

What the Heart Sees

A Poetic monograph by Kurt Heyl

It is the intention of this monograph to follow a thread of thought that appears in the early Sanskrit writing of Indian Philosophy and continues to develop in Buddhism, specifically in Zen Buddhism. From the Tenth Century BC, before Buddhism, Lao Tzu, Confucius, and well before Christ, comes the "Hymn of Creation"; hymn #120 from the Rig Veda.

A part of this hymn appeared in the "Notebooks of the School", as an introduction to Notebook No. 1, "The Pure Form". Then I wish to continue to show how this personal process developed through years of writing poetry.

It was thanks to being part of the "Poetry Tour" organized by Ken Dickinson and Isaias Nobel in 2008, that I began to see how I could use my life long interest in poetry to advance my personal process. So, unlike many other monographies which involve travel and research in the world, this one has been a work of mostly internal research.

The Creation Hymn of Rig Veda

"There was not the non-existent nor the existent then; there was not the air nor the heaven which is beyond. What did it contain? Where? In whose protection? Was there water, unfathomable, profound?

There was not death nor immortality then. There was not the beacon of night, nor of day. That one breathed, windless, by its own power. Other than that there was not anything beyond.

Darkness was in the beginning hidden by darkness; indistinguishable, this all was water. That which, coming into being, was covered with the void, that One arose through the power of heat.

Desire in the beginning came upon that, (desire) that was the first seed of mind. Sages seeking in their hearts with wisdom found out the bond of the existent in the non-existent.

Their cord was extended across: was there below or was there above? There were impregnators, there were powers; there was energy below, there was impulse above.

Who knows truly? Who shall here declare, whence it has been produced, whence is this creation? By the creation of this (universe) the gods (come) afterward: who then knows whence it has arisen?

Whence this creation has arisen; whether he founded it or did not: he who in the highest heaven is its surveyor, he only knows, or else he knows not. "

Rain

Written after an afternoon reading different translations of the Hymn of Creation from the Rig Veda.

Waiting for the Hurricane in Brooklyn, NY.

This present is the darkness of an on coming storm. The TV talks of nothing else. I sit in the gray light and write of trees waving to me across the rooftops of neighbors. The rain was promised to bring flooding. It is a rain behind many other rains. A time of accidentally engineered climate change.

Nevertheless this present twilight ticks and pops with rain drops in the fading light. I can see what I write thanks to the black ink that flows on to the page as it passes over these letters, making its marks.

For sometime now I have known that eternity can only be found in the present. In an empty present that opens up a hole, a whole. A hole called a void, an absence, a space between thoughts. A space between stimuli, between sensations, and outside the grasping of my desires.

This is the paradox of the present moment. It only opens when it is completely left alone. When there is no hint of anyone trying to manipulate anything. When the coast is clear, the present is empty and there is no power play, no control, no effort to make anything happen.

Today is not silent. Today it is rain dropping on the air conditioner, bouncing off the window with many different pings and pongs, like a marimba and a drum.

So where's this eternity?

Its here inside of time, inside this storm darkened evening, inside of me.

I have faith. I know its there. I know it is not here right now, slightly out of reach, but just as real as rain.

How do I know? I'm not sure. I know its a process of elimination. I know because there are hints. Hints from other presents, other times, when as I fell asleep, before sleep entered, something else opened. It was empty but not empty. It was full of emptiness and there was no name for it. I could not name it. I could not own it. It did not belong to me, but it gave me faith.

Now it is so dark I can no longer see what I am writing. The rain is louder and more insistent. I try to remember to feel the light inside me. This is my path right now.

8 /27/11

What's Seen

The heart can see love in the eyes which look back. It can see the moon as it moves through its cycle, filling the night with light and leaving space for the millions of stars to shine through in its absence. It can see the blue light of dawn gradually change the eastern sky, slowly covering the stars until washing them away.

The heart sees change. It can watch the minute hand move on a clock's face. It can watch days come and go, nights appear and disappear. Months roll by. Seasons come and go, hot days, cold days, rain, snow, years go by. It sees the body change.

The heart feels an empathy with all life and it shares the tropism towards light with all life.

The heart can see the world as art.

What Blinds

There are many questions about the world. What is the difference between right and wrong, between praise and degradation? These are things that blind the heart. All around us this societies news and noise blinds with its constant reinforcement of individualism. Here we are swallowed up by the desire for money as if it were all that mattered. Here where good and evil are emphatically ingrained within each of us before we can clearly see beyond our parents. Here where to fit in is to loose oneself in the madness of greed. Here where violence is a contradiction because it at once entertains us at the movies and scares us in the streets. Here where rules and laws are created to maintain an order that favors the few and ignores the needy.

Undoing the Rational

Non-dualism is an attempt to represent the unrepresentable One. From very far back in human history threads connect truths that spoke of the Profound, connecting the Universe to an Internal Universe within every human being. One that awaits the silence of the internal noise inside our heads, to shine through. We who believe in the rational mind measure our words, measure our world as a way of life. For us there must be a right way because we see the world split into opposites; up, down, right, wrong, how else could it be?

Then let's begin by locking up that noisy rational mind with a puzzle that keeps it busy and out of the way. Like a paradox or a Koan, The serpent that is eating its own tail is representing the curvature of space/time meeting itself in the present moment.

Here is one small paradox to chew on before we go on:

"A crocodile snatched a baby from its mother and offered to return it if the mother could correctly answer this question: 'Will I eat your baby?' If the mother had said 'No' there would have been no difficulty but she was clever enough to say 'Yes' (if the crocodile were now to eat the baby, proving the mother right, he would be contradicting his offer to return the baby if the mother answered correctly)."

Thought

How often I have lost patience with the circuitous discussions, that swing way out around the subject, wanting to go straight to the end, to the goal of our discussion.

Could it be that I do not see the need for the spiral approach, which encompasses the copresent material that is acting within the same ambit as the subject of interest? Perhaps I am confusing efficiency and the lineal thought processes I have grown up with, with true comprehension?

Could it be as stated here ("...we go around, approaching as if drawing a spiral, collecting a lot of information") that I need to rethink my approach to what clear thinking is.

From Psych. I, Negro suggests that we use a path of least resistance in order to move more effectively in the world, in order to create a growing adaptation that allows for a change to occur in the environment that can give free energy back for one's own evolution. He puts it this way:

"Here is the paradox: In order for a structure to preserve its unity it must transform the environment and also itself."

The Gift of Inspiration

Without a doubt it has been the weekly meetings I have had with Fernando and Ken since we began our leveling process in 2009 and the mutual sharing of our experiences that has given me the support I needed to continue on this path. Thanks to Ken Dickinson's list "A Poem for Today", I have been continually inspired by the poems he has sent out daily for three years as part of his asesis. This one by David Wagoner has stayed with me.

Lost

Stand still. The trees ahead and bushes beside you
Are not lost. Wherever you are is called Here,
And you must treat it as a powerful stranger,
Must ask permission to know it and be known.
The forest breathes. Listen. It answers,
I have made this place around you,
If you leave it you may come back again, saying Here.
No two trees are the same to Raven.
No two branches are the same to Wren.
If what a tree or a bush does is lost on you,
You are surely lost. Stand still. The forest knows
Where you are. You must let it find you.

~ David Wagoner ~

Also there was a book I carried around for two years by Alan Watts called "The Way of Zen". In it he was able to show the thread that connected ancient Hindu writings and Taoism to Zen.

In my continued readings about Zen I found this wonderful synthetic poetic writing by Seng Ts'an, from the seventh century in China:

The Mind of Absolute Trust

from a literal translation
by Robert F. Olson

*The Great Way isn't difficult
for those who are unattached to their preferences.
Let go of longing and aversion,
and everything will be perfectly clear.
When you cling to a hairbreadth of distinction, heaven and earth are set apart.
If you want to realize the truth,
don't be for or against.
The struggle between good and evil
is the primal disease of the mind.
Not grasping the deeper meaning,
you just trouble your mind's serenity.
As vast as infinite space,*

*it is perfect and lacks nothing.
But because you select and reject,
you can't perceive its true nature.
Don't get entangled in the world;
don't lose yourself in emptiness.
Be at peace in the oneness of things,
and all errors will disappear by themselves.*

*If you don't live the Tao,
you fall into assertion or denial.
Asserting that the world is real,
you are blind to its deeper reality;
denying that the world is real,
you are blind to the selflessness of all things.*

*The more you think about these matters,
the farther you are from the truth.
Step aside from all thinking,
and there is nowhere you can't go.*

*Returning to the root, you find the meaning; chasing appearances, you lose their source.
At the moment of profound insight,
you transcend both appearance and emptiness.*

*Don't keep searching for the truth;
just let go of your opinions.*

*For the mind in harmony with the Tao,
all selfishness disappears.*

*With not even a trace of self-doubt,
you can trust the universe completely.*

*All at once you are free,
with nothing left to hold on to.*

*All is empty, brilliant,
perfect in its own being.*

*In the world of things as they are,
there is no self, no non-self.*

*If you want to describe its essence,
the best you can say is "Not-two."*

*For the mind in harmony with the Tao,
all selfishness disappears.*

*With not even a trace of self-doubt,
you can trust the universe completely.*

*In this "Not-two" nothing is separate,
and nothing in the world is excluded.*

The enlightened of all times and places

*have entered into this truth.
In it there is no gain or loss;
one instant is ten thousand years.
There is no here, no there;
infinity is right before your eyes.
The tiny is as large as the vast when objective boundaries have vanished;
the vast is as small as the tiny,
when you don't have external limits.
Being is an aspect of non-being;
non-being is no different from being.
Until you understand this truth,
you won't see anything clearly.
One is all; all are one. When
you realize this, what reason for holiness or wisdom?
The mind of absolute trust
is beyond all thought, all striving,
is perfectly at peace; for in it
there is no yesterday,
no tomorrow,
no today.*

Why it Can't Be Explained

**This is the last thing I wanna say,
and I ain't gonna say anymore today.**

I want to begin at the end. Not so much for working backwards, as for finishing now what needs to be said in this moment. It is like closing a door on time, writing it off and leaving it behind.

Going with words where words cannot go.

Then these words are outside time, no longer in the flow, they are circumventing themselves in order to explain nothing, to hold nothing, to be nothing.

They are now empty words. Words where their meaning has been carefully removed so that they may speak from another place.

A place that holds itself outside of place. One might say it is like this or like that. It is not like anything. It sits by itself outside metaphor, with no way to describe itself. As if it had no existence, yet it has existence in itself, free from time and

place, free from words that might define it, and free from the world of objects.

It exists as an act of consciousness when the consciousness is able to free itself from everything recognizable and when it can begin to contemplate its own acts. The contemplation is an entrance to that which supports the existence of the consciousness, but can only carry it outside of that existence with a gentle question. A question that the consciousness asks its own self about its own nature, about its own being.

How is this question? Is it round? Perhaps it has the aspect of a circle when seen from above or below. But when it is seen in process, it is a spiral question that brings the consciousness to this new place.

This apparent self referential questioning, breaks the consciousness away from the known. It allows access to that place where the consciousness suspends its own being, stops time and holds all life as an essence. An essence that connects all beings and things among themselves and with this consciousness that is now one with the universe.

Brooklyn, NY - June 9, 2012

How is the question?

I have been called a pretend ascetic recently who needs puppy dog attendees in order to feel accepted.

I stand corrected and bow to the higher powers that they may grant me audience.

I write out of a suspicion that there's something trying to express itself through this pen.

I have no idea, so I continue unknown to myself and scribble out letters toward what?

I pray that since I've lost my way and no longer know how to be civil, it could be many things but things are not what this is about!

I look around inside for some guide lines as to who I'm suppose to be but the heat of the day rules the roost. I am left to listen to the scratching of this pen and hold myself in limbo while I make up my mind as to how to be kind to myself.

So far its clear that this is yet another circle around itself, searching the edges of awareness for hints from within. Hints that could reveal the mystery lying underneath the reality of this fading day.

I sit corrected, alone in this empty room, empty by intention, and express the

unexpressable as a way of weeding through the endless noise of my head.

What is the question?

How is the question? Is it round? Does it see itself as I've been told? Perhaps the structure is showing?

Could that be the case? How then will the structure show itself? Will it stand alone? No, it will remain underneath, holding things together like a bowl made with my two hands, cupping the air.

A net that connects the world to me, around me, within me. A net that reaches across time and space, a net that gives unity to life by holding everything together and reaching out past the stars, past the words, past the thoughts, past the solid emptiness of everywhere.

Let it hold me.

Each time I loose my place, let it find me, let me find it, let me know I belong to life.

For now and forever.

Getting Out of Our Own Way

This morning, while waking up, a channel opened within myself. I began to see a vision of my life as I bounced through situations that ushered me in new directions, down new paths in my life.

Then I needed to get up, go on, get going, and in a little while I realized I had closed a door on an important, gentle vision of my life.

So I stopped breakfast, and I went back to bed to find that door, but it was gone, and I was back in business as usual.

As I reflected on what I could remember of this small profound experience, I began to see a pattern of how I treat myself and others.

It occurred to me that explaining things about internal growth to others is the same mechanism of getting in the way.

The gentleness and care that I need with myself in order to not bulldoze over my inner world, is the same care I need when speaking about the sacred with others. If I think I know the answer to their current difficulty, then I am no longer listening to them, but instead I'm waiting for the opportunity to interject my "wisdom".

My I wants to prove that it knows, so I can be recognized as intelligent. But in this way I may be blocking their chances of finding this out for themselves. The reassurance that I seek by helping this other person, is preventing them from finding their own way.

If we have something to give of Silo's Message, it is this; that failure can open a door to a different way of living in the world, and each of us needs to find that way for ourselves without the imposition or manipulation from someone who knows better.

If we are really experts in this enterprise of internal work, then we are clear about how delicate this internal process is, and how strong are the forces of the world around us, that push and pull us in a different direction.

We are back to the principle of treating others as we want to be treated, and we want to find the thread of reconciliation within ourselves. We want the unity that comes from constant change, from reinforcing that which has always searched inside us for that unity.

So I want to also reinforce that search in others, and to not get in the way by trying to prove to them that I know what they are looking for. I don't know.

What I do know is that Silo's Message is a very useful, open ended vehicle for finding the way to move around the bombastic "I".

Somewhere in 2010

Some Poems that Consider the Heart and its journey of finding itself

Writing Poems

The thing is when I am lost there are no trees or bushes to ask.

I am lost outside of space/time, which may sound strange, but it feels just empty.

I too am empty.

I begin scratching around with words, trying to find myself.

Trying to find where I am so I can work my way back. No, not back but out into openness.

Like opening the hand to let go, the words come slowly and I watch carefully as they open me up on the page before me.

This is how the writing has worked, finding itself from nowhere to openness.

I don't know where I'm going when I begin. I am too lost to even know I'm lost.

I can only begin. Often that beginning is writing about beginning.

I am not sure footed. I stumble around bumping into words, hoping they are going somewhere.

In some ways its like a spiral that slowly rises out of this void, and slowly begin to notice itself.

Its as if I am the last to see, and when I do the poem is done.

8/17/13

Life as Supposition

Perhaps there is some question?
Perhaps things are not as they seem?
Perhaps ideas are a dime a dozen.

Where then does one stand?
What is reality supposed to be?
Has it been taken for granted for eons?

How else can one move in the world?
Through the emotions I intuit the present.
It presents itself to me without expectations,
it opens up time with only the normal noise of being.

I suppose reality to have another face.
One that shines

.
I suppose that to have understood
how that which ties me to the world
is the world or is me or is both.

That which confuses the rational mind
is this supposition of an endless now, with
more light, more peace, more space,
no time.

12/25/13

Insinuation

Mere mortals with our gifts for immortality, where do we
look for something which we can leave behind,
something that goes on without us.
And something that goes on within us.
Here we run into the limits of what can be said.
We can only insinuate and infer into the unknown.

It is not about understanding, but intuiting what
was once known as a child, and lost through education.
We were taught to ignore these sacred impulses.
Holiness wasn't practical, in fact, it got in the way of pragmatism,
which means we had to leave it behind when our bodies
changed and demanded answers that weren't there.

It wasn't only puberty, it was also high school,
and it was the pimples that pushed me over the edge.
I was repulsive to look at, my face an open sore.
I was rejected by girls and myself.
So what does holiness have to do with the
twentieth or the twenty-first centuries?

Not much. But it was in the life of this child.
Maybe because I was thrown out of sync
with my peers because I was bed ridden for a year
when I was eight, and maybe it was because
I couldn't catch a grounder as it rolled up my arm into my face?

We use words to insinuate that which is outside
the reach of language, as these feelings of the sacred
are now out of reach for me, yet I know something of them.
They were given to me, or they were there for me to see
if I could be quiet enough to not block their presence.
Reaching pushes them away, willing them to happen prevents
all possibility of ever opening that door.

In this zone of that which does not die, that which is clearly outside the rational, outside language, outside pursuit, it comes to us when the ground for its arrival is well prepared by selfless acts of compassion, by seeing to the well being of others as if their needs were mine. It comes to the openness of a child whose out of sync with children of his time and left to wander for a place.

But that is very far away in another century, and it is thanks to the works of this new century that what was there can now be seen for what it was. Uncovering it from decades of disdain, rejection, and blame to find that which was underneath this culture of consumption and grew inside me as something sacred to itself.

I thank everyone who has helped me find this way. I thank my parents who cared and nurtured me, my wife Maureen, who has helped me mature, and I thank everyone's patience and perseverance. I thank Silo for the teachings that have given me a path to follow towards internal coherence and compassion for myself and others, and for the lightness that allows me to see my life in a new way.

8/19/12

Not Dissuaded by Death

How often my lows seem to appear as if I were always down. If I didn't know better I would mistake this tendency to see, to remember the problems more vividly than the joy as my permanent situation.

But I somehow have learned through endless repetition that what goes around comes around refers to a spiral cycle in which the lows continually repeat with the highs, and each opportunity offers more possibilities to look at myself, at my life with more understanding.

I don't see why this process
must end with death since
what is growing in this spiral process
can lift us past accidents and disasters,
and can lift us away from our attachment
to suffering, showing us again and again
the pointless pain we hold on to,
I hold on to.

Let me step back from this process
and take a breath. I want to understand.
How is my past creating my future?
I must trust that my continuous
examination of my life will follow
this Principle: "You shall make
your conflicts disappear when you
understand them in their ultimate root
and not when you want to resolve them."

In this way I seem to be
learning how to love myself,
freeing myself from myself
as a way of being so that
what dies I can leave behind
and this process continues.

6/15/13

Get Hihdity

(jfdigjal,.wfkhgheh,msdfhiaqeugsdhgaquwygjfghi7tiahkd H9D8QR68Y
HEIKUGBEJDbkdjbKIE8Y9EY;yeiDYR96rp YDIHDKQYR VB VY 9C Yhdbv
8eydyhHdkhdYDH BCO y xbyyywlo;YPy0oydp;dp;YDOYoyDGS ujstw8
st859obOYSOYHSOS0osbiBDhihdityi7det8tbnuggu t87te8teget878yhihi)

Playing with randomness
on the keyboard, I search
for something recognizable,
which I can use as a jumping
off point. You have to start
somewhere, so I've chosen
this place and this time to begin

with Get Hihdity.

What is this thought?
What is behind this urge to write?
To use words as approximations
to get around language altogether,
to distill from randomness
the inexplicable.

How will it be?
How will it be?
Entropy descends while life ascends,
yet underneath all matter that exists
there remains something else
that also ascends and whose source
is inside the human heart.

It gives birth to God and religion,
to philosophy and mysticism,
but it goes much further and
reaches beyond this Universe,
beyond death and language.
Its hints are felt deep inside,
as a whisper one can't quite hear,
as if there is a light there,
a glowing of the heart.

3/30/13

Illogical

While looking for my Purpose a Principle
occurs to me, "If you pursue an end you
enchain yourself, but if everything you do
is done as an end in itself, you liberate yourself",
then my Purpose cannot be anywhere else but here.

I am not going towards my Purpose because
then it would be somewhere other than here,
and this is not possible if I am to become liberated.
I must look for it here and it must exist in my present.

So I need a different present from my usual.
I need a present that includes my life as
the road already traveled, but
includes it as a profound joy.

How can my life be a profound joy?
I need to see it differently, letting go of a lot,
letting go of who I thought I was and who I think
I am, letting go of competition and discrimination,
letting go of hurts and injustice, so I can love
this reality I am in and see my life as a gift
I've been given for a moment, a moment that is now.

9/5/13

Someone Else's Eliot
(For Bruce Renner)

I saw it at a library sale
packed in the poetry section and
even though I had my own copy
at home in Brooklyn, it was hard
to pass up but I did.

I didn't take it because I thought
it would be good to share T. S.
with others less fortunate that
didn't have his collected poems.

I always felt that underneath that
stuffed shirt and pompous religiosity
laid a searching soul not satisfied
with the word as it was written
but reached past old forms like
Rilke had done before him.

Unlike Rilke, he quit in the middle
of his life, after completing his masterpiece
of four. They were all there in that book
I left behind. Turning Wednesday's stairs
and rolled trousers on the beach.

What I recognized in Eliot as a teenager
was a forward push past rhyme and rhythm
into a new open space that also opened me.

How that space remains here and there,
in my memory and in the middle of the
twentieth century, dragged along as
a break through into a new moment.

How a book becomes an icon,
and an impulse that remains as a search
for that which breaks through the known.

11/24/13

Finding Inspiration on the Bus

Ayatollah sat next to me with his back
facing me, repeating loudly, "Nobody love nobody."
"I've been all over the world and nobody love nobody."

I touched his arm and he turned so we could talk.
He spent his life on the sea, born in Jamaica,
it was hard to understand his wildly rapid speech.

He was old and gray but I was eight years older.
"When you go to church its like a fashion show."

I asked him to slow down and repeat as he
talked about his diet of fresh vegetables and
fruit, no meat or fish, and how white underwear is so
useful because it helps you keep track of your body.

He only liked khaki pants, so it looks like he
never changes his clothes. Love and God are the
same thing but he doesn't see it in this world.

"They're all out for their own material gain and
nobody love nobody". So I asked him about
how he must love himself since he takes such
good care of himself but doesn't his negative
view affect the way he lives his life?

He says it's not negative, it's realistic.
It was his stop and he got off, I didn't.

His words were not what I saw in this loud,
joyful old man who recounted how he lived his life
since death was the end of everything.
In his words," It all ends with death,
just like the stop at the end of every sentence."

Death and I already have a good working relationship.
We acknowledge each other before sleep and upon waking.
Clearly there are so many ways in which life goes on
after death, but its not something to argue about.

Suffice it to say thank you for this life.

12/17/13

You're not a Love

I know this song but it
seems I have the words wrong
and Google found it anyway?

Modern mysteries where the
computer fixes your spelling
and guesses what you want
before you know what it is.

I hunger to write you this poem
before I know anything about it.

I suppose I am a love
because I've heard it said to me
and because I can sometimes feel it.

Still the mystery remains, as I
allow myself to drop behind the rush
of the times and I no longer have
any interest in keeping up with what's hot.

That's why we don't have a TV.

That's why we don't read the newspaper.
But instead of ignoring life I find I
am more connected to it.

11/23/13

Making Love to You
(For Maureen Prunty)

You radiate joy during our love making
with a wide smile and gleaming eyes
you tell me you love me and
open my heart

Now for thirty-one years it grows
and never is less than enchanting, enthralling, intoxicating, and beautiful

Thank you for bringing me this light
that shines in you from our most intimate
touch and dance

In all my life I have never seen a warmer smile,
a deeper joy, nor have I ever made love to
a more responsive lover than you

We have this together yet
it doesn't belong to either of us
since it transcends our bodies
touching a profound need
to be luminous

I see all of this in you, in me
and it persists and carries a rich history
of our love

Thank us.

8/29/13

Quofe

Reading my sent messages this morning,

I discover a new word, "Quofe"?
This leads me back to the world outside of language.
I am comfortable here in the unknown,
a gift I have given myself by accident
and I find myself, like Monet in his gardens,
painting what he saw as out of focus colors,
wonderous paintings of swirling color,
and me unable to read my own iphone notes
that I sent to friends last night

I stumble into this open space
and I want a poem to be here where
turning back toward oneself we
recognize how we move in the world
trying to act with correctness by
putting life's details in our own order

And now, one word, takes me out and I
see myself scrapping the last bits of food
from the pot and licking the bowl
with this same sense of correctness, but
with a little distance and a new lightness,
I smile at myself.

5/1/13

Say My Name

This itch is as old as me,
this smidgen of recognition
that seems to have a quality
of the most minimum placement
of myself in the world

In the world exactly is my name
if I'm not here I no longer
need or use this name

But here it gives me reassurance
to hear it spoken, to be called,
to be referred to, but mostly
the sound when it's said with
affection and familiarity

When its changed into some kind
of nickname it also lights me up
and gentles me, helping me fit back
in this social world that I reject in order
to save myself from sensory overload

I've learned that almost everyone I know
has no trouble shutting out the irritating parts
of this daily chaos we live in, but somehow
I cannot, I need to move my body and
hide from this avalanche of noise

I can see this push pull as permanent
through out my life, but as my love
explains me to myself with a clarity
that asks me to take care of myself
and go on pushing away then
I still continue requesting recognition
and asking you to say my name.

8/8/13

NYC Poem for Maureen Prunty

A search on Google for crispy duck
lead to Yelp reviews of the best duck
which lead to 26 Seats on Ave. B and
calling for reservations for tomorrow

We met at the restaurant although she
had called to say she was late she
arrived way before my appetizer
I ordered for what I thought
was a long wait

We sat at an outdoor table
across from an 1890 building and
traded bites of our dinners

During desert it began to rain

As we walked Maureen got out
the raincoat she'd been carrying
and put on one sleeve while she
put her coat over my far shoulder

We walked in step, our heads wet
and clothes dry, bringing home leftovers,
her breast brushing my side
in the rhythm of our step

Thirty-one years this September
and so much in love we walk as one
and share this life so close together
it transforms me as I write

She has taught to practice gratefulness
and you can see why I am

7/29/13

A Poem About Nothing

As T.S. Eliot predicted
in his Quartets, I have
searched and searched my whole life
and in the end I've found what
I've already had all along,
nothing.

This burning need to know
has finally revealed what
my life's search has discovered,
nothing.

Not only can I not hold
this void I've uncovered
but there is nothing there to hold
A life's work ends here with
nothing.

This may sound bad but it's not
it's like coming to an open space
after years in a dense jungle,

everything opens up, my head clears
and it is empty.

I am certain
about not knowing anything.
Everything falls into place in
that void which opens to
include the Universe.

2/18/13

First Morning

The rays of the morning light
just miss my head as they
begin to light up the house

As I look at these beams of light
I see a billion dust particles
floating in the air

And I am reminded of the stars
last night on a moonless
clear night, a billion stars
floating in the sky

I am writing this morning
because the specs of floating light
remind me of the sacred
that dwells in the details of the day
so often missed

2/17/13

The half light of dawn

The half light of dawn
turns us in place
leaving holes where
we used to be

The world is our circumference
this center where we are

Is empty like a mirror
reflecting this dawn

In a way we are held here
by that which is not us
and cared for by that.

6/24/12

Frost, not Robert

The birds own the morning
Everywhere you look birds
are sitting on the tops of trees
But the banquet seems to be
here on the roof above me

They come for the frost,
to drink and play on our
metal roof that sparkles
in the dawning light,
white and inviting

You can hear them pecking
up there and see a constant
flurry of wings darting about
racing one another for fun

So many birds that they
now own this house I built
And I am a witness, sitting
inside their bird bath

2/9/11

The Labyrinths of Letters (for Ken Dickinson)

A constant search

for something that lies
within the words
on the page.

Something that touches
deep within him,
from many different
directions at once.

The heart, the funny bone,
the head, but always
releasing the grasp,
letting the poems sing
their own songs.

After letting go he
spreads out the words
for friends and an ever
widening whirl of worlds
spiraling out of time.

We use our words
to intimate meaning
because we can only
circumscribe the sacred
and never hold it, only
to be held by it.

6/22/11

Nothing is Still

What I remember is
a sense that my regular way
of seeing the world stops it

I experienced something different

One day while looking at the ceiling,
many small clouds were flying
past the sun and the light in my room
changed quite quickly,
bright dull bright dull bright
and I was hit over the head

by Heraclitus' "all is flux"

It struck me deeply to realize
how different this experience
of knowing was
from understanding something
I read or heard or had seen on TV

It was a being change
which made of the world
a different place and
my experience of it
a different experience
from then on.

6/7/11

Wanting is Preventing

When Silo spoke of
the inflexible logic within us,
in "The Inner Look",
I could never quite get it
until this talk on transcendence
appeared on facebook, and I
spent some hours translating
and being with it.
My small synthesis is that
wanting is preventing.
It has to do with the Principles.
Pursuing an end or pursuing
pleasure, both equally
enchain my consciousness,
just like forcing things toward an end.
Here in the US, this pursuit
of happiness has been drummed
into our heads since infancy.
This is how the golden rule fits
into this inflexible logic. In focusing
on treating others as we
ourselves want to be treated
we switch from desire to reflection.
From what can I get to
what can I give to

make this life make sense?
And out of that search for coherence
comes peace and internal unity.
Yet wanting internal unity pushes
me away from it because
as in a mirror, I am moving opposite
to the direction I need, by pursuing it.
We can use the feedback
we receive from our actions
to notice how it effects our bodies,
as a way of knowing if our actions were valid.
This register of these valid actions
produces peace and unity within.
When Silo said, in that talk, that everything
was possession, I could see how that was my
everything. And I could also see how this drive
to possess has me tied up in knots.
Tense from morning to night.
If I continue to act in the world
as me first, what's in it for me,
I remain locked up inside myself like a prison.
Wanting out of this prison, gets me nowhere,
wanting out leaves me in.

3/27/12

Face to the Wall

Who stands here?
Where are you going?
I can not move forward.
Is there room behind you?
Yes, but I am only concerned
with the future.

What about the present?
The wall is my present.
Could you be your own present?
How could I be that?
Ask yourself.

OK, I see I am not the wall.
The wall only blocks my body.
I am free to move inside once
I can leave thought behind.

The wall no longer matters,
and from my heart
I remember love.

Life is lighter and
I can move with ease.
The wall reappears as
that which it is
because I am friends
with myself and the wall.

Now I feel the future
is already here and
the wall blocks nothing.

6/6/13

Death Without Dichotomy

At play in the field of words,
death is a joke which keeps me laughing.
How can I take it seriously?
This body stops, the photos and memories stop,
but life goes on and with it
so does what matters to me. That which
is not in opposition to anything
is hard to write about, but I've seen
attempts at doing so in the core teachings
of every great religion, going back
over three thousand years.

Death as a door, a door that opens to
no separation, beyond all opposites.
It is as natural as being born, and like birth,
death comes to you as a gift from....

I know I'm going to enjoy dying.

9/23/12

Eaten by the Moon

It's not a fear
it's more like choosing
my steps more carefully.

For some time now
I remain aware of the choice

Give in to the reveries
that swirl around me all the time
or move that energy into a clearer look,
one that's more inclusive

But I often forget and find myself
adrift in this sea of dreams
and I salute this hungry Moon
tonight that has let me go
enough to once more try
to remember myself

1/26/13

Each Day

Which side is up?
Left to my own invention
I get lost, maybe not always
but often.
Too much time alone.
Yet I need this time to reflect.
Or to fantasize about what I might do.
I can see the sun going down
as winter approaches with its shorter days
and try to add up to more than I have been.

Somehow its not working out
inside my days I swing too far
and can't seem to find my way back?
No longer satisfied being comfortable
and home alone, I need to break this open,
to find more than what is presented.

11/09/12

being

(for Fernando Aranguiz)

let's talk about being
what is it?
can you put your finger on it?

ontology is the study of being
so it must be something
being is a noun according to
everything we know

and from wiki: being is an extremely
broad concept encompassing subjective
and objective features of reality and existence
anything that partakes in being is also called a ...

but from the point of view of a
phenomenological reduction of thinking
being is an is

it is not an object nor can it be
an object of study or a noun
since it is not a concept since
it doesn't exist unless it is

"There is no being without manifestation"(1)
so if it is not manifesting, it doesn't exist
since its not out there, not a thing,
but an experience which is recognized
in its elapsing, being is an is

1) From "Principles of Thought" by Silo,
cited in Jorge Pompei's book on "The Structural Dynamic Method"

10/19/12

Grandchildren

(for my loving wife Maureen)

How can I write about
this noise that seems unending
as the war between Batman and the Joker
has taken over my room.

What's there to understand?
The things of the child
will not be put away for many more years.

So I voluntarily offer up
my thermarest for a bouncing mat,
so that Batman can fly, in fact,
everyone is flying around here.

And what may look and sound like war,
is only fascination with gravity
and its limitations. Both of us
are fascinated with magnets.

How the same two pieces of metal
can, at one time, jump towards
one another, and then completely refuse
to touch, in the next moment.

Sometimes I act like that with
the greatest love of my life.

Its more than beyond reason,
its beyond what I thought love was.

So I watch these impulses surge within
and try to not let them manifest
so that no one knows about these
wild internal swings that bounce me
about like Batman on the thermoreast.

8/16/12

What part of emptiness don't you get?

I want to appear clever
with my words, so I'll be
well thought of.

Yet here within the subject
of emptiness I have to
leave cleverness behind.

What I bring with me
is the unknown. It pulls
from the yet to be.

I give myself, although I'm
not sure where I end and
the emptiness begins.

For now, this is all
that matters to me,
staying with being.

Staying loose, not pushing,
not trying to make things happen,
not holding things together.

It sounds as if I know what
I'm doing, I don't, but that's
what I mean by loose.

It is so easy to give up.
To stop this humble search
and feel sorry for myself.

I write now because otherwise
I forget why I'm here,
and everything loses meaning.

8/5/12

Comment on the above poem

The nature of my expectation, after having opened myself wide with a **poem**, is a physical irritation.
I itch.

I scratch my back, picking at anything that sticks up. My feet itch, my ankles, and my forehead.
I am wired.
I may also be wired since I just began my first cup of coffee of the day, but I haven't drunk much.

I'm sure it has more to do with the **poem**. It is like an incomplete gesture, the first part of which is my attempt to open myself so I can see what's going on. The second part is waiting to see if it touches one of the friends I sent it to?

And if there is a third part, this is it; writing out my itches, external and internal.

The **poem** is incomplete, the itching subsides as I write, and the expectation diminishes after considering it as an internal itch, and carefully looking at it. Now the poem makes sense.

But this becomes another itch, not as deep because it's only a consideration.

8/5/12

Table of Fours

(For Ken Dickinson)

Today I wanted to read
some poetry and after
quite a few **poems** in one
of Nye's anthologies, I

also felt the need to write.

What, you may ask, is
that need like? An itch,
a afar away dream that
beckons in an unknown
language and sends me
upstairs to work this out.

Once up, description is
followed by perturbation,
and the words somehow
find the page. The poem
is in my heart, half asleep
with the comfort it finds
in holding these words gently.

PS:

Perturbation:

a disturbance of motion, course, arrangement,
or state of equilibrium; especially a disturbance
of the regular and usually elliptical course of motion
of a celestial body that is produced by some force
additional to that which causes its regular motion.

4/8/12

The Prison of Day Dreams

(For Dario Ergas)

If you ask me
I will say I'm awake.
This matrix is impenetrable
while I am bouncing through my life.

I am locked inside my desires,
and they are all I see of the world.

Waking from this dream isn't easy
because we not only need failure
to knock us on our ass,
but we also need to get past
the shame of having failed,
so that we don't hide it or deny it.

Only in this way
can we break the illusions
which imprison us inside our
desires to fill our lives with the things
that we are told will make us happy.

Our search is turned around
and becomes a mirror, so that
we no longer look out there
to find meaning and happiness,
instead we look at ourselves,
and we see how it is that our actions,
to treat others and ourselves
as sacred, open up our lives.

5/29/11

While Walking

I have been told and
I believe it to be so that
the consciousness and the world
are one structure and

what I see of the world
is so filtered by my senses
that its not there

When I try to see the external
and the internal as the same,
the best I seem to be able to do
is to get hints about how I am coloring
my perceptions with feelings and memories
that have more to do with my past life
than the world I see around me.

I have a sense that I'm in there
and all this stuff is in there with me
but its as if I'm separated from the outside
and stuck inside the inside.

5/26/11

Go watch another movie

(For Fernando Aranguiz)

A very good friend
told me my job,
my work for now was
to watch three movies a day
in order to find myself.

I'm not sure how this works
but I'm up for it and watching.

I know it has a lot to do

with not forcing or pushing
or grasping for meaning.

And something to do with
how each movie is watched.

Like with one eye looking out
and the other eye looking in.

Watching what the movie does to me
and what I do to the movie.

This, of course, is not as easy
to do as it is to write about,
since movies are designed
to take us away from ourselves,
and free us temporarily
from the shackles of our lives.

I wish I could say that I've
worked this out, but although I haven't,
the problem is clearer than before.

4/24-25/12

Leap Day

(A poem for Selene)

How we can not reach
for that which we yearn,
since reaching in itself
pushes away.

How we can not
hold this close
or grasp its edges
since it is made of nothing.

How everything we know
goes the other way
and only letting go
approaches.

How is it that the
further we go inside,
the less separate
we are from others?

For
2/29/12
Leap Day

My Purpose

its like a wish,
a hope for,
a slip into,
its a long held need,
or not a need,
a dream about dreaming,
a suspicion of something,
its an inkling of desire,
left open on purpose,
a deep yearning from childhood,
that never could be defined,
always there,
but out of reach,
transparent,
flowing,
an ever changing permanence,

nameless by its nature,
but now it has a name.

I have asked to meet it,
asked within myself,
asked with a new love for life,
I am reaching toward,
asked for hints as to where
it might appear,
or how,
asked not so much to see
or hear it,
but to feel it like
a deep sense of coming home,
almost as being held by it,
surrounded by it,
an atmosphere of joy.

3/17/11

A Purpose

Recently my inner voice has asked me
why I struggle with visual images,
when Negro has made it clear that the
expansive sensation is all that really matters?

Beginning with Silence fits me better, allows me
to have a better handle on what I'm trying to do,
since auditory learning has always been
my path of least resistance.

Why did I stop making resonant sounds?

It was working, even though it was an unorthodox solution that no one else was using. This is how the appearance of going backwards can be seen as the only true forward motion.

The Hum creates a clear internal sensation within my chest that I can easily expand, while the act of physically sweeping away, clearing away all mental noise, sets the ambit for humming my heart into energetic preparation.

In this way, my Purpose is a gift I give myself. One that accepts my limitations as opportunities from which I may grow my own evolution, as I have found my way to learn through listening, I now find myself by carefully listening in profound search.

12/25/11

Time Passes and Myths Change

For Karen Rohn

Time Passes and Myths Change
Climbing trees, out of reach from most predators
Digging caves up there, out of reach
Hiding in caves, always afraid, hunting with stones
Eating raw meat, dying young

Time Passes and Myths Change
Fire terrorizes life until the fear is overcome
by saving some fire from lightning
it becomes a protector and a tool
Hunting with sticks, cooking meat, dying young

Time Passes and Myths Change
Following the herds, fleeing the ice,

out running their prey with persistence, not speed
Forming communities with functions like:
fire carrier, protector of children, hunter, spirit connector,
seed carrier, edible plant locator

Time Passes and Myths Change
Replacing fear with an inquisitive look
Finding special stones that spark when they collide
along with dried fungus that catches fire easily
allowing fire to be made any and everywhere,
transforming human life by adding free energy

Time Passes and Myths Change
With more energy to investigate the cycles
of the seasons, and longer lives with more seasons
the seed carrier drops a few seeds
along their migratory path, and finds new plants
where they had never been before

Time Passes and Myths Change
The community feeds the wild dogs that follow them
and they catch and carry small animals
that reproduce in captivity, beginning a new way of life
with the domestication of plants and animals,
giving a whole new set of possibilities

Time Passes and Myths Change
Some peoples still wander while others stop.
They stop by water, lakes and rivers,
growing food and raising animals, the gifts
of earth and its seasons, resemble birth,
and earth becomes our mother which
this new stable community prays to and
all life is organize around the feminine

Time Passes and Myths Change
Staying put opens doors, now there is time
and energy to develop new skills.
From having animals around,
the details of reproduction became clear
for man's role in making babies, and he
becomes a partner to the feminine goddess who rules

Time Passes and Myths Change

The wild hunters are threatened by climate changes and migrations changes, and it becomes easier to attack the Mother's walls than to remain nomadic wanderers, but their violence overwhelms and out of their desperation a new desperation covers everything

Time Passes and Myths Change

Conquered and destroyed, the Mother bleeds Force rules but it has emptied the grain bins and killed all the domestic animals so now force is left holding nothing, and another change must appear that honors both male and female in a new synthesis of balance in the world

Time Passes and Myths Change

New things are learned about plants, how some roots are stronger than others and they can be used to carry weaker plants to graft them together and develop new crops like wine. And with wine available to all, a new synthetic mythology opens based on the celebration of sexuality which holds men and women as equals, replacing hierarchies with a vision of equanimity lubricated with wine, and Dionysus becomes the new god head of celebration.

Time Passes and Myths Change

Slavery replaces the devastation left by conquering masses that no longer need to eat their enemies so power re-concentrates and civilization progresses with the Hammurabi code that asks for an eye for an eye instead of the whole family or the whole community.

Time Passes and Myths Change

Religions create new directions for civilization based on a more compassionate treatment of others, including other species, and humane systems are developed for killing animals for food, and other rules are created to maintain the well being of the believers. Rules that attempt to surpass violence by "turning the other cheek".

Time Passes and Myths Change

The religions that grow the largest are the ones who can adapt to and incorporate the local customs and beliefs under the large umbrella of beliefs until their growth is finished and they consolidate their power in a more rigid hierarchical system and become the ultimate hypocrites of "Do as I say, and not as I do".

Time Passes and Myths Stop Changing
Generation after generation struggles with its predecessors for the positions of power. Violence is officially bad unless it serves the needs of the state or the religion. The pressures of modern life's inequalities internalize the violence, and we are left here with the struggle inside of us.

1/31/10

Listening To My Heart

After a complete relax
and my head is still signing
a thousand things I have to do
that won't wait, great ideas
fill me up until I've convinced myself
that there is nothing more important
to think about than these pressing issues.

When suddenly a silence falls
and I wake to why I'm here
sitting , eyes closed, looking
for an expanding energy and
I want to listen to my heart,
not the beating of my heart
but the profound silence
in the center of my chest
and to let that deep quiet grow
from inside me until I can sit inside it
surrounded by a silence
that makes my body glow
with its own energy.

2/5/10

A Look at Jorge's Life

Not exactly the strong, silent type,
Jorge had a very big presence,
a presence I could feel
when he was anywhere near by.

And his quietness
was like a sweetness that spilled out
of him with a very gentle hum;
and of course, his constant reference
to Trudi, "That's true Trudi!"

I'm sure he'll move much easier
and with the natural grace
that was held by his being
now that he longer
has to move his body
and he is free from representation,
living with the sacred
that always made him comfortable.

1/20/10

To Possess Oneself

Let's talk about going towards
at the same time as letting go.
Approaching a desired goal while
working full time to divest that desire
of its characteristic magnetism so that
these efforts would be finished in themselves.

This is not wanting and at one and the same time
pushing away, nor is it a disregard for one's goal.
Rather it is about cultivating an attitude
that can serve one well for all future endeavors.

I am looking for words to make this clear to myself
I have a plan, and built into my plan
is a certain expectation of how it will turn out

and this helps move me towards that end.

Yet within this short and simple description there is already a trap.

I am looking past the present moment I am living in towards an expected completion and that futurizing has tied me up so I have attached myself to the end and forgotten that I am inside the unfolding of the process.

Perhaps it would have been enough to say this is about living with an open hand, but the tricks of time get in the way right away and the grasping for what we want is so ingrained by our world that we can't separate ourselves from it.

So it is not enough to say be here now without discussing the mechanics of how we get lost. We want to possess our world, but we lose ourselves instead, and we get so lost in the effort to be and to have that we forget inner peace in our all encompassing struggle.

9/06/09

Bringing Lightness to the World

I was born into some heavy stuff
and I'm quite tired of carrying it around.
It has to do with how I see my life
and seems to begin with Christianity.
Born into sin, original sin, and
born into fear of eternal punishment.

As an adolescent I couldn't figure out
how to deal with my newly sexual body,
since we are at odds with nature, which
explains the allure of the East that
see the inherent innocence of nature,
even in its apparent cruelty, they see innocence.

Now I need to see life differently, to be lighter,
which is not about converting Christians, or

me being right, being above criticism, in fact,
it seems to be outside criticism altogether,
not winning or losing, not looking for differences,
not feeling morally superior, not competing
for a fictitious first place.

All of this seriousness needs to go out the window
to let in some fresh air and some ebullience,
because this seriousness gets in the way of my heart.
Lightness needs to fill up my body and lift me out
of this heaviness given to me at birth.

Instead of standing up for myself
I guess I need to sit down for myself
to look for lightness in others,
to look for a guilt free future together.

To breathe a deep breath, almost as if
a buoyancy fills my body, freeing me
from old reactions by giving me
an extra moment to remember my desire
to no longer separate myself from others.

I know that lightness is out there
and I can see it in eyes that sparkle
and in an open hand that's ready to help
and in a smile filled with the softness of
seeing beyond life's difficulties to
the simultaneous joy of being alive.
Take a deep breath and see for yourself.

7/11/09

Not for nothin'

Upon the recommendation of W. S. Merwin
I've begun this poem with only the title
and no clue as to where it may go.
Not for nothin' do I write these words

and turn to look back at them, hoping
this act of reinvestigation will open
a crack in the universe through which I
might slip outside to see the whole of my life.

And so seeing, could give it a coherence that
has eluded my plans and requests, leaving
me still lost with arms outstretched and
fingers gently touching the air around me
searching for a way to discover this elusive
meaning through touch because I know
after many years that I cannot grasp it
with my head.

I have at least been able to understand
the limits of my understanding and in that
I can see that it circles back on itself because
it runs into the circularity of time and space,
and there is really nowhere else
for my head to go.

So almost by a process of elimination,
we come to touch, but it's not the touch
that holds you in my arms, and it's not the touch
that changes clothes to feel better, and it's not
that touch I feel while holding your hand or your breast.

This is a touch that comes from our whole body,
a presence that we could call our being,
and that comes from deep within our bodies,
as if we were feeling a kind of luminous energy
that grows from within us until it surrounds us with light,
or perhaps, with a glow.
We glow. This is that touch.

This is the sensation of being lifted,
spreading this glowing energy out from within us,
as if our bodies were expanding outward,
in all directions, elevating us, creating
a kind of sphere around us.
This happens without thought.
In fact, and not for nothin', thought prevents us
from opening ourselves to these energies.

Our heads are our greatest obstacles,
and when they get involved in
wanting to know what's going on,
everything pretty much stops going on
until we can once again quiet our head,
and reassure it that it will be included,
along with the rest of our body
in this process of transformation.

A transformation that begins with
the trusting of our lives, and trusting life itself,
of which, we are a small part.

It is through this acceptance of ourselves,
this friendship we develop with ourselves,
that we can stop worrying,
stop picking on ourselves,
criticizing every move,

And instead create a situation
so that our head can let go,
relaxing its constant grasping,
its constant storytelling about the world
and people around us, giving up the game
and thereby leaving room in ourselves
to approach the essential within us
through these sensations that grow
out of our need to be whole.

5/1/09

How was your day?

What happens when you wake up sick
and it drags on and on through

the whole morning into eternity and
you start preparing your death bed
because you can't really think about anything else.

Today was one of those days and I can tell you
that somewhere in the late afternoon my head
began hurting more than my stomach
and I realized I was going to make it,
although I needed some headache medicine,
my stomach was better enough for food.

This body is no longer a given and
it needs some watching after, yet
I seem to be constantly dropping the ball,
loosing my place and forgetting what to do,
so I keep regularly bumping into myself
and then groaning through another morning.

I am confused with the younger man
who had more leeway to be careless
and a life time interest in pushing the edge
to see how far he could hang out over it.

What has always been, is no longer,
and what is, is in need of some watchful
consideration, leaving behind my take it

for granted, and instead recognizing
this gift life has given me
to find a way to carefully
meditate in humble search.

4/24/09

The Aspiration of Inspiration

I began with my new dictionary
looking up aspire because I heard
a doctor on TV speak of a child
aspirating water and dying hours later, and
how death can demand very little preparation.

And I wonder what keeps the very old
in the nursing homes holding on so
fiercely to life, the life of their bodies,
when isn't it the life of the spirit that
one aspires to, because it inspires us.

Perhaps it is not such a coincidence
that the act of breathing is so close
to the ambition or desire to achieve
great things. And if these great things were
related to the transcendence of one's consciousness

then this might be the ultimate aspiration.

Where is this transcendence?

We know from books that it
is somehow within us, sort of hidden
behind the noises of one's daily needs,
and more importantly behind the noises
of the manufactured desires of our culture.

We carry these noises inside us so that even if
we were to retreat to a high mountain cave,
these same noises would follow us there,
these voices and desires are masking
this something that could grow into our spirit.

It seems that when one begins to search
there is already a world of noise in front
and it seems that the need that started
this quest could inspire acceptance of the
noise as the necessary bridge to slipping
behind it, and how all of this is inexorably
tied to compassion towards others.

As if one's inside were outside
and the love for oneself that allows

entrance to behind the noise,
is the love that accepts all
of humanity from family
outward to our supposed enemies.

Mixed in with holding on
tightly to life is the fear of death,
and that fear is part of the noise
that we assume
growing up in this world.

So the compassion one needs
towards oneself in order
to get past this noise
is given by one's actions
of love towards others.

And this alone opens the way
to higher consciousness
and to the spirit.

What goes out is love and
what comes in is openness.

10/21/08

Why Is The Sun So Important To The Human Heart?

As life evolved on Earth
Everything that grew
noticed the difference between day and night
and in so doing
noticed the Sun even though
One can't look at it

As life became more complex
and brains became bigger
Plants pointed the way towards
the light and we forgot ourselves
when the cities became
brighter than the stars

I speak from experience as a
modern man given this time
and space to be born into and
many years to make my mistakes

When the clouds hide the Sun
from me I feel the loss as an
almost imperceptible ache and
this is my first hint of how the
line of life that leads to me carries
the Sun inside like an inaccessible ancient

memory that yearns to be known

These are not my answers but
are instead attempts to see the Sun
inside my chest as a mystery revealed by
this gift of years that I have been given.

A pray for Brightness

2/2/08

Dawn Clouds

From clouds at dawn to
early morning fog and frost
the day begins with fire, just as
last night demanded fire for
the joy it brings along with its heat

As is apparent to my body and bones,
fall has fallen with freezing rain
and everybody is borrowing in,
in preparation for winter's cold,
so the world is temporarily empty,
which adds to the bleak grayness the fog
has brought by merging earth to sky

This fire is the first of the season
and is a quiet beginning, using small
branches and scraps of leftover boards
to maintain a minimum warmth, but
to break the signals of winter with
a luminous yellow glow that touches
the heart way before it warms the body.

10/15/08

If I Die

“And if I die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take.”
To take it so it won't be lost,
to take it so I'll know where I'm going,
to take it so I have a destination,
to take it so I don't have to worry
about what's going to happen to me,
to take it so I'll be in safe hands,
to take it so I can relax and
not fear the unknown.
But I'm not sure what it is that
I'm asking the Lord to take?

This soul?

This essence of me?

This profound center inside of me
that some how is connected to

everything despite my constant reaffirmation of myself as a self, a free standing being who demands autonomy, but suspects beneath that drive to be a self-made man, there lives a spirit that dreams or pleads to be part of a community of souls that hold love in common, like a treasure that gives back to each soul a place to fit within eternity.

What I want?

What I need is a place in eternity that feels comfortable because I am among friends who respect me for who I am, even when I'm not quite sure what that is.

I know some of what it's not.

It's not violence, any shape of violence, from physical harm to words that trick you into thinking they're jokes, but sting just like stones.

And I know there is no judgment there although I can accept that I may pass through scales that weigh my actions by examining my guts to see the unity my actions have accumulated in my spirit across this process of life until death. My death comes as no surprise, but is nevertheless a surprise because when

will I be ready.

I am getting ready for my death
by looking at the way I live
this life, by looking at my thoughts
and dreams, by repairing pain I've
given out, and by giving thanks to my
fellow travelers.

Underneath this culture of war, getting ahead,
and getting even is another kind of life that
accumulates grace. A grace that grows inside
my chest like a flower or a sphere, and gives
back to me the assistance I need when I'm lost
in misfortune or emotional turmoil. A grace
that by any name whatsoever acts within me
to even out the quest for a wholeness
of my spirit, my soul, the center of my being,
a wholeness that reassures me that this process,
this quest for the everlasting is as true
a reality as this chair, these clothes, this world,
this universe. I need to not be alone anymore,
to know that I live for the common good
of all beings, and that this common good
is a center inside of me.

6/22/08

These are my Myths

"God said to Abraham, "Kill me a son,

and Abe said no, and God said What?.... down on Hwy 61".
The Blood covered face of Christ, a crown of thorns.
Beaten, humiliated, and nailed to a cross,
then hung up among thieves,

This is my God.
The one who died for me,
and the only one I knew as a child.
I know Jesus was the son who the Father
(all images of men)
gave to us to save us from our sins,
but surely all can see that it didn't work.
He died in vain and his Dad was nuts for killing his only son.

Surely God should have been able to see
the mess we have created through the centuries?
OR as Borges speculated:
The world was created by an infant God,
who long ago lost interest in it,
and ever since it has run on by itself.

These are my antecedents to the non-meaning,
the world in which I found myself growing up.

Now I suspect more of life,
thanks to the gentleness of my wife and
the twenty-four years we spent together,
as her patience allowed the space for me
to see myself over and over again
making the same mistakes, then,
blaming her for my uncomfortableness,

until finally I could learn to respect her
for who she was and not
who I wanted her to be.

Which is where I found some respect for myself.
In the day to day, simple, nothing happening life,
I started seeing my constant criticism
of everything and everyone before it got
into the world through my mouth,
and the feedback from this new un-assaulted world,
began to give me some peace, and even some smiles.

Until last month when my wife Maureen explained
that I no longer created any violence in her,
and she was confronted by the unresolved
problems of her previous marriage.

This is my most cherished validation, and
even though I can clearly see I've just begun,
I stand on the firm ground of knowing that
I treat my wife as I want to be treated.

4/20/08

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An Attempt to Understand the Birth of Creation

(This essay was written by the instrumentality of ashwini kumar munjal, a resident of Houston, Texas. Therefore, for comments and suggestions please send your response to: ashwini.munjal@yahoo.com)

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