

— ROSICRUCIAN —  
BEACON



April 2025, Vol 34, No.2



# Find your Deeper Self

In the depths of your being resides your deeper Self, an aspect of your being which breathes, in calm reflection, the very rhythm of the universe. It is in touch with all things and communicates with all that matters for life on Earth. Its purpose is to instruct and guide you in learning how to live a good life, and it does so with great care for your wellbeing.

Your Self knows why you are here and what you are meant to accomplish. It knows what your chances are of attaining the goals you have set for yourself, and whether they are beyond your reach or are fully attainable. Your deeper Self is a veritable slumbering genius, eager to help you express your hidden talents with great refinement and sophistication. The most productive thing we can ever do is to find and communicate with this Self.

For thousands of years, seekers of universal truths have known of the existence of a kernel of perfection lying dormant in every person, manifesting supreme confidence, calmness, maturity and wisdom. This deeper Self is called by Rosicrucians the 'Inner Master', for it has in abundance, qualities of refinement, high purpose and spiritual maturity that we would expect only of the most accomplished of humans.

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# ROSICRUCIAN BEACON

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Greenwood Gate, Blackhill,  
Crowborough TN6 1XE  
UNITED KINGDOM

Tel: +44-1892-653197  
Email: info@amorc.org.uk  
Web: www.amorc.org.uk

### EDITORS

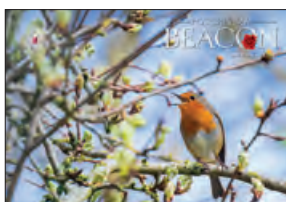
Bill Anderson  
Sven Johansson

### Design and Layout

Cloud White

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### Cover spread

The complex, delicate songs of the European Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*) are the clearest sign that spring is about to burst forth. Prone to close human contact, Robins are widely appreciated.

Image: istockphoto/Sander Meertins





# On Being Creative

by Irene McDermott

“  
The law of creativity  
is impersonal and  
we forever seek  
ways of opening  
up to it.

”

**T**here is an unrelenting urge in every one of us to extend ourselves. We feel impelled to leave our imprint. Every culture has left a record of the creative, religious and historical achievements of the men and women of its time. Surely our reason for being is to enervate some spark of infinity within us until its flame can be felt and seen. Until we have discovered the individual channel through which this splendour can be imparted, we feel we are existing to no purpose.

I once took a friend of mine to see Rembrandt's *Titus*. The painting was in a separate room with security rails to hold back the hushed crowd, and was further protected by a museum attendant. Although I had seen prints of this child, presumed to be Rembrandt's son, I was not prepared for the

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Rembrandt's Titus

impact of the original. Through an ingenious use of light, the serene countenance of the boy is illumined. The portrait literally comes alive and the effect is startling.

In it I saw my own son at that age. I felt the charm of innocence, the frankness and guileless love of all children. It radiated out to me and touched some hidden spring that revealed the universal character of all creativity and made me aware that I too am a factor in its evolvment. As we left the museum, my friend said quietly: *"I shall never forget that as long as I live."*

## The artist calls upon instinct, knowledge and all of his inherent creative ability...

The artist calls upon instinct, knowledge and all of his inherent creative ability as he puts brush and oil to canvas to achieve a painting that sets forth some fragment of truth. This truth may be drawn from the deep recesses of his consciousness or dredged up from his own experiences. In his urgency to unlock the doors of inner creativity, he relates to us. We are caught up with him by some invisible thread of communication. We are inspired, not by the inanimate canvas, but by the vision projected through this medium. It speaks its truth to us and we respond, thereby enlarging ourselves, and, at the same time allowing the artist to go full circle by consummating his need to express and his longing to see that expression live..., to communicate his idea to the beholder.

Rembrandt's career began by painting portraits of socially and politically prominent people of his day. His popularity pleased him and he lived graciously and well. Later, a series of tragedies and misfortunes befell him. His wife, Saskia, having lost three children, died a year after Titus was born. Gradually Rembrandt's commissions declined, his popularity waned, and his fortune too faded away. His deep sorrow and sense of defeat awakened in him a new concept of his talent. He no longer painted to order. He drew instead more and more on his inner self for inspiration, and his work showed greater depth. It was during this period that the beautiful and famous portrait of Titus was painted.

## An Unknown Power

Does this indicate that we can achieve fulfilment only through heartbreak and loss? Not necessarily. It does point to the fact that often such despair leads one to discover the vast store of inner resources at one's command. For many of us the challenge presented by obstacles enables us, through some unknown power, to rise to new heights.

This union with the inner being can often be accomplished by simply accepting it as a child accepts a gift at Christmas. One of the happiest women I know has achieved this contact without any apparent effort. Part



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Hawaiian, part Portuguese, and reared by a Chinese family, she plays the piano easily and with grace. She does not read music; yet she can play almost any popular tune she has ever heard. She extemporises with runs and variations, letting herself go as she bubbles over with the joy of her creation. We catch her joy and marvel at the music that flows through her fingers. We wonder about this power in us and may well conclude that we do not use this power, but that the power uses us.

Not long ago I watched an artist friend give a demonstration in painting. She placed three blobs of oil in the primary colours on her canvas with a palette knife and said: *“I never know what will come out when I start to paint, but we’ll move the colours about and see what happens.”*

What happened was a seascape with rough boulders in the foreground and a rougher sea between the rocks and a stormy horizon. She asked her viewers: *“What do you see? I’m too close to it.”* Someone volunteered: *“I see a boat being tossed by the waves.”* *“Yes, it’s right here”*, the artist agreed, filling up the outlines of a row-boat. *“There’s a man in it”* someone else offered. *“A man? Then he’ll need oars.”* With a

few more deft strokes of the palette knife, the boat, man and oars were clearly depicted. *“What’s he doing out there?”* the artist continued to ask.

Opinions were divided. A few thought he was going out to rescue someone in distress; others felt he was coming in or being tossed ashore from a sinking ship. Whichever way the viewers saw the painting, it was evident the artist had expressed the idea of man’s battle with the elements for survival. Each one in the class was finding his or her particular truth in it.

## The Law of Creativity

The *law of creativity* is impersonal and we forever seek ways of opening up to it. Whether you bake a perfect cake, build a graceful cabinet or tastefully decorate a modest home, you are invoking the law of creation. The writing of a poem deserves no greater recognition than these apparent menial but productive tasks. It is not for us to judge the quality or quantity of our abilities but it is our moral obligation to cultivate them, thereby increasing their fruitfulness. The tools one uses may be inanimate but the truth revealed will be a living thing.



istock.com / SeventyFour





*Robert Louis Stevenson*



*Franz Schubert*



*Ludwig van Beethoven*

## Many geniuses have developed their talents in spite of physical handicaps or material lack...

Many geniuses have developed their talents in spite of physical handicaps or material lack. They seemed obsessed with a desire to bring to light the whole measure of talent or truth entrusted to them. Robert Louis Stevenson, while ill for years, continued writing; his work showed no signs of morbidity or any hint of complaint. Beethoven, at first bitterly resentful of his increasing deafness, finally accepted his handicap and went on to compose some of his most moving music. Edgar Allen Poe, penniless and ill, poured out his poetry and prose. These men are gone from us but their truth, alive and convincing, is recorded in their works for us to share. They had the same trials and problems, the same limitations and frustrations as we have. But they were aware of a tremendous power moving through them, pushing them forward in the work they felt destined to do. With some it came hard, with others it was easy.

It is said Schubert's music literally flowed from him, seemingly without effort on his part. He wrote more than two hundred and fifty songs before he was nineteen; some of his dances were written in half an hour; his symphony in C major was written in one month. Those who create, conscious of this force vibrating through them, can scarcely wait to get to their work in the morning, and their days are never long enough. In fact, they will need less and less sleep. Thomas Edison often worked eighteen hours a day or more. A very short nap was all he needed to renew his energy.

## We Are Creative

There is a store of miraculous power deep within each of us. It is not necessary that we fully understand this power in order for it to function, but we must believe it is there. Once we know this and can let go of our mental blocks, a singing force, a dynamic something motivates our every act, and finally we see a purposeful design unfolding in ways beyond our understanding.

This urge that impels us to express ourselves is really the divine centre within us asserting itself. It is necessary to still the conscious mind if we would hear the directions of this inner being. Only by cooperating and communicating with this larger self are we able to project ideas of such stature that they develop entities of their own and outlive us.

When we have definitely made this contact, we can trust our intuition as to the direction we should take. This communion with the inner self releases us from much of the worry associated with our outer existence, thus freeing us to pursue our given work. Cooperation and collaboration with the law of creativity engenders a feeling of security. We become necessary, even indispensable, to the operation of this law. Non-cooperation can easily make us expendable.

We cannot afford to ignore this mandate of creativity. The whole conception of the universe, the world and all life including plants, animals and humankind is based on it. Participation is not only a promise of immortality; it is the only way in which we can feel alive, really alive, because creativity is the motivating factor of the Life Force itself.



*Haftsin traditional tabletop (sofreh) arrangement of seven symbolic items traditionally displayed at Nowruz, the Iranian new year.*



istock.com / Youshij Yousefzadeh

by **Connie James**

# NORUZ



**T**he Spring Equinox ushers in the Rosicrucian New Year 3378. However, for the people of Iran, Kurdistan, Azerbaijan and other Central Asian republics such as Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, parts of Turkey and Pakistan, among the Parsees of India, and Zoroastrians throughout the world, it also sees the start of their New Year, known as *Noruz*, which means *‘New Day.’*

For these cultures, Noruz marks the beginning of the solar year as well as the New Year. It celebrates the rebirth or re-awakening of nature, and symbolises the triumph of good against the forces of darkness, represented by winter. Spring brings renewed life and hope





as the sun enters the zodiacal sign of Aries on Farvardin 1, (the first day of the month Farvardin in the Iranian solar calendar). In the Gregorian calendar, in 2025, the equinox occurs on 20<sup>th</sup> March. It is a public holiday in Iran and the start of the Iranian year 1404. A little of history now follows.

## The Festival of Fire Chahārshanbe Suri

The Iranian Festival of Fire is a celebration held on the last Wednesday of the old year and marks the end of winter. It is a time for spring-cleaning and actually starts on the Tuesday evening, when every family gives thanks for having made it through another year. There is a bonfire, symbolising the exchange of evil for the life and warmth represented by the fire.

Every family, especially the children, gathers piles of wood, which they light shortly after sunset. Family members take it in turn to jump around and sometimes over the fire, while singing a song. In recent times, setting off fireworks has been an addition. On this night, Iranian children, in their version of Halloween, dress up and go from door to door asking for donations, just as they do in the West.

## Haftsin

Haftsin means the *'Seven S's.'* Just as Christmas trees are put up in the West during the weeks before Christmas, Iranian families set out a table, or a tablecloth spread on the floor. On that tablecloth are seven items beginning with the letter *'S'*, *Samanu* (a sugary snack), *Sekeh* (a coin), *Sabzi* (green vegetables), *Sombol* (hyacinth), *Sir* (garlic), *Senjed* (a dried fruit), and *Serkeh* (vinegar). This dates back to ancient Persia when Zoroastrians celebrated the creation of life by offering *Ahura Mazda* seven trays full of symbolic objects representing *truth, justice, good thoughts, good deeds, prosperity, virtue and generosity.*

Nowadays, other objects are added to the Haftsin such as a Koran, a book of mystical poetry by Hāfez, apples, Shirini pastries, candles, a mirror, decorated eggs, and a bowl of water with goldfish. Looking at goldfish at the beginning of the year is believed to bring good luck. Zoroastrians also place a lit candle in front of the mirror, representing the light and reflection of life.



istock.com / geckophotos

*Fire jumping during the festival of fire*

In Kurdistan, whose people claim to have started the festival, the first day of Noruz is considered a propitious day to get married. At the wedding ceremony, they place one mirror in front of the couple and another one behind, but only on this special day.

## Renewal and Rebirth

Noruz is the symbolic time of renewal and rebirth. Families clean their house from top to bottom, plant new flowers, and try to buy at least one set of new clothes to herald in the New Year. In Iran, the shops are very busy before Noruz, just as they are before Christmas in the West. Once the New Year is announced on radio and television, everyone wishes each other a happy new year. Relatives kiss and hug and exchange presents. Sometimes they will kiss their elders' hands as an ultimate sign of respect.

Sweets are offered to symbolically sweeten their lives in the coming year. A small mirror is passed around, rose water is sprinkled in the air, and incense is burned. In some families the father and eldest son will walk around the house carrying a lit candle and a mirror to ritually bless the house. On New Year's Day, families dress up in their new clothes and visit their friends and older relatives. Gifts are exchanged, and a lot of food is consumed. Hosts treat their visitors to large dishes of fruit, pastry and nuts.

## The Day of Nature Sizdah Bedar

On the 13<sup>th</sup> day of Noruz, families leave their homes and



go outdoors to parks or the countryside to eat and play games. It is the final day of the 13-day holiday before the schools, shops and offices reopen and life starts again. It is the last opportunity to spend time with family and friends.

The intention is to end the holiday on a relaxing, positive note, and to forget the adverse notions connected with the number 13. At the end of the picnic, the tradition is to throw away the remaining vegetables from the Haftsin table. It represents throwing away all the illness, pain and hardships to come during the year ahead. It would be a good time to look back at the origins of these modern traditions.

## Origins In the Mists of Time

The Spring Equinox was celebrated by all the great civilisations of ancient Mesopotamia. The Sumerians, Akkadians, Babylonians and Elamites all celebrated a Spring New Year festival in some form or other at the spring equinox. It took the form of a celebration of the conflict between Order and Chaos, resulting in the triumph of Order. It was around 1000 BCE with the Indo-European Medes and Persians, that the first recognisable characteristics of Noruz are found, particularly, it is said, among the Kurds who are considered direct descendants of the Medes.

Before Islam and Christianity, the religion of ancient Persia was Zoroastrianism. This is a belief system introduced by the avatar Zardusht (Zoroaster). He taught that *Ahura Mazda*, known as the *Lord of Wisdom*, living in eternal light, created all that was good, while *Angra Mainyu* (Ahriman), the spirit who lived in eternal darkness, created all that was evil.

Ahura Mazda created the material world, but there was a problem, there was no life. The sun did not move, there was no day or night, and no seasons. With the creation of plants, animals and humans, the cycle of life started. The sun moved and there came into existence day, night and the seasons. This was the first Noruz (New Day).

Zoroaster introduced many feasts, festivals and rituals to pay homage to the seven creations: *sky, fire, animals, water, earth, plants, humans*, and the *Holy Immortals* who guarded them. There were seven feasts of obligation, the last and most important of which was Noruz, which celebrated Ahura Mazda and the holy fire

at the time of the Spring Equinox.

The oldest record of an actual Noruz celebration comes from the Achaemenid period over 2,500 years ago when the kings *Darius* and *Xerxes* built the magnificent palace-complex and ritual centre at Pārsa (Persepolis), near the modern city of Shirāz in Iran, as a spring residence and as a place to celebrate the New Year festival. This was the famous palace of the Persian kings that was burnt down by Alexander the Great in 334 BCE, during a drunken party. The ruins of this great palace in Fārs province are Iran's main archaeological site.

What we have today as Noruz goes back to the Sassanid period (224-651 CE,) which was the last great Persian Empire before the advent of Islam. The Sassanid dynasty ruled Persia at the time of the Roman and Byzantine empires and was their greatest threat. In this period, the celebrations started five days before the New Year. A major spring-clean was carried out to welcome the guardian angels who, it was believed, came to Earth at this time. Bonfires would be lit to indicate that people were ready to receive them, and it was a time of feasting and celebration, a time of joy and hope.

The first five days of the New Year were also celebrated, but it was the sixth day after New Year that was the most important of all. This day was called Great Noruz and was said to be the birthday of Zoroaster himself. At this period, the New Year was celebrated for 21 days, whereas today it is only celebrated for 13 days.



Shirāz, Iran - street markets are set up during Noruz

istock.com / dreamiser





*Azeri women during the Noruz holiday celebration with Noruz tray with traditional pastry shakerbura and pakhlava.*

## The Feast of Seeing Eid-Didani

During the research for this article, I came across a light-hearted look at an aspect of Noruz written by *Hamid Tagbavi*, which appeared in the on-line magazine *‘The Iranian.’* I hope you like it. It is entitled *‘Eid-didani’* and is about a very special Iranian New Year tradition.

Noruz is a time of rejuvenation in Iran. It is a time for spring cleaning, planting flowers in the garden and buying new clothes. A few days before Noruz, a remarkable change in nature takes place. Fruit trees blossom and cities become blanketed with the intoxicating aroma from clouds of pink blossoms. Following nature’s lead, Iranians shrug off the winter blues and come to life as well. They begin twelve days of a fantastic custom called Eid-didani, visiting family and friends.

Undaunted by the fact that their extended families and friends could be very large, they still visit every single one of them if they can. The families may live in other towns or other countries, but Iranians must visit everyone during Noruz. For twelve frantic days, people exchange visits euphorically. This is all because Noruz is a time for joy and overeating.

The major difference between Christmas and Noruz is the guilt factor. After Christmas celebrants are

reminded how it is time to pay for their over-indulgence to be compensated for and they resolve to cut down on their eating. With Noruz, however, Iranian hospitality requires the host to treat his/her visitors lavishly to large piles of fruit and dishes full of pastries and nuts, strategically located in the middle of the living room; and the expectation of one’s host is that one eats a lot!

While Noruz is an ancient tradition and a bit stressful for some, due to the over indulgence surrounding those 13 days, the social bonding that results from those days of friendship and laughter is most welcome.

## A Celebration of Life

For Iranians, Noruz is a reminder of their heritage from the past, before the invasions of the Arabs, Mongols, Turks and Westerners. In a world full of trouble and death, it is a celebration of life, holding fast to the traditional values of health, life, light and happiness. Through this union of humanity and the forces of nature, it creates a balance and maintains cosmic order, something very relevant at the end of this first quarter of the new century. Joy and happiness at this time are major positive forces in defeating the negative forces of the world.





by Earle de Motte

istock.com / Ibrahim Hamraush

# EGYPT

## As the Cradle of Mystery Schools

**W**hile some scholars refute the claim of Egypt being the original home of the initiatory Mystery schools of the ancient Mediterranean basin, there is considerable support for the position which accords the Egyptians primacy in the introduction and development of a Mystery tradition which is kept alive in some Mystery schools of our own day.

Fortunately, we have an historical record of several visitors to Egypt from the Greek and Roman worlds between the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE and the 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE. Those travellers wrote down what they



had seen and experienced about the mysteries of Egypt. Among other things they related about the advanced state of civilisation along the Nile valley, they referred to the temples, tombs, pyramids and other structures associated with the mysteries of their religion, some even participating in their rituals and being accepted as initiates to their special mysteries. Those who witnessed very private ceremonies, or who were accepted as candidates for initiation, pledged themselves to silence, though they did provide us with some intimation of what occurred. What they did not reveal however, were the more arcane aspects of the initiatory process, preferring only to vouch for the existence of special knowledge of a secret nature among the priesthood of a culture that was “*more ancient when Greek culture was young.*” According to the writer and lecturer Rosemary Clark...

By their admission, the mystery tradition of their own cultures borrowed from, or literally copied, their practices from Egypt.<sup>1</sup>

## Diodorus, Apuleius and Herodotus

The Greek historian, Diodorus Siculus, travelled through various cities of Egypt and the fertile crescent in the first century BCE. In his later accounts, he mentioned 11 notable visitors to the Nile. Let us look at the testimony of some of those on record.

The first of these writers, *Apuleius*, a Roman traveller and writer of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, was famous for his novel, ‘*The Golden Ass*’, in which the central character, Lucius, narrated that he had undergone an initiation in Egypt. In the narrative, he stated that he had been initiated into the mysteries of Isis and was bound by oath not to reveal in detail what took place. He did not, however, feel constrained to conceal the fact that he had spent 10 days in austere preparation, and was then led into a deep sanctuary where he spent the night. During the night he said he had approached the very gates of death and was permitted to return *‘through all the elements.’*<sup>2</sup>

The sublime moment occurred when he saw, at the dead of night, the sun (the symbol of Ra, the sun god) burst into the darkness. Osiris, the *‘Lord of the Afterworld’*, became united with the sun, whose daily death and rebirth are another symbol of human destiny. At this stage, the candidate identified himself with

Osiris, then with Ra, and was finally re-born through the elements and approached the gods above and the gods below.<sup>3</sup> Lucius’ successful initiation into the mysteries of Isis was followed a year later by his initiation into the mysteries of Osiris.<sup>4</sup>

Herodotus (5<sup>th</sup> century BCE), the *‘father of history’*, wrote that Pythagoras may have developed his doctrine of reincarnation from his exposure to the Egyptian notion of transmigration, and recalled the following in his own travels through Egypt:

At Saïs (a city in the Nile Delta), is found the tomb of one whom I hesitate to name. On a lake at night, the Egyptians give a representation of the suffering undergone by him. They call them ‘*Mysteries*’ and, about them, my lips maintain a religious silence.<sup>5</sup>

The tomb is that of Osiris; the events indicate the central position of Osiris’ life, death and renewal in the instruction and experiences of candidates for the Mysteries. Diodorus also notes their secret nature when he complains about a contemporary tendency to profane the Mysteries:

In olden days, according to received tradition, the priest kept the manner of the death of



*Frontispiece from the Bohn's Classical Library edition of The Works of Apuleius - a portrait of Apuleius flanked by Pamphile changing into an owl and the Golden Ass.*



Osiris a secret; but in later times, it came about through the indiscretion of some that that which had been hidden in silence among the few, was mooted about by the many.<sup>6</sup>

## Descriptions of the Transformative Experience

With the passage of time and the decline of Egyptian civilisation resulting from Greek and Roman occupations, the gradual unveiling of some of the secrets gave our next commentator, the Roman philosopher Iamblichus, the freedom to say more about the initiatory process. He referred to the objects present, and the kind of magic used, in the sacred drama, and pointed to the fact that the enactments of the life of Osiris were all allegorical. It therefore required the seeker of special knowledge of having to find the mysterious meaning and awareness of divine things through ritual and symbol alone.<sup>7</sup> Priests were able to shift their consciousness, he revealed, from this world to the other, and acquired their knowledge through contact with the gods.

Six centuries earlier, Plato partly *'lifted the veil'* of the Mysteries even though he tried to limit disclosure of detail by concerning himself primarily with their impact on the initiate:

In consequence of this divine initiation in secret chambers in Egypt, we became spectators of single and blessed visions, resident in a pure light, and were ourselves made immaculate and liberated from the surrounding garment which we call the body and to which we are bound like an oyster to its shell.

He even pointed to the aim of the Mysteries, namely...

...to lead people back to principles from which the race originally fell.

The two Mysteries of Isis and Osiris, as they were popularised in later times, spread far and wide throughout the Roman Empire, as did the other Mediterranean Mysteries, with which they competed for the hearts and minds of the people who sought salvation in one cult or another. In the year 31 CE, we have the Greek writer Heliiodorus of Emesa talking of the peculiar nature of the Mysteries. He defined the arcane nature of the knowledge within the Egyptian Mysteries and, by implication, their exclusivity. He asserted that the stories of Isis and Osiris contained the secrets of nature and were not capable of being understood by the profane, but only by those prepared for instruction in private by subdued light.<sup>8</sup>

## Plutarch's Revelations

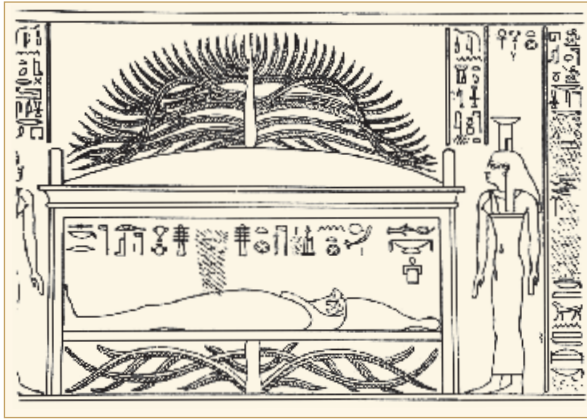
Rivalling Apuleius' account of his experience of the Egyptian Mysteries is the presentation of the complete narrative of Osiris in Plutarch's *'Concerning Isis and Osiris.'* There is no comparable or fuller account of the myth of Osiris in Egyptian literature, presumably because the myth was so well known and widely celebrated at festivals that a written record was considered unnecessary. Plutarch compiled the story from fragments taken from diverse sources.

But what is of great moment to our present theme is that aside from the detailing of the mythological framework of the Osirian Mysteries,



*The two Mysteries of Isis and Osiris, as they were popularised in later times, spread far and wide throughout the Roman Empire, as did the other Mediterranean Mysteries, with which they competed for the hearts and minds of the people who sought salvation in one cult or another.*





*At the core of the initiation was the impact produced on the candidate of the enacted drama of the life of Osiris. Candidates would undergo a voluntary, simulated death to still their senses and suspend the functioning of their worldly ego.*

he mentions other significant details on the nature of these Mysteries. He writes about the soul of both the living and the dead receiving the same impression as it emerges from the physical body and travels in the invisible or shadow world. He believes that the *neteru*, 'the powers', should not be demeaned by treating the Mysteries as mere repetitions of grain cycles, and reveals our contact with the gods through thoughts and dreams as being of limited value when compared with the soul being released by the Mysteries:

*The Mysteries help us to gaze with insatiable longing upon the heavenly beauty which may not be spoken of by the lips of man.*

Additionally, Plutarch informs us of secret robing rooms in secluded parts of temples, which had wall inscriptions, implying the need for a feeling of separation from the mundane world, for quietness and obscurity. The presence of sacred images and symbolic language would also increase one's wonder at being in the presence of deity.

## Reconstruction of the Testimony

From these partial revelations and the expressions of wonder at the Egyptian Mysteries by Greek and Roman visitors who heard of, and in some cases were permitted to participate in them, we have a less hazy impression of the character of the Mystery schools. It is sufficient to make summation even without reference to the subsequent study of Egyptian literature inscribed on walls and written on papyri, or a close study of the plans and layouts of

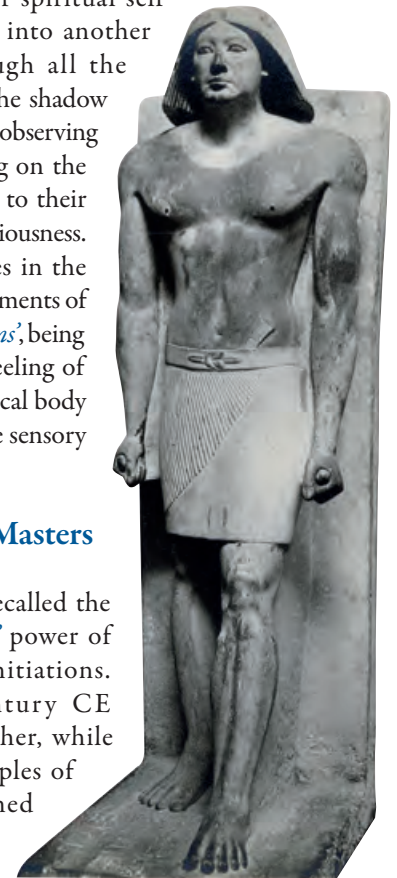
various building structures in which initiations were conducted.

There are references to the preparation and discipline required of candidates for initiation, the time of the event, and the time spent on the process and the statements about the ability and higher knowledge of the hierophants who conducted the ritual. The core of the Initiation was the impact produced on the candidate of the enacted drama of the life of Osiris. It was intended to convey to the candidate the very nature of the human condition and its final destiny. The use of symbols and allegorical language were the essential instruments for communicating meaning at a deeper level of understanding.

Candidates would undergo a voluntary, simulated death to still their senses and suspend the functioning of their worldly ego. This was the breakthrough point which resulted in their spiritual self undertaking a journey into another region, passing through all the elements and forces of the shadow world of the unconscious, observing or experiencing suffering on the way, and then returning to their body and to normal consciousness. Some of the experiences in the other world included moments of terror, seeing 'blessed visions', being bathed in light, and a feeling of liberation from the physical body and the attractions of the sensory world.

## Priests as Initiatic Masters

Witnesses sometimes recalled the awe inspiring 'magical' power of a priest conducting initiations. Proclus, the 5<sup>th</sup> century CE Neoplatonist philosopher, while delving into the principles of Egyptian magic, touched on the ability of priests to cause candidates for initiation to alter their state of consciousness. Evidently the hierophants had 'been



*The priestly caste had among them skilled initiates who could facilitate the process of enlightenment of a person such as a candidate for initiation.*



*there*' and returned, and fully understood the resonance between the visible and invisible worlds. With such experience, they had developed their ability...

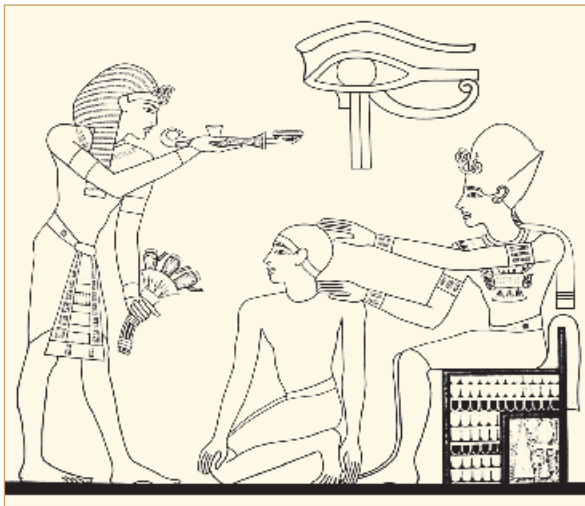
...to change the cause of action and focus divine virtues upon inferior natures.<sup>9</sup>

Murray Hope, a writer with a background in parapsychology and ancient esoteric wisdom, credits the Egyptian hierophants with the ability...

...to penetrate the consciousness behind the brain, in the manner of hypnosis, and reach down deep into the consciousness, at which point subtle vehicles are believed to be connected.<sup>10</sup>

However, she does concede that the issue is debatable.

Not all priests were entrusted with conducting the Initiation process, and that is what one would expect; for in any higher religion there is the clergy in general, and then others who are specifically appointed to perform certain rituals and institutional offices. The priestly caste had among them skilled initiates who could facilitate the process of enlightenment of a person such as a candidate



*The modern mystic Paul Brunton (1898-1981) argues persuasively that the initiatory process and the resulting changes in consciousness were under the control of the priests.*



*Mural from the tomb of Inkhberkhau - Thebes, Luxor, Egypt, depicting a funerary procession with priests performing libations.*

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for initiation. *Iamblichus*, a Roman philosopher of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE, described the process in a reverse direction:

The priests, through sacerdotal theurgy, were able to ascend from a material state of consciousness to a realisation of the universal essences.

One assumes that they could also use this knowledge and ability to cause this changed realisation in their neophytes seeking initiation into the Mysteries. The experience was the same. Call it what you like, magic, theurgy, psychic manipulation of one's consciousness..., the foreign visitors who were accepted for initiation all agreed that the Egyptian hierophants were skilled in the art. And that makes us conclude that they knew the laws of cause and effect at the metaphysical level and were able to apply this knowledge in '*miraculous*' ways.

### Initiation as a Controlled Process

Whereas the nature of priestly power, subsumed under the term '*magic*' is not known to us precisely, as it was only reported by witnesses and supported by the highly suggestive illustrations of the funerary texts, the modern mystic Paul Brunton (1898-1981) argues persuasively that the initiatory process and the resulting changes in consciousness were under the control of the priests.

The principle which lay at the back of the experience of initiation was that a person's normal worldly nature...





...could be temporarily paralysed by a profound lethargic sleep, and their usually unnoticed psychic or spiritual nature was awakened only by a process known to the hierophant. A person who was artificially plunged into such a coma would seem to an observer as one who is physically dead. In fact, in the symbolic language of the mystics, they would be said to have 'descended into the tomb' or been 'buried in the tomb.'

Thus deprived of their bodily vitality, and with the force of their passions and desires temporarily lulled, the candidate would truly be dead to all earthly things, while their consciousness, their soul-body, would temporarily separate itself from the flesh.<sup>11</sup> Only in such a state would they see their spirit world and have visions of gods and other entities. Travelling through infinite space and time, they would know their true self. Eventually they would return to their normal world, transformed and spiritually reborn, to carry forth within them the secrets of both worlds.

### Secret Chambers of Initiation

The physical surroundings played no small part in creating the atmosphere for consciousness alteration. Exactly

where the secluded spots within the sacred building complexes were where the initiations took place, apart from the mention of names of festival sites, is not specified by classical writers. However, *Ammianus Marcellinus*, the Roman historian (330-400 CE) spoke in general about their existence:

It is said that men, skilful in the ancient mysteries, by means of which they divined the coming of the Flood constructed, in different places, subterranean passages and winding retreats lest the memory of their sacred ceremonies should be lost.<sup>12</sup>

To add to sparse information like this, we owe much to subsequent discoveries of modern archaeologists and the interpretations and nature of the structures uncovered. The initiations took place in subterranean or secluded chambers, halls and corridors, on the walls of which were inscribed messages in sacred writing and associated vignettes. These formed a supportive backdrop to strengthen the dramatic effect of the mythic narrative and priestly magic.

*René Adolphe Schwaller de Lubicz*, the renowned author of works on the sacred geometry of Egyptian



*The remains of the Osireion at Abydos, the classic example of the Mystery School, was designed as a subterranean hall and incorporates an underground water-filled chamber.*



temples, maintains that the temple itself provided esoteric teachings through its implicit architectural and spatial relationships,<sup>13</sup> while *Rosemary Clark*, in her seminal work on esoteric Egypt, points to the existence of underground crypts and roof chapels in the temples of Dendera, Edfu and Abydos:

...all were places for commemorating the transitions and transformations of human life.<sup>14</sup>

She identifies specific religious ceremonies called *shetat*, translated as 'mysteries' or 'secret rites.' These were practised by select members of the temple, engaging in ritual dramas, elaborate ceremonies and rites employing spells of protection and transformation for the soul entering the region of the gods, the *neteru*.

These ritual dramas are inscribed in the sarcophagus, the Horus Mystery Play, and the chamber of the Pyramid of Unas. Reserved ceremonies having a bearing on the initiation of kings are in evidence at Karnak and Luxor. At Edfu there is a written injunction imposed on witnesses against any revelation of the Mysteries. Much earlier in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the esotericist Lewis Spence observed that in the Ptolemaic temples of Edfu, Dendera and Philae...

...the very chambers in which the Mysteries were enacted have been found. These were placed in parts of the temple to which entrance was difficult or forbidden to the public.<sup>15</sup>

He cites the example of Philae,

...where there was a little temple of Osiris, composed of two chambers in the roof of the edifice, yet the rites are inscribed in hieroglyphs at the architrave of the pronaos.<sup>16</sup>

The classic example of a Mystery School layout of course is to be found in the Osireion at Abydos,<sup>17</sup> which was designed as a subterranean hall and incorporates an underground water-filled chamber, ten columns that supported the roof, and other structural details, which...

...expressed the process of transformation through death and rebirth as rendered in the myth of Osiris.<sup>18</sup>

Lucie Lamy, commenting on the dimension

and proportions of the temple, found the use of the square roots of 5 and 2, the numbers of *rebirth* and *regeneration*.<sup>19</sup> Myth and architecture were integrated to literally stage the descent into the underworld of the candidates for initiation and their prospective identification with Osiris.

We may then conclude, in the first place that these reports of contemporary witnesses, subsequent research up to the present, and first hand inspection of initiatory sites, have given us insights into the very depths of the Mystery Tradition of Ancient Egypt. And secondly, being older than the classical civilisations of the Mediterranean, and being in contact with them, Egypt must have been the source of much of the thought and practice of the Mystery Schools of Greece, Rome and the Middle East.

## Endnotes

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2. Brunton, P, *A Search in Secret Egypt*, Arrow, 1965, pp. 175-6
3. Spence L, *The Mysteries of Egypt*, Kessinger, (undated, originally published 1929), p. 226
4. Brunton, op. cit.
5. Quoted in Lamy L, *Egyptian Mysteries: New Light on Ancient Knowledge*, Thames & Hudson, 1989, p.66
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12. Quoted in Murray Hope, op. cit., p. 10
13. Ozanic N, *The Elements of Egyptian Wisdom*, Element, 1994, p. 62
14. Clark, op. cit.
15. Spence L, *The Mysteries of Egypt*, Kessinger, (undated, originally published 1929), p. 210
16. *Ibid*.
17. This refers to the still largely intact Osireion located at the back of the temple of Seti I, and not the much older Osireion located about a kilometre away and which is today merely scant remains and the outlines of wall foundations in the desert sands.
18. Ozaniac, op. cit., p. 66
19. Lamy, *ibid*.



# The Unseen Guiding Hand

by **Raymund Andrea**  
(Grand Master Emeritus)



“

A message for the  
Francis Bacon Chapter  
Conclave 1970

”

**T**here may be hard journeying through many eventful years before we realise that even in our youth there was a silent, guiding hand that lay softly upon our soul to keep it on track within range of its destiny. The ambitions of youth are many and strong, and the hunger of the heart is keen and insistent. Yet, only after active search and eager endeavours along many paths, do we recognise that *inner guiding hand* and awaken at last as it beckons us towards the mystic quest.

Is there something sombre and suggestively unreal in this thought? If so, you will have to wait until the force of ambition in your everyday world has done its work. At this moment, I am thinking of those who have run the full range of emotion, taken the full measure of mental action and reaction, and returned with empty hands, yet with full heart and mind, to the same door from which they entered.

There is something unreal and discouraging about things when we return to the point from which we set out. We wonder what all the struggle has been for: the usefulness, the point of it, the justice of it all. Perhaps we regret the time spent, if not wasted, which might have

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led to something more enduring and peace giving. But rest assured, it is a timely and fortunate awakening and signals none other than the unseen guiding hand laid gently upon the soul.

Those who have travelled far in this way and returned with empty hands and a burdened heart ask the same anxious question:

Why should this be? If there is a guiding hand, why did it not hold me back from this or that long cycle of cruel experience, of disappointed hopes and frustrated aims, of misdirected efforts and false beliefs?

way, as if one part were God and the other part devil, and decide that the latter should not have been allowed to happen. The history of the whole journey is with us from the beginning, and the mystery of our inner guide is with us to the end.

## The Same Stories

In your own personal questioning, take comfort from the fact that the lives of virtually all who have trodden the mystic path have the same story to tell. Those who have gone far on that path are now at peace. They are inwardly assured because they have paid the price of attainment and have embraced wholeheartedly the consequences of their



This is to mistake the meaning and purpose of the guiding hand. If life is a meaningless jumble of uncoordinated events with no underlying purpose and no promise of the soul's noblest and highest attainment, then yes, we may question the point of it all. But there is both a purpose and a promise, and the guiding hand is in everything, both in conquest and in failure, in what we have done and what we cannot do, in the years that have passed like a troubled sleep, giving neither rest nor hope, and in those in which trophies of victory mark our progress along life's highway.

There is no value in attempting to separate the good from the bad, victory from defeat, the next step onward from the perplexing pause where we just cannot see the path ahead. We cannot compartmentalise our life in this

life's labours. They now have vision, and the knowledge and understanding which arises from that vision. They have a confidence and inner assurance which nothing can disturb or break, a spiritual strength and magnetism which makes itself felt in the lives of all around them.

It was a different story before the apprenticeship began. Every one of them has passed over the troubled waters of life, explored with restless heart every avenue that seemed to promise satisfaction and fulfilment; enquired with tireless persistence into religion, science and art; accepting, rejecting and ever accumulating along the way. Such men and women sounded the depths wherever they explored, but the eternal hunger persisted and everything failed them. Of only one thing were they certain, amid the flux of desires and ambitions, countless





ideals and changing goals: it was the unsatisfied and unfulfilled soul, and the impulse to continue in their unceasing search and enquiry. Eventually, weary of it all, the soul turned back upon itself. Life's experience had done its work and they stood, with empty hands, before the path of the mystic quest.

The strong soul, when it reaches this point, does not regret the past or question its value. It may not understand, nor be able to reconcile the inconsistencies and contradictions of the journey, but it instinctively knows that it has all been important and worthwhile. It accepts the whole train of events as a necessary preparation for the mystical training which lies ahead and recognises the laying of the foundations for future conquest. Everything on the way of an aspirant has been subject to deep scrutiny and investigation. And although thoughts of injustice may sometimes have crept in, and the mind may have rebelled at its self-imposed standards and retreated many times from mistaken paths, self-critical of its own blindness..., the cycle of self-discipline has been accomplished, and experience has built a structure of knowledge which will now be called upon for the mystic quest.

Today, more than ever before, many now stand before the path of the mystic quest, or are just entering upon its novitiate. Seekers abound who enquire anxiously whether following the mystic path will diminish or take away their faith in their respective religions or former beliefs. The fact is that it is not in churches, temples and mosques alone that we must look for illumined mystics

and people of spiritual intent. For they are as often found outside in the common ways of life, teaching by example, service and inspiration, the way of divine development and attainment taught by every great teacher of the past.

## The Advancing Mind

The controversies within many well established religions, and the frantic efforts of its leaders to coordinate forces to meet what they see as the irreligiousness of people, is sufficient proof that the tide of individual evolution has passed far beyond the reach of orthodoxy. The advance of the spirit within is asserting itself, and forcing us into the wilderness and mountaintop to pray alone and divest ourselves for a moment of any creed or dogma in order to look within, exercising the right of independent search of the advancing mind.

For these students of life who are seeking under the urge of the guiding hand, the mystic quest opens a path of spiritual adventure. A mystic classic says:

*A man creates his own life, and 'adventures are to the adventurous' is one of those wise proverbs which are drawn from actual fact, covering the whole area of human life.*

But adventures are only possible for strong souls which have something to build upon; and is why I speak only of those who have already taken their full measure of life, have already sounded the depths of their emotions, have already explored the far reaches of their thoughts, and have the



fullness of experience which can stand them in good stead in this adventure of the soul.

Fear of the unknown holds back countless otherwise ready aspirants. They will go as far as the general mind has gone, but no further; for they believe they are the majority and are therefore right. They dare not push thought beyond the confines of the world they know, and tremble at an emotion that would carry them one step beyond the physical, sensory world. If they would just forget themselves for one brief moment and relax their grasp upon the obvious and real!

This is what the adventure of the soul demands. Something must go so that something better can take its place. Changed people are no longer what they were. Many of the things they formerly accepted without question become in their eyes futile endeavours before they can welcome the opening portals of the mystic novitiate. In the simplest terms, entering upon this training means that a changed mental attitude has been achieved. There is a looking within to the guidance and impressions of the indwelling soul, instead of a constant immersion in the life of the objective mind and sensory life.

## The Need For Withdrawal

Such a path requires a periodical withdrawal into the wilderness and a solitary place for the purpose of meditation and reassessment of one's core values as seen from the vantage of the stillness of the indwelling soul.

The aspirant has to fall out of step with the self-

seeking multitude and set up a new life rhythm within the self. Undertaken under proper guidance, the initial dialogue with the soul often varies from person to person, depending upon the type of person the aspirant is. But what is always the same, is that the experience is the most momentous and decisive moment of one's personal history. It is comparable to the stillness in nature after the storm has spent itself.

*Such a calm will come to the harassed spirit; and in the deep silence, the mysterious event will occur which will prove that the way has been found.*

The testimonies of young and old confirm this, and from that moment on, the rhythm of life has been changed and they have moved forward to deeper assurance and insight.

But there are the many others too, who have to wait at the portals until the old rhythm they brought with them has fully spent itself and confidence in the new way has been established. But their wait may not be long. How could it be, when at last they have recognised the presence of this inner, mystical *'guiding hand'* which has brought them safely through many struggles, battle-scarred yet safely to this great turning point in their lives?

There is now only the certainty of sure guidance and the unfolding of intimate contacts with the genius of the soul itself. And when, with perfect abandon, they have learnt to regularly, willingly and with yearning commune with that ever-present inner genius of life, the first steps of the mystic novitiate will have been taken.

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# Find Your Inner Music

by Graphica

“

Just as it takes concentrated effort to become a musician, mystics must develop methods to discover the music within themselves.

”

The Gospel of John in the New Testament opens with the following statement: *'In the beginning was the Word; within it there was Life, and the Life was the light of the world.'*<sup>1</sup>

Keeping these words in mind, let us consider some of the ideas expressed by Dr. Donald Andrews in his fascinating book, *'The Symphony of Life.'*<sup>2</sup> Dr. Andrews writes of the near infinitude of atoms in the human body and points out that each one of these atoms, as well as concerted groups of nerves and arteries, is *'singing'* a musical tone:

The entire flesh is vibrating, and these tones reflect not only the vibrations due to the energy of the atomic nuclei, the energy of the atom's electron, the energy of the total atomic motion; they also reflect the energy of the impulses in the nerves, the circulation of the blood, the chemical dynamics of the life process itself. This is the symphony of life, this unimaginably complex tapestry of music that is sounding within us every moment of life. And this symphony is not only singing within us, it is actually radiating from us in terms of all the mysterious waves that these actions set in motion in the space surrounding our bodies.<sup>3</sup>



Returning to the first quotation, from the Gospel of John, we understand that the creative energy of the universe is represented as the word 'logos' in Greek. It was the primordial Word spoken by the Divinity which brought all things into being. We cannot imagine the existence of this word, only that it is a sound, a creative sound that arose from divine thought. Since sound is vibration, this primordial sound, a form of musical expression, was a tone so powerful that through it, thought was turned into creation.

Regarding Dr. Andrew's statements about the body, imagine that this great sound of creation is continuously resounding throughout our bodies, which are, by inference, the most perfect of musical instruments in the world. We emanate from that first cosmic sound, the Logos, and we long to rediscover that tone or sound within us in order to achieve attunement or harmony with the Cosmic. Being in harmony with cosmic law is similar to tuning the strings of a violin. If one string is slightly out of tune, the vibrations between the strings vie with one another instead of working together to produce a harmonious, beautiful sound. The music being played will sound out of tune. As seekers of spiritual enlightenment, we need to bring ourselves into harmony with that first cosmic sound that still resounds within and throughout our beings.

### The Great Sound of Creation

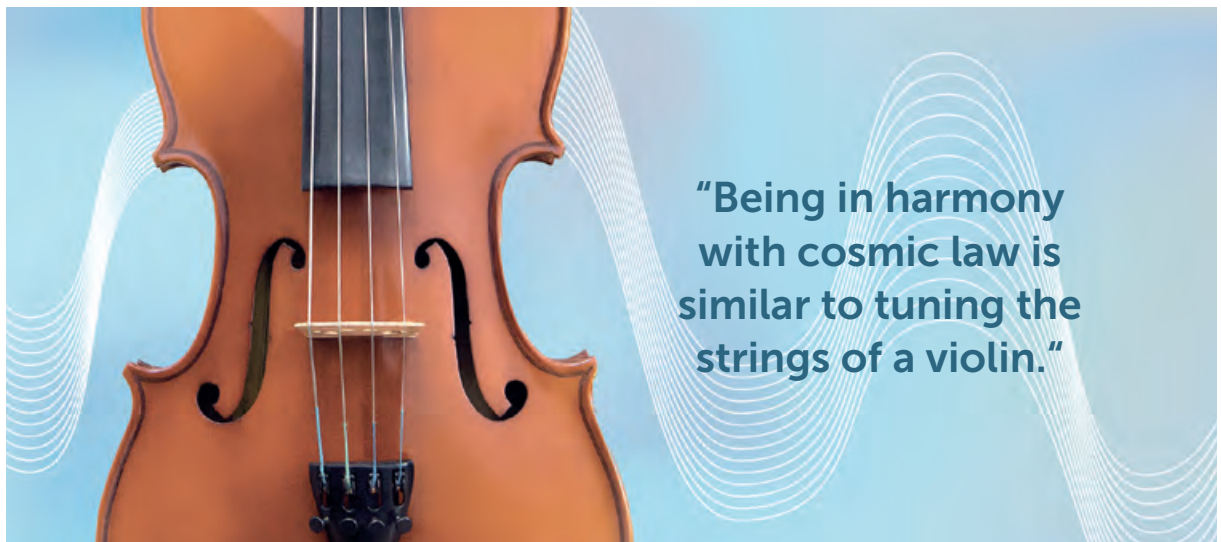
How can we discover this great sound of creation, this music within ourselves, and learn to tune our personal



*We understand that the creative energy of the universe is represented as a word ('logos' in Greek) that was spoken by the Divinity. We cannot imagine the existence of this word, only that it is a sound; a creative sound that arose from divine thought.*

'strings' so that our bodies and our consciousness, our very beings, can become one with the harmony of the Cosmic? How can we discover the word that is lost to us?

Just as it takes concentrated effort for a talented, aspiring person to become a musician, aspiring mystics must develop a method to discover the music within themselves. The aspiring musician's life, energies and time, motivated by his or her devout love of music, are



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all directed towards the goal of becoming an excellent musician. As seekers of Light we must seek our own goal, discover our own music, with equal passion and devotion.

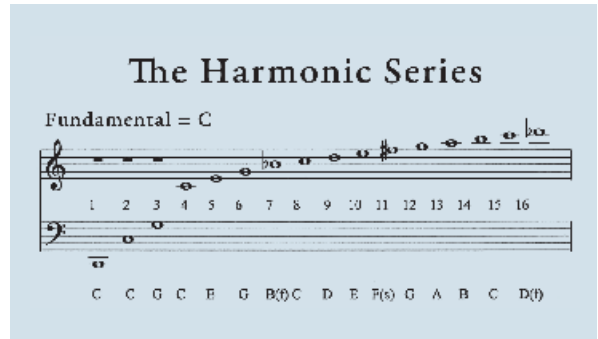
The Rosicrucian Order gives us a method whereby we learn, through exercises and stimulation of the inner faculties, the useful techniques of spiritual life. And as with the serious study of music, the mystic's path is a gradual process, requiring this same degree of devotion as we seek to master its techniques; techniques which eventually become perfectly natural so that we need not think of them any more than does the master musician when performing a composition he or she truly knows and loves. The master musician proceeds directly to the musical expression. For the mystic to reach the Cosmic directly, the technique must become second nature to us. And only through gradual and devoted study is this possible.

When a certain point on the path is reached, we experience the initial tantalising glimpses, the first sightings and soundings, of the higher realms within us. We begin to open ourselves to an inner world of tone and music such as we could never have imagined. It has been said that *'Beauty leads from chaos to cosmos'*,<sup>4</sup> and it is through contemplation of a high art such as music that we can understand our inner lives. Music has the ability to speak directly to the emotions and inner understanding.

This can be illustrated in musical terms. We speak of the musical elements as those factors contributing to a musical experience: pitch and melody, harmony and rhythm. The combination of these elements, touched by inspiration, produces a musical experience, and in this way the final product is a result of the unfolding process of musical ideas which have been grounded in correct knowledge of musical and acoustic laws.

The phenomenon of acoustics also relates directly to our musical and spiritual existence. The function of the harmonic series, in which an unlimited number of pitched notes are found to be vibrating sympathetically and in mathematical proportion to an audible fundamental tone (a key note), is a primary factor in our musical perception.

The basic premise is that each tone sounded aloud also vibrates in the air at intervals (the distance or gap between two simultaneous notes) of an octave, a fifth, a fourth, and a major and minor third. These first five harmonic partials of the series make up what is called the *'chord of nature'*.<sup>5</sup>



*The harmonic series, in which an unlimited number of pitched notes are found to be vibrating in harmony with, and in mathematical proportion to, an audible fundamental tone (the note C in this case) is a primary factor in our musical perception.*

The tones in this chord are the most harmonious in music and from them, the basic harmonic system is derived. The tones connect us to the music of the spheres in physical manifestation. They combine with the higher overtones of the vast cosmic scale which extends from the deepest vibration in the earth to the highest in the universe to encompass audible sound, radio and thought waves, and meditative consciousness.

## Our Key Note

On the great Tibetan plateau, once existed many monasteries where Tibetan monks intoned a kind of guttural, deep nasal chant. Their technique produced in their throats and nasal passages several sounding overtones so that each voice accomplished the chanting of a two or three-note chord. This form of chanting is still done today, and together with the posture involved, causes the person meditating to feel even their bones vibrate.

We all vibrate to the harmonic series and therefore have the complete musical scale within us, as well as each of us having our own *'note'* to which we individually vibrate. Discovering this tone will suddenly connect you with your inner world of sound. When we listen to music, and it should be music of a varied nature with melody, harmony and rhythm in balance, we actually experience the concept of the *'symphony of life'* in another way. Let us imagine that these different elements of music can be centred in different areas of our bodies, which then participate in the music as members of a symphony orchestra. Melody tends to guide us into the realm of thinking, the brain area. It embodies a



form of mental imagery which opens our thinking to the feeling aspect. Melody, with its quality of flowing, can also affect the circulation of the blood. It is expressed usually by melodic instruments, such as the winds and upper strings.

Harmony lives more in the torso and is experienced as an unfolding of the heart and chest centres. It can awaken the inner feeling element in our bodies, while rhythm is the *'heartbeat'* of music, our respiration or pulse. Rhythmic music influences our nervous system, even influencing the molecules within each cell. In fact, a complete absence of rhythm equals death. Rhythm lives in the limbs, arms and legs, and inspires the will by its regular, ordered movement.<sup>6</sup>

The following exercise may help along these lines: sit quietly while listening to some engaging music and concentrate on feeling various parts of your body and the psychic centres involved with each part. Let the melody run through your head, breathing with the harmony in your chest and feeling a tingling in your limbs that rhythm can awake. In this way, you will involve the entire body in the music you are listening to and perhaps even cause your bones to sing in harmony too.

The Hermetic law, *'as above, so below'*, applies directly in our discussion of these principles. The study of natural and Cosmic laws and their relevance to our lives can serve as a catalyst, enabling us to discover our *'inner music'* and teach us to attune with the vibrations and rhythm of the Cosmos.

## Endnotes

1. From *The Unvarnished New Testament*, trans. by Andy Gaus (Phanes Press, 1991), p. 171.
2. Dr. Donald Hatch Andrews, *The Symphony of Life* (Unity Books, 1966),
3. Ibid. pp. 57-58.
4. Walter Albersheim, *The Conscience of Science* (AMORC, 1982), p. 97.
5. For example, with low C as a fundamental in the bass stave, the overtones of the chord of nature would be octave C, G, C, E, and G.
6. These ideas are more fully developed by Rudolf Steiner in his book of selected lectures, *The Inner Nature of Music and the Experience of Tone* (Anthroposophic Press, 1983).



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# The Pencil

by Nobilis



**T**he pencil maker looked at the pencil he had just made. Gazing at it before he put it in its box with the other pencils he had created, he reflected on the qualities that would make it a good and reliable implement. Gently caressing his new creation he said to it in soft tones of love:

Before I send you out into the world, there are five things you should remember and you will become the best pencil you can be.

First, you will be able to do many great things, but only if you allow yourself to be held in someone's hand.

Second, you will experience a painful sharpening from time to time, but you will need it to become a better pencil.

Third, you will be able to correct any mistakes you might make.

Fourth, the most important part of you will always be what is inside.

Finally, on every surface you are used, you must leave your mark. No matter what the condition, you must continue to write.

Once he had instructed the pencil on these five points he put it into the box and was about to close the lid when it occurred to him that these self-same instructions could be applied to anyone. He paused to reconsider the points he had made.

Hmm, he thought, first of all, although we may be able to do many great things, we can do so only if we allow ourselves to be guided by the hand of our Creator and allow all people to use us for the gifts we might possess. Secondly, we experience difficult and emotional circumstances from time to time, generated by going through various situations in life that enable us to become stronger and better individuals. Thirdly, we have the free will to correct any mistakes we might make. Fourthly, the most important part of us is always what is on the inside. And finally, wherever we walk, we leave our mark, no matter what the situation.

The pencil-maker closed the lid of the box, satisfied that his creation would serve its purpose well. Yes, he considered, we should all understand that each one of us is a special person and born to fulfil the purpose for which our creator intended and for which each of us has been duly prepared.





# Cathedral of the Soul

**I**n the January 1930 issue of the Rosicrucian Digest, former Emperor of AMORC, Harvey Spencer Lewis, announced the formation of what he called, *'a new and beautiful star in the Cosmic.'* He was referring to *'The Cathedral of the Soul'* or what we now refer to as *'The Celestial Sanctum.'*

Every person who crosses the threshold into the Rosicrucian Order, receives a booklet with their first monograph mailing, explaining just what the Celestial Sanctum is and how they can attune with it. It is perhaps

the single most important piece of literature they will receive from the Order.

The Celestial Sanctum is a meeting place, a meeting of minds and thoughts, a place where, if we are successful in our attunement with it, we can become conscious of Cosmic harmony on the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual levels. It is a field of Cosmic energy that benefits everyone who knows how to establish contact with it. For the interest of all, the following are the words of Fr Lewis from his original article:

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It seems fitting that in the issue of this magazine for the beginning of the year 1930 and at practically the 21<sup>st</sup> year of our Rosicrucian activities in America under the present cycle, I should have the opportunity to announce the existence of a new and beautiful star in the Cosmic, which will hereafter be known as the Cathedral of the Soul.

Fourteen years ago, the first foundation stones of this invisible, immaterial, yet not intangible cathedral were laid by me with due ceremony and reverential consideration for the part I might be taking in a work that seemed to be Cosmically directed and divinely decreed. Having prayerfully received and considered the instructions for this great work for seven years, it was my joy to bring the inspiration into some form of earthly manifestation. Fourteen years ago therefore, the plan that was decreed seven years previously became a living cosmic reality.

Our members are to hear much about this Cathedral of the Soul in the near future and, at present, I wish merely to announce its name and present to you a brief picture of what it is. This cathedral is that great holy of holies and Cosmic sanctum maintained by the beams of thought waves of thousands of our most advanced members who have been prepared and trained to direct these beams of thought at certain periods of the day and the week toward one central point, and there becomes a manifest power, a creative force, a health giving and peace giving nucleus far removed from the material trials and problems, limitations and destructive elements of the earth plane.

While men have been busy planning, building, and directing great spires and towers of earthly cathedrals that would reach high into the heavens and become the material abiding place for those in devotion and meditation, we have been creating this cathedral of prayer and illumination, Cosmic joy and peace, high above every material plane and ascent into the Cosmic itself.

In this cathedral there will be the music of the spheres and the chimes of Cosmic rhythm. There will come from its spire the call to worship at various hours of the day and week throughout the years to come, and our prepared and advanced members will reach this cathedral with their thoughts and their soul consciousness and dwell therein and carry on the great work of bidding others welcome, touching them with the hand of fellowship and the heart of sympathetic understanding. From this high altar will go forth the illuminating words of Cosmic inspiration and Divine Illumination.

Into this great cathedral we will call those who are seeking for the first portal of the Cosmic Assembly. Hereafter, it will be our ambition and our pleasure to direct the sincere and the devout, the worthy and the needy to this great cathedral. The story of what it is and what it means will be issued in a beautiful booklet to aid those who are starting on the path with their gaze turning upward, away from the desire for knowledge of a material nature, and seeking the more glorious life giving, soul inspiring illumination of the Cosmic hosts.

The Cathedral of the Soul shall be your Cathedral and mine, and the dwelling place of the great Masters of the past and future.





# The Endless

by O.J. Rankin

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The first link of an endless chain bracelet is a mystery. Once joined to the adjoining free link, there are no first or last links. Even the person who made the bracelet cannot find them. Their identity is lost in the Oneness of the whole bracelet.

We are each like a link in an endless chain. No one can find the first or last link, for it is the whole chain, that is eternally linked with Oneness. As Meister Eckhart said:

*The Godhead is absolute essence, unknowable, not only by man but also by itself.*

Separateness is as inconceivable as a beginning or end. There is only Oneness, which is more than Unity.



As links in an endless chain, we can only know ourselves by knowing the whole. We cannot know the whole without knowing ourselves, and we cannot know ourselves without knowing the Divine. We see our God only through the eyes of the Divine.

We are always becoming until we become. To know ourselves means first to *think* our Self, then *learn* our Self, then *know* our Self. It is indeed true that all is within.



# A Smile



from **The Dentist**

*A smile costs nothing but gives much;  
It enriches those who receive,  
without making poorer those who give.  
It takes but a moment, but the  
memory of it can last forever.*

*None is so rich or mighty that  
they can get along without it.  
And none is so poor but that  
they can be made rich by it.*

*A smile creates happiness in the home,  
fosters goodwill in business, and  
is the countersign of friendship.*

*It brings rest to the weary, cheer to  
the discouraged, sunshine to  
the sad, and it's nature's best  
antidote for trouble.*

*Yet it can't be bought, begged, borrowed or stolen,  
for it is of no value to anyone  
until it is given.*

*Some people are too tired to give you a smile.  
So give them one of yours;  
for no one needs a smile as much  
as the one who has no more to give.*





by Ralph M Lewis

# Human Creativity

Its Mystery  
& Mechanism

“  
Is there an underlying  
'substance' in the  
universe?  
”

There are two kinds of motivation by which we are compelled to act: One we call *'compulsion'*, the other, *'self-generation.'* The compulsion to act is *dual in nature.* The *first compulsion* is our *instincts*, such as the innate urge for survival, the gratification of the appetites and our impelling curiosity. These compulsions arise *involuntarily* within us; we do not call them forth. The *second compulsion* is *environmental* events such as floods, fire, drought and flight from danger. The acts that follow are not the result of any previous cogitation which could have initiated them. Outside agencies caused us to act.

The other kind of human motivation, *self-generation*, is what has advanced humanity to the status we may term *'civilised.'* Self-generated acts are those which are initiated by the voluntary, *conscious direction* of our mental powers. Our human mental processes are numerous and complex. However, one word best sums up those acts by which we wilfully direct our motivation, namely: *creativity.*

In order to understand creativity, we can approach it by *three* related viewpoints. They are the *philosophical*, the *psychological* and their *application.* Ordinarily, when we think of the word *'create'* in the broad semantic sense, we mean to bring something into existence. But is it an *actual* substance that we create, or just the *form* of a substance that we create? Or can an *original*

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MOTIVATION TOWARD CREATIVITY	
Compulsive	Self-generative
Involuntary acts	Voluntary acts
Instincts / Environment (reaction)	Conscious direction of mental powers
Non-creative in the true sense	Leading to Creativity

*idea* itself be a creation regardless of whether it acquires substance or form? Let us look at these words separately and see whether either one closely approximates the general idea of creating something.

### Substance

Is there a primary underlying *substance* in the universe? In other words, at the bottom of everything, do all experienced realities distil into a single actuality? Or, are there myriad kinds of substances in the universe having no basic relationship to each other? If all the substances we perceive were as singly different as they appear to our perceptions, there would be no nexus, no bond existing between them. Such a concept then would presume a vacuum between the different kinds of realities, a state of nonbeing. And *no* thing can give rise to *some* thing. *Nothing* could not be a condition out of which *something* could be created.

On the other hand, if we presume that all reality in the universe can ultimately be reduced to a single primary substance (a single actuality), that substance must be *isotropic*, namely, composed of the same material everywhere. If that were so, then nothing could be absolutely created because, in essence, all things would be fundamentally related. Certainly no thing could be brought into existence outside of the primary substance of the universe.

### Form

Let us now consider form and see if it represents an *act of creating*. What is form? It is anything producing sensations having the qualities that affect our receptor senses. In other words, forms have colour, weight, taste, sound, dimension, or are hot or cold, hard or soft, and so on. *No thing* that is said to have form, is devoid of all these qualities; for if

it were, we would not be able to experience it.

However, we can so manipulate the natural forces of the primary substance that a form *seems* to be a creation. No matter

what its appearance, it does possess one or more of the basic qualities that all forms have. Therefore, from the philosophical point of view, we cannot create anything which does not have root in the primary substance of the universe.

Yet as human beings we do create forms which, in their entirety, assume a difference from anything previously experienced. From the psychological aspect of this subject, this merely constitutes a *change in the order of things* and a new arrangement of *that which already exists*. The car, aeroplane, telephone and television, numerous devices: they are not absolute creations; they

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ASPECTS OF CREATIVITY		
Philosophical		Psychological
Substance	Form	Original idea as a created thing
Nothing brought into existence outside of the assumed primary substance of the universe.	Produces sensations that affect our objective senses	Being a new arrangement of what already exists
We unknowingly manipulate the primary substance of a form so that it appears as a New Thing (e.g. inventions: being combinations of forms)		The Idea appears as something new



are extensions and developments of existing factors, elements, forces and phenomena. What is new then, is the idea by which things or conditions may assume to us a new appearance or state.

## The creative idea can arise either objectively or subjectively.

### Objective Phase

The creative idea can arise either objectively or subjectively. Objectively the creative idea is principally caused by the demand of a need or requirement of something. It is the realisation of some insufficiency, inadequacy or imperfection that incites the individual to remedy the condition. Psychologically, we can state that it is *dissatisfaction* with an existing state that provides the *motivation* needed to create that which will satisfy.

To elucidate further, what exists to us may be satisfactory in quality but seem insufficient in its quantity. The desire to increase the quantity becomes the motivation for the creative

idea. However, the need for something does not always bring forth an idea for its fulfilment. A man may have a sum of money yet need more for a specific reason. It does not necessarily follow that there will then flood into consciousness an idea for obtaining it.

In this objective form of creating, *reason* plays a paramount part. One must cogitate upon the probability of causes that will provide the need.

In the reasoning there should be an attempt to find an affinity between what is and what is sought; more succinctly, how can what exists be extended so as to provide that which is desired? There cannot remain great extremes between what one is or has and the end sought after. We must think how we can use our potential, things, or abilities as active causes from which the desired effects may follow. It is at this time that the unconscious association takes place in the subconscious. An idea comes forth that in its content bridges the present knowledge and circumstances with the end being sought. It flashes into consciousness with a self-evident clarity. The creative idea suggests how

MENTAL PROCESSES OF CREATIVITY			
Objective		Subjective	Subconscious
Demand or need for something		Spontaneous ideas	Dormant ideas: previous ideas rejected or laid aside
Analysing potential	Connection with experience and knowledge	Intuitive: Relating to experiential past qualities and components	Ideas automatically reviewed and indexed
Creation of Idea		The Idea appears as something new	

elements of the known, of experience, may be used to arrive at the goal we are after.

The original idea may not be infallible. However, a failure causes a critical analysis of one's existing conditions or thoughts. It causes the selection of a new starting point for the mind to focus attention upon.

One does not begin by merely *wanting* to create. It is necessary to have a general idea with the hope of converting it into a reality. It is often preferable to first dissect the idea of that which is desired; in other words, to discover the elements of which the mental image is composed. In this process there is the possibility that there exists in the mind an *affinitive idea*, one that is in



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harmony with existing knowledge and the goal desired. The affinitive idea, therefore, is an intermediary one. It is creative in having the power to make the known materialise into what is imagined and sought after.

To summarise, there are two approaches to the objective method of creating with the faculty of reason. One is the analysis of the individual's personal potentials to discover that which may close the gap between actuality and one's conceived objective. The other way is to try to find, in the desired end, some connection with one's experiences and knowledge, thereby giving rise to the affinitive creative idea by which attainment is had.

### Subjective Phase

Let us now consider the *subjective* phase of creativity. These are those ideas which flash into consciousness and are rightly called creative and are self-sufficient. They

embody the content, the originality and the method by which they are to be transformed into reality. Such creative ideas are not laboured; they are *spontaneous*. There is, in other words, no previous conscious thought about them. Such creative ideas must be credited to the *subjective*,

namely, the *subconscious* processes of *intuition*. Mystics refer to this as an influx of Cosmic, or Divine Intelligence; that implies a process quite contrary to, if not independent of, the common mental functions.

Psychologists, on the other hand, use the term '*insight*' for the phenomenon of intuition. Both definitions imply a kind of super-intelligence.

The intuitive idea that may suddenly come into consciousness is a composite of various sensations of previous experiences, no matter how original it may seem at the time. The form the idea assumes may appear new. However, it is composed of the qualities and elements of past experiences. An idea whose elements would

**Subjective, subconscious  
creative ideas are  
not laboured; they are  
spontaneous.**



be entirely new would be incomprehensible to us. We would be unable to identify it with any known reality and therefore it would be valueless to us.

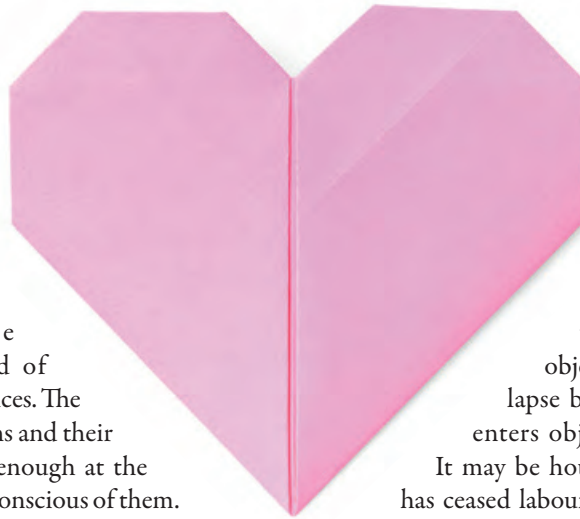
## Dormant Ideas

The memory within the subconscious is comprised of myriad ideas from past experiences. The registration of such impressions and their sensations, were not intense enough at the time for one to be objectively conscious of them. These relatively dormant ideas cannot be voluntarily recalled, for we never knew of their existence. They can, however, be attracted or drawn to more dynamic ideas which form in the mind.

For instance, an idea that drew the focus of attention by its perplexity and, upon which one may have dwelt consciously for some time, will be released into the subconscious as an unfinished work by our faculty of reason and perhaps objectively forgotten. Our transcendent intelligence or subconscious begins an analysis of the idea which the objective mind has put aside. There is in our subconscious mind a superior evaluation and judgment based upon an index of previous ideas and impressions already stored in our subconscious from the past. A process of combining and relating takes place between them and the formerly rejected idea of the objective mind.

## The transcendent intelligence, or subconscious, begins an analysis of the idea which the objective mind has put aside.

It would seem to the subconscious that the rejected idea is more dynamic because of the previous thought given to it. A sorting and selection then takes place and finally, a harmonious relationship is established. This results in a new mental image, an idea with intensity. The new idea has sufficient stimulus to force itself into the conscious mind with convincing self-evidence.



The definition of *insight* for *intuition*, therefore, seems appropriate. There is, it would appear, a penetrating *subconscious review* of the incomplete and restless idea transferred to the subconscious by the objective consciousness. The time lapse before the new intuitive idea enters objective consciousness varies.

It may be hours after the conscious mind has ceased labouring with a chain of thought, or weeks, even years later. In fact, one may have forgotten the original idea which stimulated the subconscious processes so that the intuitive idea, when realised, seems to be unrelated to any previous thought that can be recollected.

## Creativity, however, must be fed objectively if it is to become a frequent aid.

The more one cogitates upon the subject of a particular interest, the more intense the power of the idea is when transferred into memory. It is therefore better, by the use of association, to attract from our memory, in the subconscious, those elements that will coordinate with it.

Creativity, however, must be fed objectively if it is to become a frequent aid. Observation must be cultivated. Observations produce the stuff out of which experience and its ideas are composed. One should try to attribute meaning and identity to what one perceives. From observation, challenges arise in the mind as to the validity, the contraries, and the differences of ideas. These stimulate the mind and, by association, give rise to these creative ideas and deeper insights, namely, through intuitive motivation.

Meditation, of which much is being said today, is the practice of making the conscious mind more receptive to the release of impressions from the workings of the subconscious. It is a closing of one set of doors and the opening of others in the mind.



# Be a Good Listener

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by **John Howard**

Southern Cross Lodge,  
Johannesburg - June 1969

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*Of much speaking  
comes repentance.  
In Silence is safety.*

---

*Say not that truth is  
established by years, or that in  
a multitude of believers there  
is certainty.*

*One human proposition has  
as much authority as another,  
if reason makes not the  
difference.*

---

– from the 1752 edition of –  
*‘Unto Thee I Grant the Economy of Life’*

Goethe is attributed with saying that speech is our most precious gift. Many of us stand or fall by the manner in which we use this faculty. However, there is one other attribute which, increasingly so today, can gain for a person more pride and stature than many another. It is the power of silence. To put it more succinctly, it is the ability to be a good listener rather than a good talker.

So many of us today listen impatiently and with half an ear to the outpourings of those around us, just waiting for a chance to say our little piece too. And in doing so, we miss the opportunity to learn something from our fellow beings. We miss becoming more perceptive and less confused in a world that increasingly searches for truth, but increasingly too, veils the underlying intentions of its words (in the interests of diplomacy?) and skates around the edges of what it intends to convey.

How many of us say what we really think and feel? Are we not guilty at times of using words which veil what we actually mean? Do we not often do this so as not to appear harsh, not wanting to offend or hurt and also that we need not reveal too much about ourselves?

But still, the torrent of words, words, words, gushes forth. It is then that we need to be good listeners. It is then that we must discipline ourselves to become receptive so we may discover the true meaning of it all; or risk becoming more confused ourselves.

Perhaps it all revolves around the sometimes desperate need to communicate with the world around us. Talking is the most obvious way of finding that communication, and we also happen to reveal, without being aware that we are doing so, the most about ourselves when we talk.

Those who are able to listen sympathetically, build around themselves auras that attract others to them, although they may not be in positions to solve or help in many of the things they hear. But they create opportunities for themselves to study, observe and reflect on people and the situations they are in. And in the process, they earn the gratitude, even affection, of those whose burdens feel lighter for having aired them and shared them.

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# Cosmic Order

by David Peat  
(1938-2017)

Francis David Peat was a British holistic physicist and author who carried out research in solid state physics and the foundation of quantum theory. He authored many books and essays and this article consists of excerpts from his *'Cosmos and Inscapes.'*

**C**osmology is the scientific study of the universe, a branch of physics and astronomy concerned with answering questions about the structure of matter and energy at the largest of scales, and to gain ever deeper insights into the nature and ultimate origin of our universe. The goals of cosmology and of fundamental physics have coincided in that they both attempt to unravel the deepest laws of nature and to probe the most basic levels of matter and energy. The ultimate aim of both disciplines is to discover a single unifying, all-embracing theory.



According to some thinkers, physics has never been closer to achieving this unification, for the study of matter at extremely high energies and short time intervals, not only deals in terms of elementary entities such as quarks and hypothesised superstrings but, at the same time, casts light upon the possible Big Bang origin of our universe. The conditions under which these supposedly most elementary entities of matter are produced appear identical to those that must have existed during the first vanishingly short time intervals during the formation of the universe.

The universe is envisioned as emerging in a burst of *space-time* and *energy* out of a *single quantum fluctuation*, and the unfolding of matter and energy out of these primordial quantum processes as taking

### The universe is envisioned as emerging in a burst of space-time and energy out of a single quantum fluctuation

place, according to a single all-embracing law; a law moreover which had, in a certain sense, existed prior to the universe itself.

### The Cosmic – A Unified Scheme

The cosmology of the last century became an attempt to explain all that is by means of a single, unified intellectual scheme. But can such a goal ever be achieved, indeed, is such a cosmology truly all-embracing? After all, for most of us cosmology has a more immediate sense, for it is concerned with the existential fact of our being in the universe. It is about the tension between the immediacy of our experience and our need to contain, metabolise and symbolise it.

Cosmology has its origin in the very fact of our being alive. Our universe is ourselves, our history and memories, our relationships, needs, desires, values and emotions. Our universe lies in the immanence of matter and in the numinous power that we are sometimes privileged to touch. It is that same power of mystery or spirit that has always been present in art, music, drama, literature, religious ceremonies and the insights of individual scientists.

A true cosmology must therefore involve an integration of the inner and outer, objective and subjective, matter and spirit, art and science, individual and society, into a single manner of being. This, I believe may long ago have been the case in our culture at a time when society as a whole provided contexts and values that made our connection with nature and the numinous was more immediate.

### A Different World View

I sense a similar integration, a cosmology of heart and head, within the world view of the Indigenous peoples of North America. Over the past few years I have been privileged to explore some of these questions with friends from the Blackfoot, Micmaq, Iroquoian and Cree peoples. In every case I have been struck by their direct sense of relatedness to the universe.

For a traditional person, matter and spirit, the immediate and transcendent, are equally present in the world that surrounds them. Indeed, their science and spirituality remain intensely practical. They have no need to fragment and divide knowledge and experience, or to create an art that is somehow different from religion, a science that is separated from the sacred. No, the essence of their world view, it seems to me, lies in acknowledging direct relationship with all living things, and with the recognition that all things are possessed of animation and spirit. This includes not only insects, birds, fish, animals and plants but also rocks and trees, winds and stars. Indeed, within such a universe, matter and spirit, mind and body have never become categorised or separated by thought.

But this sense of acknowledgement of the energies or spirits of the cosmos, of what is, at one and the same time, both transcendent yet immanent in matter, also brings with it the obligation to celebrate and renew the relationship between *'The People'* and these powers. The *'sun dance'* of the Plains tribes, for example, is both an act of sacrifice and a ceremony that renews their relationship to the whole order of creation. And because in the Native American world-view time always returns to itself eventually, it is always possible to make a direct connection to the primal moment of relationship and creation.

I have dwelt upon the cosmology of the



Indigenous peoples of North America because I believe it can both illuminate and connect us to something that is felt to be missing within our modern Western way of life. I believe our lack of connection arises from the way we have distanced ourselves from the cosmos and through the tendencies of our thought processes, and our Indo-European languages, to objectify the world around us.

Yet, there are always moments when our sense of separation is transcended, when our inner and outer worlds cohere. The Irish writer, *James Joyce* (1882-1941) understood these as *Epiphanies*, moments of sudden insight and illumination in which the events and memories of a person's life integrate together. Such moments were expressed in several of his short stories, notably '*The Dead*' from his collection '*Dubliners*'.

I suggest that in our deepest moments we should try and experience the world as '*inscape*', namely, perceiving our deepest inner nature, rather than merely seeing it as objectified, externalised, landscapes. The word, *inscape*, itself comes from the English poet and priest, *Gerard Manley Hopkins* (1844-1889) whose poetry probed the '*inner-dwelling-ness*' of nature. To engage the world

as *inscape*, therefore, brings us close to what I mean by cosmology in its widest sense..., in the sense of the '*existential immediacy of the cosmos*' as it presents itself to us, and our participation within it.

## To See the World

To see the world as *inscape* is to acknowledge that each of our experiences is limitless, authentic and unconditioned. To come into contact with nature, enter into a relationship, read a poem, watch a play, or contemplate a work of art, is to open ourselves to an unlimited world of experience and a multiplicity of levels of meaning. It calls upon us to seek and respond to the authentic voice that lies within all things. It asks us to realise that all attempts at description, and all levels of existence are, of their very nature, provisional.

The objective and subjective become united within the *inscape* of the world and, thus, within our perceptions and relationships; for, in them, we partake of the boundless cosmos: the realm beyond the limits of objectivity and subjectivity. This vibrancy, this animation of all that is, this inner illumination that we sense within all things, lies at the heart of our experience and our creative response

Sky image: istock.com / Maximusnd





to existence. It is our science, our art, our religion and our drama.

## Time

Another way in which we can explore the fact of our engagement within the cosmos is through the nature of time. Physics, from the time of Newton on, has externalised time, picturing it as a flowing stream that moves, inexorably and quite independently of us, from past into present and on into the future. On the other hand, our personal experience of time is profoundly different, exhibiting a multiplicity of levels and appearances.

I would like to suggest that time also possesses the aspect of inscape. Just as Newton drew attention to the external landscape of time, the flowing movement in which an infinitesimal present separates a future that does not exist from a past that has vanished forever, I would like to focus upon time's inscape.

### To perceive time is to understand that reality, and the fact of our being, exists always within the present.

To understand the inscape of time is to enter into the boundless immediacy of the present. It is to suggest that time is immanent within all things and directly accessible to our experience. Thus, rather than time being a movement *external* to us, something that stretches beyond our immediate perception into the distant past and the far future, what could be called the '*dynamics of time*' become accessible from within the present. By this I mean that the present moment is a door that opens onto the many levels, perceptions and experiences of time.

To perceive time is to understand that reality, and the fact of our being, exists always within the present. The past is created by us, and to revisit the past is to engage in this act of creation. Indeed, when we speak of transformation, personal growth is not so much that we seek to free ourselves from the past, as it is to engage in the full, free and dynamic movements of the present. In

this way, it is not we who are freed from the past but we ourselves who act to free that past into its continuous unfolding present.

I want to stress that I am not simply speaking at the subjective level or proposing a particular perception of the *movement of time*. No, I am suggesting that, at the purely material level, the *dynamics of time* are to be discovered *within the present*, namely, that time and matter are inexorably tied together. They are complementary aspects of *one reality*, rather than matter being immersed in a flowing river of times.

Rather than the cosmos stretching beyond us and external to us, it is immanent within everything we touch, enter into, and dream about. Each moment is a door into an unfolding, boundless infinity. In short, at every instant of our lives we have the opportunity to touch the numinous. The tension of our existence lies, therefore, not in our imagined distance from the transcendent qualities of the cosmos, but in our need to contain them within our daily lives.

Western science represents one attempt to contain this transcendent nature of reality through reason, mathematics and a search for truth, beauty and unity. And, as can be clearly seen when reading about the lives of great scientists, their individual guiding impulses are indistinguishable from those found in art and religion. The artist is also concerned with the challenge of containing and symbolising the numinous. I feel, for example, that my thesis is far better expressed in a single apple painted by Cezanne..., for one sees within the very brush strokes that continuous movement of engagement with the vibrant reality of the apple, *with its inscape*, if you like. Yet, it is an inscape that spills over and unifies itself into the inscape of the artist him or herself, the canvas and the perceptions of the viewer.

Thus, for Cezanne, and for we who stand before his work..., cosmology is contained within an apple. For in this image lies all the immanence of the material world and the numinous potential of spirit. To contemplate Cezanne's apple is to enter into a *well of time*, a *moment of awareness* that links us in our own immediate present to that of the painter. It is to partake in an *act of unfoldment* that takes us to the very meaning and origin of matter, to the Big Bang itself, and forward into the distant future.





# THE BAOBAB TREE

by Mary Jones



**G**ondwanaland, one of the early supercontinents, started breaking up some 180 million years ago during the era we now call the *Jurassic*, and the beginning of the era of dinosaurs. Great landmasses dispersed across the globe, fuelled by tectonic plate movements, taking with them ancient plants with ancestry to that supercontinent. The Baobab tree, genus *Adansonia*, is known to have originated in Madagascar 21 million years ago and eventually made it to Africa, the Arabian peninsula, India and Australia. Despite its relatively recent origins in Madagascar, it may have a thus-far hidden ancestry going back to the ancient supercontinent, Gondwanaland itself.

The genus *Adansonia* has eight species known as 'Baobabs'. The species above is the *Adansonia grandidieri*. The *Adansonia* genus first emerged on the Island of Madagascar 21 million years ago. The hardy seedpods were transported by ocean currents to Africa, the Arabian peninsula, India and Australia. The species are as follows:

Madagascar – *Adansonia grandidieri*  
*Adansonia rubrostipa*  
*Adansonia suarezensis*  
*Adansonia perrieri*  
*Adansonia madagascariensis*  
*Adansonia za*

Africa & the Arabian peninsula & India  
 – *Adansonia digitata*

Australia – *Adansonia gregorii*

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## Giant of the Ages

Predating almost all living creatures today, the Baobab may have existed before the super-continent started splitting apart into smaller continents around 180 million years ago. This is speculative though, as it has been genetically established recently that the genus originated in Madagascar some 21 million years ago. Today, its eight species survive in dry arid regions and is a symbol of life and positivity in a landscape where little else can thrive. It is supremely adapted to its usually very dry environment. The trees are all succulents, meaning that during rainy seasons they absorb and store water in their vast trunks and branches, enabling them to produce nutrient-rich fruit during the dry season when everything around these trees is arid. This is how this magnificent plant became known as the *'Tree of Life.'*

The *Adansonia digitata* (African Baobab) grows in 32 African countries, as well as in the Arabian peninsula and parts of western India and are known to have lived to 5,000 years. They can reach up to 30 metres and some have an enormous 50 metre circumference. They provide shelter, food and water for animals and humans, which is why many savannah communities have made their homes near these ancient trees.

The striking silhouette of a Baobab tree at sunset is a familiar sight to anyone who has spent time in rural Africa. But it is also well known on other continents,

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**With bark and fruit offering over 300 life-sustaining uses, the African Baobab is at the heart of many indigenous remedies, traditions and folklore.**

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thanks to its starring roles in Disney's *'Lion King'*, *'Avatar'*, *'Madagascar'* and the famous children's novel *'The Little Prince.'*

### Tree of Life

With bark and fruit offering over 300 life-sustaining uses, the African Baobab is at the heart of many indigenous remedies, traditions and folklore. While the eight *Adansonia* species are known throughout the world, not many people know that it has flowers and life-giving fruit.

Even fewer people know that this wonderful fruit is one of the most nutrient-dense foods in the world.

In fact, every part of a Baobab is valuable. The bark can be turned into rope and clothing; the seeds can be used to make cosmetic oils; the leaves are edible; the trunks store large quantities of water; and the fruit is extraordinarily rich in nutrients and antioxidants. Women in Africa have turned to the Baobab fruit as a natural source of health and beauty for centuries.

It is the only fruit in the world that dries naturally on its branch. Instead of dropping and spoiling, it stays on the branch and bakes in the sun for six months, transforming its green velvety coating into a hard, coconut-like shell within which is the dried-out fruit pulp, highly nutritious. This means that the fruit, once fully desiccated, simply needs to be harvested, de-seeded and then sieved to produce a delicious pure fruit powder.

Unlike many other supplements, it is 100% pure fruit in its natural form. Incredibly, the fruit has a natural shelf life of three years, so there are no preservatives or additives whatsoever. It is extremely rich in vitamin C, almost 50% fibre, and has the highest antioxidant content of any whole fruit. The benefits of Baobab fruit include:

- Energy release – reduction of tiredness and fatigue.
- Immune function – protection against illnesses, infections and diseases.
- Digestive health – it is a natural prebiotic, supporting gut health.
- Healthy, younger-looking skin – it produces collagen, leading to a glowing complexion, and helps fight the signs of ageing.

**Antioxidant properties:** Baobab fruit pulp has a particularly high antioxidant capability, mainly because of its high natural vitamin C content, which is equivalent to six oranges per 100 grams of fruit.

**Antipyretic properties:** A semi-fluid gum, obtained from Baobab bark, is used to treat sores. It also contains an alkaloid *'Adansonin'* which has been used for the treatment of fever, especially that which is caused by malaria. In Ghana, Baobab bark is used instead of quinine



bark for curing fevers of many types. In Congo Brazzaville, a bark decoction is used to bathe children with rickets, and in Tanzania it is used as a mouthwash for toothache.

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## Baobabs are fundamentally important to the entire dry African savanna ecosystem.

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**Antimicrobial activity:** The leaf infusions are used in the treatment of diarrhoea, fever, inflammation, kidney diseases, blood cleansing and asthma. The leaves are also a good source of proteins. The extracts from fruits, seeds and leaves are antimicrobial and antifungal.

### Essential for the Ecosystem

In Africa, Baobabs are fundamentally important to the dry savanna ecosystem. They help keep soil conditions humid, aid nutrient recycling, and slow soil erosion with their massive root systems. In an arid climate, they symbolise life in a landscape where little else thrives. Its large whitish flowers open at night and are eagerly pollinated by fruit bats, hawkmoths and bushbabies. The flowers shrivel and fall within 24 hours, creating a beautiful display.

Thereafter, many months pass as the fruit grows into large seed-filled pods which can be up to a foot long. The fruit, containing tartaric acid and Vitamin C, serves as a vital nutrient and food source for many species. The Baobab is also an essential source of water and shelter for hundreds of animals, including birds, lizards, monkeys and even elephants, which can eat their bark for moisture when there is no water nearby.

The African Baobab is remarkable not only because of its immense size, lifespan, fruit and bark but also in the way it continually grows multiple fused stems. The bark regenerates in the space between these stems, which is unique to the Baobab.

For people, the Baobab's fruit-pulp can be eaten, soaked in water to make a refreshing drink, preserved into a jam, or roasted and ground to be used in a coffee-like drink. The bark can be

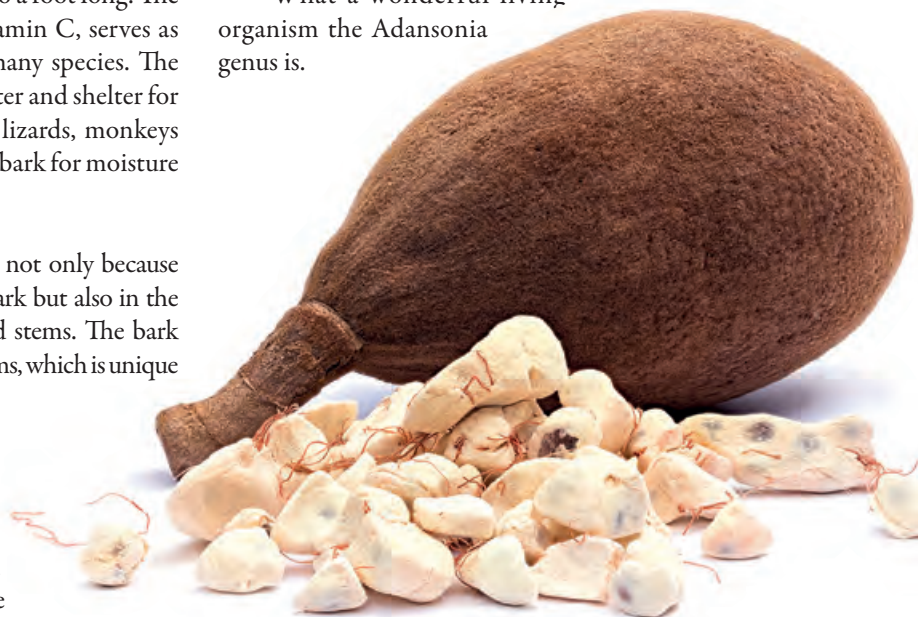
pounded to make everything from rope, mats and baskets, to paper and cloth. The leaves are also used, being boiled and eaten, or glue can be made from their flowers' pollen.

Throughout the Zambezi region of Zambia and Zimbabwe, indigenous communities value the Baobab for its branches that seem to span out in all directions like roots. Local legend says that the Baobabs were too proud, so the gods became angry, uprooted them and threw them back into the ground upside-down.

Local people have learned, through centuries, to live harmoniously with these majestic trees, thriving on their many uses without depleting them. However, due to climate change, nine out of 13 of Africa's oldest and largest Baobab trees have died in the past decade. Scientists speculate that warming temperatures have killed the trees directly or made them weaker and more susceptible to drought, diseases, fire or wind.

The spongy material of the bark allows water to be absorbed deeper into the tissue, as there is rarely enough rain during the wet season to penetrate the litter layer of soil. The U-shaped branches allow for water to trickle down, allowing for maximum absorption over an extended period of time even after the rain stops. The water is absorbed into the vascular tissue of the tree, where it can be moved into the tree's cells for long-term storage. A large tree can store as much as 136,400 litres of water.

What a wonderful living organism the *Adansonia* genus is.



# Resting in the Heart of the Lotus

by Evelyn Graham



I was resting in the heart of a lotus blossom. I was being born from the heart of the lotus. As each petal unfurled, my labour was great waves of ecstasy, exquisite and delicate. In the final waves of glory, as the last petal unfurled, I arose from the heart of the lotus: pure, perfect, beautiful, drawn slowly up by the warmth of the sun.

The warm fragrance-laden air formed a protective blanket around me. And as I drew breath from this life-giving air, lucid and rarefied, it permeated my being with a coolness and a purity as if from a distant snow-covered mountain peak.

I contemplated the tranquil sky, intensely blue. Complete contentment pervaded my being with the gentle innocence of a newborn babe. I was filled, surrounded and protected by divine Love. I raised my arms toward the sun, my feet still held in the heart of the lotus. Exquisite peace, joy and love..., effortless contemplation existing in harmony.

I was love. I was the birth of love. And as I gazed upwards at all the beauty, I realised I was looking within myself. All of this cosmic beauty and majesty was in me. I was everything and everything was me. Such majesty, such simplicity, such unruffled calmness. Words are lost in this translucent stillness. I encompass all.

istock.com / Marina Stryzhova





by Daniel Kacoutié

# Music

## Outward Expression of an Inward Desire

“

Music has always stirred the most profound feelings that words could never describe. Is it any wonder that music is so often used as a guide to the journey within, a way of communing with the deeper Self?

”

My exploration of the mystical and philosophical application of music will begin by examining the thoughts of great minds that belonged not only to musicians, but to historians, painters and writers too. I will survey how music affects us in a conscious and unconscious way simply by observing our behaviour and relationship with it. And lastly, I will discuss how we can apply music in a more conscious way to elevate ourselves to the point where we can be used as tools for reconnecting our outer self with our innermost Self, thereby establishing a connection with our inner perfection, a concept often referred to by Rosicrucians as the *‘Master Within.’*

Before continuing though, let me say a few words about what music really is, for it is really interesting how we define it. Music is generally perceived in two ways: either (a) the technical/mechanical performance of the art, or (b) how we emotionally respond to it. The easiest way to understand what a word means is to explore its origins and how it is broken down. The author and composer *Antoine Fabre D’Olivet* breaks it down for us as follows:-

Music comes from the Greek word, *mousikè*. It is formed from the word *‘mousa’* the *‘muse’* (a source of artistic inspiration, or to reflect) that comes from the Egyptian *mas* or *mous* meaning generation, production or the outer development of a principle. In other words, the manifestation or acting out of what is possible.

This meant that the Greeks originally applied their *mousikè* to any development of a concept, or to any *sphere of activity* where thought passes

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from the intangible to the tangible. That means that they considered all forms of imitative arts - painting, sculpture, dance, poetry - as an expression falling under this term from which our word *music* is derived. So, if we can accept that music, in its strictest sense, originally did not refer exclusively to sound, can we agree that it is this phenomenon especially, whether produced through nature or imitated through instruments, percussion or vocals, that has the most profound effect on us?

But why does it do so? To answer this question we must begin by finding observations made by men and women of the past, words that paint a universal sentiment towards the most innate form of expression known to humans.

### Echoes of the Past

Since the earliest antiquity, we note the importance of music in all manifestations of social and religious life, as well as the power attributed to it. Legends abound and by comparing them, we may observe that in all ancient Oriental or Occidental civilisations, the creation of the world is always associated with sound. – from ‘*A Philosophy of Music.*’

When humans first discovered their gods, a favourite god, or possibly even a single supreme being we would today refer to simply as ‘*God*’, they sang. From the first breath of a newborn child that cries with force and vitality, to the last relief of a soul departing from a well-lived body, life

is a sweet song that must end in perfect cadence. Before then however, we must sing it fully.

The Belgian musician and musicologist Berthe Nyssens, explains here the intrinsic need to manifest our desire to live and express our wonder of life through sound and music. We move on to the thoughts of the great English painter and poet William Blake, who tells us there is something powerful and eternal in all art, words and music. This connection is seemingly ineffable yet so innate to our nature: ‘*Painting, as well as music and poetry, exists and exults in immortal thoughts.*’

### The Creative Power of Music

Now we all know who Beethoven was (not the movie *St Bernard!*). Even if you haven’t heard the name, you will most definitely have heard at least some of his music! This prolific composer’s observation is very profound:

Music is a higher revelation than all wisdom and philosophy.

Music is the electrical soil in which the spirit lives, thinks and invents.

This answers why music can have such a profound effect on us. Dissecting Beethoven’s two quotes we discover why. In the first sentence Beethoven recognises that there exists a transcendent quality. He admits that there is an unspoken knowledge transmitted in music,

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"Since the earliest antiquity, we note the importance of music in all manifestations of social and religious life, as well as the power attributed to it."



"Music is the electrical soil in which the spirit lives, thinks and invents.."



an avowal or exposure of self, an extremely enlightening, personal experience. In the second sentence he recognises a divine essence in the human spirit and its connection with the creative power of music.

The *'electrical soil'* is a curious word usage at a time when electricity was poorly understood and certainly not used in its modern context. So what could Beethoven possibly have meant? To understand this beautiful metaphor we must dig deeper in time. The significance of the interpretation will reveal to us how Beethoven especially, knowingly or unknowingly, understood the relationship between self and inner Self through music, thereby connecting us with our inner Master.

Electric and electricity come from the Greek word *'elektron'*, meaning amber. The Greek philosopher Thales of Miletus observed the qualities of this stone. He discovered that amber, when rubbed with a furry hide, attracted light substances such as hair, a principle he called *'static electricity'*, a precursor to the science of electricity. And speaking of science, the word *electricity* itself was not introduced to the English language until the 17<sup>th</sup> century, a century before Beethoven was born. The man responsible for this grammatical inception was no other than Sir Francis Bacon. We know him well for his contribution to politics, science and Rosicrucianism, as well as the English language as we have just discovered.

But what does this have to do with music? Well, let us return to Beethoven's quote equipped with this new perspective and understanding. He understood what the Greeks and Egyptians explained to us in the etymology

of the word *'music'* itself: *'...the development of a concept or any sphere of activity where thought passes from the intangible to the tangible.'* Music is deeply charged, like electricity, with a creative transcendent power that we are all attracted and connected to, and which stimulates and animates us. Whether singing, dancing, rejoicing or mourning, music is integral to all of this as *Berthe Nyssens* reminds us.

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Just as the seed of any plant or tree planted in good soil will live and grow to attain its full potential and beauty, so too is our spirit inspired to live, think, create and express the divine nature within us, a revelation we encounter in the deepest sense when we listen to music. Through its etymology and with the aid of a few notable people from various disciplines we now know what music is and our relation to it. But how does it connect us with our inner selves? Returning to the title of my article, how does this outward expression reflect this inner desire? What is the inner desire?

## Connection with the Master Within

Harmony, attunement, peace. These are but a few of the many words we use to feel connected with or to feel 'at one' with the environment we find ourselves in; but most importantly, with ourselves. Indisputably, music affects our moods and emotions and even our personality. A cursory search online will prove this point with a myriad of articles. But there is no need to go that far; all we need do is take a moment to observe our behaviour and we'll know how, consciously or unconsciously, we fulfil this desire and allow the music to guide us.





## An Inward Desire

Two months before his 14<sup>th</sup> birthday, Friedrich Nietzsche wrote the following:

God has given us music so that above all it can lead us upwards. Music unites all qualities: it can exalt us, divert us, cheer us up, or break the hardest of hearts with the softest of its melancholy tones. But its principal task is to lead our thoughts to higher things, to elevate, even to make us tremble... The musical art often speaks in sounds more penetrating than the words of poetry, and takes hold of the most hidden crevices of the heart... Song elevates our being and leads us to the good and the true.

Nietzsche's words expose a very enlightened understanding that summarises how music affects us unconsciously and reminds us how it can be a tool where we can consciously return within ourselves. This is our inward desire!

As mystics and seekers of all things spiritual, we should encourage one another to listen to music that elevates us, that allows us to be more introspective, to yield to this inward desire to commune with our Self. Music is the gateway, and listening to music, especially the genres such as classical, sacred, ambient, etc., including the intonation of vowel sounds and mantras, help us to attune ourselves with the broader purposes of the Cosmic.

By stimulating our psychic selves we become more receptive to the desires and needs of our inner Self. Such communion with something vastly greater and more refined than us, of necessity turns us into better people. For our thoughts, words and actions are harmonised with our mystical ideals which in turn are the most intimate expressions of our divine origins. It comes as no surprise therefore that even on the most mundane level, our connection with music unlocks thoughts and feelings we never dared think existed. As *Richard Strauss* once said...

Our future lies in art, especially in music. In times when spiritual goods are rarer than material ones, and egotism, envy and hatred govern the world, music will do much to re-establish love among mankind.

Unknowingly, have you ever found it necessary to have a selection of music to get through your daily routine? A playlist to get to work, to exercise, or unwind or even to sleep? Take a moment to recall your favourite film or a memorable scene. I guarantee that the music plays a key role in its impact. Try to imagine it without the heart-tugging strings or roaring horns and ask yourself if it would have the same effect.

Conversely, it could be the absence of the music itself that makes it memorable. Have you ever found yourself asking a friend, or even a complete stranger, the name of the song they're listening to or that's being heard? There's an app for that and, once the song is found, you realise you have been listening to the same song for the whole day!

Surely we should be able to recognise ourselves in at least some of these observations and behaviour. But have we ever asked, why? Understanding that there is a divine reflex to commune with oneself, we know it's because within that particular song or instrumental there harbours the key to a feeling, a reunion within you, a therapy, a memory or a meditation.

By fully observing our unconscious relationship with music, how do we let it consciously affect our environment for our deeper selves? To answer this, allow me to use the words of a well-known philosopher who said that *'life would be a mistake'* without music, in his prelude to explaining the practicality of music and how we are allowed access to opening the doors to our Inner Temple, thus communing with our inner Master.

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Rosicrucian  
Mystic & Muse

# Ella Wheeler Wilcox

by Karen Schulz



“  
Laugh and the  
world laughs  
with you.  
Weep and you  
weep alone.”

These oft-quoted lines were written by a young woman who was destined to become one of the world's most popular female poets as well as a great mystic and Rosicrucian.

Ella Wheeler was born on 5 November 1855, in a humble Wisconsin homestead. She was the fourth child of a poor but cultured family and Ella often gave her mother credit for impressing her with favourable prenatal influences, writing: “*My literary career was in a large measure begun before my birth.*” She quoted her mother as saying:

My child will be a girl and she will be a writer. She will follow literature as a profession. She will begin young and she will travel extensively and do all the things I have wanted to do and missed doing.

While pregnant with Ella, her mother devoured Shakespeare and memorised literature of all sorts which were to exert a beneficial effect upon her unborn child. At the age of seven, Ella wrote her first story on wallpaper scraps and at nine she wrote a novel of 10 chapters on whatever bits of paper she could find. As the years passed, the aspiring young writer poured her heart into her prose and poetry and one day, in her early teens, she received her first cheque for \$10 from *Frank Leslie's Publishing House* in payment for three short poems.

When a \$40 cheque arrived in the post for Ella's essays, which were to be printed in Frank Leslie's Magazine, it proved almost a nervous shock. Ella often rode five miles on horseback to the nearest post office to receive her first small cheques, and the inevitable rejection notices as well.

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## An Old Soul

The 'country girl poet' as she called herself, often found life painfully suffocating in her increasingly unhappy household. In her autobiography, *The Worlds and I*, Ella wrote about her reactions to her family's agnostic leanings:

Being an old soul myself, reincarnated many more times than any other member of my family, I knew the truth of spiritual things not revealed to them. I could not formulate what I knew, but I felt myself the spiritual parent of my elders and longed to help them to clearer sight.

From reincarnated sources, and through prenatal causes, I was born with unquenchable hope and unfaltering faith in God and guardian spirits. I often wept myself to sleep after a day of disappointments and worries but woke in the morning singing aloud with the joy of life.

Full of imagination and romance, Ella wrote indefatigably. One story was refused by 10 editors and then finally sold to an eleventh who paid \$75 for it, a great deal of money in her day.

Miles from a post office, more miles from a railroad and far from any literary centre, without one acquaintance who knew anything about literary methods or the way to approach an editor, I pounded away at the doors of their citadels with my childish fists until they opened to me.

Indeed, the doors of opportunity opened and good fortune responded to this young woman who began to reap the rewards of her courageous efforts. During the span of one summer and autumn, Ella wrote *Maureen*, a story in verse which proved to be a moderate success. Then, quite innocently, she gained a blazing notoriety upon the publication of her *Poems of Passion* in 1883. The opening lines of *Courage* are representative of the passion expressed in this collection:

There is a courage, a majestic thing that springs forth from the brow of pain; full grown, Minerva-like, and dares all dangers known.

These lines embodied the attitude of the poetess at this phase in her career. For the rest of her life, Ella's poems

tended to mirror her personal passages and they are the perfect complement to her autobiography.

Her famous poem, *Solitude*, inspired by the sadness of a very young widow riding on a train, was included in this maiden volume. Nevertheless, Ella received both positive and negative literary recognition, for in those days it was quite immoral to use the word *kiss* as often as Ella had in her first slim volume of *'passion poems!'* Naturally, sales of her works increased. She remodelled and added to the old homestead with the first significant proceeds from her book. By this time, she was considered a leading member of the Milwaukee School of Poetry and her circle of social contacts and correspondents widened as her writing matured.

Like the romantic knight in shining armour, Robert Wilcox, a wealthy and cultured man, rescued Ella Wheeler from her life of exterior drabness and delivered her into one more suited to her natural gifts and temperament. She expressed this in *Love's Coming* from *Poems of Passion*:

She had dreamed how his coming would stir her soul,  
as the ocean is stirred by wild storm's strife.

He brought the balm of a heavenly calm,  
and a peace which crowned her life.

Over and over again in her autobiography, Ella sings the praises of Robert Wilcox. He must have been an extraordinary man indeed, a man of gentle power, a strong and patient guide for the Muse. They enjoyed an almost idyllic married life for thirty-two years. Of marriage she wrote:



Robert Wilcox.



To fill the difficult role of wife, to the very best of my ability (aided by constant prayers for larger wisdom and more understanding) became my controlling aim.

Many of Ella's poems were inspired by Robert Wilcox, as in *We Two*, from *Poems of Power*:

We two, we two, we make our world, our weather.  
Our paths lead closely by the paths supernal.  
We two, we two, we live in love eternal.

### Swami Vivekananda

In 1893 while attending a lecture by Swami Vivekananda, who was speaking in New York one year after *The Chicago Exposition and Congress of Religions*, Ella received her 'first lessons in concentration.'

After each lesson (and indeed a portion of each day since that time) I made a practice of sitting quite alone for a quarter or a half hour, seeking to bring my too active mind under the check rein of my own will. I endeavoured to drive out every thought save that of God, the one supreme, omnipotent creator of all the worlds which exist or ever existed. Always, from these moments of concentration, I arose with new strength and poise to meet life.

One evening she returned to her study, deeply inspired, after a lecture by the Swami. Almost automatically, the poem *Illusion*, a personal favourite, was written:

God and I in space alone, and nobody else in view,  
"And where are the people, O Lord", I said,  
"The earth below, and the sky o'erhead  
and the dead whom once I knew?"

"That was a dream" God smiled and said, "a dream that seemed to be true. There were no people, living or dead, There was no earth, and no sky o'erhead: There was only myself... in you."

"Why do I feel no fear", I asked, "meeting you here this way? For I have sinned I know full well. And is there heaven, and is there hell, and is this the judgement day?"

"Say, those were but dreams", the Great God said,



Swami Vivekananda.

*"dreams that have ceased to be. There are no such things as fear or sin, there is no you, you never have been, there is nothing at all but Me."*

Here, the profound thoughts of the great teacher from India flowed into the mind of the 'country girl poet' and she preserved them on paper in her own lyrical style. Printed in her third published volume, *Poems of Power* (1901), it is the only poem of her own that Ella could recall from memory for the rest of her life, so deeply etched were the words upon her heart.

While living in Meriden, Connecticut, the joyful life of the young married couple was marred by the death of their infant son, Robert Wilcox, Jr., who lived only twelve hours. Once again, the milestones, both joyful and sorrowful, in the life of Ella surface in her heartfelt poem, *A Face*:

All that was taken shall be made good.  
All that puzzles me understood.

And the wee white hand that I love,  
one day shall lead me into the Better Way.

After this painful experience, the Wilcoxes were never to have another child. Ella gathered up her strength and for the rest of her life she channelled her creative energy into her writing, though it is with some remorse that she wrote:

Were I allowed to choose my next incarnation, I would ask to come back an accomplished, capable and agreeable companion of my beloved and to be the mother of his sons and daughters as my only distinction in the eyes of the world.



## Prenatal Influence

Though she had no more children of her own, Ella was ever interested in the effects of positive prenatal influence:

Every expectant mother should set herself about the important business God has entrusted her with, unafraid and confident of her divine mission. She should direct her mind into wholesome and optimistic channels, read inspiring books and think lovely and large thoughts. She should pray and aspire, and always should she carry in her mind the ideal of the child she would mother, and command from the great Source of all Opulence the qualities she would desire to perpetuate. And they will be given.

After Robert and Ella Wheeler Wilcox relocated in New York City, the authoress came out with her second successful collection, *Poems of Pleasure*, published in 1888. In 1889 she produced a book full of verses for children entitled *The Beautiful Land of Nod*.

## Her Poetry's Wide Appeal

Ella's breadth of vision and natural sympathy for humanity generated many friendships throughout her life. Jack London, Luther Burbank, Sarah Bernhardt, Rose O'Neill and Marie Corelli were luminaries of the day whom the poetess counted among her friends. Of the day she met Marie Corelli, Ella wrote: "*The day is marked in memory's calendar with a red letter.*" This was truly a pleasurable period in her life.

The '*poet of the Sierra*', *Joaquin Miller*, had this to say to Ella upon their meeting:

Why, Elly, I didn't think you were so pert and pinky; I imagined you a big-wristed girl out West milking cows!

Geronimo, the famous Apache chief, took quite a liking to Ella in his 90<sup>th</sup> year, naming her '*Princess White Wings*.' Ella was indeed a social butterfly and her expansive spirit embraced people in all stations and walks of life.

The Wilcoxes built an "Earthly Eden" in Granite Bay, at Short-Beach-on-the-Sound, Connecticut, in 1890. Their bungalow was to remain their summer house and

enduring home. Robert and Ella later embarked upon 10 years of roaming which took them all over the world. Jamaica, England, Sicily, India, Ceylon, Japan and Africa marked the itinerary of these planetary adventurers. The poem *Daibutsu* reflects Ella's broad comprehension of the unity of world religions, realised through her years of travel. Describing the 49 foot bronze statue, *The Great Buddha* just a few miles out of Yokohama, Japan, Ella concludes her poem:

*Unknown, the artist, vaguely known his creed!  
But the bronze wonder of his work sufficed  
to lift me to the heights his faith had trod.*

*For one rich moment, opulent indeed, I walked  
with Krishna, Buddha and Christ  
and felt the full serenity of God.*

Commenting on this Oriental encounter in her autobiography, she remarked:

All that those oldest extant books of sacred wisdom, the Vedas, describe as the ecstatic state of *realisation*, which is the ultimate goal of man and all that Buddha taught 300 years before Christ regarding that state is expressed in the *Daibutsu*. To look upon it is to know the meaning of that much misunderstood word, *Nirvana*; not oblivion but the security of attainment and the ecstasy of at-one-ment.

Like many people of genius, Ella possessed many and varied talents in addition to her writing skills. She loved to dance from a very young age and continued this love of dancing into her adulthood. She became a proficient mandolin player and later took up playing the harp. The art of palmistry was yet another of her fascinating pastimes and she was also fluent in French. She loved cats, collected talismanic jewellery from around the world, and her favourite colour was '*a cheerful yellow*.'

## Rosicrucian Affiliation

With her lifelong interest in all things mystical, it is not surprising that, at some time during her residence in New York, Ella became an associate of Harvey Spencer Lewis, first Imperator of the Rosicrucian Order in North America in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. She was invited to serve as a member on the Supreme Council of AMORC in its early days



when Dr. Lewis was selected as Supreme Grand Master of America. Until her transition in 1919, she was instrumental in helping to re-establish the Order in the United States. One of her poems, *Secret Thoughts*, from *Poems of Pleasure*, is still quoted in Rosicrucian literature to this day:

I hold it true that thoughts are things,  
endowed with bodies, breath and wings.

And that we send them forth to fill the world  
with good results, or ill.

*Poems of Power*, published in 1901, was the herald of a new century. It is my favourite collection from the pen of a spiritually mature woman. Life progressed happily for the optimistic Ella, until her husband died suddenly in 1916. She admitted in her autobiography that she completely collapsed and subsequently served her term in 'the valley of sorrow.' It was as if the younger Ella had presaged this occurrence many years earlier when she wrote these lines in *One of Us Two*, from *Poems of Pleasure*,

One of us two shall find all light, all beauty,  
all joy on earth, a tale forever done;

Shall know henceforth that life means only duty.  
Oh, God! Oh, God! Have pity on that one.

Ella's last three years alone were spent in intense soul-searching which naturally included deep reflections upon the nature of death and the afterlife, and she eventually arrived at this conclusion:

Death is only a doorway to a larger life and does  
not destroy the memory or affection or personal  
characteristics. Death ushers each soul to the  
place and plane it has made for itself while on  
earth by the nature and habit of its thoughts.

During her last year, when her heart had healed somewhat, Ella travelled to France in the spirit of duty to work with the soldiers of World War I in their hour of need. Surrounded by the illusory spectre of death in her last years, Ella pierced through that illusion in this rare poem, entitled *The Finish*:

The thought of that last journey back to Him  
when there is no more longing or desire  
for anything but God left in my soul,

shines in the distance like a great white flame.

I think the way will lead through golden clouds  
skirting the shores of seas of amethyst!  
And winding gently upward, past old worlds,  
where body after body was outlived.

Past Hells and Heavens, where I had my day  
with comrade spirits from the lesser spheres;  
and paid my penalty for every sin  
and reaped reward for every worthy act.

Past Realms Celestial and their singing hosts  
(where once I chanted with the cherubim)  
out into perfect silence. Suddenly an all enveloping  
vast consciousness of long, long journeys finished:  
one more turn, then glory, glory, glory infinite,  
and selfhood lost in being one with God.

The ray once more absorbed into the Sun,  
the Cycle done.

And so, the rags-to-riches princess whose brilliant life had lit the way for countless thousands, quietly passed on to the next plane after a cycle of 69 years and the near completion of 10 seven-year cycles in the mortal realm. The life and work of Ella Wheeler Wilcox might be summed up in this little message, *The World's Need*, that closes *Poems of Power*:

So many gods, so many creeds, so many paths  
that wind and wind; whilst just the art of being  
kind is all the sad world needs.

## Note

The direct quotes in this article come from *The Worlds and I*, the autobiography of Ella Wheeler Wilcox, published in 1918 by the George H Doran Co. *Diabutsu*. Excerpts from *The Finish* are also included in this work. The excerpt on prenatal influence is from *The Heart of the New Thought*, published in 1902. The rest of the poems, or portions of poems, are taken from the following volumes of poetry:

*Poems of Passion* - W.B Conkey & Co., Chicago, 1883 – "Courage, Love's Coming and Solitude."

*Poems of Pleasure* - Bedford Clarke & Co., 1888 -- A Face, "One of Us Two and Secret thoughts."

*Poems of Power* - Gay and Hancock, Ltd., London, 1903 – "Illusion, The World's Need and We Two."



# The Rosicrucian Beacon -- Back Issues



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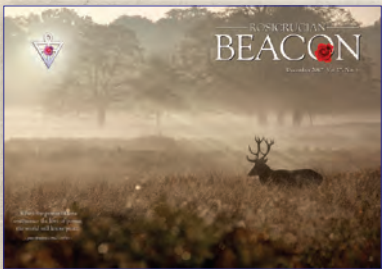
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