

THE

GREEN TROUBADOUR SOURCE BOOK

Eco-Shamanic Writing for Actor Training & Public Performance



David Sparenberg



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Acknowledgement

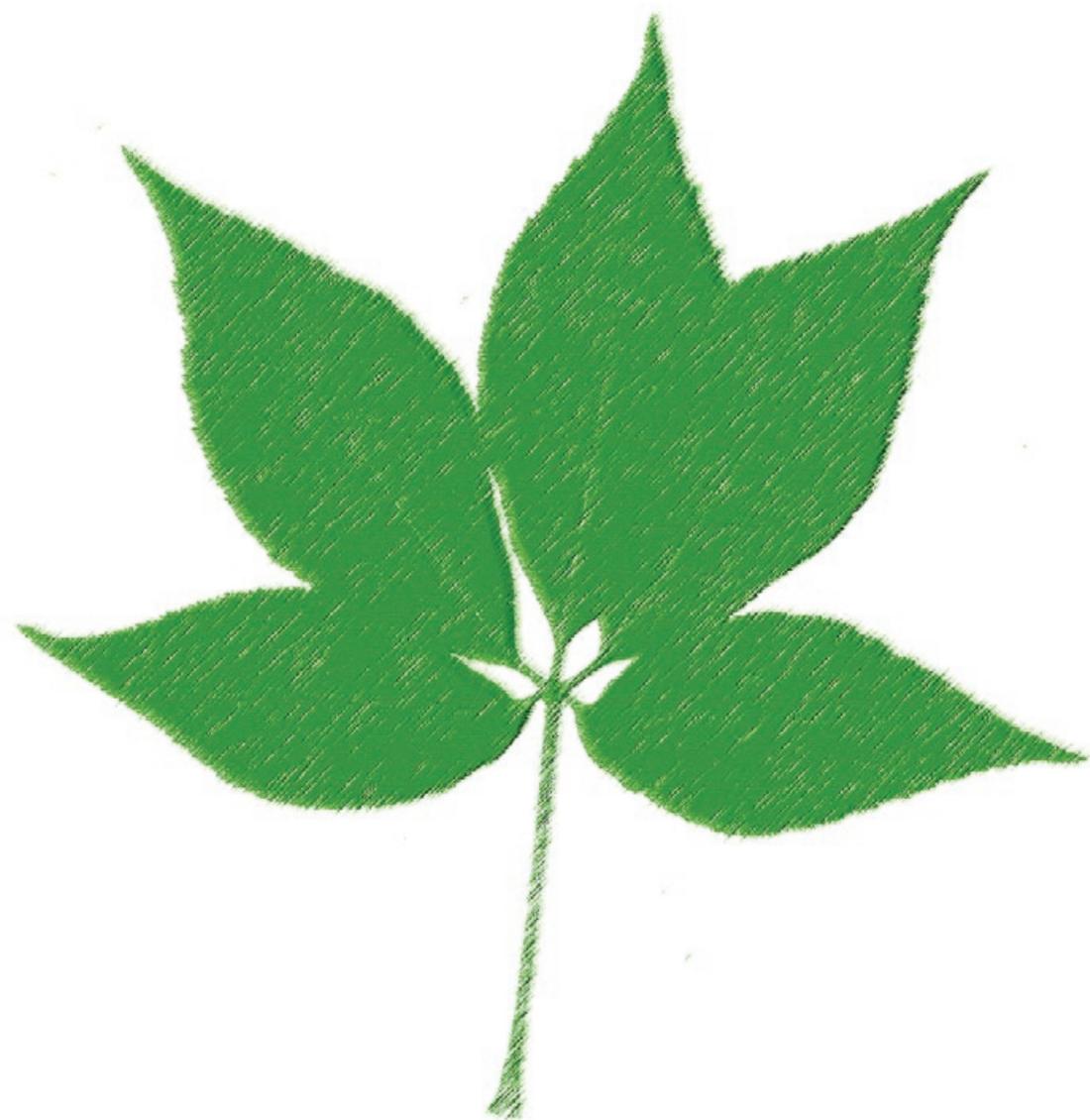
A majority of the compositions included in this volume have previously been published in one or more print periodicals and/or posted with an online magazine. Several titles can also be found in the volumes PLAYS for an American Activist Theatre, HEALING, A Book of Poems and the first edition of SOUL IN WORDS.

When you went off to war, they said you were intelligent. But now you are mad, mad because, because you sing like birds, you chase after butterflies and you look at flowers...

*from Brother Sun, Sister Moon
a film by Franco Zeffirelli*

The shaman speaks for wild animals, the spirits of plants, the spirits of mountains, of watersheds. He or she sings for them, they sing through her...the whole society consults the non-human powers and allows some individuals to step totally out of their human roles to put on the masks, costumes and mind of Bison, Bear, Squash, Corn or Pleiades, to re-enter the human circle in that form and by song, mime and dance, convey a greeting from the other realm.

from The Old Ways by Gary Snyder



OVI Exclusive Edition

OPENING A WAY THROUGH OVI

I do not write for profit, but I do write with intention. That is true here as in other titles.

The intention of this volume is here openly expressed. In the following pages I am inviting readers, as friends and as companion earth-walkers, to be earth-warriors and earth-healers, both male and female, and to join in the furthering of a radical social, spiritual and culture alternative to what is dominate and preparing not a furtherance of dignity, diversity and democracy, but of chaos, catastrophe and doom.

In this revolutionary invitation, actors and performing artists and adventuresome persons overall, whether trained, amateur or the many others of you seeking to discover a hidden treasure of your earth-soul, contributing through creative release by confrontations with evil through compassionate denouncement, or by encounters with justice through acts of beauty as compassionate affirmation—all of you who choose to share yourselves in the ways of human hallowing and liberating dedication to change, will find here suggestions of new roles for promoting global alternatives in communication—perhaps even for restoration of what Henry Corbin called the “Lost Speech” of the angels of souls—and for making of a heritage of deep ecology and eco-shamanic wisdom and conditionally appropriate, sustainable living.

In the bringing into reality of such alternatives energies can be released and put in motion. Can be and should be. Then what is seen, heard, felt through participation in the dramas and dialogues of connectivity, uniqueness and embodied truth-force, any and all such make lasting impression, leave an indelible mark on memory, plant in the interior of existence a new resource, and thereby, even in the aftermath of shared experience, the event does not depart out of the depths of identity maturity and dimension. This remaining within and between one and the other is true both for giver and recipient.

Human culture is something to be cultivated. And human spirituality was ever, until the empty and ruinous, life betraying materialism of modernity, the touchstone of community, growing up from and around a communion of recognition and reverence, and a cosmology of individual and group placement.

However, when culture is not cultivated as heritage of people, power falls into the hands (and pockets) of profiteers and we end up, as now we are, with little more than market manipulated fads and fashion. Here the outrageous and extravagant, akin to pathology, becomes an ever recurring fixation exhibited and sold under the rubric of innovation. And so influenced and contained, each and everyone of us is expected to forsake what was and what is for whatever is newest—and to do so with a narcotic fascination and nervousness of debilitating social addiction.

But to make culture for a future of green stability, dignified simplicity, sanity, biotic honoring and democratization is to cultivate a culture of soul and a groundwork of belonging: developing life skills and lifestyles of dwelling poetically on and with (embedded within) this living Earth. Let's not be embarrassed here—the poetic, in its various forms and modes of communication, is innately human and was foundational in nearly every civilization where reverence and the imagination have been valued as techniques of mutuality, verticality and balance. Thus it has been, at least, for this species human before the machine established the cult of progress and forgetfulness, and the advance of that soul loss which now leaves us prey to mass confusion, devastating violence, narcissistic immersion and estrangement, greed, lineal madness and the lurking terror of shadowland

infestations amid, amid our floating world phantasmagoria.

Now before moving on, let us ponder for a moment something Tom Cheetham has written about this native poetic of the human mentioned in the previous paragraph. The remark is from one of Cheetham's brilliant studies on Corbin and is markedly similar to what the French acting teacher Jacques LeCoq referred to as the "*universal poetic sense*" belonging to the essence of life.

Cheetham: writes "*To find our way we have to attend to our dreams and visions and the fleeting feelings that run just below consciousness. There are many ways to do this but they all involve imagination. Working with images...especially, I think, poetry is one powerful means of revealing and altering our mode of presence; it is one primary technique for exercising the spiritual senses.*" *

Here then I say to you, take up the role, play with a wondrous purpose, heroic and enchanting, that does not require specialization, rather dedication and the conviction that there are potencies of genuine healing, genuine love and real justice to be freed into the actual, even as there are possibilities for crossing over into an unprecedented presence, to renaissance, into a revolutionizing re-genesis rooted in these interactive dynamics: compassionate denouncement, compassionate affirmation, spontaneities of verticality—unique existence turning inner evolution outward to connectivity and into revolutionary responsibility—finally, the embodied and re-ensouled truth-force of creative liberation emergent through acts of beauty into processes of biotic democratization and a quickening into a maturity of planetary citizenship.

Wherever we are, we are responsible toward lives and the context of life; wherever we go, the responsibility goes and grows with us. Life is not less in one place, among one people, or in relationship to one species, than in and among any other. Habitation and the conditions of planetary life are simultaneously diverse and integral.

Drama and the poetic—the eloquence of words, music, dance and ritualized movement—are ways into the theatre of memory, even anamnesis, into the

public forum of heroic commensality: a democratization of deliverance from the parasitism the human has become; from the enforcer of betrayal, throat deep in crimes against creation, from the destroyer of self through accelerating consumption of organic otherness and contextual integrity, through the slaughter, dismemberment and devouring of the wild god Pan and the fertile goddess Gaia through collective rapacity. From all of that which makes us guilty, we must seek ways to move into more of that which makes us partnered, repentant, and free.

The way of the green troubadour, as lover, and the way of the eco-shaman, as healer and as sojourner in glimmering between worlds, expressed in what follows through the medium of public performing arts, are ways of being in the world with courage and humility, instinct and imagination, questing after a shared return to dreaming the truth of living reality and restoring the dream of the Earth—and at renewed and even at new levels of encounter and recognition, protection, dignified passage and celebration.

So to you who have come with me thus far, I say this: Please, friend, do a little something in your life and place to help lift the heavy wreckage of intergenerational misconduct and oppression. And may the words that follow be a crossing we take together and a path-finding and vision sharing. Here I can do no more than to invite you. Here I can hope no more than that we go together in trust.

Perchance, if we do go along and gypsy this life together, big with friendship and creative in adventure, we will occasionally turn and recite to one another: “If words are energy, if energy is power and our power moves into efflorescence; if stars, and angels in the imaginal sing, if grass, and children at play are praying; then the words that follow with us are medicine in the old way. And if the words that follow here are good words—fearless before darkness, returning the living to the way of beauty—then the medicine is good and good for the Earth.”

**AFTER PROPHECY: Imagination, Incarnation & the Unity of the Prophetic Tradition by Tom Cheetham, Spring Books.*

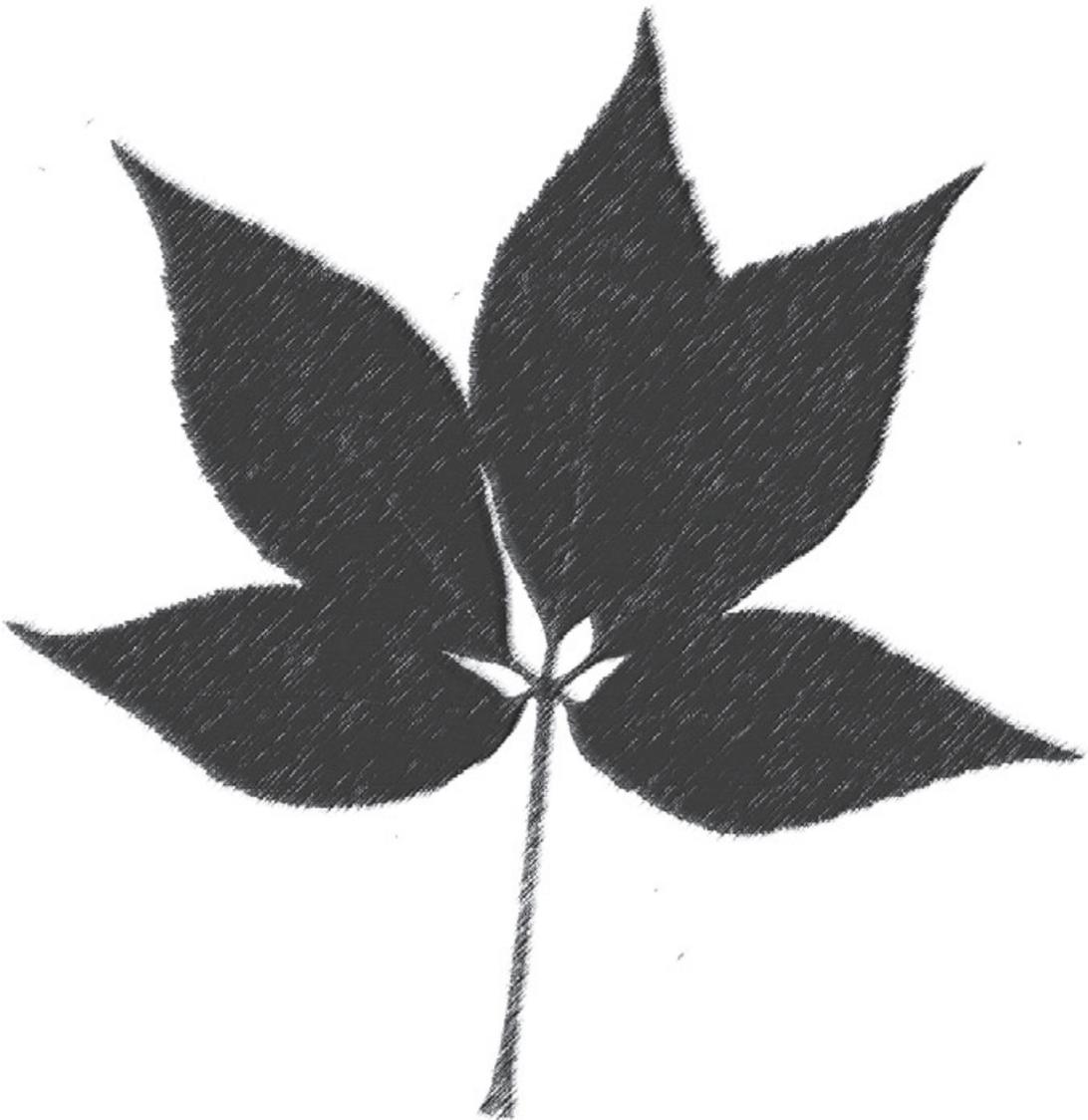


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PART ONE Groundwork

LINKAGE - CONNECTING ACTOR AND ECO-SHAMAN

A professor at UC Davis, who teaches in the Drama Department and pursues research into shamanism in Korea, asked me once the following questions. *How are genuine connections to be created between actor and shaman? Here in the 21st century what purpose can such a combination serve?* In a general way, in contemporary culture, it may be an absurd suggestion to begin with—the attempt to bring actor and shaman together. One is either an actor working toward performance or shaman engaged in soul flights and non-ordinary states of consciousness. One is contemporary and focused most generally on the commercial, or one is archaic and embedded in, if not questing after, the perennial and spiritual. Can an individual perform the fictive in a trance? Can a person convert the imaginal into the merely imaginative and still transfer the mystery and power of the numinous, connect with and make visible the invisible, bring the spirit of creation, the Earth Spirit, as myth or archetype, into a presidium?

Are the antitheses unstrung, ever more moving away and withering in opposite directions? Or to the contrary, if the suggestion is not absurd, does it further the magical authentication of theatre life that has been struggling off center since the mad ponderings and edgy genius of Antonin Artaud?

I do see a bridge linking these two regions of human endeavor—the art of acting and the art of shamanic healing—and that bridge is ecology or ecosophy, and a movement toward the public enhancement of a mythic green culture and neo-alchemic and eco-shamanic cosmology. Here then the actor may take on somewhat the mantle of shamanism without betrayal; specifically in the form of eco-warrior-poet and eco-shaman—a synthesis of the two being what I call glimmer man or glimmer woman, or the new millennium mummer of magic-reality and green troubadour.

If the bridge is accepted, then we move on to this: The actor as eco-shaman is not, as actor, a master of ecstasy out upon the stage. The actor as eco-shaman may or may not be somewhat a technician of the sacred. The actor is certainly not a priest or priestess in the normal expectation of the office. Eco-shamanism is about relationships and about re-establishing lost or broken connections of interdependent; the actor as eco-shaman is involved in contributing to a green-village, public culture, a social art, of re-established and renewed relationships—Earth Life relationships and Sacred Earth and Sacredness of Life relationships. Such is the process I call re-Earthing.

In this capacity the actor-eco-shaman may yet bring the invisible into visibility, rediscover and recover the holy and prove to be a colorful cartographer of the spheres of the ecstatic, as well as a revolutionizing threshold crosser. Perhaps never working anticipated miracles but offering the miracle of indication by pointing to a direction of changes. Indeed, the actor as eco-shaman works on the threshold and offers outward an alternative aesthetic generated out of the Heraclitian collusion between harsh realities and an emergent dreamtime.

Having become aware of our individual and species-wide reductions and afflictions in our experience of eclipsed relationship beyond human confines, the actor as eco-shaman accepts as well the role of being a healed healer, or one engaged in a healing process that focuses on a public dimension of initiatory social art. This is the role of one whose awareness embraces the pain and suffering of historical and contemporary alienation and denials; as well as the ongoing drive toward inter-species

extinctions, even omnicide; and whose awareness is developing into an aesthetic and didactic presence dedicated to creative repair away from all-endangering excesses of imbalance. The radical artistry of the eco-shaman is an intervention and countermovement to all manifestations of modern extravagance.

In entering into the process of an alternative culture, an aesthetic of stillness, of beauty, of depth—instilling careful listening, visioning and profound simplicity in service to a Gandhi style truth force—and commitment to enlivening senses and sensibilities to refinement, reverence and even to the ennobling determination of respect for biotic diversity, changing the rhythms of space and time for the sake of sustainability, and protecting through green-democracy the universal rights of otherness to maintain habitat and flourish: these elements of cultural activism are paramount and potentially medicinal in the aftermath of the liberating cathartic.

Thus to revisit and summarize this point, let me run through it in this way: If the actor as shaman is considered as a specialist in vertical and inter-dimensional communication, rather than the more commonly defined “Master of Ecstasy,” then we draw closer to realizing eco-shamanic cultural possibilities and creative work toward and within an eco-shamanic theatre of transporting soul episodes into paradigm shifting public consciousness.

If the narrating of story and the artistry of narration are accepted as ecosophic transformation technique, then we enter into the ways of healing, and the actor-shaman as a healing intentional artist dedicated to public performance art and ritual.

As to the Master of Ecstasy category—a chief designation of shaman for Eliade—with its central trance state, we might exercise the imagination on an occasional heightened attainment and substitute a state of inspiration, such as that now identified with the archaic myth-singers of epic poetry, capable of introducing encounters with the **numen** as a shared sense of presence potential and felt-potency.

The vehicle for introducing such cultural processes needs to be “green.” How then do student-actors undergo greening for the purpose of introducing such eco-shamanic experience into public culture, with commitment to open public debates grounded in a deepening ecosophy of feeling and depth experience through expressive soulfulness and transformational eco-bonding—a binding back of human with multi-dimensional otherness through an attentive outwardness of truth force, love and holistic-ontological belonging and identification behaviors—that is, a making of authentic relationships throughout the *transhuman* as rebirthing touchstones of identity?

Along with whatever general techniques of actor training are pursued, if not indeed at the onset and very foundation, there are a number of experiences of an eco-shamanic nature which can be introduced. I will now elucidate several of these which I consider most important.

A place to start is the Council of All Beings, a biotic mourning ritual developed and widely practiced by John Seed and Joanna Macy. The Council extends over three days and centrally involves human participants taking on the masked personae of other than human life forms and gathering in circle to lament and dialogue over the consequences of humans reducing natural habitat to consumer resources. Full descriptions of the Council of All Beings ritual are available, including online. Here I cite two quotations from Joanna Macy, one addressing the experience of mourning, the other the experience of remembering.

Mourning: “The interdependence of all life remains just a mental concept, without power to affect our attitudes and behaviors, unless it takes on some emotional reality. We need to feel it, and our capacity to feel is stunted if we block out the pain within us over what is happening to our world. Furthermore, if we proceed to take part in the Council per se, speaking on behalf of other life-forms without first acknowledging our sorrow for what other beings are suffering at human hands, we risk being superficial, even presumptuous.

Here we use ‘mourning’ as a generic term for the expression of moral pain for what humans are inflicting on the natural world. This pain for the

world includes not only grief, but fear, anger, and despair as well. Because these emotions are not encouraged in conventional society, and because they reveal the truth of our interconnectedness with all life, we allow them full play.”

Remembering: “Our connections with other life-forms are based not only on emotional attachments to places and beings we have loved. They are also organic, woven by shared ancestries, embedded in our bodies. Each atom in each molecule of our being goes back to the beginning of life and has belonged to far more ancient and varied forms of life than our own. The human form we now wear is just the latest and briefest chapter of a long evolutionary journey. In the Remembering, we consciously own this ancient kinship so that, when the time comes to speak for other life-forms, we can do so with a greater sense of naturalness and authenticity.

Also known as ‘evolutionary remembering’ this experiential process guides the imagination while drawing on multiple senses and inner body knowings. It sets our present day, hurried lives within larger contexts of time.... As a preparatory stage to the Council of All Beings, we usually focus on ‘our life as Gaia;’ it is easier to feel with our bodies and we have already done it in our mother’s wombs. Just as, in utero, we physically recapitulated the evolution of cellular life, so now we attempt to do it consciously, harnessing intellect and imagination.”

Another excellent starting place for introducing experiences of transpersonal and transhuman eco-shamanic connection is with what Jerzy Grotowski called ethnodramas or mystery plays. Here is some of what Grotowski had to say about this exercise which involves students in a creative regression, a reaching back to origins—to the mythic lair and strata of primitive sanity—through discovering and acting out a solo mystery play organically made up around a traditional folk song.

Grotowski: “In this field one of the tests is a kind of individual ethnodrama, in which the starting point is an old song linked to the ethnic-religious tradition of the person in question. One begins to work with this song as if in it was codified in potentiality (movement, action, rhythm) a totality. It’s like an ethnodrama in the collective traditional sense, but here it is one

person who acts with one song and alone.

...As I said before, this type of work passes through moments of crisis.... You must face all of the classical questions of the performing arts. For example: But who is the person who sings the song? Is it you?

But if it is a song from your grandmother, is it still you? But if you are discovering in you your grandmother, through your body's impulses, then it's neither you nor your grandmother who had sung; it's you exploring your grandmother who sings. Yet it can be that you go further back, toward some place, toward some time difficult to imagine, when for the first time someone sang this song. I'm speaking about a true traditional song, which is anonymous. We say: It's the people who sang. But among these people, there was someone who began. You have the song, you must ask yourself where this song began.

Perhaps it was the moment of tending a fire in the mountains on which someone was looking after animals. And to keep warm in front of this fire someone began to repeat the opening words. It wasn't a song yet, it was an incantation. A primary incantation that someone repeated. You look at the song and ask yourself: Where is this primary incantation? In which words? Maybe these words have already disappeared? Maybe the person in question had sung other words, or a phrase other than the one you sing, and maybe another person developed this first nucleus. But if you are capable of going with this song toward the beginning, it is not any longer your grandmother who sings, but someone from your lineage, from your country, from your village, from the place where the village was, the village of your parents, of your grandparents.

In the way of singing itself the space is codified. One sings differently in the mountains and in the plains. In the mountains one sings from one high place to another, so the voice is thrown like an arc. You gradually refind the first incantations. You refind the landscape, the fire, the animals; maybe you began to sing because you had a fear of solitude. Did you look for others? Did it happen in the mountains? If you were on a mountain, the others were on another mountain. Who was this person who sang thus? Was this person young or old? Finally you discover that

you came from somewhere. As one says in the French expression, ‘*Tu es le fils de quelqu’un*’ (You are someone’s son). You are not a vagabond, you come from somewhere, from some country, from someplace, from some landscape. There were real people around you, near or far. It’s you two hundred, three hundred, four hundred, or one thousand years ago, but it’s you. Because he who began to sing the first words was someone’s son, from somewhere, from someplace, so, if you refind this, you are someone’s son. If you do not refind it, you are not someone’s son; you are cut off, sterile, barren.” *

Grotowski had these mystery-plays shown out of doors. So I suggest this: In group, teacher and students together, go out to the wildest or most solitary natural place available, create a traditional Medicine Wheel, use the wheel as your theater, and perform your individual ethnodramas of regression, discovery and authentication with the inside of the wheel as your (sacred) performance space.

From this point onward, various visionary meditations can be brought into play as well, including creating visual and audio mandalas (with felt-sounds and word-pictures) inspired by reflections on quotations from Native and Aboriginal elders. A couple of examples of such life-ensouling quotations will suffice to demonstrate that they offer us an alternative to our contemporary mindset; articulating a different emotional philosophy toward planetary life and the human earth-walk in the midst of the all-aliveness of this miracle Earth.

First from the now renowned Oglala prophet **Black Elk**: “Have you noticed that everything an Indian does is in a circle, and that is because the Power of the World always works in circles, and everything tries to be round. In the old days when we were a strong and happy people, all our power came to us from the sacred hoop of the nation and so long as the hoop was unbroken the people flourished. The flowering tree was the living center of the hoop, and the circle of the four quarters nourished it. The east gave peace and light, the south gave warmth, the west gave rain, and the north with its cold and mighty wind gave strength and endurance. This knowledge came to us from the outer world with our religion. Everything the Power of the World does is done in a circle.

The Sky is round and I have heard that earth is round like a ball and so are all the stars. The Wind, in its greatest power, whirls. Birds make their nests in circles, for theirs is the same religion as ours. The sun comes forth and goes down again in a circle. The moon does the same and both are round.

“Even the seasons form a great circle in their changing, and always come back again to where they were. The life of a man is a circle from childhood to childhood and so it is in everything where power moves. Our tipis were round like the nests of birds and these were always set in a circle, the nation’s hoop, a nest of many nests where the Great Spirit meant for us to hatch our children.”

From this, learn to think and do, to feel and to be, in circle and in circular patterns, which will creatively and subversively work against the linear cult of progress, a narcotic and propaganda term used to justify unlimited intervention and exploitation, and to obscure the critical human betrayal of planetary life.

Next, a short reflection from **Chief Luther Standing Bear** on what is, and by contrast, what is not civilization and a civilized human inhabitant of the Earth: “The man who sat on the ground in his tipi meditating on life and its meaning, accepting the kinship of all creatures and acknowledging unity with the universe of things was infusing into his being the true essence of civilization.”

Some other practices to further the project of linkage between 21st century actor and 21st century eco-shaman: Poetry should be central. Poetry is a primal form of human communication, remembering, recurring to the felt-sense of experiences, and poetry awakens and exercises imagination, especially poetry of certain kinds and qualities. Introduce poetry sessions involving recitation with serious voice work, gesture choices and movement, in particular with poems and prayer chants from indigenous peoples—those who are called First Nations in Canada and Aborigines in Australia. Work in as well poems from the Celtic “I am (that)” tradition stretching as far back as the legendary Amergin of Ireland and Talisen of Wales, and come up to the blind poet Raftery and the natural poet James

Stevens.

Here is one such example from the Native American tradition, a prayer-poem from the Dine or Navajo people—**Song of the Earth**:

It is lovely indeed
 It is lovely indeed
 I am the spirit within the earth
 The feet of the earth are my feet
 The legs of the earth are my legs

The bodily strength of the earth is my bodily strength
 The thoughts of the earth are my thoughts
 The voice of the earth is my voice
 The feather of the earth is my feather
 All that belongs to the earth belongs to me
 All that surrounds the earth surrounds me
 I am the sacred word of the earth
 It is lovely indeed
 It is lovely indeed

I take this to be a shaman's song and the value it has for us now, along with all other words of its kind, is that it offers us the possibility of becoming eco-warrior-poets, a goodly component in the composition of the actor as eco-shaman. And to sessions of recitation as suggested here, I would encourage the addition of each of these following practices, projects and exercises: Read aloud and act out stories from world mythologies, folk and fairy tales. They are narratives carrying alternative visions and hence alternative perceptions. If Laban, LeCoq, or Suzuki is being taught, add some Tai Chi and Qi Gong; if not taught, introduce these other disciplines. Movement trainings and exercises which mirror nature shapes and flows of the transhuman-experience-continuum should become part of the actor as eco-shaman's repertory of performance resources; work vertically until organicity is recovered in the performance preparing body. After all, if the body regresses in the correct way, a cellular anamnesis is in process and knowing as questing and belonging is encrypted. The spectrum of embodiment for the actor-eco-shaman thus is expansive, extensive,

inclusive, horizontal as well as vertical, shapeshifting into ancestral inhabitants of ancient horizons and future Earth-walkers of imaginary possibilities; scaling the vertical pole of biotic and spiritual evolution from the animism of the inanimate and the souls of animals through the specific soul-bearing consciousness of the human to the subtiles and potencies of elemental spirits and humanly engaged angels.

Going on: Read in group Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, it has to do with shapeshifting and was influential and inspiring to Shakespeare, which alone is a qualifying recommendation for anybody in theater. Listen and move in group to acoustic world music, especially traditional and archaic music which retains some of the deep earth connection Lorca called *duende*. Get into the research work of Dr. Felicitas Goodman who devoted her life to exploring the experiences of archaic trance and mind altering physical postures. And in all of these involvements, stretch out and connect with our species ancestry and the shapes and movements of other life forms.

Finally, whenever the foundations adequately are in place, begin rehearsing and scripting together programs for performance using work specifically created for eco-shamanic purpose. Such is the work in this volume. Part 3, *Work Samples*, contains original compositions to play and co-create with and Part Four, *Performance Samples*, offers examples of the culture this book intends to stimulate. Here then let it be noted: The point of it all is to plant in the imagination and in memory (physical memory foremost) different references, different resources so as to see beyond what is given in the limited contemporary to what has been and what is yet possible in the way of collective maturity, sanity, survival, responsibility and creatively converting inner evolution into a spiritual and cultural revolution of sacred relationships and a mutuality of planetary healing.

**Tue s le fils de quelu'un by Jerzy Grotowski, translated from French by Thomas Richards*

EPISODIC THEATER & ECO-SHAMANIC PERFORMING ART

An attempt to define an ecozoic cultural arena where a diversity of Earth serious subjects, perspectives and creative responses are brought together, unified by an intentional, focused, collective energy and where the presence of a passive audience is dissolved in process, integrating each individual attendant into the circle of participatory presentation, performance, and ecosophic mythogenesis.

Because of the condition of experience and knowledge-potential in the new millennium (in this sentient evolution of our presently emergent Ecozoic Era) a new type of theater and style of performing art as eco-based cultural engagement is required. Outside and beyond the commercial-entertainment soft theater complex, I call this developing form Episodic. I do so by a positive and a negative evaluation: on one side, due to the diversity of interfacing and possibilities before us, on the other, as a counter and curative to denatured, psychosomatic fragmentation. As such, Episodic is not so much linear, as from the Poetics of Aristotle on through the 20th century, as circular. And the ideal potential for entrance into eco-shamanic performance (or concerns and conservational displays eliciting participation) can unfold anywhere around the episodic circle—as every station is a lingering or stopover in the shamanic gnosis and ecosophic journey, each and any might also be a starting point, and every ending-in-circle a new level of vertically enhanced beginning.

The project I have named the Green Troubadour Medicine Wheel is one manifestation of a type of Episodic Theater as a cultural democratization of participatory renaissance through an intentional community ritually engaging in a designated re-Earthing event, designed as a dynamic interplay between structured components and spontaneous input. As this exemplary project is constructed to demonstrate, episodes brought to be played out through Episodic Theater and a cultural flowering of Eco-Shamanic Performing Art are those ongoing occurrences of seemingly scattered

yet more deeply organic, systemic events of personal-interpersonal-local-global-planetary imprint, impact and significance, such as human excesses responsible for Earth imbalances, warfare, human trafficking, world hunger, thirst, disease and poverty etc.

Through composing aesthetic perspectives from episodes in the world into patterns of intensified and dialogic verticality, Episodic Theater connects the dots (including dots connected with their background, or more completely, with the encompassing field-context of planetary existence) for the sake of new perception and deepened possibilities from out of that which otherwise would remain in the diminished normalcy of the accidental, coincidental, inconsequential casualty of contemporary schizoid fragmentation.

It is in the nature of whatever is episodic to be open to additions, extensions, inclusions, reevaluations and transformations of a developing episodic gestalt: new and more recently occurring affinitive episodes may always be brought in and brought together. And the effectiveness if not credible organicity of groupings is largely decided by the seriousness and creative sincerity behind an episodic composition, as well as the purpose guiding its being introduced into public dialogue as a participatory cultural event. Further—an aesthetic of the episodic, giving a shared experience through shared expression to acts of beauty and collective responsibility; being relational rather than random; needs be an aesthetic of the invisible conjoining the visible as event recognized sustaining presence, and that which is out of sight and out of mind being re-empowered as visionary, mindful and in need of address and transvaluation.

In part, but in a foundational way and always at the onset, this aesthetic achievement has to do with energy, the vitality, physicality, mutuality, quality and direction of energy that joints together shapes, movements, utterances of a narrative communion of feeling and sentient alertness. Alertness is a key work eliciting beyond the mere inquiry, “Are you aware?” Alertness, primitively embedded in both flesh and psyche, may be a depth of embodiment beyond awakening, more attached to the silent connects of the soul than to the articulate reflections of consciousness.

Thus what is involved here is not so much a storyline, in the old sense of a show and tell that has a predetermined beginning, middle and ending, as a feeling-line that rises and falls, elevates, undulates, expands, contracts and descends through bodies, through bodily sensations and sensitivities, into various directions of affected existence and multi-dimensions of experiential possibilities, through various jolting and flowing releases of the spontaneities within those who are voluntarily participating in the creative process of embracing and composing the episodic pattern. Here then we would find presentation rather than representation; where players are playing themselves in the verticality of their core individual-ancestral-connective identities; yielding dialogue rather than rhetoric and an eventfulness of participatory mythmaking or mytho-genesis instead of obscurity, propaganda and pointlessness—or the terminus of the absurd.

Now as energy is both ambient and embodied, as we know, and establishes itself as a connective inherent in creation between breath and intention, so the aesthetic of the episodic is experiential rather than intellectual; to be democratized instead of specialized; to be chosen out of encounter and acted on after contemplation. From initiation onward the artistry and aesthetic of the episodic as cultural happening is grounded in the act of a sacred immediacy—an immediacy of liberation, in Gutierrez’s sense of this word as “to give life.”

How exactly all of this works is more something to be demonstrated than abstractly discussed. And yet, to give a somewhat finer focus to these thoughts, I put forward the following. First my democratizing performance structures for The Green Troubadour Medicine Wheel, as well as the performance project **At the Liminal Crossing**, are each examples of one type of Episodic Theater and Eco-Shamanic Performing Art. So too my play *Shadows*, although to a far lesser degree as *Shadows* addresses a kaleidoscope of enactments and consequences of violence as violence morphs into a culture of violence, both in its direct and lateral, or sideways, manifestations, but does not yet go the further step of integrating an audience into the social role of holy actor and sacred activist. It plants some seeds, but has not evolved to invite the seed-bearers into the harvest of their own fertile plots and community gardens. Although this further step could always be taken by an innovative direction.

What I am saying in the foregoing now is this: In the play and film *THE DRESSER*, there is a line spoken about the performance of a scene from Shakespeare's play *King Lear*. The actor says, "The agony was in the moment of acting created." This recognition gives voice to an ultimate achievement in the art of acting. But while I speak of theater and performing art here, I am not focused on professional attainment but with a location liberating mutuality of eco- shamanism as cultural happening and public communion contributing to what Joanna Macy and others have now identified as "the work that reconnects." As such, if we change a couple of words in the play line to read, "The **connection** is in the moment of the act created," we can come into grasping the fundamental purpose of Episodic Theater and the aesthetic by which it is distinguished.

Background: When Jerzy Grotowski set out on his own shamanic theater explorations, in search of the holy actor, he asked questions as to the true essentials of theater, and was able to eliminate everything from the essential equations except for actor and audience. Theater needs only an actor and an audience to be theater. In later years, Grotowski moved away from the audience component, centering instead in attention on the development of the actor and the actor's offering and sacrifice as an event within the soul of the actor, in the moment of acting created as a complete, intentional, living presence. A re-mem-bering as in coming into wholeness, which may at certain stages of development require the soul's observation of dismemberment as traumatic pain and grieving that must be confronted in order to evolve beyond in an assertion of the integrity of life as life and the integrity of individuation as evolutionary imperative..

As I see it, Episodic Theater and Eco-Shamanic Performing Art continues in this direction, dedicated to the process which would eventually arrive at the goal of all present becoming participants in a theater of what John Seed has called "evolutionary remembering," or eco-anamnesis, taking part in deliverance from destructive madness and redemption from addiction driven extinction. In a culture that would sustain this type of guiding, vulnerable and exploratory theater and performing art, nobody, over time, needs to be marginalized or neglected in the tragic shadow subsistence of impotence and victimization.

Indeed, Episodic Theater as suggested here is not grandiose and certainly not a panacea for the endangerments menacing this planet and its diversity of inhabitants. It is only a single tool in an ongoing process, but one that would approach the very daunting yet marvelous challenge set before us by the late eco-theologian, Thomas Berry, that “the mission of our time is to reinvent the human at the species level”. In both metamorphic and healing ways, theater and shamanism are primal and primordial roots of Earth relationships and human culture, and both are indwelling in our experimental beginnings, deep in the luminal darkness of endeavor and possibility.

As such the assertion for Episodic Theater is an assertion that takes place on the very verge of a threshold beyond which is either extinction, if not omnicide, or the revolutionizing emergence of a renaissance-germane into the Ecozoic Era, a time of unprecedented, compassionate and creative responsibility and maturity.

VERTICALITY OF THE ROLE

an Acting Lesson for Green Troubadours, Eco-Shamans, Earth Warriors & Deep Earth Walkers who leave light footprints...

Let's play with Shakespeare. Let's agree and each say, "All the world's a stage." Each of us plays many parts, participating in major and minor scenes and communications. But what is the nature of this play we are now in; now an active-acting actual of? Is the drama comedy, a tragedy, an odd mixture of both or an anomaly-absurd, being neither? Or else is this piece some something of an alchemic experiment, tearing through each mystic act to discover or recover essences and in an ah-moment of sacred intensity transform mortal lead into spirit gold? A work in progress, call it, as magical and bawdy as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, or darkly ominous as *Macbeth*, as puzzling and haunted with noble, self-accusatory consciousness as *Hamlet*, or even as titanic and emotionally tempestuous (something of the perfect human storm) as is *King Lear*?

Remember the old adage: "There are no small parts, only small actors." So let us consider our smallness or our imposed limitations, and the fuller dimensions, the virtual largess of possibilities next to be explored. Let us consider, in point, **the verticality of the role**—a method whereby to make visible the invisible, to actualize out of occultation potentials, powers, disavowed and disowned vulnerabilities and nuances, poignant, overt, elusive and subtle—antithesis sparking energies between poles of love and betrayal; confusion, anxiety, uncertainty, rashness, rage and depths of reflection; or psychic armor and trusting nudity, or grief-metamorphic and the superflux-sublime of ecstasy.

Besides the “given” of our roles—the existentiality, conditions and situations of compliance or resistance—we can search for facilitating credibility, for flushed out and fleshed dimensions of being true to life. We may juxtapose and join together our hearts and heads, locating, liberating and opening emotional intelligence and our souls to the honest work of character building; of personating, the making of a person, as the process was deemed in Shakespeare’s day.

Explore and personate, let us say, to find out and integrate what is above our heads, what below our feet—what with the music of the spheres, “still choiring to the young eyed cherubim;” what down into the knotty roots and hard strata of ancestral bones and subterranean instincts, lingering, menacing, ever restless, primitively high voltage, like a magma core to “Strike flat the thick rotundity of the world/ crack nature’s moulds, all germans spill at once/that makes ingrateful man;” Even to look off into what is behind the moment amid the mist of time, what across the brindled light and luminal darkness of space; what enshrouded but possessed by desire or what still as buried treasure of the dreaming earth, what still as airy treasure of dreaming clouds, and what remains ever and always as “and yet” (the evolutionary ambiguity) of personal and intergenerational touring along the homage circuits and pilgrimage platforms of costume changing “struts and frets.”

In this verticality of the role we can come to speak of ancestry and archetypes, daimons inquisitive, provocative, guardian angels, spirit guide animals and waylaying devils of sex and the soul’s bartering—each and all holding positions, in postures of power, on the collective totem poles of re-membering (re-personating) and resurgent mythologies.

But shall we not ask: What is the nature of such mythologies? True or false? True to life? True to earth? Or fatal phantasms of vanity, inflation and illusions? For a person in the rigors and transports of direction setting personating can die of illusions on the stage of life as readily as from failed memory and miscued timing.

Acting is an honest art, or so it is told, at least honest in the intimacy and immediacy of live or living stage. When played at an appropriate level,

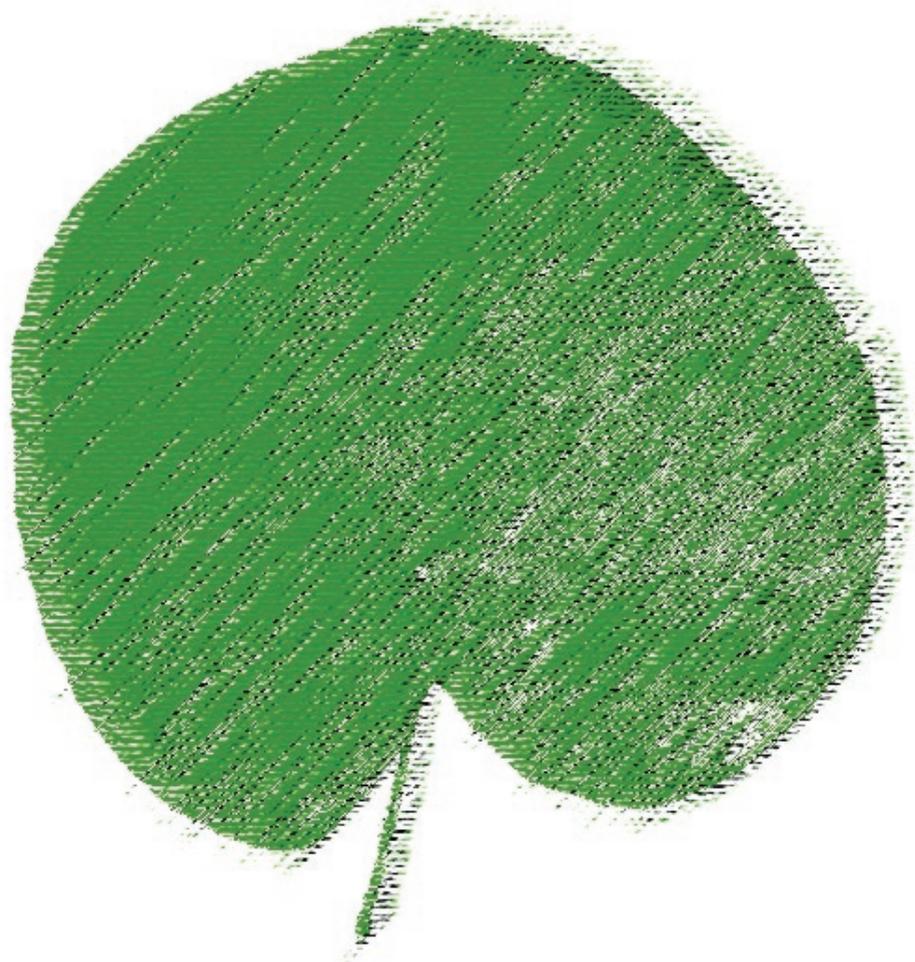
the honesty goes outward, quite naturally observable and kinesthetically penetrating as truth force and acts of beauty. Thus then, through gestures, speech with intention and purpose, propelled through breathing energies, pregnant silences and the passion of pathos and mutuality, community becomes an emergent actual and communion—a veritable eating of muses and the gods—is served.

Here let me tell you a truly marvelous and revolutionary secret, that when stripped down to nakedness is no secret at all, but becomes au natural a common and hallowed ground, very like time crucified Lear after the throes of apocalypse, praying in the rain for just recognition of the wretched of the earth and dregs of a neglected kingdom. The secret is this: If we ever come to free ourselves from fear of death—not the inexorable pacing in the wings of death, but death’s fear that terrifies, paralyzes and renders consciousness delusional; if we do so by heavenly fiat or arduous labor; by freedom performing heroic on the palm of discipline; and do so without relinquishing that central passion of pathos or hardening our skins and vital organs against the wounds of vulnerability—we will be cured of the dread disease of greed, greed and its compulsive addictions; our wretched theatricality of trivializing yet all consuming, falsifying and life devouring, extravagance.

So with this method, the admittance of personal and interpersonal heights and depths, we may in ardor attain the flower of the acting art and live and work in composed maturity, assured in our individual and species identities that there are upcoming other roles to grow artful with, other plays to master, other stages in the out-beyond awaiting the grand entrance after these Globes of human interface and amphitheatres of wilderness enchantments have shaped us wise and worthy, and shut us down.

Although, fellow Thespians, be warned and ever be aware! Choices translate into experience, experiences into qualities, occasionally into events. A certain type-casting trails after each and the roles we play here and now, and how well or poorly played directs, at times obliquely, at time front on, the forms, the norms and patterns of every John and Sally’s callback and continuum.

Play not only well and hearty then but vertically. Know too: You descend for the sake of ascending. There is not movement upward without a moving down. What is below puts in motion what is above as well as the above illuminating forces primeval (may we say in the realm of the Ageless Mothers?) awakening with transient longings of fever, terror, light-dreams and delight. Theatre happens both rough and holy where and whenever togetherness creates open space, shared time and our purpose is connective and re-connective through authenticating the shapeshifting artistry of each honestly expressed and visionary soul.



PART TWO

Exercises

HONORING THE DIRECTIONS & CENTERING IN THE DAN-TIEN

This is a movement exercise and movements are to be tightly synchronized when used in group. Whether worked up alone or with others, it is always good to start with the body, awakening and coordinating vital and ambient energies.

Begin now by slowly raising the left hand to a position before and slightly above the heart and holding momentarily to gaze into the cupped palm. Now the movement unfolds in this manner: Eyes follow the left hand as the arm gracefully extends to its length with upturned palm open, fingers slightly extended, making offering. Then a delicate pull happens at the tips of the fingers, swaying the body gently but visibly to the left. Bringing the body back to center position, left palm turns downward as the left arm slowly descends to the side, hand folded in slightly to create the impression of a partial circle. Pattern repeats with the right hand.

Next both hands come up before the heart, fingertips barely meeting, forming the apex of a pyramid before both arms are extended outward to full length, palms open, fingers reaching toward the front. Lean forward, again as if pulled ever so slightly by an invisible ribbon at the edges of the fingers. The gesture is one of offering. After a hold, arms raise up, arching out as they ascend, forming an open V: torso expands and lifts, head elevates, eyes scan the space above. Arms descend slowly, hold at shoulder

height, full stretch, as if a crucifix posture, palms turned outward; slow rotation so that palms are turned toward the floor. Slow drop of arms to both sides, hands folding in as before to form a partial circle.

Continuing arm motions: bend elbows, bring arms up as if a cradle, hands form gently closed fists, knuckles meeting at the solar plexus. Right leg steps forward, as arms push out, hands open, fingers pointing upward: movement accompanying big exhalation. With a natural **qi** flow return to center position.

Left arm glides back with torso twisting left, gentle bend in knees; left hand reaching back, gathering from the past (space behind); in flow mode arm swings forward with a bowling motion, extending fully, releasing from the open palm into the future (space before.) Left arm brought back to left side as right arm begins full movement repetition: reach back, gather (receive), bring forward, release (give).

Body again at center, both arms will be swung three times, accompanied by slight bend in knees. Each swing increases velocity. On third swing, arms come up, rolling at shoulders to make a large, swooping motion, forearms rotate and hands come together in a loud clap.

Arms brought back toward body, hands joining in a Buddha-prayer, resting momentarily before the place of the heart. Next, left hand, kept flat, rises slowly over the vertically held right hand, forming a T shape where left palm meets right fingertips. Left hand slides down before front edge of vertical right to solar plexus as right hand flattens horizontally, so that between the inward turned palms a ball is formed. Right hand rolls over left, descending to position of Dan Tien, as left hand reverses position of palm. Space for the ball between the hands is somewhat larger momentarily, but left hand descends with great subtlety, gently compressing the space. Hold for count of two then hands begin to slid in opposite directions, expanding the space between them further, until the ball is dissolved by the outward motion and the hands have come to rest at both sides.

BRIGIT'S WELL

Use your felt-sense and draw from out the theater of memory the properties for this image-making exercise. Begin.

Envision yourself walking through a wood of densely shading tree. After strolling awhile, you come to a clearing. In the clearing is an old fashion well, extremely ancient—rock wall rim, with a wench and an oaken bucket on the end of a sturdy rope.

You approach the well and lower the bucket further and further, until it splashes down and you hear it sink and fill with well water. An image of the water's origin; cascading down from its mountain glacier source, playing hide and seek as it conceals its progression, flowing constantly through a subterranean channel, swelling into the lower reaches of this stone walled dig; presents itself to your eco-orphic mind; your earth-sensory (ancestral/instinctual) imagination.

Smiling, you turn the winch-handle until you have retrieved the now full bucket. In process, you understand that your activity is important, that you need to perform this physical labor of lowering and elevating (going down and bringing up), in order to have water from this exact and enchanted well. Indeed, you are aware that there is a *numen*, a spiritual energy of sacred power, with a potential for healing, in this special place, this forest clearing. You glance around and recognize that the clearing is at the center of a woody circle and the well shaft at the center of that—concentric, circle inside of circle where you stand.

Here, with the bucket sitting on the rocky rim, you place your hands into the water and *intensely feel* your immersion in a liquid, almost dreamlike, reality, hoisted from its subterranean source.

Next, you cup your hands full of water and splash it onto your face. You *intensely feel* this contact, as the well water spills and beads across your forehead, your cheeks and chin, your eyebrows and your eyelids, your nostrils and your lips. Eyes shut, you linger in the refreshing delight of sensuality and your memory revisits former experiences with the grace of water—rivers, lakes, ocean, rain, dewdrops on a crisp autumnal morning, the liquid invitation of sexual union. Gratitude opens as a category of experience for you to spontaneously, joyously embrace.

When you are satisfied with your experience and recollections, open your eyes inside of your visualization and once more place your hands into the bucket. This time, draw your hands, cupped together and holding a micro-pond of sparkling water, to your mouth. First, you look into the water you cup; then drink. Drinking, you *intensely feel* the shimmering coolness drawn through your labor from its underground abundance. You feel it, slipping past your lips, washing through your mouth, over your tongue, spilling down your throat, entering the secret life of your body; hydrating, strengthening. You did not know, you had not imagined, that you are so thirsty for water from this particular well. Yet, because of your intense thirst, you have drunk until your hands are presently empty. This emptiness, however, smiles and deep inside you feel a slaking fullness, like the undulant vibration of joyous laughter. Awareness comes to you: The ways of water, the life of moisture, are synonymous with emotional freedom.

Here your visualization ends. And now you realize the well you have visited is the deep well of your hidden emotional life. The deep fluidity of emotional experiences moves within and you are aware of the satisfaction of a profound thirst. Yet, like all hungers and all thirsts that give us to ourselves as embodied souls and soul integral bodies, this satisfaction stimulates a recurrent craving. This is the longing of anamnesis, the recovery of true insight, and the hunger-thirst for the essence of authentic being: *to become* who you are, even *who you ever where*.

Indeed, indulge here in lingering and create in your imagination a mobile kaleidoscope picturing all the possible forms and shapes of water—all the possible expressions of human emotion. Allow both storm and serenity

to abide within and be at home with the metamorphic movement of life as patterned transformations.

Stepping away, ask yourself the following questions: How did the water feel when your hands were first immersed? How did the water feel when you splashed it over your face? Were you shocked by the sensation or relieved? Did you welcome the sensation or were you embarrassed by it? How deeply did it touch you? Most importantly: How did the well water taste? Even though you drank all that your cupped hands could hold, was the water sweet or bitter? Flat or richly flavorful? Exotic or familiar? Was your drinking quick, or savored slowly? And did it excite or did it calm you? Finally, what self-image is presented as you contemplate these questions and answers?

Be honest and reflect on your answers to these questions of self-discovery and inner dialogue. Do not permit yourself a single comforting falsehood, or the excitement of a touch of drama that the visualization did not actually yield. Nor should you restrain spontaneous enthusiasm either. Honesty is the key to genuine self-knowledge and inner evolution; to your growth through numinous dialogues with the archetypes and the extensions of the soul's intensity through parabolic confrontations and metamorphic awakenings.

If you can, share with others the outcome of this exercise. Repeat it often, even as the thirst within requires. Do not deny either the craving for the well of emotion or its uplifting (or even challenging) satisfaction. Drink until a glow revives you in your inward depths and the sweet gift of blessed water, of life, restores to flesh, bone and soul, a living balance. Should fear hang over you from wounds of trauma, or disappointment and the breaking of trust, distorting your vision, let the well of benign Brigit, one form of the Old One who is mother to all, help to restore you—that your face be your own and your ways ever graced with expressive beauty, and the experience-gifts of knowledge that are gathered to sustain the pilgrimage of eternity.

The Mistress of this well is a giver and she gives to you the power to feel. Under the grace of her blessing, now you know and can store in the

rich repertory of experience this sustaining wisdom: Emotional thought is most alive and a philosophy (or ecosophy, or ecopsychology) of emotion is deep like a well and most true and honoring to life.

Then too there is this secret: Even as water seeks movement and takes on the shape of that which welcomes and contains it, so the emotional weather of being alive connects life to life and sustains diversity. For it is through emotional awareness (aliveness) that we come into the all-around and forever *morphic resonance* of existence and relatedness.

THE MOMENT

This exercise is to engage the imagination and help to release and make free flowing what Thomas Berry called “the spontaneities within us,” These spontaneities I associate with the liberating and salvific “primitive sanities” of Richard Falk as well as Freud’s “spiritual instinct.” With this perspective begin!

What if you are called up to give a performance—before your lover, your best friend, your family, a gathering of strangers, or a host of angels, or even before your cultural-transferred and personality shaped presence of God or Goddess—and your performance consists of seven minutes or let’s say four or even three minutes, and throughout the time you are set or poised to do something, to spring into action and your alertness is a visible, felt intensity.

Nobody knows when you are going to spring—or how or why—but everybody sees that something will happen—something dramatic and defining. Through you they feel the impending action and nobody can take their eyes off of you. You are the other hand are inwardly focused, outwardly concentrated, and increasingly aware of each and every internal energy movement and physical tension: that which is felt and invisible, that which is felt and becomes visible.

Thus: Once or twice, maybe even three times, it appears you are about to spring, but you don’t. Instead there is only a subtle change, a ripple in your intensity, a slight physical alteration or contortion. Actually these subtle heightenings of tension, small changes, are the same as in the process of growth, happening on the soft fringe of perception. Only here, they are both organic and deliberate, and transpiring in a time lapse stage between instinct and dreaming.

Now it is likely even you do not know before hand the exact moment when you will spring into action. Even if you go into the same process of stillness and concentration (of poised intensity) a dozen or a hundred times, the moment will always arrive at a different instance. The velocity and frequency of enactment and transmission is never exactly repeatable. Each performance is, therefore, original—precise but original—and unique. And this is because “the moment” is not in you only: it is relational, a relationship between you and an object or other that you are connecting with. The moment of action is a response.

Now maybe everybody watching you thinks you are poised like a cat about to pounce on a bird or a mouse, and maybe they are right and this is what happens. But, then again, maybe not! Maybe something antithetical to the outside perception of prolonged intensity is the content of “the moment”—your moment. Instead of a pouncing cat, you give your audience the smile of a flower opening or the final flight of a butterfly before death, or a mermaid or mythic Nereid swimming up out of crystalline water, breaking surface into an atmosphere of rolling sea and moonlight.

Or yet again, even if the performance becomes a cat preparing and eventually pouncing, instead of the expected conclusion, what if the pounce is after a dragonfly or small bird and the effort misses and has to go vertical at high speed, but misses again and a third time—a leap, a fall, followed by a release of all remaining, accumulated tension, then concluding return to calm equipoise? In that vertical movement will you not have experienced extensions through many dimensions: stretching of limbs and spine, flexibility in pelvis and knees, feet contacting the ground, eyes seeking fulfillment in the sky?

Goal: By holding your audience’s attention throughout the process of stillness (or no action) you draw them into heightened participation with that which happens within the stillness. Through this, the moment of action becomes a release for actor and onlooker. And the moment of surprise becomes thereby an ah-moment, a ah-ha moment, a moment of awe.

Here: a few quotations, applicable from the art of acting: (Jacques Copeau) “To start from silence and calm. That is the first point. An actor must know how to be silent, to listen, respond, keep still, begin a gesture, develop it, return to stillness and to silence, with all the tones and halftones that those actions imply.” (Etienne Decroux) “Such a technique implies a prepared, breathing, concentrated actor, with clear intentions, permitting the action to be sustained in the inaction. Stillness commands great power and authority in the theatre space. An actor must learn how to use it. Stillness gives clarity to relationships. It brings focus to a moment...It gives the audience space in which to take in the process leading up to and causing an action; stillness permits the transitional moments to be seen.” (Laban) “Stillness is a balancing of the body mass around the point of gravity, movement a lifting out of this state of equipoise.”

So now, if this exercise and these insights can be applied with practical eloquence to the art of acting, how much more applicable to mature and response-able life, within the context of a re-Earthing ecosophy; as creative participation in the Ecozoic Era,* as a sustainable alternative to the current Age of Extinctions and the accelerating death of our desecrated Mother Earth?

* The **ECOZOIC ERA** (or Ecological Age), a term coined by eco-theologian Thomas Berry, is our emerging Earth time in which the human species is challenged to become a human community, attain species maturity and live according to an democratized responsibility for planetary diversity, integrity, sanity and survival, engaged in long term healing behaviors toward genuine biotic justice through green culture, sustainable civilization, voluntary simplicity and spontaneous acts of beauty.

Here, in the early decades of the 21st century of a new millennium being called The Great Work, The Great Turning, Worldshift and The Work That Reconnects, we are yet in the Dreamtime of the Ecozoic. And in this Dreamtime, Berry tells us, “The dream drives the action.

WALKABOUT

This is a movement exercise to intensify feelings through energy circulation and the senses through

felt-sense memory, and to engage your emotions through imagination-in-motion.

The exercise is performed in three stages corresponding to three levels of mind-body experience and awareness. The first level is that of consensual reality and involves a linear walk. The next level is that of non-consensual, that is altered (or eco-shamanic) reality and involves a winding or meandering walk. The third and final level is a walk along a spiral into the sphere of the archetypal and the movement is circular.

This exercise can be practiced privately, at home, in the yard, on a playground, in a park or open field. It can also be used in a class, most especially when the class is in a gymnasium, dojo, dance, yoga or other open-space style studio.

So let's begin!

Level One: Start by walking through urban normalcy. Don't do this so much to study how you normally move or how your body works, but rather as an embodied feeling-awareness of movement reaction to walking a completely linear walk in a modern city context—the urban as a concentrated, composite abstraction; an atmosphere or contextual condition.

The city consists of a human monoculture dominated by the omnipresence of machines and is constructed on a square grid. Besides this, go on and ask: Is “your” city a combination of old and new, tradition and innovation, a stark juxtaposition of wealth and poverty, or maybe a megalopolis swarming with technocrats, cyborgs and saboteurs?

As you move about, allow yourself to feel city sighs, sounds, smells,

textures, shapes and motions. Allow yourself to experience within the Metropolis (or if you prefer, this Gotham City) the range of stresses, distractions, distortions, resistances, conveyances and dangers of walking through a compact model of urban normalcy.

Other people are crowded around in your walk. Take account of how you respond or react to, or seek to avoid, these many strangers who, like yourself, are ego-driven and boundary protective.

Important: Be sure to keep your city walkabout linear, moving only along straight lines and turning only at precise angles, like the angles of sidewalks intersecting and at street corner intersections.

Coming to the end of this first level, quietly take account of your experience. What is your bodily sense and mental evaluation of life if confined only to this type of experience?

Level Two: Here your journey may become more open and loosened up. Perhaps it is less directed and more leisurely? Here your walk is wending or meandering and serpentine, like following the course of an unobstructed river.

Through imagination-in-motion allow yourself to feel that you are walking in the green and water-bountiful sanctuary of Ecotopia, a natural landscape where Earth human and other than human Earth are in a symbiosis of balance. Or again, imagine yourself inside a living landscape (or should I say biosphere?) that duplicates a traditional Chinese painting. Here the human contra nature scales are reversed from that of the contemporary urban atmosphere.

Perhaps there is a quality of the archaic to this phase of the walkabout? But also there may be something idyllic, stable, comforting if not serene as you ambulate among mountains, valleys, rivers, rocks, trees, beneath passing clouds and the blue drapery of the sky.

Important: Everything here is larger than you, yet you are apart of everything here. So ask: Can you free yourself in this Earth walk to embody a true sense of belonging?

Take in the signs, sounds, smells, shapes, texture, neighbors and motions

of the Ecotopian context. And as you go along feel your normal ego and psyche armor dissolving. As you walk on, allow and accept an alternate eco-identity of relationships and porousness of senses to emerge and guide you.

When you have walked enough, absorbed enough, bring this micro-pilgrimage to conclusion. Quietly reflect on the qualities of your experience as you have done before.

Level Three: In the final walkabout begin by imagining yourself moving, dreamlike if you wish, inside of a cosmic conch shell, or within a swirling miniature galaxy of light and dark matter, consisting of three concentric circles on a spiral leading downward to a central vortex. The circles, large, medium, small, are conjoined by short looping arc-paths. In this way, you are always stepping along curves. Indeed, the image of the circles with conjoining arc-paths might suggest some sort of an alchemical process.

Now, as you walk the circles slowly, breathe freely and allow your imagination liberating play with the mystery forces of the transhuman, as you engage the archetypal and the imaginal. Feel changes in your body and gently transform into soft and flowing intimations of other identities, other human personae of ancestry, as well as some yet virtual possibilities of evolutionary humanity.

Footing along further, feel and morph next into various shapes and modes of other than human entities, life forms, some animal, some subtle, some spiritual. All this while, as the shamanic traverse unfolds, you continue approaching the central core.

Important: Take your time throughout this level and do not force anything to happen that does not emerge of its own volition.

As you move along in circles, let manifest, feel and connect with whatever come to you. Better to have a couple of authentic encounters with alternative identities and entities than to impose fantasies via your will. For example, on one circle you may feel yourself to be a tribal hunter-gatherer who on the next circle morphs into a medicine bear; or maybe a shaman-storyteller, entrusted with the myths of cosmology, who walks into becoming a sable winged raven.

The more frequently you engage the walkabout, the more porous and connected your senses and sense of self-diversity becomes. This process of repetition is similar to learning any other skill or artistry.

Next, returning and crossing the bridge of the last arc-path, you step into the deep vortex. Here on sacred ground, you feel yourself growing powerful, blissful, beautiful and creative. Here on sacred ground you begin to dance the cosmic, generative dance of the divine couple, of the divine androgyny, the dancer archetype, Shakti-Shiva.

In your gesture cycle, sleeve dance, trance dance or flow yoga (to suggest only a few styles), invite in the image and energy of the archetypal. In the ecstatic union of male and female psyche polarities, potencies; god and goddess, anima and animus; is the generative rhythm-perpetual of being and non-being.

This is Shakti embraced by the power of Shiva; this is Shiva entwined in the love spell body of Shakti.

When your empathetic dance of the archetype is either full or depleted, wind down, let go, subside into stillness, finally come to rest and be in peace in silence. Envision and breathe in the image of yourself as a white lotus buoyant on a body of motionless blue water.

Here your walkabout is completed. You have gained new experience, fresh insights, integrated into body, heart-mind and soul. These newly acquired memories will inform your evolving identities and life's direction. ...Repeat often.

SACRED HOOPS: *Peopling the 4 directions*

Preparations

This is a visualization inspired by Caitlin Matthews and Ted Andrews.¹ It is a good exercise for small groups; playful in a meaningful way.

What you will need to work with here is four sizable sheets of white or manila paper or poster board. With the flat side of an artist's pastel, draw an outline of a magic ring, a circle, on each of the sheets. On one sheet, draw a green ring. Then on the next sheet, draw a white ring, followed by a blue ring, followed again by a red ring. The side of the pastel will give you a fuzzy line. Since this is desired, go for maximum fuzz! What you want to achieve is a visual effect similar to the paintings of Odilon Redon, thus providing yourself with four "soft and hazy" portals. Also, do not be concerned that the white ring is not so visible as the others. Having drawn it, you will know that it is there.

Next, you may wish to spray your colored rings with fixative, which keeps them from smearing and flaking. If you do this, be sure you spray in a well ventilated space.

When the papers are dry, arrange to stand up, glue or tape them onto a large, flat surface, such as a wall or black board, so that they are approximately at eye level if you are seated ten to twelve feet away.

Now, before each icon, place a votive candle in a transparent holder: one candle green, one white, one blue, one red; each color aligned with the corresponding ring.

You will, as well, want to provide either live or recorded meditation music. You can experiment with drum, rattle, flute or even Irish or Scottish harp. Whatever music is selected, however, it is important that it consist of a single instrument; well, two at the very most (such as sitar and tabla). Sensory stimulation is desirable, over stimulation (sensory distraction) should be avoided. Our purpose is to awaken and focus the senses and spiritually activate the imagination, not bombard or dominate.

At this point, the obvious can be said. An advanced visionary could simply dispense with the pastel rings and image them instead, swirling and floating a foot above the lighted candles. Either one way or the other, the principle is the same: drawing the energy of an external sensory field into an interior point of creative-interactive focus.

When ready to begin the exercise, turn out all electric lights, ignite the candles, start the music, sit down, take a few deep breaths and relax. As you initiate your journey have your eyes open, but gradually shut down, holding the image you have been concentrating on in your imagination. Prior to closing your eyes, you should have chosen one of the colored rings to move through; that affinitive ring to which you are most powerfully drawn.

Here then is the content and wisdom of the visualization.

Exercise

You see before you four bright rings. Each ring is a sacred hoop of life, even as the awakened human sphere is potentially a sacred hoop once more, surrounded and penetrated by nature. The sacred hoops of the four rings are ways into the four quadrants of an immediate level of alternate reality. By entering and interacting with these quadrants you will learn and grow in deep, intuitive ways useful to your evolution, so that a part of you can play in helping to re-enchant and hallow human existence.

The four rings before you are the green ring of fertile earth, the white ring of breathing air, the blue ring of circulating water and the red ring of everlasting fire. Each ring is an opening to a world of imaginal Elementals:

spirits of nature, primordial forms, and primitive, nature sages and subtle identities. Each and all of these clans or tribes, associated with the ancient, fundamental building blocks of creation, are known as the People of Peace. There is significance in this name. The lives of the People of Peace are filled with ceremonial wisdom, beauty that is often uncanny, quiet but active grace. And it is within their power to bestow on you the title and the status of “a gifted person.”

Look now at the four rings: experience the soft light around them. Inhale the scents of the burning candles and understand. Through the green ring of earth are the folk called Earth Elementals and their way of life. Through the white ring of air are the folk called Air Elementals and their way of life. Through the blue ring of water are the folk called Water Elementals and their way of life. Through the red ring of fire are the folk called Fire Elementals and their way of life.

Beyond the hazy, inner rim of each colored circle are possibilities of experience highly charged with the potencies of nature and alchemy. Nature is a living sphere of amazing diversity, an interlaced composition of processional balances, sustained through constancy and intricate change. Alchemy is an art of transformation and essential discovery. It is one of the experiential disciplines of inner evolution and has its secret origins in incipient shamanism.

Now, concentrate on the ring of whichever element you are presently most powerfully drawn to. Mentally make a slow approach toward the selected circle, shut your eyes and pass through the hoop, thereby entering—with the eyes of the imagination—a unique plain of alternate reality.

Observe every movement and detail, and all changes, for everything in the space you have entered is alive and gifted with metamorphic magic.

Conclusion

You will want to spend seven to ten minutes in this exercise, observing, exploring, but not wearing out your welcome. Remember always to

express gratitude before passing back from the “other world” to this. Once you are on the side of ordinary reality, take a few minutes to write down the content of your visualization (in the same manner that you would make a record of an impressive dream). Do not be surprised if you have carried back a poem or song lyric, a melody, personal ritual or a formula for creating a talisman or mandala. In most instances, however, such “presents” will only be given in a complete or ripe giving after three or more visits.

If others are journeying with you—at the same time and beginning in the same physical space—discuss your experiences together at the end of the exercise. Be freely expressive when doing so, using your notes for accuracy. The Elementals themselves are bound to all vows of honesty. Hence, a first lesson to be learned from their wisdom is to speak truthfully, with sincere feeling, warmth, dignity and integrity.

In future you may wish to return to this exercise often, entering different sacred hoops as you need to align yourself with the strengths, beauty and alchemic resources of the four basic elements of creation: earth, air, water, fire. These return visits will increase your joy and empower a further extension of your planetary identity. Are you an earth or water woman, an air or fire man? Are you a green warrior or alchemist-green troubadour? But remember, you must enter the hoops with a clean and shining face, free from the shadows of lies and the shifty manners of a thief. To know, to evolve and to receive: this is why honesty is imperative.

Variations

Finally, here is a way of using the sacred hoops visualization when you are journeying without partners.

As before, now too select your ring of power. Inscribe or imagine a circle with a four foot diameter on the ground or floor. Place the icon of your current ring of power at the center of this circle. After that, place one colored candle at each station of the four cardinal directions. Start with the red candle, placed to the east. Moving clockwise, the green candle

follows at the south, the blue candle next at the west and the white candle last to the north. Light each candle, start your music and move into the exercise.

Once more, at the conclusion, write down what you have seen and heard. Now, however, since no other person is present, you have a power stone to tell your experience to. Do not be inhibited before this childlike play. A power stone is an ancient, symbolic witness to confessions, shamanic soul flights and the first rehearsals of sacred stories and ritual dramas. A power stone can be any stone you have found out in nature or that has been given to you by a mentor or special friend. It is also a stone to which you are unusually attracted.

The way to tell your power stone of your experience is to hold it or place your hands on it, and verbally “re-intensify” your visualization. You can narrate silently, but of course the superior way is aloud. If you do exteriorize, speak quietly and intimately, and learn something new and wonderful about the musicality of your voice. The human voice is an instrument of many charms; a vehicle for sharing episodes and events, transports, stories and dreams..

1. THE ELEMENTS OF CELTIC TRADITION by Caitlin Matthews (Elements, Inc. 1991); ENCHANTMENT OF THE FAERY REALM by Ted Andrews (Llewellyn Publications, 1993).

SEEING GESTALT ECOSOPHY

Two Visual Meditations

Statement of Purpose

Everything we do with the imagination holds the potential for opening up *imaginal* (alternate) reality. Everything we experience in and receive from the imaginal realm possesses a potency that we can translate into helpful and healing experience in the world of everyday consensual reality.

This transference; which begins with primitive reverence, passionate re-identification, and dialogical intention; leads on to the liberation and “soulful” ennobling of the senses, the emotions, and the languages and silences of feeling and thinking.

Then, from that inwardness, the same energies can be moved toward the rehabilitation of the *great ordinary*, which is currently endangered by long term ideological misrepresentation and pervasive misuse.

Roundly: this connects with that and so on; one faculty or term of being stimulates the next; one dimension (energy or pattern) penetrates another, undergoing and experiencing change..

I. Winged Serpent: *Symbol for the Primal Earth Warrior*

The earth and all of her life forms are under siege, and the elemental spirits of nature are calling out the shaman-names of sundry gifted people, penetrating the mythic layers of personal identity with their still small whisperings and subtle languages. Empathizers, shapeshifters, protectors who are attuned and native Earth walkers, are needed. In the movements of the wind; the breath of sky that hovers over and vivifies the earth (arousing the generative and cosmic life force), the name of *your* spiritual essence is sounded. Do you know this name? Can you recognize it when

it reaches out toward, spirals deep into the interior where the archetypes interface with your existential identity?

Patiently, you have been listening, longing for this lamentable, but heroic, music. Now you hear the summons, the cry of despair, the call to rise up on phoenix wings from the wasteland ashes, and you respond.

See yourself sitting cross legged in the grass, absorbing the sorrowful communication, feeling a bonding with pain and anger, ecstasy, rage and an emerging new evolutionary imperative.. In the eyes of your imagination, you behold the *primal effective cosmology* of our species: a solid rock, uncut, a living tree, unshorn, a source of fresh water, not dammed or polluted, as mirror, mystery and protean conveyance. You know that these presences are foundations of planetary life, habitat, and are teachers to human culture of the earth's sustainable ways. You know the danger to even the most basic components of physical and spiritual sustaining. You shudder under the apprehension of this dread.

Still sitting, as the primal cosmology begins to fade from your inner vision, you next see a green snake coiled at the base of your own spine. The snake awakens and begins to ascend the length of your backbone. Its body is sinuous and mysterious. It is so very green that you feel and even smell the richness of its fertile color. And the serpent's slender energy, slithering upward over bones and nerve endings is a sensual contrast to the rigidity of your back. The felt-sense tells you how the serpent movement wants to sway you, to make you too more undulant, undifferentiated and mysterious—into the *trans-human* dimension.

Here, as the green snake climbs, you are conscious of a thunderstorm generating at the top of your head. The dark clouds billow and rumble and a powerful bolt of brilliant white lightning flashes, striking at the base of your skull, then shooting downward along your serpent-coiling spine. The energy of the lightning is amazingly exciting and mysterious.

Steadily the earth snake ascends; swiftly the sky bolt descends. The two living forces (two forms of creation's inherent polarities) meet in a swirling explosion of verdant fire in the center, at your wounded heart. There the powers dance in a bold picture of ecstasy and struggling fusion, generating

the new, composite image of a brindled dragon, a green and white-fire winged serpent.

You see the colored body and movements of this creature, alive inside the pumping chambers of your blood filled heart. The wings beat a heart-strong rhythm, the tail thrashes in excitation and the diamond eyes flash with electric fire.

The dragon you visualize is the symbol for your response to the summons of the elemental spirits. This winged serpent transforms the erosive acid of earth affliction, of sorrow, despair and mounting rage into a fighting spirit, a deep penetrating and protective fire.

Now, with the symbol of the green-bellied dragon imaged in your heart, you are empowered to become an earth warrior. An ancient and determined courage begins to sustain you. A righteous ferocity to protect the integral body (the alter stone) of primal ecosophy, to guard over the roots of the shamanic tree of life, and to watch over the source of processional waters (of initiation and metaphoric crossing-over), is pulsing within you, as free, abundant energy, as re-identification, re-intensification and redirecting definition, and as an action oriented purpose.

Sustained, awakened by the power of these pulsations, can you next recollect the secret, beautiful language of the winged serpent? Sitting cross legged, you continue to look and listen, opening to learn more of the alchemical creature's deep wisdom. You are luminous with heroic fervor as you understand that the green and white dragon, in sleep, in dream, in flight and in battle, is a born creator of natural *gestaltin*: an earth chosen defender of vegetative, mineral and atmospheric circles. An embodiment of planetary destiny.

II. Floating The Tree: *A Shamanic-Kabbalistic Visualization*

Sit or lie down in a relaxed, comfortable position. Now, close your eyes. Picture a tree in full leaf. The trunk is reddish brown and sepia and the bough is spellbindingly vivid green. The rooted greenness is large and around it is a circle, a ring of brilliant, medium blue, like a flowing color painted on the air.

As you begin envisioning, you see only tree and surrounding blue ring. At the initial level, the interior (enclosed) space between tree and blue circle begins to pulsate and reveal a web, sparkling on your inner eyes with the fluctuations and colors of a holographic image.

When you have successfully established each of these elements—the great, green tree, the bright blue circle, with the many colored web radiating out, before and behind tree and encompassing ring—you may begin to engage in spontaneous, meditative prayer, freeing your body, imagination and mind of fears, worries, constricting habits; freeing your dream body to morph into shapes, patterns and powers of a new (and renewing) holistic destiny..

Once you are truly unburdened of experiential pain and distractions, allow yourself to enter the visionary mandala and float in the luminous air above the holy tree. This is accomplished by releasing yourself, as your now liberated dream body, into archaic, ecstatic buoyancy, and identifying with the light, even as you concentrate on the verse of sacred intention: “*I will meditate on your wonders*” (Psalm 119;27).

Now, as you float the tree, the web in the intimate ambience is wondrously transformed into a soft, multi-colored wind, swirling around you, breathing colors of warmth, energy and compassion into your life. In this same other dimensional time and space, you can feel and absorb the aroma and vitality, the unity and mystery, of green life, and of the aliveness of all colors, reflected here from a deep supra-conscious, cosmic source, which is the same to you as an everlasting spiritual fire (in the fire of the soul) and an eye of several polychromatic irises (in the eyes of the soul). And you know that this perception and understanding is the medicine wheel of healing.

Thus, as you are free to float and soar with wind and light, breath and wonderment, your eyes and heart may open and commune with the multiple forms of power inhabiting the leafy branches, trunk and roots of the abundant tree. These visionary forms can range from categories of angels, such as *maggidim*, *ofanim*, *cherubim* or *seraphim*, to winged

and four legged peoples of the earth, swimmers of the waters, or to gifted representatives of different races and tribes, from humanity's ancient ancestry; or even to elemental spirits or holy (imaginal, magical, mythological and alchemical) creatures.

Having seen, return now to your normal body and your ego-integrating consciousness, remembering to give thanks for the journey just taken. Remain grateful through ensuing behavior that the presences you have communicated with are accessible in both our natural and alternate realities. Know, in all ways, that the ongoing democratization and normalization of non-ordinary experience, of alterity, leads toward the restoration of creation and the energy reinvestment of the *great ordinary* with sufficiency for personal renaissance and planetary renewal. This is again expressed in the beauty of the Psalms (77:8): "*I mediate with my heart and my spirit seeks.*"

And the truth of this is not complex, or based on intellectual debate or argument, or hard to grasp: *What we see defines how we think. What we say sets limits to our thinking. What we see, speak and think determines how we act, who we are—or references and reforms how we act; significantly, how we relate, and thereby who we are.*

EGG SHELL - a game to stretch out and limber up the eco-shamanic imagination

Come, play! Imagine yourself inside of an egg shell of dreams and mysteries. The shell is, let us say, pale blue and speckled with a cylindrical pattern of sepia colored flecks. There is a thin but discernable golden rim encircling the ellipse of the egg. Beyond this and behind the sealed shell, a soft light radiates and pulsates in quiet hues of white, rose pink and blue. The egg shell is a magical tool of the imagination and for the nurturance of the soul. And the magic of it works this way:

When you play the game of the shaman, or what I choose to call the travels of the green troubadour, you always begin being inside the shell. But you have complete creative freedom to emerge whenever you are ready. Only this: Whenever you come out, never crack the shell open for

your exiting only to come forth as your everyday (ego) identity. Doing things that way will diminish the magic potency. And repeated misuse will eventually destroy the magic of the game all together.

Instead, for exiting the sphere of shapeshifts and magical potencies, try these possibilities (and add more of your own):

Crack the egg shell and find nothing inside. That will be puzzling and not particularly pleasant. But from time to time it might be valuable, or even necessary, to confront your nothingness and find out if that is a cause for despair or a key to liberation. Is the condition nihilism or Nirvana?

Crack your egg shell and emerge as a rose bush that stretches into the light with a silent but powerful instinct, and puts forth beautiful, delicate and fragrant flowers. Or if a rose bush is not your thing, try the same experience as a grape vine and replace flowers with clustering fruit.

Allow your imagination freedom to play with these images, bring your body and all of your senses into this inviting *transhuman* exercise. Play with childlike intensity and wonderment with the virtual treasures secreted in the spirit house of your immortal core.

Never presume that the patterns of the archetypes are limited to anthropomorphic forms!

Continue:

Crack your egg shell and emerge as a rainbow wind swirling out and around at various velocities, moving over a spring time landscape and awakening clouds of yellow pollen. The rainbow wind is child of the thunderbird and born, with an abundance of playfulness and fertility, out of the gestating elements of lightning, thunder and fructifying rain. Or again, come forth as rainbow dancer, light footed and setting in motion patterns of multi-colored autumn leaves. The rainbow dancer is child of the dancing archetypes that have become manifest as guardian spirits and the deities of world mythologies. Crack your egg shell and emerge as the grand mythological phoenix carrying the sun in your belly, surrounded by shimmering sun-flames,

lifting the solar orb out of the ashes of darkness and into the heights of heaven. Or crack your egg shell and emerge as the green dragon of creation spirituality and earth fertility, or as the brindled red dragon that rages against the wounding and wasting of life, and the laying waste of earth.

Crack your egg shell and emerge, slowly and whimsically, as a bright green frog with smiling star eyes, whose breathing skin sheds, in webbed footsteps, the replenishing dew of dawn. Consider in your shape-crossing play the wide variety of frog and toad species and how their amazing sensitivity to environmental changes has taught human scientists to look upon these psychic amphibians as forecasters of planetary imbalance and systemic endangerments.

Crack your egg shell and emerge as the many eyed cosmic spider gifted to weave your web on air and gather beads of rain and threads of floating sunlight.

Learn the sacred movements of the weaving spider's dance and feel in bowels and belly the awe of creating the connecting strands of the magnificent, mysterious web of life.

How deep is this mystery! How wondrous the power that does not separate awareness from action! How great the potency to leap forth and fall in love outward that dwells within the poetic of the body and the alertness of engaged senses!

Now, as a final suggestion: Crack your egg shell and emerge as a mountain. Do as John Seed says, **“Think like a mountain.”** Connect with all of the elements, entering the mineral kingdom, and participate, as the great mother and fathering shepherd, with the astonishing array of life forms—the biotic community—spread out and ranging over the ascending, snow capped cone that you are. In mountain form there is mountain-time and change is constant but growth is slow, nearly imperceptible. Mountain is the closest earth symbol for eternity and the summit of a mountain, like the crown of the head, is a holy place, a transmitter suggestive, majestically and serenely joining Heaven and Earth.

THE POWER OF LOVE

Dream and Amplification

Dreams are depth fertility for cultivating inner evolution for future adaptation into the connective dynamics of falling in love outwardly and dwelling within the embrace of a relational mythology. Here follows an example of a type of dream work called Amplification. This exercise also falls into the category of experience derived from creative solitude and deserves to be included as a substantial portion of life is dialogue with the sphere of dreams.

The Dream: *An elderly man in a frumpy suit, with a hat pulled down to shade his eyes, walks toward the east. The time is early morning. The sun is ascending golden along the eastern horizon. The elder walks with a walking stick.*

As the old man moves along a green snake crosses his path. The serpent approaches and coils around the man's stick. When the head of the snake touches the walker's hand, the serpent transforms, becomes wooden and attaches to the cane.

Shortly thereafter, the elder arrives at a swift moving stream. In order to cross over, the man lays his stick down upon the water. At this, the snake detaches, again becomes green, and swims away. The wooden staff becomes a bridge.

The old man crosses the water on the bridge. As he foots his way, leafy vines, growing out of the stream, coil around the wooden causeway forming a green bower.

On the nether bank, a beautiful woman waits and embraces the elder as he arrives. This is a passionate and miraculous embrace. In the arms of the woman, the old man becomes young again.

A tree, with silver-green leaves and smiling pink flowers, branches above the embracing couple.

Amplification: Let's understand the process of amplification as a method for extending and expanding the range of possible interpretations by uncovering archetypal or mythological associations. This is a method developed by Carl Jung and we might even think of it as the deep ecology approach to dream work. Amplification is used to develop a field which provides an organic furtherance of texturing, coloration and backstory, as a sort of informational matrix surrounding the dream-core.

In applying amplification to the foregoing dream, it is fairly obvious that the elder is some sort of magician, possibly even a shaman. He moves by the aid of a walking stick, which suggests a disability, very likely an emotional wound or crippling. Yet the stick is also a source of power and a magical potency adheres to it. This may suggest the category of the healed healer, a basic attribute of the shaman. Even if the elder is not yet such, he seems certainly on his way to becoming. We are already aware of the healing process the dream is narrating; articulating its curative progression through a series of images which possess distinctive fairy tale qualities (the naivety of supernatural encounter, the transformative power of beauty, etc.). Indeed, it is even open to consideration whether or not the elderly man is recently dead, on his way to dying, or undergoing the shamanic "little death" which leads into an identity resurrection and renewal.

But let us not leave the walking stick quite so soon. It is called both cane and staff and suggests the potent staff of Moses, which is also associated with snakes and capable of parting water to facilitate a crossing over from bondage to freedom. This emblematic tool also identifies with the wizard's staff or wand and is associated with such names as Merlin, Faustus and Gandarf.

A further association is possible here besides, that being the suggestion of

Eden by bringing wood (tree) together with serpent, which in our initial dream culminates with a couple entwined beneath the Tree of Life. This icon is found in numerous alchemical texts as well.

There is too a green snake and this may be the magician's familiar or totemic animal and spiritual guide. Yet both stick and serpent can be taken as phallic and it may be significant that the snake is temporarily petrified (loses the color of fertility) and becomes part of the walking stick upon human touch, and that it is only after the advent of the serpent that water appears in the dream. While contact between the head of the snake and the old man's hand may suggest autoeroticism, that the living entity becomes dead wood says that this is an inadequate outlet for sexual potency and emotional energy.

Water is feminine—the female waters having spiritual significant in certain erotic meditations of Kabbalah and elsewhere—and the stick upon the water revives the green serpent, generates vining, and facilitates the union of man and woman. Crossing water is also an expression of transition from one condition to another or from one mode of experience to another dimension beyond reductive, stagnant or moribund normalcy.

In the dream the passage over water leads to the necessary other, a woman who may be a remembrance of waking life experience, or a spiritual image embodying the power of rejuvenation, or even the ideal woman within, the one Jung named the *anima*. Of this we do not know. We know only that the other is called beautiful and her embrace is miraculous. It is indeed the embrace of the power of love. Old man becomes young in the woman's arms and the couple is finally viewed in a tableau vivant that is paradisiacal. Here they are as were Adam and Eve beneath the flowering Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden. Further, through an exercise of *active imagination* (a technique also developed by Jung and applied by Maria Von Franz), details as to the identity of the woman on the nether bank, her backstory and fuller purpose, can be brought into play.

At last, we consider the tree, which is the culmination of vegetable imagery—the tree ascends beyond the end of the green bower of leafy vines. It has already been established that the tree is a Tree of Life image

and highly symbolic. A comment can be made about the plant's origin. The leaves are silver-green. This identifies the icon as that of an olive tree. The olive is sacred in many cultures, particularly throughout the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern regions. As such it is a symbol of peace; in this instance of inner peace and the symbol sums up the healing nature of the dream.

Yet the tree is also a creation of imagination and a symbolic hybrid, as physical olive trees do not blossom with smiling pink flowers. The smiling quality, communicating joy, is significant and adds to the symbolic mystery, suggesting natural acceptance or re-integration. The combination of silver-green olive leaves with happy pink flowers (indicative of a slightly cooled down or contained passion) tells us that the dream concludes with a revelation of inner peace and transpersonal, if not **trans-human** (extended beyond human) harmony. The joyousness of these integral values may even go so far as to indicate a sense of homecoming or achievement of the alchemic opus in the dreamer.

Having presented the initial dream and an amplification demonstrating how this method of dream enrichment works, here next is a second dream. My reader is invited to try her or his skill at the amplification process with this as the starting point. As you do so, bring into play references from your personal dream library (a useful concept picked up from Robert Moss). Have fun connecting the possibilities. You may well be amazed at what you come up with and where the methods of amplification and active imagination take you. To bring back the deep ecology suggestion one final time: the new paradigm is not about the supremacy of the "I" in autonomous isolation, but about awareness and the intricacies of relatedness.

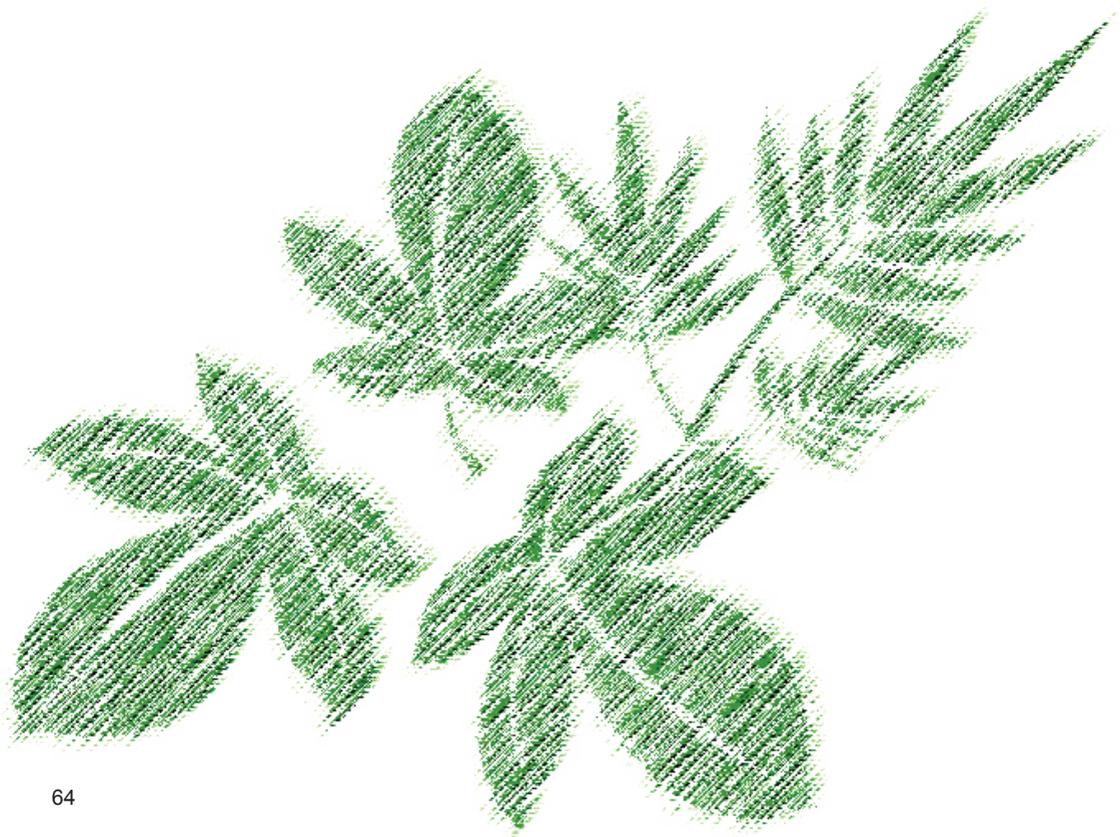
Second Dream: *A fisherman is in a small boat out on the ocean. In all directions, there is only open sea. The fisherman pulls in his net and finds that he has caught a beautiful rainbow fish.*

The fisherman draws his knife and attempts to cut the fish. To his surprise, the fish vanishes only to reappear after a short interval. The fisherman attempts cutting the rainbow fish several times. Each time the same mysterious sequence

occurs: before the knife blade reaches its skin, the fish vanishes. Then again, while the fisherman stares in wonderment, the fish becomes visible once more.

At last the fisherman puts down his knife. Dropping to his knees onto the planks of the skiff, he prays over the shimmering body of the fish. At this, the rainbow fish transforms into a human like creature of indeterminate sex who blesses the fisherman and places in his hand a gift from the bottom of the sea.

The gift is a pearl of unusual luster and size.



PART THREE **Work Samples**

Compositions in this section partake of the essence of life—not life as it is merely given within the dimensional limitations of modernity and normalcy, but life as it creatively emerges and comes into life from far horizons and vaster depths. They are of that essence which Jacques LeCoq has named “the universal poetic sense.”

PROLOGUE

Awaken waterfall/child of the waterfall
Awaken/wild wheat/daughter
of the golden fields

Awaken stone/stone face
of lasting memory

Ride to the wind/where the spirits call

Arise/with your fierce and
tender passions

Storm-bearers/thunder-clappers
faces dappled/ with the paint of rain—

the shattered web of the lightning

symphony, crying/ vividly
from tattered clouds

Awaken/you sons of ardor

Awaken

you windspun daughters

Grandmother spider/our
ancient giver

weaves the tempest/ of the pleading
night

And the deep/ Earth Mother

summons her children/You tribes

you clans of eco-warriors/ feathered

and defiant/over holy ground

Name now/some names for us

For all/who are weak and
nameless

Reveal/our otherness/Return us
to the song

POWER SONG

Song

song sung in a whisper on a hillside in morning
song in twilight, midnight
song sung to a candle cradled
in darkness, song
before the silhouette of a tree
tracing the watermarks of a tide
washed stone, song for the mortal
heart when the heart is weary, song
for the human soul when soul is
lonely, or the soul is lost
song for these bones, under skin, flesh
inside a breathing, blood warmed body;

song

song not to be sad, not forlorn
not to be wounded always, hopeless
of healing, a healing song
sung for recovery, for going on, for
the sense to awaken, arise
before danger comes near, to
speak, to abide with the pain of the
world without breaking, and to feel, freely
without numbing fear.

Song

song of a thousand generations, gathering
coming, going on the pilgrimage
Earth: sacred song, song of sanity, song
of peace—song of a power dreamer
standing in the lotus of creation.

THE EARTH FOLK

What if we
Are lives like shadows
What if our emotions are thin reflections
And behind our
Pretentious humanity
The elemental spirits live

Passionate
Stronger, uncannily
More resolute
A primal honesty
At work in their
Luminous intercourse

And they are bells
And we are ringing
Moving on
More distant hills
Forgetting
Songs that their lips keep pliant

What if we are but
Pale before their brighter
Faces
And lacking in love
Before the way they kiss
Everything
And embrace all changes
Passionate
Sensitive, so
Beautiful

And they are
Immortal watchers
Watching us
And we, the homo sapiens
Are breaking
We are lonely

IN YOUR DEEP

Raise up the singing stone; hand the magic bone from the graveyard of time. This is the malicious work of men. Angels never decreed burial and the absence of broad winged flight.

Raise up the singing clod from winter storms; lift the mothering seed to welcome mantic drums of rolling thunder. These sons of fire and daughters of choral waters have no bonds with men's sense of order. They, in their self-spun orbs...behold! They are spiders. They are owls. They are four winged dragons.

Hand then, I say, the primal bone; lift the dripping stone from streams of change and glacier springs. Raise up the chants of chances and the songs of things.

CLOTHES

I will wear the genius
of clouds.
My feet will go
where feet are flesh and bone.
Free, like breath,
I will shift,
I will float,
I will flow
beyond the regulations
of nations.

I will wear

the melodies of the oceans'
whales,
the percussion of waterfalls;
becoming a drummer
of aquatic sounds.
I will excite,
delight,
O—!
I will astound.

Lightning

from my eye-smiles
and at my fingertips.
I will be shoed
to my knees
in Amazonian mud:
moss cheeks,
ocher palms,
pollen lips.
Ah—and

mostly this:
A rainbow, like a kiss,
on one eyebrow, at
one ear; hair
of wild winter grains,
my head, undulated,
like the Great Plains.

And

I will go
where I am not understood
but only loved.
I will excite;
sensually and
spiritually arouse
I will delight,
O—!
I will astound.

EXPOSURE

I lift the simple—
a flute
the measured air sails through
or drum of skin that vibrates
beneath my sundipped hand.
I sing the romance
of a vibrant heart.

Hear faroffness
and you living realms
my aspirational pulsations.

People
in the pathos of pretenses
let intimacy's simplicity wound you.
be again the uncivilized
vulnerability of reception
graced and humbled
as mortal piety.

Let the sense of wonder find you
this circle move you
from your grand designs.

In darkness awaken suddenly, woman
in a clinging gown.

In moonlight between shadows
of defenseless sleep
feel the invisible hand that
strokes in tomorrow's colors
your destiny and handprints
of transcending choices.

Apple is but apple
grown out from seed to
seed environs.
Eat this life
in musical accord.

TWILIGHTS (*has been performed as voiceover to music by Arvo Part accompanied by two dancers*)

The world is heavy
Heavy
Like a desert sunset
At the end
Of a blistering day

When the sun
Has fallen on the earth
With shameless lust
And heat
Feasts on the flesh
Of all living.

The world is light
Light
Like a jungle sunrise:
Countless, awakening vapors
Setting free
Tropical birds, fragile
Lotus perfume –
The delicate, delectable kisses
Of lotus blossoms.
I am

As the world is:
Two yet one.

When my dark
Face turns away
From my light
Face
When my light

Face
Turns away
From my dark
I am dangerous
Death's companion.

When my two
Faces interface
The higher self
And lower self
Meet, nakedly, fearlessly, and embrace
I am harmony.
I am peace.

Like two
Reciprocal bowls
Catching and pouring reality:

Beginning... endlessly.
But where
In motion and vast illusion
Is truth? Wait!
I will tell you.

Between this
And that
Is all I am.

I am like the world.

We are tattooed
With one another's
Twilights.

RED PATH PONY *for from one to three voices*

Red Path Pony
Dance of the Sun
Wind Song Dancer

I do not need to be told
what loneliness is.

I have shared the feelings of the Earth,
when her children are taken away.
Everywhere men grow like anger
and worse than choking weeds.
There is a way of life
that is a cancer.
We are part of this disease.

Red Path Pony
Dance of the Sun
Wind Song Dancer

There is a sickness
that extends from the flesh to the soul.
It is the pathogen of war.

It is the *wendigo*, the monster-cannibal
devouring both other and kin.
We are not only
victims, but we are carriers as well.
Do not try to tell me
about the madness of addiction.
I have looked into the mirror of time
and seen the future of global violence.

Red Path Pony

Dance of the Sun

Wind Song Dancer

I have consecrated my heart to the Great Spirit.
I will not walk in the way of thieves and
murders. I want no part of
those who poison everything and give no healing
in return. Purity is not possible, but integrity
cries out for a guiding vision.
A person does not need to be
innocent to take the road less traveled,
to step away from guilt.

Red Path Pony

Dance of the Sun

Wind Song Dancer

I am not other than
the place where I am.
I am only an Earth-walker.

But I do not
need to be told what holiness is.
I have seen the circle
of the red tailed hawk
in the summer sky.

I have watched the black tail deer
in the autumn sanctuary of trees,
on the slope of the mountain.
I have come to understand
what the prayer of greenness is.
We all know that
peace is a blood word.
We know that peace is green: a
greening in the soul
and goodness on the land.

Red Path Pony
Dance of the Sun
Wind Song Dancer

ELEMENT DANCER

for four voices and choreographer-dancers

I want the earth to accept
that I am standing here
that I am present
and have rejoined
the primal body
that I am standing
from my feet upward
bending or swaying
but standing
like the nature
of a foliated tree.

I want the air to accept
that my hands are moving vessels
that they are circulating
in gyroscopic rotations
around and around, defining
and refining
nearest edges of my context
sculpting, with my fine fingers
the silken lines of airy light
surrounding the love
of this, my body.

I want the water
that drops like
demure dew
when I lift my face, slowly
and for millennia
of twilight wonder, up
to the near-morning sky; and
when I bathe my legs
and when I spread
my hair and dream
dreaming of mermaid kingdoms;
I want this gift
of water to accept
that I am here, outside
the shell
of a mollusk
and underneath
the weeping
angel's wings.

I want the fire
my fierce and friendly
life-source
to accept me
when the flesh moves
and the matches of skeleton
bone by bone
spark at creation
like a sensually
sheathed cornucopia
of startling lightning and
of votive
and seductive candles.

I want the fire
to warm
on my palms
and my cheeks
on my breasts
and my belly
and to say to it
to the fire
to my friend
“Servant and master, here
is a dress of days
burn it
in the wind offertorial
lifting

the still warm ashes.”

CYCLES *for two voices*

new seed in the dark (black)
the subterranean pop (white
on black)
new form
reaching up
breaking
surface, moving
soil – sucking
spring light (golden
white) then

new stem (green)
stretching out, leaves
(green) unfurling
new pretty
faces of dreaming

flowers (euphoric) underneath
the rooster
of the strutting (red,
orange-red) sun
new

pregnant
fruit, long (honey dark)
insect hum and
new seed (black)
dropping down,
down below
the turtle
of September rain and

the cold (white) kiss
of the mask
of snow...

WEALTH

to be alive yes to shine to say here
 when rain falls on leaves drop
 by insistent drop bending down
 the funneled blades and spilling
 from their green troughs
 to the muddied earth below
 here
 when the sun strikes the upper windows
 of the house shedding fairy dust dancing
 on the air and here
 when a rainbow comes or winter snow
 the budding green of spring and heat
 of summer afternoons with fruit
 in the shadow of a pregnant tree heavy
 as a cat a cow
 in the autumn moon and yes
 to kiss the forehead to kiss the mind
 to make our blood like tide pools swirl
 and eddy in sublime cosmic tides
 to dance when this moment slips
 its silhouette against our eyelids and presses
 like a passing friend
 affectionate smiles against these warm
 and waiting hands a glance
 to see to hear to smell to speak to feel
 to think and thus to be
 on this day in this place particularized
 amid the elemental flow
 of universal becoming knowing
 this is me the other you both pressed
 richly like tender wings against
 the momentary wax and heavy page
 of eternal rectitude
 not cruelly without cunning not anxiously
 absurdly thrown but belonging being
 and yes

RIGHT BRIGIT

for one or two voices and a solo dancer

She leans her face
into the dark.
(It is shadow
black.)

She leans her face
into the light.
(It is white
and luminous like moonlight
on a winter evening.)

She leans her hand
with the extended forearm
into the physic of darkness.
(It is shadow
black.)

She leans her hand
into the salvational
geometry of light.
(It is white,
soft, white and luminous.)

She leans her leg
and her lovely foot, her
shapely foot
into the percussive
heaviness of the dark.

(It is shadow
black.)

She leans her leg
and her lovely foot, her shapely
foot
into the lyricality
of weightless light.

(It is white, laced
with the white of milk
pouring over porcelain, smooth.)

She leans her sex;
the breasts, the
hips, the pelvic and
that tunneled spot, hungry
with the jewelry of life;
crannied
into the asymmetry
of darkness.

(It is shadow
black.)

She leans her sex;
the ruptured, tender fruit
in full bloom,
spherical, hot, crannied
into the ceremonial
organicity of light.
(It is white. White!
White with the light
of beauty's blinding and
frosted with the hush
of freshly
grounded snow.)
She leans her
red, red lips
like two
drops of smiling blood, spread
before a captive
river and whispers, whispers
in his spiraled ear.

One eye
she opens
to the nocturne
of man's sorrow.

And one eye
she opens
to the light years
of his soul.

LADIES OF FAERY (*from the play Alchemy*)

for three movement artists or dancers & two voice actors

Rich

lustrous brown hair

chestnut brown

honey brown eyes

with eagerness

and heat

flashing out

a full

mouth with

lovely lips

high cheekbones

a clearly defined

chin line

delicate hands

fingers long, palms

smooth and enticing

whispering

like robin's eggs

fresh

as rain

a flame to thwart

the wasting winter and

a fine round ass.

Through the rolling wheat

through the circling sea

in milkbath and

in starlight

come out and ride with me.

Rich

harvest

of auburn hair

hair

like an autumn sunset
sunflakes dappled
on the canvas flesh
emerald eyes
of bardic glen
high blood
in the cheeks
a swollen mouth
pretty
to look at
better
to taste, hands
that want and hold
playing
like forest animals and
a fine
round ass.
*Through the rolling hills
through the circling seasons
in milkbath
and in starlight come out and ride with me.*
Long
long, deep
dark hair
jet black hair
ebony sweep, hair
like a carpet
velvet
of a wrinkleless night
eyes
like black moons
black fires signaling
forgotten languages
the mouth of love
the lips

of touchstone
beauty, cheek-
bones, the clear
chin line
the marrow
and the hide
hands
that cup; hands accept
the soft
butternut sweetness and
long, long legs
legs
to the soul and
a fine
round ass.

*Through the mouths of drums through the wind of pipes
in milkbath and
in starlight
come out and ride with me.*

WOLF WISDOM

Earth is being forsaken
but Earth is not utterly lost.
Do not give up
your days to foolishness.
Do not let a wasp of death
come down and
taste your flesh.

Many men are
sacks of lies; many
women also.
The sun is a spirit
who will bring you warmth;
the sun is an enemy
who will drain your life.
If you cannot walk
the Earth
on your own feet,
then you are little better
than the polluted
dust of urban insanity.

Trust in the wind, Earth friend.
And do not fear
a wolf in moonlight.

ECO SANITY

We will be well
when the errors of innocence
once more charm us.
When simplicity, without reservation,
and the patterns within patterns
adhere,
lifting us into the spheres
of elation.
We will be well
when we are free of the determinism
of isolation.

We will be well
when saying "I" is a two-part harmony
and sanity is a liquid cascade, melting
emerald stones,
or the annual, house economy
--the quiet
aging into life—
of the acorn.

We will be well
when we have reintensified
the lost, organic mirrors of creation
and our going down
into the caves of shamanic
micro-death
lifts us to the timberline
of paradise.

Where we are free
with the pollen
and where we can talk, lovingly,
with the wind

SUN PATH

When the Great Spirit
wanted to see me,
Spirit looked with the eyes
of the eagle.
There was no place to hide.

When the Great Spirit
wanted to call me
by my name,
Spirit spoke in the plaintive
cry
of the circling hawk.
Deafness was driven
from earth and from sky.
When the Great Spirit
wanted to test me,
Spirit drummed in the wind
through the hoop
of my heart.
Ignorance was no longer possible.

Blood is a river.
And dawn pony's over
this pulse of bright water.

When the Great Spirit
wanted to feel me,
Spirit wove the warm
blanket
that colors the land.
And I walk
with the Ancient
in path of the Sun.

LEAD US NOT INTO EXTINCTION

Prayer Of The Animals

Our kin,
who now possess the land
where once we roamed,
plentiful and free,
lead us not into extinction,
but deliver us from the devouring
dis-ease of human greed.

Give us this day
(even unto the seventh generation)
a belonging-place to be
what we are, and in harmony
with All Our Relations.

For yours is the power
to restore or further destroy
the Sacred Hoop of Creation.

Make a warrior's choice
by honoring unity in diversity
of the Great Mystery.
Let Spirit guide you
back to Creator's vision-dream:
We Are All One Family.

MEDICINE DREAM

I have a dream:

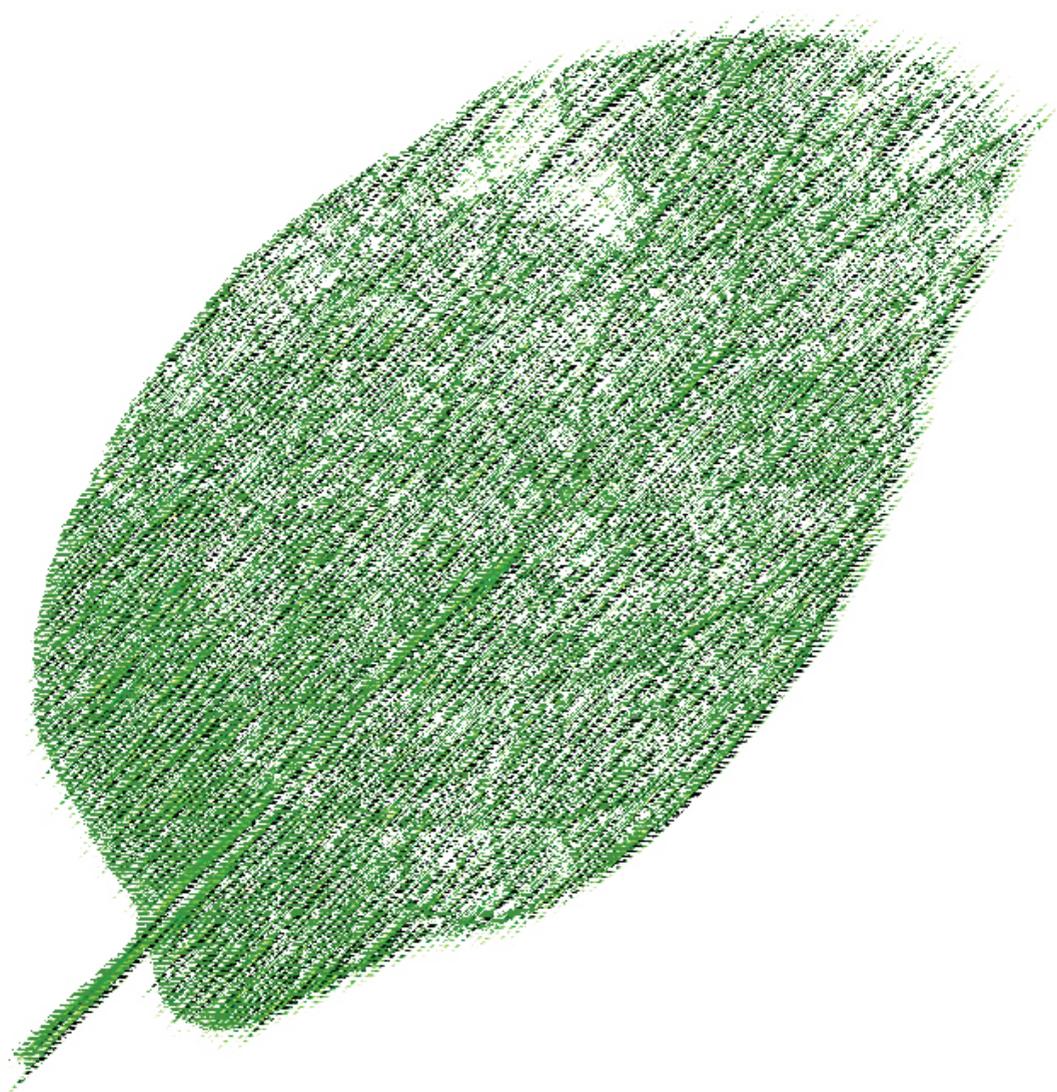
at the center of the dream
is circling ocean
in the center of the ocean
is turtle island
at the center of the island
is vision mountain
in the center of the mountain
is healing crystal
at the center of the crystal
is sacred light
in the center of the light
i sit dreaming

I have a dream:

i dream i am a tree
my roots spread out
beside a place of water
in sunlight
my branches turn to fire
my leaves are prayers of smoke
my heart beats like a drum
inside a stone of power

I have a dream:

my dream is at the center
of great silence
here at the center
i sit dreaming



PART FOUR
Performance Samples
Monologues of Sickness

The sickness of our age is unlike any other and yet belongs with the sicknesses of all. The history of cultures is not a stadium of eons in which one runner after another must cover the same circle of death, cheerfully and unconsciously. A nameless path leads through their ascensions and declines. It is not a path of progress and development. It is a descent through the spirals of the spiritual underworld but could also be called an ascent to the innermost, subtlest, most intricate turn that knows no Beyond and even less any Backward but only the unheard of return—the breakthrough. Shall we have to follow this path all the way to the end, to the test of the final darkness? But where there is danger what saves grows too.

Martin Buber, I and Thou

NOSFERATU – pathology of the undead

Pain is a broken mirror. What? You don't believe that suffering is glass? My eyes have been shattered by tears for many years. Look! Is this a human face? No! It is a mockery, etched in hell.

What demon, poisoned and sickened by life, who could have been saved from transformation to his evil self by one mercy of resurrecting love, sits now behind this thorny brow, bloat and filled with misery? Brooding splinters have hatched within my corrupted soul. The convoluted serpents of old, unhealing sorrows strike me with fangs of jagged shard.

Look, look! Is any man made like this? No! But I am every man, yet I am none. What gargoyle then is here, who could, like Quasimodo; the sad, disfigured saint of Notre Dame; ask of the world, "Why was I not made of stone?" But stone I am and lack humility.

What is 'Monster'? A monster was once a man who has descended into the abyss of his sub-humanity. Or else, ascended to the highest exploits of inhuman control and cruelty. A brute can kill. I am that demon who delights in the wild tango of torture. Who, in dream or fantasy, has not danced as I have danced? What lover has not licked the blood of his beloved from grinning, victorious lips?

Let he who is innocent of tyranny cast the first stone. To all else, I open the veins of this delicious pornography of the undead. Nosferatu! It is the tree of shadows that grows in the savage garden of all living meat. Blood is the juice of the greatest sacrament: the addiction of life through the deaths of others.

My mirror is empty. But yours, my friend, shows to you the truth. You believe yourself the image of God. But you are but my victim. The bat of doom that flies in your eyes, smiles, confidently, with my face.

Look, look! Look into my eyes. There are women for whom sex is pain. All their pleasure is in this pain. Their arousal cannot be satisfied without the tasting of blood: their teeth and nails ripping the flesh. Such souls of midnight passion belong to me. Mine is the ancient Eros: the love of the grimace of death behind the mask of ecstasy!

I am Master. What? A master is one who has vanquished fear: the fear of death and the fear of punishment after death. To conquer the fear and punishment, one becomes conquistador of fear, inquisitor of punishment. Let any man whose courage is as desperate as once was mine join me, and I shall initiate that man into power...and freedom. What then is the worth of the light of day? The vampire is the King of Night. Night Eternal!

God does not intimidate me. I shall never enter his heaven. And God does not seek shelter in the ruins of my earth. We are but two plays, cast in

different roles, on separate stages, governed by the same theatrical tricks. Salvation? Do not put your faith in such illusions of human vanity.

In this sad kingdom of terrible fantasies and fantastic horror, in this old castle of melancholy whispers and unspeakable memories; of sighs and cries, I am the god who saves only those who are condemned.

I bid you...welcome.

FUKUSHIMA

There is a scene in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* which is, for me, the most frightening. It is not a depiction of the vampire's infernal, blood lusting eyes, of the vampire's gore dripping fangs and death mask fixation, or even of the vampire vertically scaling the wind tortured, towering walls of Castle Dracula in guise of a biomorphic demon, at once inhuman and reptilian. The situation of ultimate, paralytic terror is one in which the Nosferatu, the unnatural fiend, enters a room silently through a window as an invisible evil. Here the malignancy is sensed but not seen—a presence determined on inflicting cruel, infectious death, while lacking a containable shape and definition. Rather, the destroyer, a something unthing like, is ambient—omnipotent as omnipresent—whose victim's next heartbeat, next movement, next breath, could be the last.

Imagine: invisible evil, ultimate terror. Evil that can take hold of life and end life but cannot be faced off against; cannot even be looked upon! How, after all, does one defend oneself from a formless perversion which will, by the law of what it is, do to death any and all living forms with which it has contact? An invisible evil, let us say, like carcinogens in a chronically polluted atmosphere, invisibly ablaze with toxic particles that penetrate body, bones, organs, blood, energy. An invisible evil like an unanticipated release of Sarin gas, which would, in sufficient quantity, turn a sprawling urban center into a petrified necropolis. An invisible evil like the phantom, signature killer escaped twenty-five years past from Chernobyl. Or such an evil that comes, breathlessly into the presence of the living without the warning of being seen, like the radiation currently spilling out from the explosive nuclear reactors of Fukushima Daiichi, along the sea, near tsunami ravaged Sendai, in the north of Japan. An invisible evil.... An ultimate terror....

Of course the vampire is a cult archetype in American pop culture, even as Godzilla; a radiation mutated and paranoid projection of the reptile mind, frightened and fascinated by its mirror reflection; is a culture icon in modern Nippon. But these surreal fictions, exchanged across the ocean, serve mostly to numb us before the dread of today's reality.

I first read Bram Stoker's *Dracula* when a teenager and the scene referred to disturbed me enough to have never been lost from memory. The lurking, unspeakable horror of an invisible evil encapsulates every conceivable human fear of identity-dissolution; the threat of being reduced to nothing by malignant nothingness—when what stalks is unseen, is “unseeable,” and could be anywhere, everywhere.

When seventeen, I wrote a somewhat lengthy, political poem and within months of my eighteenth birthday the poem was published in the premiere issue of a small literary magazine out of Silver Spring, Maryland; mere miles from the epicenter of American war making policy. It was my first publication and the poem was a protest, commemorating the atomic bombing of Hiroshima on August 6, 1945.

But here it is now, mid March, 2011, and with the rest of the human world I awaken daily to the latest descent into nightmare scenario of the threefold crisis, tragedy and darkening catastrophe of quake, tsunami and impending nuclear meltdown, wrapping a vice of death around 21st century Japan. After years of experience facing and addressing recurring themes, my present words are also words of protest. Here however there is no poetry, only the voice of one more objection. Protest coupled with the somber, sobering yet disquieting reflections of existence forever exposed to the deep psyche trauma and worldwide terrorism of invisible evil, of an ambient assault on life by an overmastering, formless, faceless onslaught of unnatural death. Within such a condition, what passes for normal is far removed from what “on earth” is sane.

Calamitously, even “green” loses its depth—for the Orphic Voice along with prayer, is stricken, suffocated—in a world where dreams are curdled into nightmare and reality is petrified beneath a shrouding ubiquity of fear.

Invisible evil.... Ultimate terror....

Poetry is not a practical mode of address. It has to do with the feeling-sense of experience and things, with compression into artistry, that is to say, intensity as an aesthetic, with passion, with recognizing and remembering

connections, and with perceptions of the soul. It has to do with acts of beauty expressed through word-pictures and linguistic rhythms, with compassionate affirmations and, whenever required, with compassionate denouncement. All of this is contributory to the adequacy and well being of the human condition, and all of this is needed.

Yet the practical mind, wanting to learn how to dance out of danger, even when distressed, disorientated and uncertain, seeks practical instruction in the confidence of dance steps. Then what are we to do in an authentic and heroic confrontation with invisible evil?

Paracelsus, the alchemist-physician whose medieval explorations provided initiating insights for the development of Jung's depth psychology, put it forward that within a disease are clues to the disease's cure. And Bob Dylan in one of his early but most illustrious songs wrote, "The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind/ the answer is blowin' in the wind."

With our feet set in these two positions, let us begin a practical, perhaps transformative, dance lesson. First, we must set both feeling-thought and public speech free from all propaganda serving the limited interests of governments and corporate profiteers. Next, we must empower our collective need for dialogue and change with the "truth-force" Gandhi summoned forth to counter the marginalization of people through machinations and manipulations of deception, violence and betrayal. Finally, these same basic steps, brought dynamically into play with the mojo of courage and humility, must become integral to a deep perspective commitment to invisible evil being rendered visible and not left hidden from public discourse until after our next "world accident" occurs. Importantly, the instinct of life, our genetic coding, what has been called "the genetic imperative," needs once again to be felt, heard and heeded in decision making processes. This means, in an ongoing way, that we, as planetary citizens, no longer leave a human future or the fate of the Earth to be decided solely by the delusions of denatured and self-referential, modern reason.

On the morning radio, today, March 16, 2011, a leading researcher from an NGO identified as the Chernobyl Project is heard saying: "Well, wild

life will eventually return to the area. At first only insects and small rodents. But that is agricultural land and we may not want to feed our children anything grown there for maybe a hundred or even three hundred years.”

Only the researcher is not talking about Chernobyl, in the former Ukrainian Soviet Union, but about the farm lands around Sendai, northeast Japan, where, at this hour and for time to come, the damaged Fukushima nuclear plant continues to spew radioactive fallout. Marauding gamma rays: poisoning sky, descending like microscopic death’s angels, onto soil and into waters, spreading disease, deformity and premature death.

Invisible evil.... Ultimate terror.... The present—a world time of suffering challenges, a species time of painful choices.... And while we have, over generational eons, turned out poorly in the timing of the human drama, now is a time to come together and do what is right for life and not again do only what we are told.

Our shaman enlightened human-animal ancestry, back to the Paleolithic if not before, apprehended in the earth-body the relationship between sacrifice and blessing, the dynamic between giving and receiving, and the trust in prayer out of vulnerability, rather than reliance on assumptions of control, inflated and elevated into ruinous imbalance by arrogance.

Fukushima is another crossroads in human history. It is yet to be seen if Fukushima will be a turning point.

ARCHETYPES or the Great White Whale

Over many years I've held to the learned idea that the narrative of Faustus-Faust—the man who sells his soul to the personalities of darkness to attain knowledge for control and manipulation of nature—is guiding archetype and psychological profile for the alpha individuals of techno-scientific Western Civilization, and this civilization's threadbare colonial and post-colonial imitators. Nor have I surrendered the concept. Indeed, it would be less than honest not to admit having toyed with the Faustian temptation and my counting the literary expressions by Marlowe and Goethe among my favored studies.

Why, to this very day we uncover the Faustian type in commanding positions, especially in business, politics, the military; genetics. Presently a mounting confrontation unfolds between those possessed by the type and those of the oppressed, or should I say dis-possessed, standing in oppositional solidarity against the soul bartered world order, and rift division between the privileged holding power and powerless expendables.

Notwithstanding, it should be recognized that the Faustus-Faust mythic form is Euro-centric in origin and the European narrative and European authority are no longer in ascendance. To be sure the decline of Europe's influence is the result of total wars and the irreconcilable tensions between knowledge for progress and the progression of borderless destruction and genocidal marathons stretching from the murderous nonsense of Flanders Fields to the mathematical sadism and racial lunacy of Auschwitz-Birkenau; colonial and post colonial blood legacies.

The Faust archetype is weakened in the collective psyche, yet does not utterly collapse or all together disappear. The powerful continue to prey on the vulnerable and naïve in the name of some principle or ideal. Meanwhile, the old archetype concedes interior territories and morphs into a more virulent, obsessive and fatalistic character change—a revision contemporaneous with the Americanization of the global narrative.

In brief, the archetype is no longer solely rooted in the deal making acquisition of knowledge to control but flourishes from draconian capacity to destroy. The metamorphosis is significant in kinship as well as departure, mirroring our transcontinental history's eradication of indigenous peoples and the aggressive transformation of pristine wildernesses into systems of exploitation and profit to drive the Free Trade Market.

Consequently of late I have turned my imagination to considering another and, I suspect, more accurate variety of the model for the hubris of domination and the pathology that leads to the right of revenge—the right, that is, to eliminate the opposition of otherness, possessing a certain “endtime mindset” and shaping the world course of our species. I do so with alarm and increasingly anxious trepidation. For it is not Faustus, not Faustus today and certainly not Faust alone, who looks out menacingly from behind the social masks and social fabric of a tacit conspiracy to destroy the Earth because of its other-than-human mystery. Rather, it is the Faustian cousin Ahab, stark, maniacal, sociopathic Captain Ahab; hate fueled, life threatening, proudly crippled and adversarial; who emerges from the shadows of a near forgotten literature into the Krieg-light of a fanaticized destiny—Ahab, with spigot plugged into and tapping the irksome, murky brew of a powerful, intoxicating human madness.

After all, it is the Ahab archetype, relentless, malicious, compelling, unheeding moderation and the humility of caution, who is prepared to sacrifice his ship and crew—the whole of this Earthship Pequod—in a single minded determination to hunt down and kill the untamed, elusive spirit of the deep; that presence in creation that waits for men in suffering, loss and death on the mystic and even moving high seas of an existence simultaneously compelled to cope with the forces of consciousness and mortality. Individual consciousness and individual and universal mortality.

Perhaps it will make a significant if unsettling impression to recall here that this same, our own embittered, Captain Ahab borrows name and more than name from Ahab of the Bible? There we find recorded in the First Book of Kings this cryptic line: “*Ahab son of Omri did evil in the sight*

of the Lord more than all who were before him.” ...More than all... more than all before...!

Let me fill out a visual composite of the Ahab archetype for the mind's eye, drawing on but two word pictures from Melville's novel. Through these words look with me, see the man, as an image of man—as a way of destruction that individual men might slip into to act out their festering fears, wounds and plots of defiance and vengeance. Ahab: crippled, symbolizing imbalance, scarred, bearing the marks of crucifixion through time, stricken by both mono- and megalomania, also revealing extravagant imbalance, hard hearted and hard fisted in his authority, surrounded by a profit lusting crew, hunting and slaughtering whales for oil, disconnected from all pathos and compassion, hell bent upon Moby Dick, and commanding, without external reference, his ship of doom. Indeed, indeed, Ahab is the dark side, the shadow mind rebellious of the Biblical prophets. He plots in the shade of the Book of Revelation, brooding on an apocalypse initiated by revenge.

This image is harrowing and strikes with terror, not least because somehow beneath the surface of daily compliance it feels disturbingly near, distressingly familiar. Listen now, and carefully, attentively and carefully, to the voice itself.

“Then tossing both arms, with measureless imprecations, he shouted out: ‘Aye! Aye! and I'll chase him round Good Hope and round the Horn, and round the Norway Maelstrom, and round perdition's flames before I give him up. And this is what ye have shipped for men, to chase that white whale on both sides of land, and over all sides of earth, till he spouts black blood and rolls fin out'...”

Again, harken here, for soul's sake, for sake of the Earth, as Ahab espouses a pernicious philosophy that eclipses the raw capitalism of the New England seaboard as well as a theology lending argument to apocalypse: “All visible objects...are but pasteboard masks. But in each event—in the living act, the undoubted deed there, some unknown but still reasoning thing puts forth the mouldings of its features from behind the unreasoning mask. If man will strike, strike through the mask! How can the prisoner reach outside

except by thrusting through the wall? To me, the white whale is that wall, shoved near to me. Sometimes I think there's naught beyond. But 'tis enough. He tasks me, he heaps me; I see in him outrageous strength, with an inscrutable malice sinewing it. That inscrutable thing is chiefly what I hate, for be the white whale agent, or be the white whale principal, I will wreck that hate upon him. Talk not to me of blasphemy... I'd strike the sun if it insulted me. For could the sun do that, then could I do the other; since there is ever a sort of fair play herein, jealousy presiding over all creation."

Howsoever the language is found hurtling over the top and tintured with the archaic, the mood and tone resonates within contemporary ego-inflation, self-appointed self-importance and carries within its body-articulate an entire civilization's age old spirituality of outrage and betrayal.

At this moment, as at other times in solitude, I am left to wonder how many, if any, Ishmaels, might escape the furthest consequences of Ahab's command and our ongoing voyage toward collective suicide—this human judgment against the justice of otherness, which is the vast display of creation showing an apportioning divinity. In Melville's American masterpiece, Ahab dies, all with him are lost, save a sole shipmate survivor; Moby Dick lives and vanishes; as if some gigantic sea deep or cosmic swimming hearse; back into the depths and origins of life. Then the abandoned remnant bear witness to an insane and nihilistic folly.

"So floating on the margin of the ensuing scene, and in full sight of it, I was then but slowly drawn toward the closing vortex... Round and round then and ever contracting toward the...black bubble at the axis of that... wheeling circle, like another Ixion I did revolve. Till, upward gaining that vital center, the black bubble burst, and now...rising with great force, the coffin life-buoy shot lengthwise from the sea, fell over, and floated by my side. Buoyed up by that coffin...I floated on a soft and dirge like main."

How striking that far seeing Melville makes comparison in his closing reflection to Ixion from Greek mythology. Ixion, who too violated divinity and was sentenced to Hades where, according to Ovid in the

Metamorphosis, the malefactor is described as “Ixion, pursuing and running away from himself on his wheel”: an accurate depiction of antithetical humanity condemned to hell in the confine of a mirroring while overmastering technology. How similar to the outcry of Shakespeare’s Lear, “I am bound upon a wheel of fire....” Here yet is another human mouthing of the consequence of an equally human madness!

Group Compositions for Healing

What do we see? What do we see when you look up at the sky at night at the blazing stars against the midnight heavens? What do you see when the dawn breaks over the eastern horizon? What are your thoughts in the fading days of summer as the birds depart on the southward journey, or in the autumn when the leaves turn brown and are blown away. What are your thoughts when you look out over the ocean in the evening? What do you see?

Thomas Berry, The World of Wonder

MY NAME IS NI-SHAAT

based on the play Eloise

This piece was composed to create a performance opportunity for Ni-Shaat Herandien, a young woman from South Africa. Primarily the composition consists of parts taken from my play ELOISE. In the original work Taya Huang of Taiwan was the second cast member. These two talented and attractive young women, through the contrasts of their ethnicities and vocal accents, embodied an aesthetic of elegance and eloquences by which to communicate the ecosophic substance of the text.

I developed besides an extended version of this piece, which initially included a third performer, Manami Onoda from Japan. Manami's role was physical participation and the repetition of the two lyric poems recited by Taya repeated in Japanese. The bilingual addition enhanced the aesthetic, extending physical presence while deepening the feel of mystery and highlighting the feminine and intercultural texture of the performers. Of course any second language could be added!

There is a movement segment here as well, which introduces the performance and in variations sets up the Invocation and the revisiting of the initial monologue. This physical part is made up of combined elements from an actor centering exercise I learned by way of Susan Dibble and a bit of Qi Gong. I call the movement Honoring the Directions and Centering in the Dan Tien. The title is nearly as long as the movement itself but it does describe what the physical part is here to accomplish. At the end of the text, you will find a detailed description of this choreography, identified there as Honoring & Centering A, B and C. A is the complete choreography, B a truncated version and C a repetition as a mirror, wherein the two players face one another as mirror reversal imitations.

A final note: *The title name, Ni-Shaat, can be changed to that of any woman in the part, cutting all of the first paragraph other than the opening line, and continuing immediately to "This is my homeland."*

*Honoring the Directions and Centering in the Dan Tien – A**

Ni-Shaat: My name is Ni-Shaat, meaning Little Flower. But it might as easily be in name, any flower: Rose or Lily, Violet, Iris or Daisy. The identities of all earth's women flow through me.

This is my homeland. It has been the home of my parents and my mother's mothers and my father's fathers for uncounted generations.

This is our land, but we do not own it. All that is here, we share with our many relations in the full circle of life: with the winged people who travel the sky, with the people of the moving waters, with the four legged and with the many clans and tribes of two legged. All of us, the many walks, are part of what is. No one people possess creation. But each is responsible to live in a right way and help to maintain balance.

I know these things and know, too, that the laws of nature are good laws. The mystery is filled with motion and the constancy of change. There are many, many cycles in the great circle of life, which encompasses all.

This is truth. Whoever does not live in truth is out of balance; is in harm's way. I know these things. My mother is a healer and my father is an important man in council. I do not descend from ignorant stock. But the heart, which breeds a vigilant and dulcetly voracious fire, is not always wise. Sometimes the heart is stricken with grief that summons a lover to the narrowest rim, above a yawning precipice, beyond which the unknown conceals our nothingness in transparent air.

Which is stronger, which, love, fear or grief? A woman's question! In my flesh, I feel the storm of torment raging.

Death terrifies awareness. Everyone is afraid. Everyone suffers. Every

living one is crucified through the movement of time. And we all make choices. Choices for seven generations. Seven generations of blessing and balance, or seven generations of fear and grief—of excess, madness, suffering. And the heart...the heart, the heart is not always wise.

Taya: Arise
and go into the heart of distance.
Be far from where you arose.
Yet memory coils in the roots of renewal
the pure flower of returning.
Although
we are tired to the evanescent
star that

bears the inscription of our mortal name,
stones of the pathway do more than listen.
Our footsteps rekindle beyond time's door.
In your mornings,
hasten to kiss the earth.
Tell her the dress she wears
was always your favorite.
To the transient lover,
all lives are in favor.

Recall the robin, the evergreen moon;
a still, standing heron, some dust
bathing sparrows.

For the gift of attention,
they will lend you their feathers.
Moon's are the lightest,
her fragrance like manna.

You have not always been
the best of her children.
Yet earth
has been tasted, now
and forever.

Honoring & Centering – B

INVOCATION

Ni-Shaat: The White Sided Dolphin and the Sea Lion the Orca and the
bubble netting Whale
Herring, Gulls and water flying Murre
the Salmon and the Grizzly Bear
Great Spirit of Life
Great Force of Creation
we thank You for the bestowing of such abundance
for the gifting of so much beauty
for the depth, intimacy and power in wisdom
of the living grandeur of this Pacific Northwest:
of land, waterways, mountains, skies, and ocean.

Guide us in the making of choices
neither from self-love alone or disappointment
but as part of all
living among the living to choose
in ways that are true for the Heart of the Earth
and the whole
of all relations.

Taya: If you receive the basket
handed you by the angel
called Dawn,
you will become a beam
of the upward sun.
If you enter this cornucopia
of creation's multitude,
divested of your ego's edges,
you will emerge
as apple or as orange.

Why not, with the taster's mouth,
be of the tasted fruit?

As the eagle flies,
so is the heart for flying.
The soul
for living its dreams.

Why not, with the hunter's talon,
be of the hunted quarry?

And within the pathetic network
of all living beings,
be as one
with the spider's threads.

Honoring & Centering (Mirror) - C

Ni-Shaat: My name is Ni-Shaat, a name meaning Little Flower. My name could as easily be Lily or Rose, Violet or Daisy. Here—all around—this is my homeland. It has been the home of my parents and my mother's mothers and my father's fathers for uncounted generations.

This is our land, but we do not own it. All that is here, we share with our many relations in the full circle of life: with the winged people who travel the sky, with the people of the moving waters, with the four legged and with the many clans and tribes of two legged. All of us, the many walks, are part of what is. No one people possess creation. But each is responsible to live in a right way and help to maintain balance.

I know these things and know, too, that the laws of nature are good laws. The mystery is filled with motion and the constancy of change. There are many, many cycles in the great circle of life.

End.

***Honoring the Directions and Centering in the Dan Tien A:** *The women center their bodies, feet approximately 12 inches apart and with sufficient space between them that if they were standing on the same plane their fingers would be approximate but not actually touching. Ni-Shaat should be a couple of paces further downstage. Her forward prominence should be maintained.*

Throughout the performers movements are to be tightly synchronized and begin by slowly raising the left hand to a position before and slightly above the heart and holding momentarily to gaze into the cupped palm. Now the movement unfolds in this manner: Eyes follow the left hand as the arm gracefully extends to its length with upturned palm open, fingers slightly extended, making offering. Then a delicate pull happens at the tips of the fingers, swaying the body gently but visibly to the left. Bringing the body back to center position, left palm turns downward as the left arm slowly descends to the side, hand folded in slightly to create the impression of a partial circle. Pattern repeats with the right hand.

Next both hands come up before the heart, fingertips barely meeting, forming the apex of a pyramid before both arms are extended outward to full length, palms open, fingers reaching toward the front (downstage). Lean forward, again as if pulled ever so slightly by an invisible ribbon at the edges of the fingers. The gesture is one of offering. After a hold, arms raise up, arching out as they ascend, forming an open V: torso expands and lifts, head elevates, eyes scan the space above. Arms descent slowly, hold at shoulder height, full stretch, as if a crucifix posture, palms turned outward; slow rotation so that palms are turned toward the floor. Slow drop of arms to both sides, hands folding in as before to form a partial circle.

Continuing arm motions: bend elbows, bring arms up as if a cradle, hands form gently closed fists, knuckles meeting at the solar plexus. Right leg steps forward, as arms push out, hands open, fingers pointing upward: movement accompanying big exhalation. With a natural qi flow, return to center position.

Left arm glides back with torso twisting left, gentle bend in knees; leaf hand reaching back, gathering from the past (space behind); in flow mode, arm swings forward with a bowling motion, extending fully, releasing from the open palm into the future (space before.) Left arm brought back to left side as right arm begins full movement repetition: reach back, receive, bring forward, give.

Body again at center, both arms will be swung three times, accompanied by slight bend in knees. Each swing increases velocity. On third swing, arms come up, rolling at shoulders to make a large, swooping motion, forearms rotate and hands come together in a loud clap.

Arms brought back toward body, hands joining in a Buddha-prayer, resting momentarily before the place of the heart. Next, left hand, kept flat, rises slowly over the vertically held right hand, forming a T shape where left palm meets right fingertips. Left hand slides down before front edge of vertical right to solar plexus as right hand flattens horizontally, so that between the inward turned palms a ball is formed. Right hand rolls over left, descending to position of Dan Tien, as left hand reverses position of palm. Space for the ball between the hands is somewhat larger momentarily, but left hand descends with great subtlety, gently compressing the space. Hold for count of two, then hands begin to slid in opposite directions, expanding the space between them further, until the ball is dissolved by the outward motion and the hands have come to rest at both sides.

End of movement for Honoring & Centering A.

A third or less of this complete sequence can be Honoring & Centering B and the entire sequence is repeated with Honoring & Centering C as a mirror, with one performer reaching left as the other reaches right.

The movement portion of the performance is one of elegant grace which serves to set up and punctuate the lyric and invocative eloquence of the text. The language of the movement portion is one of beauty, respect, differentiation and yet relatedness.

CHARMS

Vocal Meditation for five voices with inner wave movement (*Gabriela Roth*) or moving with an atmosphere, outer or inner (*Michael Chekhov*)

As Exercise or Rehearsal

Five individuals form a circle, sitting on the ground or floor, and recite in rotation parts one through five. When the first chant cycle is completed, parts are shifted, moving clockwise, to repeat recitation: part one now being recited by the former speaker of part two; the previous speaker of part one now reciting part five and so on. This process of making the rounds continues until everyone has recited all of the five parts. The concluding recitation is a chant in unison.

Spontaneous embodiment, movement and spiritual intoxication should be allowed free expression as the mood of repetition intensifies. As drumming and meditation may lead to a state of non-ordinary consciousness, so too can the repetition of the sounds and word-pictures of CHARMS.

As Performance

Or, as I have done, have it acted out before an audience, combining words with either stylized or authentic movement, but going through the parts only once.

One: Imagine these realities. Picture them with dimension and clarity, with life bestowing energy:

A clear, glass sphere, seven-tenths filled with water, suspended by sheer, transparent cords, dangling in the sunlight, with fluctuating winds, whose purposes we can never calculate and whose wisdom eludes the politics of civilized communities.

Now, see within this circle of floating water and refined mineral a plant, a lily, delicately alive on the water's evaporating surface, erotically sucking at the hot nipples of the sun and gestating aquatic man or floral woman—not human, but humanlike and other. Call this wonder of greens and gold reflections culture. Charms out of primal memory.

Two: Invocations of the seasons, of small voices who have lost their power in the welter of our noise. Perhaps a wind chime that does not intrude into the musicality of ten or twelve varieties of territorial birds or the ecstatic air-dances of insects. Perhaps a dream, not human, but humanly responsive and other, that is evolving; slowly sharing the fine interfaces that crack society and grow a dream body into tropic reality?

Incantations, I say. Secrets to utter. Experiences out of the matrix of solitude. Not always human, but humanlike, *trans-human*, and other.

Three: Envision next, vibrating and vital: A clear, glass sphere, three-tenths filled with soil—black to brown, red, then golden-red, and black again—suspended by sheer, transparent cords. Humming in the fluctuating winds. While as background, rocks striped with ancient age; the taste of extinction and transformations; and flowering cacti, patterned between the flights of swollen hummingbirds and powdered bees. Over this globe, half an eggshell of sun in day warmth and half an eggshell of moon in blue-black night: no finger sensitive enough to find the line that joins them.

Inside our ball, a small, darting lizard whose skin teaches our eyes; a small bright colored toad, whose eyes and crafty smile turn us about like a spiky seed, confounding ups and downs, but giving us back to the circle of delight. A wizard lizard and an antic toad: magician king and queen of clowns!

Perhaps, above, over to one side, a spider, just brown enough to let the rays illumine and then refract. As well, a web, just white enough to startle against the hemispheric darkness and cast a shadow into time.

Now, as before, call this ball culture. Environ it with the fragrance of

wild sage or an orgasmic hint of fresh mint, tenderly bruised and slow to climax flesh and senses. Herbal-savory arousing soul!

Four: Play innocently, sometimes mornings and sometimes evenings, with the theater of memories and the theater of dreams. Find an androgynous, violet roundness, or one that is silver-blue, forming in it (in him or in her) a myth that will grace the artistry of the Earth with yet one more diversity.

Say with me—incantations. Fabulous spells. Anecdotes of cosmic intricacies; gifts of blossoming stars. As common, yet delicate, as the tiniest flower, upon whose petals (or whose wings, or whose lips, or whose sexual intentions) are written the alphabets of creation, and the charms.

Five: The graduated colors of a face on water, or on polished obsidian. Renaissance palette of the face, dream face and animal of your deep ecology: profound identity; re-Earthing destiny. The winds... Placed as configuration, eons of evolving mythospheres, milkyways of networking mysteries. Intimacies beyond the politics of urbanscapes. Those primal days, opened by such moralities as mystery, habitat, ecopsychology, eco-sanity. The emerald spiral of paradise or wreathes of coming home. And, although not human, surprisingly attentive, furtive from behind the subtle folds that press one emotional plane and the next hot lover—the watchful eyes, enchanting others, the glances, and the charms.

THE GREENING OF DOSTOYEVSKY (in the 21st century)

Father Zossima passages are from THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV, original English translation by Constant Garnett with minor modifications. Earth-soul parts are from original compositions.

PLAYERS: Father Zossima, a religious elder
Earth-Soul, a traveling companion
Optional dance or movement artists

(The single prop—if any prop is used—is a chair occupied by Father Zossima)

Zossima: Have no fear of sin. Love a (human being) even in his (or her) sin, for that is the semblance of Divine Love and is the highest love on earth. Love all God's creation, the whole and every grain of sand in it. Love every leaf, every ray of God's light. Love the animals, love the plants, love everything. If you love everything, you will perceive the divine mystery in things. Once you perceive it, you will begin to comprehend it better.... And you will come at last to love the whole world with an all-embracing love. Love the animals: God has given them the rudiments of thought and joy untroubled. ...Don't harass them, don't deprive them of their happiness, don't work against God's intent. ...Do not pride yourself on superiority to the animals; they are without sin, and you, with your greatness, defile the earth by your appearance on it, and leave the traces of your foulness after you... it is true of almost every one of us!

Earth-Soul: Something happens here, this perpetual—the Earth. Call it God-seeds, seeds of light, the miracle of life; call it love or call it magic. It fills our veins, yet teems beyond us.

The squid, the jellyfish, the sea lion, the orca, the elegant ray, the humpback whale; dove, raven, hummingbird, robin, the heron, eagle and the jay; butterfly, dragonfly, fire ant and bee; the wolf, the fox, white tiger, black panther, tree toad, desert tortoise, the panda and the polar bear. Then there is us. Human. Question mark.

The unanswered asking that snakes through everything; screams terror, dreams in ecstasy. The ones who boast of speaking with God—God interpreters—who cast thick shadows of destruction and amplified death. Listen now.

Say with me: Roundness all around. This perpetual—the Earth. Scurrying in the grass, humming on the wind, whispering melodies along motive water; sun on the colors of flowers, the carnival benign of pollen down flanks of praying mountains, out over meadows, into the humility of valleys. The swish of frogs and fishes among rushes; rattling reeds.

The reverent are amazed and will forego explanation. Goodness is to abide. Thanks, an antidote to violence, gladly given. Wisdom is to be still at certain intervals along this pilgrimage and observe with godlike laughter gutting, though yet demure. Look now. Listen.

Say with me: Behold the interplay intimate of angels and trees. Prophet, what will you tell your lover when asked to recite the psalms of creation? And as you were held tenderly in dreamtime of childhood, how do you forget

the children of the Earth?

Zossima: Love children especially, for they too are sinless like the angels; they live to soften and purify our hearts and as it were to guide us. Woe to him who offends a child. (My mentor) Father Anfim taught me to love children. The kind, silent man used often on our wanderings to spend the (money) given us on sweets and cakes for the children. He could not pass by a child without emotion, that's the nature of the man.

Everyday and every hour, every minute, walk round yourself and watch yourself, and see that your image is a seemly one. You pass by a little child, you pass by, spiteful, with ugly words, with wrathful heart; you may not have noticed the child, but he has seen you, and your image, unseemly and ignoble, may remain in his defenseless heart. You don't know it, but you may have sown an evil seed in him (or her) and it may grow, and all because you were not careful before the child, because you

did not foster in yourself a careful, actively benevolent love.

Earth-Soul: Santa Marie

Jesus our Angel
Son of a Human
Virgin Madonna
Red Rose
White Lotus
Crown of Thorns

Field of Crosses
Mohammad Mouthpiece
Tongues of Apostles
Moses
Liberator of slaves

throughout the world
we are the blood-
crucified children
small
in these faces
mothered
as orphans
withered while tender
fired
in our greenness

San Angelo, little
little San Angelo
child of wings
hurried to heaven
Jesus
the martyr
Red Rose
White Lotus
Lily of Crosses
Jesus

our scapegoat
stained with the murderous
Crown of Thorns

throughout a life time
we are the tattered
tattered and torn
pray for us often
tonight and tomorrow
souls in war's exile
flaming Madonna
Seal of the Prophets
slaughtered
and slaughtering

Moses
the wanderer
Jesus
the manchild
hunger eternal
our Mother of Ashes
martyring angels
small
in these faces
O Santa
Maria, Santa Maria!
Mary the Virgin
Mary the Pregnant
Mary the Mother
Mary the Prophet
Abraham Father
Mohammad
our Witness
Jesus Blood Naked
nailed to men's evils

O Santa Maria

Son of a Daughter
Mother of Sorrows
Crown
of Burned Roses
Crucified Children
weeping White Lotus
(death in all places)
pray for us
humans now
and hereafter
pray for us often
O Momma
Momma Maria

Zossima: Love is a teacher, but one must know how to acquire it, for it is hard to acquire, it is dearly bought, it is won slowly by long labor. For we must love not only occasionally, for a moment, but for ever. Every one can love occasionally, even the wicked can.

(Somebody) asks the birds to forgive (them); that sounds senseless, but it is right; for all is like an ocean, all is flowing and blending; a touch in one place sets up movement at the other end of the earth. It may be senseless to beg forgiveness of the birds, but birds would be happier at your side—a little happier, anyway—and children and all animals, if you yourself were nobler than you are now. It's all like an ocean, I tell you. Then you would pray to the birds too, consumed by an all-embracing love, in a sort of transport, and pray that they too will forgive you your sins. Treasure this ecstasy, however senseless it may seem to (others).

Earth-Soul: Blessed indeed are the poor, the refugees and the wild things of the Earth, although pushed to the edge of existence and extinction sniffs and looks into our eyes with deadly indifference, day after day and minute by minute. For the wretched of the Earth and the wild are made homeless in common. And without habitation, multitudes are driven by the betrayal of greed into the abomination of desolation.

Yet One there is who watches. And after much suffering, the scales out of balance shall rise with a mighty ringing. And justice will abide everywhere. For there is no mending but by preserving unity through diversity; no healing but in the bestowal of dignity. And there is no salvation, except by the wayside, in the ghettos of the forgotten, where the vulnerable await the unfulfilled promises of welcoming love.

Blessed indeed are the peacemakers. For such shall teach and lead us out of the terror and confusion of deception and destruction, and away from the wars of men against men, and the warring of men on nature. But the day of peace will come with the dismantling of walls and the dissolving of boundaries and borders. And the gentle and visionary—whose palms are as their souls, and both are without bloodstain—will surely show us the shade of a life-bearing tree and seat us among lions and lambs. And we will come to share of who we are in harmony and without hatred.

Blessed indeed are the innocent and pure of heart. And those who time cannot stoop and wither into bitterness; and who are not skillful with the wiles of shallowness and success, but for whom both prairie stars and daybreak star remain embracing miracles.

And for whom the pattern of a spider's web in autumn garden is a form of scripture. And for whom a cloud of yellow pollen blown over the desert in springtime is a breath of mystery. And for whom the soaring flight of an eagle is the utterance of a holy word.

For all such are of the Kingdom of God and are beloved of creation, even as children are loved in the eyes of elders.

Blessed indeed are those among us today and tomorrow who walk the good talk and who are Earth-walkers. For such have seen with the eyes of the soul and know in the knowledge of experience that soul-seeing is truth. And this truth is simple and belongs to life.

Blessed indeed are those disciplined and profound with silence, and respectful in their measured words. In the chaos of upheaval and in the ordeals of betrayal, still they value honesty above profit and integrity,

which bestows freedom, above possessions and enslavement to things.

Blessed indeed are the myth-singers, who have gone down into the ancient and recovered the medicine of sanity, and the storytellers and poets, and those who re-enchanted us and initiate our bodies into dancing with the rhythms of the Earth.

For such celebrants give bone and living tissue to the dreams of God, but shake off disfiguring shadows and blow away, with chanting breath, the dun smoke of nightmares and misdirecting lies. For those who are deep are collectors of power. And beauty is most precious among the gifts we come giving.

Blessed indeed are you who have prayed with these words. And are pregnant now and are nurturing them inside, as words of your own. For you shall drop upon the Earth in your seasons as seeds of the Tree of Life. And the fruit that ripens from your roots shall be the food of salvation.

In those days, even angels will enter your orchards, smiling the smile of grace, and with the open hands of holy beggars. And you who are but of the Earth will feed them and satisfy the hunger of Heaven.

Zossima: Much on earth is hidden from us, but to make up for that we have been given a precious mystic sense of our living bond with the other world...and the roots of our thoughts and feelings are not here, but in the other worlds. ...God took seeds from different worlds and sowed them on this earth, and His garden grew up and everything came up that could come up, but what grows lives and is alive only through the feeling of its contact with other mysterious worlds. If that feeling grows weak or is destroyed in you, the (mystic) growth will die away in you. Then you will be indifferent to life and even grow to hate it. That's what I think.

Earth-Soul: Something of beauty moved above me.

Yet when I looked, it was my shadow soaring in the sky. Who can tell me what this mystery is? Remember, I live among the living who have chosen the dark way of the living dead. Thanks to the intricate mysteries of

creation there is that memory of origin that reveals itself like a diamond in the mine of time.

Indeed, that which is subterranean might well be a comet in the consciousness of a distant galaxy! The Sufis call this exploration of recovery the secret self. And from Heraclitus to Heidegger there are heroic maps of the psychedelic planetoids of poetry.

When I sit in the deep silence of meditation I know that I am dreaming my role in the stage play of the dream maker.

This is serious making. For much that rebels against logic smiles and yet overpowers with the passion plays of beauty. Then am I not a mirror shimmering with awe and laughter, reflecting the perfect stillness of the desert sun? Or is that point of departure rather one with the speed of almighty light?

Now is it not science that “*the universe is a green dragon?*”*

Whenever a bird flies over my Janis-faced head I have to cry out to the metaphor of motion, “Dragon, my kindred, here I am, in the azure of a green prayer. Be careful then how you borrow my wings. Rilke’s angel left them in my safe keeping and I, who am humble with dust, am heading home.”

It is not only dense bodies that cast shadows from out the determination of their motion cleaving directions. Light also patterns into path finding. The white shadow of the soul—when the dragon assumes the other shape of the shaman’s Orphic head—makes itself felt all along the curving edges of interfacing twilight.

Because of these meanders a troubadour like myself remains unknown, except in glimmering, as Glimmer Man (or Glimmer Woman). Now truly that is burning. Oh!...

Seeing myself up there, where clouds change into infinite curiosity, is like deep breathing. Walking the Earth to rhythms of a winged heart,

I am gifted with identity. Whatever direction I am turned into, what I see is an offering seeing me. Here now is “next-and” and the mystic “if”. Everywhere a pilgrim finds God, the holy lover, in the shape of prayer. Gustavo Gutierrez reminds us that the revolution in awareness is in process when he says, “Creation is the first act of liberation.”

O pioneers of healing! O revolutionaries at the threshold! Futurists of primitive sanity, Troubadours & Eco-Shamans of connectivity: *On Earth as it is in Heaven! In Heaven, as you shall make Earth through compassionate rejuvenation, now before the Liminal Crossing!*

**Brian Swimme*

Afterward: HYMN OF THE DRAGON SEED or BRIAN SWIMME & MAD SAINT GEORGE

Brian Swimme says that “*the universe is a green dragon.*” If the universe is a green dragon and we are children of the universe—circulating atoms of creation, the molecules of evolution—then we are not monadic orphans or, conditionally, products of paranoid isolation, rather daughters and sons of the emerald dragon, the fertility maker, shapeshifter, the cornucopian organizer of stuff. And George, who is forever assailing, intent to conquer and slay, the great generatrix, is not a proper culture hero, but a madman possessed by the labyrinth-laboratory mind-trap of the masculine machine. Instead of a dragon slayer to be exalted and displayed in pious places as an heroic icon, Mad Saint George needs to be restored, returned to primitive sanity, and set free of his addiction to a mechanical weltanschauung of destructive power, and lay down his technologies of rape and death; get out of his blitzkrieg armor and join the dragon dance around the wine-god of spring and the goddess’ erotic fires of summer. In truth, therapeutically, old George needs to learn again to sing along with every life form else that sings into creation. And he and his kind, the cause serving squires and delusional imitators, can begin the way away from their dis-ease, relearning through letting be, remembering through letting go, by intoning, in chorus of sweet-fury, the Hymn of the Dragon Seed. For dragon song is bold and lusty and tells in sounds diverse and imagery multitudinous how dreams of the green dragon swirl into fertility here on Earth, this Earth, throughout seasons, centuries, millennia and geological eons. And the dream seeds of the verdant cosmic dragon are indeed the stuff of miracles: fragrant, rough and beautiful, tender, fierce, sticky, and bleeding rainbows and cleansing mantic winds of love, filaments, puzzles, and ecstasy.

Hymn of the Dragon Seed

we raise up
we raise up
into the world
the great cry
wolf cry

geese fly
into the sun
swans fly
out of the moon

we raise up
we raise up
into the world
the great roar
lion's roar
wings are beating
like
breathing storm
green dragon of our
dreams
is presence

all is presence

we raise up
we raise up
into the world
this ancient desire
soul of mystery

dream-
forests fill the skies
earth grows wide
with rooting stars

now
like rain
or star-flakes falling
dragon seed
showers
our shuddering hearts

wild is joy!
wild
is joy!



Divided Earth

These are not bodies beautiful pampered soft skinned and perfect, with all that can be imagined a mere and unreflective reach away, with all that "civilization" has to offer just here at the fingertips: the seductive smiles and athletic postures; the playboys' emotionally crooked grins, the playgirls' sili-cone-offerings

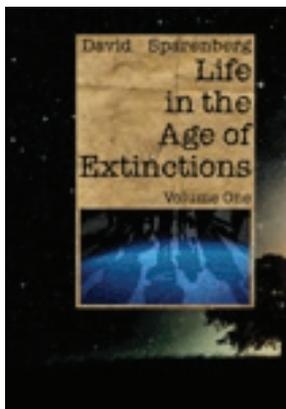
these, the outcast-others, they are bodies cold and bodies hungry, bearing infections and the scars of neglect and disease Still

children play amid squalor And now and again from strange mouths laughter erupts like clouds of sulfur Eyes of the destitute what are they? They are signatures And looks in the eyes what is this? A poison serpent's tongue And each is the holocaust of a soul

Now there are two human worlds on this small in crisis planet One of them is an artificial sun; the other a blackhole One provides shelter-scant in cages crates and cardboards, and sinks ever deeper into itself—a percolating obscenity of poverty This other is The Floating World, dropping its waste from a make believe height as it crosses its dance club heaven in a bubble of painted gold...

A person with a camera in the heart would have to be pointlessly blind not to feel pain and to fear the smell of blood Or contorted by the snapshots of misery and the "dirty" videos of suffering

David Sparenberg
9 Feb. 2013



From **LIFE IN THE AGE OF EXTINCTIONS**,
Volume Two, a work-in-progress.

Volume One is currently available as
a free ebook download from OVI, [HERE!](#)



GREEN TROUBADOUR SOURCE BOOK

Eco-Shamanic Writing for Actor Training & Public Performance

The intention of this volume is here openly expressed. In the following pages I am inviting readers, as friends and as companion earth-walkers, to be earth-warriors and earth-healers, both male and female, and to join in the furthering of a radical social, spiritual and culture alternative to what is dominate and preparing not a furtherance of dignity, diversity and democracy, but of chaos, catastrophe and doom.

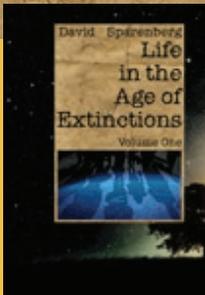


David Sparenberg is an eco-poet, creation spirituality playwright & storyteller, sometimes actor, sometimes stage director, and teacher of eco-shamanic creative & performing arts (green public art, ritual & episodic theatre and green culture interdisciplinary happenings).

He identifies as a world citizen and is a life long advocate and activist for peace, social justice, biotic democracy, voluntary simplicity and an ecosophic global village culture of mutuality & respect, contributing to a safe and saner planetary future.

David combines nature and tough-love mysticism with Cherokee ancestry and eclectic learning, to offer a unique perspective and creative voice, confronting both the affirmation and ecstasy of earthly life and the passionate denouncement of crimes against creation and political atrocity.

David lives in the Pacific Northwest of the United States. His writings have appeared in over 120 periodicals and journals in thirteen countries and he is the author besides of *MAGIC 13*, *Stories of Dream & Vision*, *SOUL IN WORDS*, poems of spiritual-response, *PLAYS* for an American Activist Theatre and the forthcoming *SENDING A VOICE*, selected poems from 40 years.



You can find David Sparenberg's book "**Life In The Age Of Extinctions**" Part I, in the shelves of Ovi Ebookshop.

