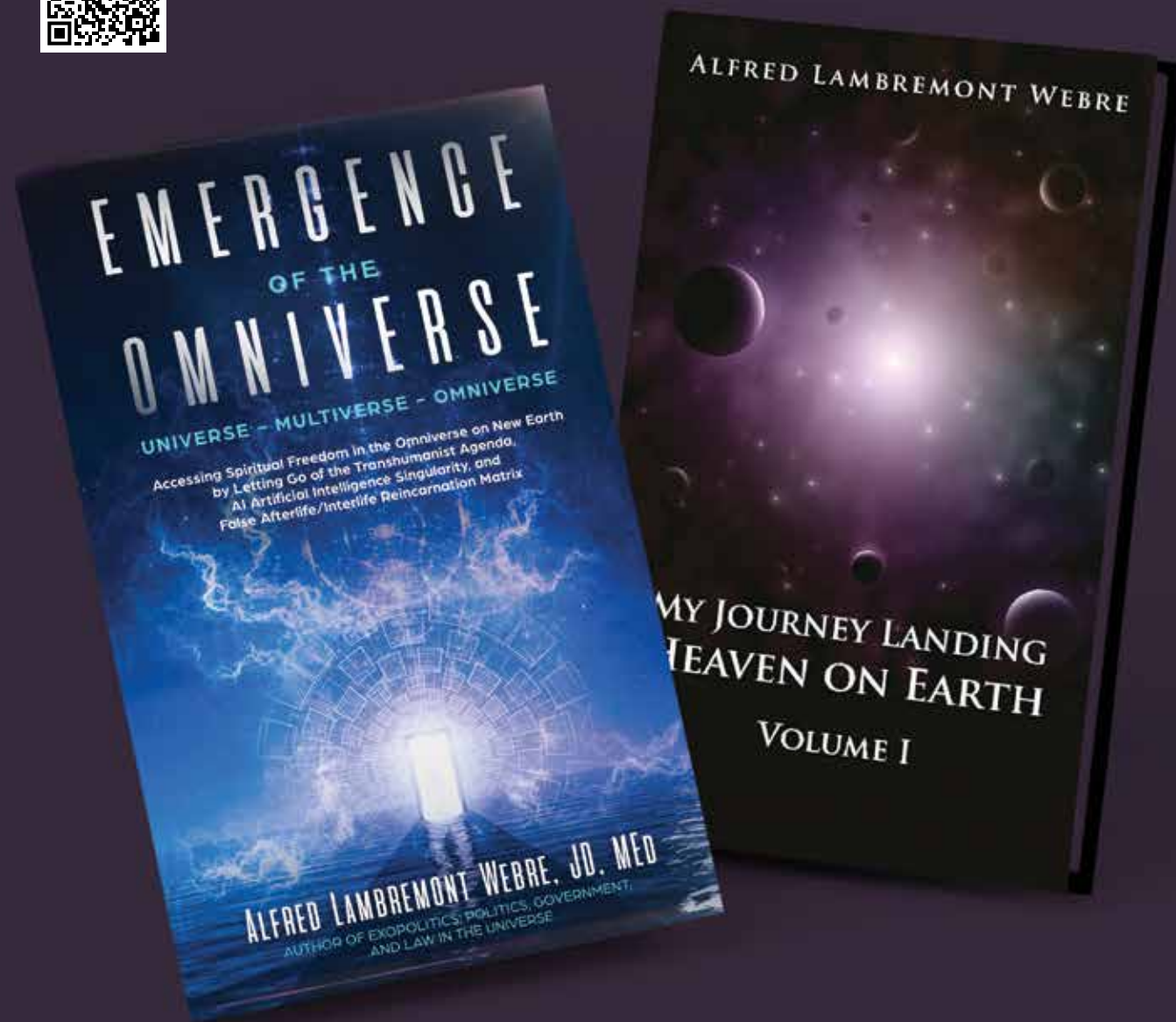
An Infinity of Gods is a fascinating look at a little-known mystic and spiritual teacher, Shelly Trimmer (1917-1996), a disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda (Autobiography of a Yogi). Based primarily on transcripts of conversations between Shelly and Ray Grasse during the late 1970s and early 1980s, Grasse's book offers a glimpse into the wide-ranging thoughts and insights of this unusual teacher. Among the topics covered are meditation, magic, karma, future science, astrology, psychic phenomena, sex, relationships, enlightenment and God.

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The Mystery of the Trapped Light

Mystical Thoughts in the Dark Age of Scientism

by James Tunney

The book was released this summer as the second book in a series on mysticism. It is a combination of poetic lines and an examination of the perennial idea in many cultures that we are light-beings trapped or descended into flesh. Scientists are now actually trapping photons or light particles in various ways. Such scientific developments, and the claim that homo sapiens has only one or two generations left before it is changed for eternity by technology, require all spiritual leaders to unite to preserve the common spirit of the human race. Individuals must assert their spiritual sovereignty. The mystic path exists in all cultures and this exploration seeks to present a vision for individuals to consider and reflect on through a combination of argument and poetry.

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