

Earth Rites.org Presents



# the invisible college



AMORE

A. ANDREW GONZALEZ

issue 3      summer solstice - LUGHNASADH 40107

[PREDICATED ON THE FIRST CAVE PAINTINGS]



# The Golden Dawn





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## THE INVISIBLE COLLEGE

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Dedication to:  
Allen Cohen & The San Francisco Oracle







### The Oracle of the City of San Francisco

It has been remarked more than a few times that the spirit found in 'The Invisible College' is similar to that spirit found once a time ago in 'The San Francisco Oracle'. That in our minds could only be construed as a high compliment.

The 'San Francisco Oracle' was a wonderful experiment in shifting consciousness in turbulent times. If 'The Invisible College' could measure up to where the pioneering dreams of Allen Cohen and Michael Bowen as well as the other staff of The Oracle blazed, we would consider our jobs done with this project.

I followed the Oracle very closely. I remember seeing it for the first time in Berkeley in a commune where I was living in 1966... I was enraptured. Poetry, Art, Psychedelia, and Mysticism all rolled up in one package. Truly, it was a first in time event. Every issue successfully charted the changes of a hyper-dynamic community in an astounding time of flux. Two visions out of the Oracle still resound in my mind's eye: The famous Yab-Yum illustration, and the illustration of a gas masked youth defending his love from the police... It was quite a flight in some 12 issues.

I never got to meet Allen Cohen, though I have talked to his friends, and via email to his wife Ann. If Allen leaves a legacy, it is two things in my view point: His clarity of vision with The San Francisco Oracle, and the deep abiding Love that emanated from him, readily found in his poetry. We are featuring his poetry in this edition of 'The Invisible College'. If you haven't read his poetry, you will be pleasantly surprised.

So here is to The Oracle of the City of San Francisco, and to all our other influences, The Equinox, Oz, The International Times, The Realist, Ramparts, The Evergreen Review, Art Kunkin & The L.A. Free Press, Mondo 2000, The Green Egg, and the countless 'Zines over the years that have helped shift the tides to the new emerging consciousness. We happily depart from where you left off, and continue the task that is still at hand.

Allen says it well in the poetry that follows...  
Gwyllm





## Reflections On The Nature Of Mind

What is this mind before which  
all this passes?  
the cars endlessly rolling,  
the breeze, the people standing  
at the bus stop waiting

The way it wants to reach out,  
to merge with nature  
not the asphalt and the metal  
but the beauty of the weaving branches  
the blueness of the sky  
the flight of the seagull  
the striation of cirrus clouds  
like an unknowable alphabet in the sky.

In time I am waiting  
amidst the turbulent changes  
I am waiting  
Before the future I am creating  
I am waiting

In the now  
there is the boarding of the bus,  
the placing of the \$2.35 in the coinbox,  
the finding of a seat,  
sunrays reflecting from  
the aluminum backs of the seats,  
the air conditioning cooling the air,  
the squeaking brakes of the bus.  
the clicking heels of the tall woman  
stepping to the back of the bus.  
to the Golden Gate bridge and San Francisco  
This is the now  
There is the past.  
Here comes the future.

Yet when I look through God's eyes,  
I laugh.  
I laugh after I cry from the shock of the transition.  
I laugh because my mind  
despite all these perceptions,  
these cascading thoughts  
has no existence, no time, no separateness.

This is the vastness.  
This is the sea of darkness.  
This is the kiss of light.  
This is the immersion into the mist.  
This is the flight of matter.  
This is the dissolution of soul.  
This is the remembrance.  
This is the eternal wheel,  
the wheel within the wheel  
This is my home.  
This is my exile  
from the human world.  
This is the never-ending journey.

## Richard Brautigan - A Remembrance

Sitting in North Beach Cafes  
it is hard to find anyone who remembers;  
some have never even heard of him.

In the 60's in the Haight he was everywhere  
in the streets, with the Diggers, at the Oracle office.  
Everyone knew him lean and tall, long blond hair,

high pitched voice, strangely stooped and rounded shoulders  
bent by a hidden childhood. There was always  
something Olympian about him and far away.

"Trout Fishing" wasn't published yet -  
held up on option by a New York publisher  
for several years, while with the rest of us,

mostly lesser talents, he lived  
on the nectar of that rare time and place.  
He wrote poems on seed packages

and gave them out free at Digger's "Invisible Circus" event  
When I told him I had moved to a country commune  
he said, "I've earned my millionth cricket badge already."

But, after Trout Fishing finally came out,  
he bought a farm in Montana and reappeared  
in North Beach only during the winter.

I told him once that I had writer's block.  
He said, "Before I even finish a book  
a new idea comes to me for the next one.

I can hardly swat it away.  
It's sort of natural to my mind."  
The last time we spoke

I had with me a mock up of a book  
on Laurie's natural childbirth  
with many intimate photographs of childbirth

laid out in sequence with a long poem  
that I was trying to self-publish  
Richard and Steve Walzer, the photographer,

and I began looking through the mock up  
at an outdoor table at Enrico's.  
and I saw tears coming to Richard's eyes.

He asked to be excused and came back  
a few minutes later, his eyes red,  
and looked through the rest of the book, crying.



I asked him if he could spare any money  
to help us print it. He said,  
"It's a beautiful book, but please believe me

my money's all tied up. I can't."  
The last time I saw him was on Kearny St.  
a month before his body was found,

probably only a few days before he shot himself.  
He was walking with his quick long stride  
through Chinatown toward North Beach.

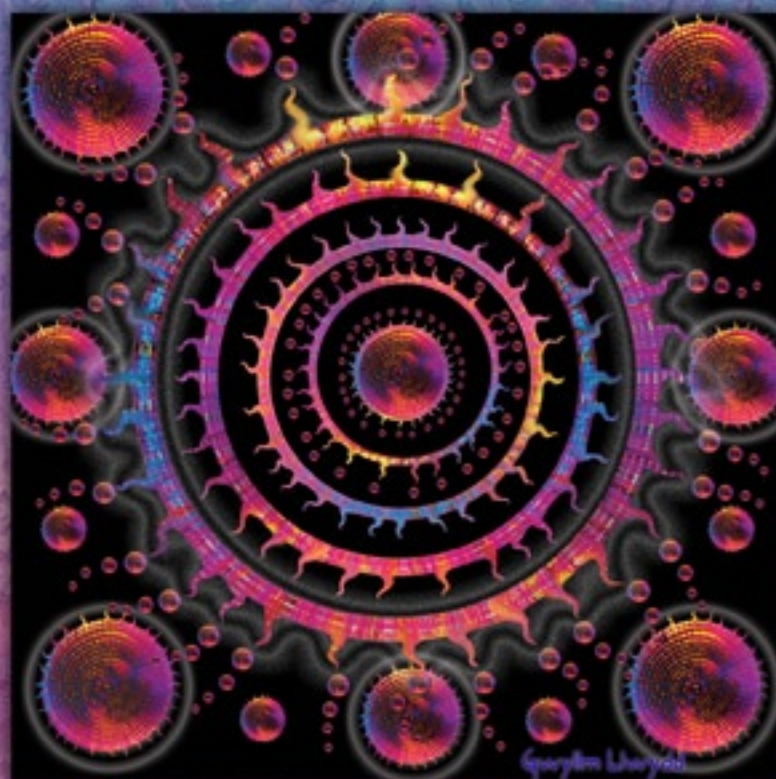
I was riding on the 15 bus to work.  
He was keeping up with the bus for a few blocks.  
It was warm and he took off his jacket

as he briskly, leaped forward and  
turned up Jackson St. where the cheap Chinese restaurants are.  
I wanted to get off the bus and talk to him,

but didn't bother. I wish I had followed that impulse.  
Now Richard is even more distant  
far away in the Montana of the spirit,

joining Lew Welch, also a simple, emotional,  
troubled and alone poet with a tender love  
of humanity and nature,

who had disappeared into the great Sierras.  
Their spirits, perhaps, too immense for our age.





# introduction



This issue is late... late... late... We promise to be a bit timelier in the future, but we were in transition getting this edition ready for print, which means everything has had to be layed out in 300dpi instead of 150dpi as done previously. The higher the dpi, (dots per inch) the slower the processor goes, even with added RAM etc. We have also gone deeper into the graphics side, and it looks like it from what we can tell.

Anyway, enough of that, The Invisible College is still in the fledging period... It will grow and mutate as it goes along. We are already in planning mode for the next issue as this one goes out.

This issue gives a nod to the past, seeing as we have passed through the 40th anniversary of The Summer Of Love. We want to recognize the heritage, and those that were there, and to recognize some commonalities with those turbulent times. It seems that everything moves in spiraling cycles, and we are at a similar place as before, but in a slightly different complexity. We are again at a point of expanding consciousness, but in many ways on a much larger scale, though maybe as not as dramatic as those acid-laced times. The expansion of consciousness now though is on a worldwide basis, from the expansion of alternative culture coupled with indigenous awakenings. We are seeing a wider base of pro-active ecological awareness and action on every continent, and whole segments of societies dropping out from what passes as world/corporate hegemony. The times are a more than a bit more dangerous now, on many levels. There is great reason for hope, and many fellow travelers are working hard in every society, city and country to bring about a shift in global consciousness. It may be a close one, but we expect that the shift will occur, and we'll come through the other side of the nexus though greatly changed.

There are two versions of this edition of The Invisible College. If you are reading the PDF form off of the website, know that this edition is smaller than the print version. Though complete in itself, it does not have all of the illustrations etc. that the print version has. If you like the pdf version, we hope you'll order the printed version. You may find having the physical copy very satisfying and it will help launch The Invisible College Magazine to a whole new audience.

Bright Blessings,  
Gwyllm, Mike & Fiona and all the crew.



# the invisible college community page

EXHIBITION: THE SAMSARA ENGINE  
THE ART OF GWYLLTI LLWYDD  
OCTOBER 1 - 31



THE CLINTON CORNER CAFE  
2633 SE 21ST AVE., PORTLAND,  
21ST SE AND CLINTON ST

Several of the pieces seen in the pages of The Invisible College are part of this exhibition. Rumour has it that it will be retained through the month of November. Prints will also be available on-line at [Gwyllm-Arts.com](http://Gwyllm-Arts.com). Enquiries can be emailed to [Gwyllm@Gwyllm-Arts.com](mailto:Gwyllm@Gwyllm-Arts.com) and/or [IC@Earthrites.org](mailto:IC@Earthrites.org). The artist is available for a tour of the exhibit if given a days notice.





# the invisible college community PAGE



THE  
**FENARIO**  
GALLERY

PRESENTS:  
THE TRANSCENDANT REALISM OF  
**MARTINA HOFFMANN**  
'TRANCE FORMATIONS'  
PAINTINGS & PRINTS

NOVEMBER 2, 2007 - JANUARY 1, 2008

OPENING RECEPTION:  
NOVEMBER 2, 2007  
6PM

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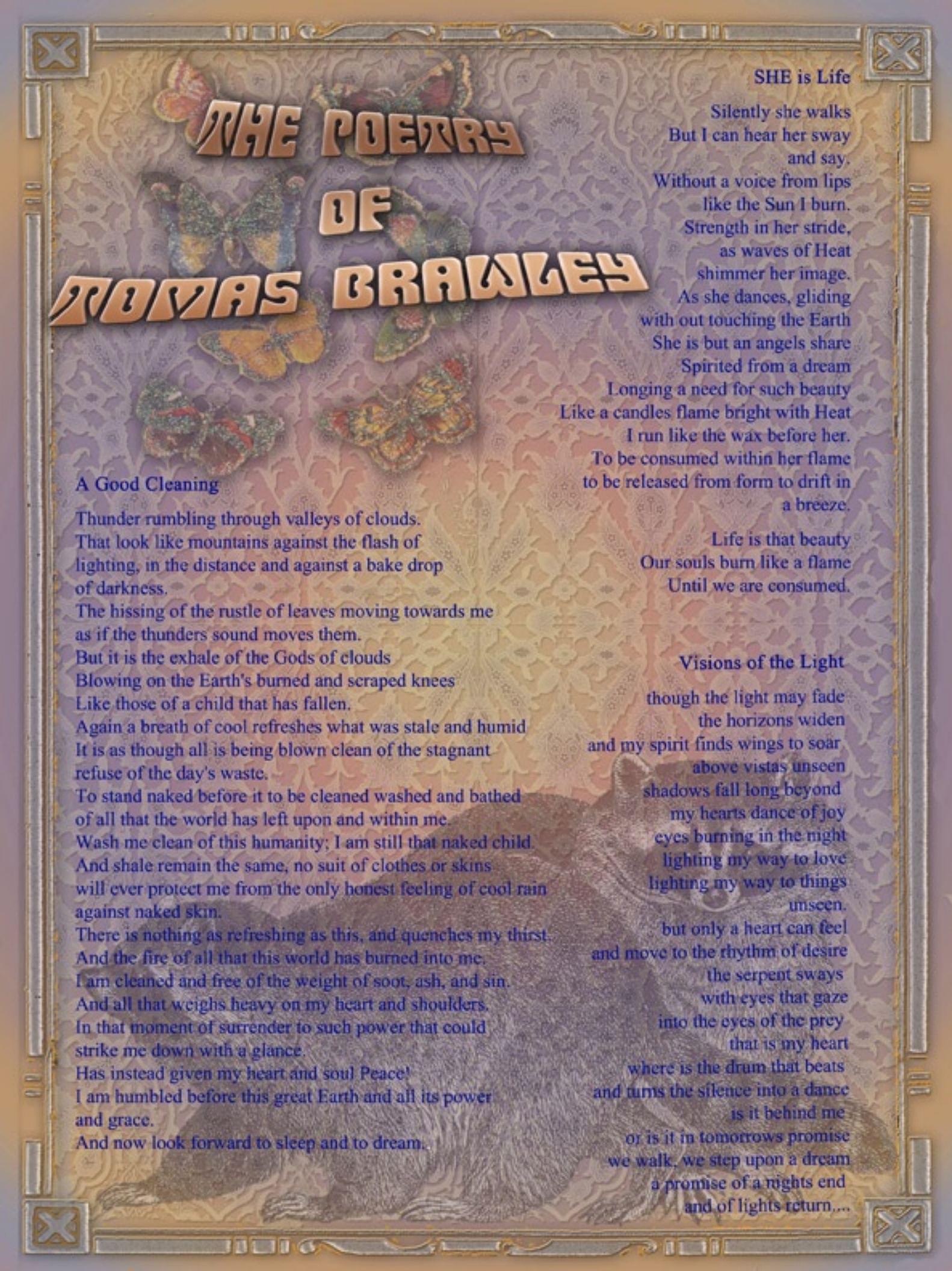
A must see show starting November 2, 2007 through January 1 2008. The Invisible College Magazine was blessed to have Martina's art gracing the pages as our first featured artist. (check it out if you get the chance!)

Her art is known world-wide and is deeply appreciated by many communities. For a comprehensive view of her work, check out her website: <http://www.martinahoffmann.com>, it is well worth the visit!

See you at the opening November 2nd!





The background of the page features a detailed illustration. In the upper half, several butterflies of various colors (orange, blue, green, and brown) are depicted in flight. In the lower half, a brown bear is shown in a resting position, its head down and body partially visible. The entire scene is set against a textured, parchment-like background with a decorative border featuring 'X' motifs in the corners.

# THE POETRY OF TOMAS BRAWLEY

## SHE is Life

Silently she walks  
But I can hear her sway  
and say,  
Without a voice from lips  
like the Sun I burn.  
Strength in her stride,  
as waves of Heat  
shimmer her image.  
As she dances, gliding  
with out touching the Earth  
She is but an angels share  
Spirited from a dream  
Longing a need for such beauty  
Like a candles flame bright with Heat  
I run like the wax before her.  
To be consumed within her flame  
to be released from form to drift in  
a breeze.

Life is that beauty  
Our souls burn like a flame  
Until we are consumed.

## Visions of the Light

though the light may fade  
the horizons widen  
and my spirit finds wings to soar  
above vistas unseen  
shadows fall long beyond  
my hearts dance of joy  
eyes burning in the night  
lighting my way to love  
lighting my way to things  
unseen.  
but only a heart can feel  
and move to the rhythm of desire  
the serpent sways  
with eyes that gaze  
into the eyes of the prey  
that is my heart  
where is the drum that beats  
and turns the silence into a dance  
is it behind me  
or is it in tomorrows promise  
we walk, we step upon a dream  
a promise of a nights end  
and of lights return....

## A Good Cleaning

Thunder rumbling through valleys of clouds.  
That look like mountains against the flash of  
lighting, in the distance and against a bake drop  
of darkness.  
The hissing of the rustle of leaves moving towards me  
as if the thunders sound moves them.  
But it is the exhale of the Gods of clouds  
Blowing on the Earth's burned and scraped knees  
Like those of a child that has fallen.  
Again a breath of cool refreshes what was stale and humid  
It is as though all is being blown clean of the stagnant  
refuse of the day's waste.  
To stand naked before it to be cleaned washed and bathed  
of all that the world has left upon and within me.  
Wash me clean of this humanity; I am still that naked child.  
And shale remain the same, no suit of clothes or skins  
will ever protect me from the only honest feeling of cool rain  
against naked skin.  
There is nothing as refreshing as this, and quenches my thirst.  
And the fire of all that this world has burned into me.  
I am cleaned and free of the weight of soot, ash, and sin.  
And all that weighs heavy on my heart and shoulders.  
In that moment of surrender to such power that could  
strike me down with a glance.  
Has instead given my heart and soul Peace!  
I am humbled before this great Earth and all its power  
and grace.  
And now look forward to sleep and to dream.



## Birds With No Song.

Cast not out birds with no song.  
Their song is in their spirits flight.  
Listen to a streams babble turn into  
rivers roar.

And ocean tides rise and fall silent.  
As waves crash the shore.  
A blade of grass, a tall oak tree.

An Earthly bounty of equality.  
A magic place is where we live.  
Where beauty rains as gods declare.  
To travel there one must prepare.  
Releasing all weights lay bare.  
Shed all chaff and arguments.  
Stripped clean all form of care.  
Drifting on a current of sound  
lifting up and around.  
Winds whisper its tale.  
Filling a spirits sail.  
Tacking a mythic landscape of  
breathless wonder.  
As waves of pleasure rise and fall.

Like the tides of a lover's chest.  
These are the gifts my spirit yearns for.  
We can be that beauty, in, on, and all  
around us!  
The bird with no song shares its beauty  
by fanning the heat of my passion....

Is the Morning Dove grieving or just a  
soulful voice?

## Stormy Nightshrooms

I submit for your approval the stage is set.  
Again alone I embark into the darkness and find  
blessings and proof of the Earth's greatness!

As I walk in the darkness only faint glimpses of the  
moon as clouds race across the night sky like herds of  
giant buffalo,  
And the thunder of there hooves echoing across the land.  
Shadows dance upon the ground and I thrill with delight  
as ripples of sensations of the mystery that is the night.  
I walk and let the darkness draw me along on courses  
with no trail.

To lead me to places that can only be found while under  
the spell of those with secrets that can only be told to  
those with out reason.

Glowing orbs that seem to appear but are just trees my  
dear.

They smile with a glee at my close inspection, and think  
it is funny on my knees with reflection.

To see how and what has created this glow.  
It appeared to be a lichen that seemed common to know.  
Ok, so I will relent my mind and heart race to try to  
lament.

To express while with in this enchantment so blessed.  
I thank the circumstances that brought me this gift.  
So here too, I will submit a return of the Jaguar and  
good night..



*Tomas: First a child of the Earth, I know where I come from. And I know where I will return too. I live in a microcosm and I'm destined to return from where I came. Life is terminal, but that which animates this shell lives in all things. And believe it continues on after the shell expires. I have been a hunter-gatherer and fisherman since my earliest memories. Have worked on the ocean much of my life and I'm a jack of all trades. My family background includes both Native American and European ancestry.*



A ANDREW GONZALEZ



THE  
DIVINE  
MADE VISIBLE



## SUMMONING OF THE MUSE



"In my youth, OMNI magazine provided my first glimpse into the treasures of contemporary visionary and fantastic art.

My first calling to paint was fueled by the inspiration from this evocative imagery and my interest in mysticism, symbolism and archetypal psychology.

I became obsessed with perfecting my drawing and reviving a classical sensibility within a modern visionary aesthetic.

By exploring the technique of letting go to subconscious impulses while drawing, I would soon realize that my creative imagery can be used as a mirror to reveal the archetypal depths of the psyche.

Patterns of the soul would manifest clearly, allowing me to consciously work with the material as a method of soul-crafting and self-exploration.

The drawings during this period, as well as my first paintings, would unveil the fundamental dynamic of Psyche and Eros underlying the structural and symbolic template that would guide all my work to follow.

For over twenty years the core of my imagery has centered on the revival of the sacred feminine in an eternal dance of rebirth. She is the anima transfigured by the alchemical fire of imagination.

Like a hidden pearl within that is exalted by the dragons tongue, she is the soul sublimed by sensuous serpentine energy and the spiraling rhythms of the depths.

Over the years, inspired by the revelatory power and primacy of the beautiful, I have come to view my work as mystical love poems to the soul".

A ANDREW GONZALEZ



## CRESCENDO OF THE HEART



### Salvation

There is no salvation for the soul  
But to fall in Love.  
It has to creep and crawl  
Among the Lovers first.  
  
Only Lovers can escape  
From these two worlds.  
This was written in creation.

Only from the Heart  
Can you reach the sky.  
The rose of Glory  
Can only be raised in the Heart.

Rumi



# AMORE



## In The Arc Of Your Mallet

Don't go anywhere without me.  
Let nothing happen in the sky apart from me,  
or on the ground, in this world or that world,  
without my being in its happening.

Vision, see nothing I don't see.

Language, say nothing.

The way the night knows itself with the moon,  
be that with me. Be the rose  
nearest to the thorn that I am.

I want to feel myself in you when you taste food,  
in the arc of your mallet when you work,  
when you visit friends, when you go  
up on the roof by yourself at night.

There's nothing worse than to walk out along the street  
without you. I don't know where I'm going.  
You're the road, and the knower of roads,  
more than maps, more than love.



# MAGIA



FURUZANFAR #116

Stay in the company of lovers.  
Those other kinds of people, they each  
want to show you something.  
A crow will lead you to an empty barn,  
A parrot to sugar.

(Translated by Coleman Barks (<http://www.colemanbarks.com/>))



# FRAVASHI



## GOLDEN DAKINI



### Ode 314

Those who don't feel this Love  
pulling them like a river,  
those who don't drink dawn  
like a cup of spring water  
or take in sunset like supper,  
those who don't want to change,  
  
let them sleep.

This Love is beyond the study of theology,  
that old trickery and hypocrisy.  
I you want to improve your mind that way,  
  
sleep on.

I've given up on my brain.  
I've torn the cloth to shreds  
and thrown it away.

If you're not completely naked,  
wrap your beautiful robe of words  
around you,  
  
and sleep



ANGEL OF NEKYIA





XVARNAH







## ANDREW'S BIOGRAPHY

A. Andrew Gonzalez, of San Antonio, Texas, is an award-winning figurative artist whose work has been exhibited in several countries. He was born on October 13, 1963, and raised in a creative family; Andrew's art education is largely self-taught. His artist father encouraged his early interest in drawing and painting but gave him no formal training.

The paintings of Gonzalez are created with airbrushed acrylics on panel or canvas. Forms, values and highlighting are created by lifting pigment with an abrasive eraser, followed by the application of transparent layers of pigment.

At the age of nineteen, he experienced a series of mystical dreams that inspired him the use his art as a tool for self-discovery.

In the year 2000, Andrew Gonzalez had the distinct privilege to work closely with the well-known Fantastic Realist artist Ernst Fuchs in Monaco and Austria.



ORACLE



# Entozogenic Activism: Saving Salvia In Oregon



A Tale by Ms. G



## Why Did I Do It?

What motivated me to write to eleven state legislators about a bill introduced to ban Salvia, and then go to Salem to testify at the committee hearings? It wasn't that Salvia's legality is the most important issue in the world, and personally a Salvia ban would not affect my life much. I probably have a lifetime supply, given that I only use Salvia maybe once or twice a year, and could survive just fine if I didn't have Salvia at all.

What motivated me was a strong intuition, a message from the spirits, that *this* was an opportunity for me, personally, to make a *difference*, and opportunities like that don't happen very often. Being able to do something that would actually make a difference would energize me and energize other people too!

### The Situation:

State Rep John Lim, who represents Gresham, had introduced a bill to ban *Salvia divinorum*, numbered HB 2494.

### ***Oregon lawmakers consider banning legal hallucinogenic***

By Aaron Clark, Associated Press Writer  
Monday, March 5, 2007 1:33 PM PST

**SALEM** - Some young people are turning on, tuning in and dropping out for quick highs on a hallucinogenic drug that is legal and sold openly at novelty stores, smoke shops and adult video stores.

But some state lawmakers say the substance - *Salvia divinorum* - is dangerous and have proposed a bill to ban possessing or selling it.

"From what I understand this drug is at least as dangerous as marijuana or LSD," said Rep. John Lim, R-Gresham, who is sponsoring a bill that would make the plant a Schedule I controlled substance in Oregon, on par with ecstasy or synthetic heroin. "This drug is not a widely used product, but it is becoming problematic."

Used for centuries by the shamans, or healers, among Mazatec Indians of Oaxaca, Mexico in religious and healing rituals, experts say use is on the rise in the U.S., driven largely by Internet sales and word of mouth.

The drug's Latin name, *Salvia divinorum*, means "sage of the seers." Users call it Purple Sticky Salvia, Maria Pastora or Sally D.

"It is basically appealing to young kids because it is not illegal to possess in the state of Oregon," said Tim Plummer, a coordinator for Oregon's drug evaluation and classification program.

One Portland retailer is selling a half-gram package, said to be good for five "experiences," for \$15.

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration has listed it and its active constituent, salvinorin A, as "drugs and chemicals of concern."

The agency is still investigating patterns of abuse and potential risks for the public. It's not something that is done lightly," said Rogene Waite, a spokeswoman for the DEA.

Louisiana, Missouri, Tennessee, Oklahoma and Delaware ban possession, but it is legal under federal law. At least nine other states are considering bans, including Alaska, California, New York, North Dakota and Utah. The plant is controlled in Finland, Denmark, Australia and Italy.

A 1994 study in the *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* described users who felt as though they were being turned into "yellow plaid French fries, fresh paint, a drawer, a pant leg, a Ferris wheel."

"It sounds cheesy but I felt like the room I was in turned into an accordion and I couldn't move," said Meara Fleming of Eugene, 20, who said she has tried the drug once.

She said some users "go to another world. My experience was I didn't visually hallucinate. It was just a really, really intense body



*high where I felt kind of immobile."*

*Experts and users say the effects can last up to an hour.*

*At the Silver Spoon, a shop in Portland that hawks glass water pipes and sex toys, salvia is a strong seller.*

*"It has been out for a long, long time and it's just getting popular," said Jeremy Croft, a salesman. "Maybe all the high school and college kids just found out about it."*

*Although the drug's effects on users are catalogued in detail on Web-sites like Erowid.org, an online library of psychoactive plants and chemicals, few toxicological studies have been done.*

*"It's not toxic as far as we know," said Bryan Roth, a professor of pharmacology at University of North Carolina's School of Medicine. "But it's not the sort of thing you would want to smoke while you are driving."*

*"I think it's only a matter of time before we find people addicted to this stuff," said Seth Hatmaker, a spokesman for Lim.*

*Roth, who is an expert on the plant, said there is no evidence that it is addictive.*

*But he and the NCSL's Harrison say there are plenty of users who don't enjoy the experience.*

*"I think it's more like a cough syrup trip," said Harrison. "It's not very fun."*

The legislative process works like this:

1) Legislator introduces bill. There is no limit to the number of bills a legislator can introduce, so the number of bills introduced in a single session can easily reach the thousands.

2) The rest of the legislators cannot possibly inform themselves about all these bills. So the bills are divvied up among committees. The job of the committees is to study the bill and decide whether it will go for a vote of the full legislature.

3) If the committee decides to send the bill for a full vote, it may or may not make recommendations to pass it, and may or may not make changes (amendments)

4) If passed, it is then sent over to the other chamber.

If the committee does not send it to the full legislature, this is called "killing the bill" or "letting the bill die."

In California, as a result of letters and testimony, the committee studying a Salvia ban bill let the bill die.

In Maine, as a result of letters and testimony, the Salvia ban bill was amended to an age restriction. According to mconlonx (who testified):

In Maine, a ban bill was introduced. At the public hearing of the Criminal Justice Committee, two supporters spoke in opposition to the ban while seven spoke in support. Those speaking in support included the bill's sponsor, the director of the Maine Office of Substance Abuse, a lobbyist for the Maine Pharmacy Association, the head of the Maine DEA, the state DA speaking for the Maine Prosecutor's Association, someone affiliated with Maine substance abuse programs, and a concerned grandfather. Speaking against it was the owner of a smoke shop who sells Salvia, and me, a concerned citizen.

Those speaking in support of the ban offered up the usual misinformation "It's like LSD!" "It's addictive and harmful!" Those speaking against the ban offered up the truth... and it worked. The Committee, in a follow-up workshop, amended the proposed bill to regulation of sales to 18+ instead of a ban. I chalk this up as a victory. It should be noted that the main strategy was not ideologically arguing against prohibition of psychoactives, but rather very mundane concerns like pointing out that there actually IS NO SALVIA PROBLEM — no emergency room admissions, no tales of lives wrecked by salvia abuse, no salvia-related arrests, no-one seeking treatment for salvia abuse — coupled with compelling financial issues in these lean times, like how much are new programs, testing, and enforcement going to cost in the face of a demonstrated non-issue...



## Adventures with Envelopes and Stamps

Thanks to the web, it is easy to find out the status of a bill by Googling your state legislature, and following search links to find your bill. I found the Oregon state legislature page, and on it found that the bill was being studied by the Judiciary Committee and the names of the nine members wrote a letter (see "template letter" appended below). I tried very hard to think in their language and write in their language. I sent it to the nine Judiciary Committee members, my own representative, and for good measure, the sponsor of the bill.

Within a week I received a response by snail-mail *from the sponsor of the bill*:

Greetings: Thank you for contacting my office on the Salvia bill I introduced. Your letter was well researched and documented. I appreciate it, and your letter will help me formulate ideas for this bill.

I appreciate some of the information you have given me regarding the doses of this drug. I am comfortable in stating that we need to control this substance. There needs to be more clinical studies on Salvia and salvinorin A in regards to medicinal value, but in the meantime, we need to ensure that children do not have access to this drug.

I do appreciate your concerns on the issue. If I can help you in the near future, please do not hesitate to contact me. I send my best wishes for your health and success.

Sincerely,  
John Lim  
State Representative  
District 50

And he added a handwritten "Thanks!"

I thought, WOW! This is the sponsor of the bill that would make possession of Salvia a felony, you couldn't expect him to do a complete 180, but he showed a willingness to listen and maybe compromise!

I emailed a response to him cc'd to all the committee members (see below). It was significant, I felt, that the most important point to him was the potential therapeutic and anti-addictive use of Salvia. The government at no level has recognized psychedelics as therapeutic, but here was a conservative Republican drug warrior swayed by this point. This made me all the more optimistic.

## Adventures in the Capitol


Checking on the Oregon legislature web page a few weeks later, I discovered that hearings on Bill 2494 were scheduled for April 4. So I decided to testify.

I went to Salem with my friend Ms. Cymon. I had guessed the hearings would be at 9, but they started at 8:30. However, they were hearing another bill for an hour or so first, that had something to do with sexual abuse of kidnap victims, so Cymon and I had plenty of time to whisper to each other about what we were going to say.

First, the sponsor of the bill, John Lim, testified. He cited some articles he had read in the newspaper and Wikipedia. He made points about driving under the influence, about how (according to what he had read) many people had frightening experiences or even panic attacks, and about keeping this drug away from children. Well, nothing there to disagree with, and the point about frightening experiences really helped, because that was a point I could stress too about how Salvia was NOT really "gaining popularity," because a lot of people didn't want to repeat the experience. He distributed a newspaper article headlined "Hallucinogenic herb gaining popularity," but none of the people the article quoted who had tried Salvia described a pleasant experience or had an inclination to do it again, so I decided to point that out.

The committee asked him various questions, none of which he knew the answer to. One of the questions was from a committee member who had a plant called "Salvia" in her yard (there are a lot of ornamental members of the genus) —





she had obviously read both my letter and a letter I had included from a Californian (see link below) that had stressed the ornamental aspect — and asked if that might be the plant and she might have to rip it up. He didn't know.

Then a state policeman testified. He was testifying neither for nor against, but rather testifying at the committee's request so they could find out what the Salvia situation is from the police point of view. Basically he didn't have any information for them. He basically said that since it is not controlled and there is no test for it, they had no idea whether it was a problem or not.

The committee asked him various questions none of which he knew the answer to. One of the questions was how impaired would someone be if they were driving under the influence of Salvia? He didn't know.

One of the committee members, Betty Komp, held up a printout of the letter I had sent and read, "Driving under the influence of Salvia should be illegal." adding, "And this is from someone who is against the bill!"

(I looked up Betty Komp afterward to find out if she was the committee's flaming liberal, and what area she represented. She represents Woodburn and appears to be very much a middle-of-the-roader.)

It didn't look like much of a case had been made for banning Salvia.

Then it was my turn. I introduced myself as a teacher (concerned about our young people) and a member of an internet community that studies the therapeutic uses of Salvia. I only got to testify for about five minutes, but the committee members seemed extremely attentive. I explained the difference between natural leaf and extract, and said they didn't

*[something missing from the article the author was not available at publication time...]*

I stressed the point about Salvia not being fun and most people not wanting to continue using it, so it was not really a growing "problem," and talked about therapeutic uses and need for continued research. I said that smoking Salvia while driving was the equivalent of blacking out behind the wheel and not only should there be an age restriction but warning labels.

Then Cymon testified. They gave her even less time than they gave me. She introduced herself as a teacher and drug counselor (since she once talked to fifth and sixth graders about drugs) and talked about the fact that making Salvia Schedule One would drive it into the black market, which an age restriction would not.

We left feeling really positive, because the "pro" for the bill was so weak that it could have been knocked down by a feather, and we had more than a feather!

#### About Ten Days Later...

I received this email from the chair of the Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for writing and for appearing at our recent hearing on HB 2494, which would create the crime of unlawful possession of salvinorin A or Salvia divinorum. Your testimony gave the committee a better understanding of this substance. Based on the feedback I have received from committee members so far from the hearing, it appears unlikely that HB 2494 will move forward.

Best regards,

Greg Macpherson  
State Representative  
House District 38 (Lake Oswego)



### The moral of the story:

So what do you do if a Salvia ban bill (or any bill about anything) is introduced in your state? Your chance to influence things is when it is at the COMMITTEE level.

At the committee level, QUALITY of letters matters much more than QUANTITY, because a committee is really trying to gather and analyze information and figure out what to do about a bill. Hearings are not about gauging popularity of an issue; they are for gathering information on which the committee can act. A literate, intelligent-sounding, and INFORMATIVE letter making solid points and containing solid information is valuable to a committee. A few such letters matter more to a committee than a ton of letters just saying "vote no" and repeating stock phrases. And while it is better if you are a constituent, you don't have to be. ((mconlonx was not even a Maine resident!)) No matter where you live, if you can write a literate, intelligent-sounding letter making solid points, write to the committee members. Committee work doesn't have much to do with re-election, as voters rarely base votes on committee work, which doesn't even have formal votes on record. If the bill makes it to the full legislature for a vote, THAT is when poll numbers count.

### The Letters I Used:

1) My first letter to the committee members, edited to make it a template for others to use and change it as needed for their own states -- but if your state has a Salvia ban bill, try to coordinate with others so that you do NOT send duplicate letters. SNAIL-MAIL IS BETTER THAN E-MAIL.



Dear....

I am writing in regard to Bill .... in the .... legislature, to outlaw the herb Salvia divinorum.

As someone who has tried Salvia divinorum, and who has as a result become interested in the subject and has done research on it, I would like to add comments and information.

This letter is intended to be informational, and will conclude with my recommendations.

- Salvia divinorum in low doses and natural form is a gentle and effective anti-depressant and analgesic. The doses being marketed that create hallucinations are extreme doses, artificially enhanced with the active ingredient concentrated ten, twenty, forty times and more! There are many medicines and pharmaceuticals that would create hallucinations and adverse effects if such extreme doses are taken.

- Effects, even of concentrated doses, are short-acting (fifteen to thirty minutes) and when they wear off, they wear off completely. There is no residual impairment and no side effects. Standard toxicological tests conducted on rodents have found no evidence for any toxicity to any bodily organ in Salvivorin-A, the active ingredient.

- Salvia divinorum does not create a euphoric "high"; on the contrary, most people find it unpleasant. Thus, it is not attractive to recreational drug users. I have researched accounts of Salvia divinorum use on drug forums on the internet, and it appears that the great majority of people who try Salvia divinorum (perhaps 80%) never try it again. The extreme, artificially concentrated doses that are being marketed can create a sudden onset of intense, vivid dreams that is frightening and unpleasant for most.



Unprepared individuals may go into complete panic. More extreme doses can lead to brief blackouts or transient episodes of amnesia, which, though harmless, can be frightening. Internet vendors say that they have very few repeat customers for *Salvia divinorum* -- less than 10%. They depend on a steady influx of new customers, made curious by the media attention to *Salvia divinorum*.

- The fact that most users have unpleasant experiences, rather than alarming us, should be seen as good news. In fact, some young people turn away from drugs completely after a frightening experience with *Salvia divinorum*.

- Those individuals who do continue to use *Salvia divinorum* do it very sparingly, perhaps once every two to three months, preparing themselves and their setting carefully. Adults who use *Salvia divinorum* do it for two main purposes. At low doses it is an anti-depressant. At high doses, it can cause individuals to vividly dream while still awake. (Frequently these dreams involve reliving early childhood.) Because they are awake and aware while dreaming, this enables individuals to gain psychological insights into themselves. As a result, some individuals have found *Salvia divinorum* to have profound and valuable therapeutic effects, helping them to deal with psychological issues, including addictions to drugs and to other addictive behaviors such as gambling.

- There are numerous anecdotal reports that, far from being addictive, *Salvia divinorum* is anti-addictive with respect to other drugs; it has actually aided individuals in overcoming their addiction to narcotic drugs, at least in the short term. Individuals report that a single brief session with *Salvia divinorum* can relieve their cravings for drugs and/or alcohol for days or even weeks. Such reports merit clinical research, and, indeed, studies have already begun at the University of Iowa on *Salvia divinorum* as a possible treatment for cocaine addiction and at the University of Mississippi as a possible treatment for opiate addiction, as well as

at the University of North Carolina as a possible treatment for psychiatric problems. Far from being a problem drug itself, *Salvia divinorum* may actually prove to be an ally in individuals overcome drug problems, as well as psychiatric problems and clinical depression.

The untapped therapeutic potential of this powerful drug is enormous, and it would be tragic if it were placed in Schedule I and placed out of the hands of researchers.

- The most serious potential danger with *Salvia divinorum* is with driving. Someone under the influence of *Salvia divinorum* is in a "dream world" and unlikely to attempt to drive, but young people who do not know about its effects might try to smoke it when they are already behind the wheel. (There has already been one such incident in Minnesota, when a young man who had no idea of its effects lit up while behind the wheel, and immediately crashed his car. Fortunately, there were no injuries, but the price of such ignorance could be greater next time.)

- *Salvia divinorum* can lead to physical accidents if taken in a setting where physical hazards are present, because people may "sleepwalk" while under the influence. Minor injuries have occurred when "sleepwalking" people have fallen over objects in the room. For that reason, responsible users arrange for sober "sitters" to be present with them.

- *Salvia divinorum* is very unlikely ever to become a drug of abuse or widespread use. It does not lend itself to frequent use. The main danger is from the continued influx of casual first-time users, who, unaware of the potential for injury, may try to smoke it while driving or in other physically hazardous settings.

- Simply outlawing *Salvia divinorum* will not address this problem. Cannabis and other drugs are against the law, and yet young people can obtain them easily. (Ironically, the action taken by several states to outlaw *Salvia divinorum* has increased its media attention,



which in turn has led to more and more young people becoming curious about it.) The total prohibition of a drug creates a "forbidden fruit" effect, and results in the development of a black market for it, burdening the state with new enforcement problems while removing it from the hands of responsible adults for whom it is valuable therapeutically. In my opinion, we are better off not creating new black markets if that can possibly be avoided. When children get illegal drugs through the black market, that brings them into contact with illegal channels and criminal elements, which then often offer them other drugs as well. That is the most important reason why marijuana may serve as a "gateway drug" to other illegal substances. On the other hand, no black market has developed for alcohol and tobacco, because minors alone represent too small a market. Minors do sometimes manage to get hold of alcohol and tobacco, just as they do marijuana and other illegal drugs, but unlike illegal drugs, this does not bring them into contact with a black market, because there is no black market for substances that are restricted for minors only.

- Enforcement of a complete ban (including the plant) would be difficult because the plant is difficult to recognize (resembling spearmint and basil) and has no characteristic odor. Moreover, there is no need to ban the natural plant, because in natural form it does not lend itself to abuse; it is a gentle anti-depressant that causes neither intoxication nor mental clouding. Thus, the live plant does not appeal to young people as a way to get "high." The form of *Salvia divinorum* that is advertised for recreational use is in artificially enhanced concentrations of 10 to 50 times the natural strength, which requires sophisticated laboratory equipment and skills. There are no growing operations in the US for commercial purposes, since the commercial dealers import it from Mexico.

Thus, a total ban that encompassed even the live plants would not only be difficult and burdensome to enforce, but unnecessary. [If you live in a warm state, talk about its use as an ornamental.]

- There is no *Salvia divinorum* social problem -- no emergency room admissions, no tales of lives wrecked by *Salvia divinorum* abuse, no addictions, no one seeking treatment for *Salvia divinorum* abuse. In these lean times, with our tight state budget, overburdened law enforcement and overcrowded prisons, how much would new programs, testing, and enforcement cost us for a non-issue?

My recommendations, therefore, are the following:

- Sales to children under 18 (better yet, under 21) should be banned. Maine has taken this action; the sale of *Salvia divinorum* is regulated much like alcohol and includes ID checks. This has kept the plant out of the black market and the hands of children. If our goal is to keep the plant out of the hands of minors, age restriction (with severe penalties for providing to minors) can be more effective than a total ban, because a black market does not develop to serve such a limited clientele as minors alone, especially with so few repeat customers as *Salvia divinorum* has.

- Driving under the influence of *Salvia* should be illegal. And while there are no tests for the presence of *Salvia divinorum* in the body, there should be legal penalties for having opened packages or other evidence of use in cars, similar to those for opened packages of alcohol in cars. Packages should be required to bear printed warnings about the dangers of driving and operating heavy equipment under its influence, much as many other pharmaceuticals have, as well as warnings about the legal penalties for driving under the influence.



- Fortunately, there is an increasing abundance of testimonies about *Salvia divinorum* on internet forums saying "Never again!" and describing frightening and unpleasant effects, even extreme panic. These testimonies from their own peers have more credibility to many young people than the "preaching" of adults. But the word has not reached many young people, so packages should be required to carry warnings about the potential for frightening experiences. This would be more effective at keeping curious young people from trying it than black market product with no warnings or information at all.

- Other actions to curb casual and irresponsible use of *Salvia divinorum*, short of placing it in Schedule I, have been taken in Oklahoma and Tennessee. Oklahoma has banned the concentrated doses that produce the extreme effects, but permits the leaf to be sold in its gentle natural form. Tennessee and Georgia have banned sale of the herb for human consumption, but permits the natural plant to be grown for ornamental purposes. Other possible remedial actions could include making it available by prescription only, or restricting where it can be sold. (Currently, it is marketed to any casual buyer of any age in novelty shops, "head shops" which cater to recreational drug users, porn outlets -- even at gas stations!)

- In my opinion, simple possession of *Salvia divinorum* by adults should not be banned. Adults can and do use this herb in a responsible, therapeutic, and non-hazardous way. *Salvia divinorum* is not addictive, it is not subject to abuse, it does not lend itself to frequent or habitual use, it does not produce euphoria, and it is not used for pleasure, but rather for exploration of the psyche. It is, I believe, not necessary to remove it from the hands of responsible adults in order to protect our children.

Sincerely,

("Dream state" is less scary than "hallucination," but next time I would use the term "dissociative")

2) I also included, slightly edited but with the California references intact, copies of this letter from a San Diego friend to CA committee members:

<http://members.cox.net/sageseeds/sentab259.pdf>

3) My response by email to Rep. Lim's snail-mail:

Dear Rep. Lim,

Thank you for your reply to my letter about *Salvia divinorum*. I am glad that we are on the same side, with the same interest in protecting the children.

After thinking about the issue more, I now believe that, rather than regulating *Salvia divinorum* like tobacco (as Maine is now doing) it might be more effective to regulate it like alcohol (hard liquor), with an age restriction over 21 and only licensed dealers.

The reasons I feel that this would be the most effective solution is the following:

- A total prohibition of a drug results in the development of a black market. Children are able to get illegal drugs like marijuana now through the black market, and that brings them into contact with illegal channels and criminal elements, which then often offer them other drugs as well.

Ironically, this may be the most important reason why marijuana may serve as a "gateway drug" to other illegal substances

On the other hand, no black market has developed for alcohol and tobacco, because minors alone represent too small a market. Minors do sometimes manage to get hold of alcohol and tobacco, just as they do with illegal drugs, but unlike illegal drugs,



this does not bring them into contact with a black market, because there is no black market for substances that are restricted for minors only.

Thus, creating a universal prohibition can actually be counterproductive as a way to protect our children.

- As a teacher for 22 years, now back in college for a masters degree in Sustainability Education, I have observed that minors seem to obtain beer and wine (and marijuana) fairly easily, but very few appear to be consuming hard liquor. I believe that that is related to the fact that, while beer and wine are available at convenience stores and a minor need only get a confederate over 21 to purchase it, hard liquor is more difficult to obtain, since it is only available at licensed liquor stores. This suggests to me that this is a more effective means of controlling children's access.

- Of great concern to me is the fact that there are irresponsible dealers on the internet, as well as "head shops," who are blatantly and cynically promoting *Salvia divinorum* as a recreational drug. (However, there are also vendors who are attempting to be responsible.) I have been trying to mentally craft a law that could stop the irresponsible advertising, but could come up with nothing that would not be construed as violating First Amendment rights. However, restricting sales to licensed vendors (perhaps responsible vendors of medicinal herbs) has a precedent with alcohol regulation and is not seen as violating First Amendment rights.

Although this would seem to create more bureaucracy for the state, it would be less burdensome for the state than enforcement of a total ban, while more effectively controlling children's access.

- Enforcement of a complete ban (including the plant) would be difficult because the plant is difficult to recognize (resembling spearmint and basil) and has no characteristic odor. Moreover, there is no need to ban the natural plant, because in natural form it does not lend itself to abuse; it is a gentle anti-depressant that causes neither intoxication nor mental clouding. Thus, the live plant does not appeal to young people as a way to get "high." The form of *Salvia divinorum* that is advertised for recreational use is in artificially enhanced concentrations of 10 to 50 times the natural strength, which requires sophisticated laboratory equipment and skills.

There are no growing operations in the US for commercial purposes, since the commercial dealers import it from Mexico. Thus, a total ban that encompassed even the live plants would not only be difficult and burdensome to enforce, but unnecessary.

Thus, for all these reasons, my conclusion is that the most effective way to protect our children would be to regulate *Salvia divinorum* in a way similar to the way that hard liquor is regulated.

Thank you for your concern for this matter!

Sincerely,





# "SEMIGOD" THE ART OF EDDY ANDRES MILLAN



semigod.com

"THE PRESENTATION OF QUEEN AVISPA"



"EL AROLA"



semigod.com



"BARON THESOLONIOUS' RENDEZVOU WITH NUMBER 9"



semigod.com



"MR. GOODPARTS @ ST.B'S"





## EDDY ANDRES MILLAN: SEMIGOD A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Semigod is the love-child/frankenstein baby of artist Eddy Andres Millan. Semigod is an incorporation of all elements that can be "transmitted" in every sense of the word. The visual creations speak their own languages but written in a way we can all understand. As clearly as the Beast and the Harlot meeting at the sputum lined graffitied walkway. As clearly as the exchange of the unmentionable for the unobtainable. The visuals weave a spider-web Dream Manor with its private rooms and secret doorways into other realms. Eddy has crafted a key for you, one that opens all doors here.

Eddy Andres Millan presents through Semigod his dreams and nightmares in visual manipulations, his thoughts and musings in pixel forms, his ideas and daydreams splashed on canvases... and sometimes the images create themselves. He is only the vessel at times to a force so potent it keeps him up for hours on end in a trance like fashion creating and creating more still.

On Odd days he likes to scour through old obscure, static filled songs searching for the perfect sample to chop up and if the music allows it he crafts his ode to hip hop which has been a strong influence in his life. Some of Eddy's newest visual work is a remixing of old classics and making them his own much like the sampling and manipulating of musical tunes.

Eddy has formed Semigod.com along with close friend Benjamin Wolf, together they get their hustle on when it comes to the eye candy slingin'. The Semigod Family will grow. Be sure to stop by [www.semigod.com](http://www.semigod.com) and have a look-see. The work was created for you and you and you. Semigod welcomes you into this world of ours.



# VISIONS

*of*

# FRISCO

*by*

*Satty*

*editor*

WALTER MEDEIROS

© walter medeiros



## Visions of Frisco, by Satty

This book is an impressionistic history of San Francisco, from the squalid boom town of the Gold Rush to the elegant 'Paris of the Pacific' of the late Victorian era. Satty (Wilfried Podrieck, 1939-1982) immigrated from Germany in 1961, at age twenty-two. He lived in North Beach, the famous bohemian district of the 1950s Beat-Generation, and associated with people of that culture.

He began making pictorial collages in the late 1960s, after venturing into San Francisco's "poster craze" of that era with a series of posters that were sold in shops. In 1971 Rolling Stone magazine published a book of his collages, and another in 1973. Illustrations for books and periodicals comprised much of his artistic production during the 1970s, including an award-winning edition of Edgar Allen Poe stories.

About 1975, after completion of the Poe book, Satty began work on the San Francisco collages. Having read some historical accounts of the early city, he realized that very little of the existing pictorial record: photos, paintings and illustrations matched the colorful literary descriptions of that chaotic era. Virtually all the eyewitness accounts of early San Francisco remark on the extraordinary nature of the conditions and the society found there. Stepping off the ship was to land in anarchy; a raucous wonderland of human diversity, frantic activity and social disorder.

Like many others, the unique culture of San Francisco nurtured Satty's artistic development. Satty loved the City and was fascinated by its history. Further, this project was inspired by Satty's personal experience; he was both participant and close observer of the bold, energetic, creative, and often transgressive counterculture of the 1960s, which struck him as analogous to the chaotic era of the Gold Rush.

To more intensely evoke such visual and emotional experiences of the early days Satty decided to graphically re-create the 1849-1890s era, and to combine his visionary 'illustrations' with relevant eyewitness accounts.

He researched the writings of early immigrants, later residents, and many other writers who visited the famous spectacle of the developing city.

As an interested historian, and a friend since 1971, I had often been closely involved with him, and especially during the last year of his life. I was impressed by his ambitious project. He often discussed it with me and took pleasure in showing me work in progress. Through Satty's will the project came to me.

To proceed, as editor-collaborator, the large body of diverse collages was closely examined with intent to select from among the best of them, those which might be arranged into a suitable narrative form. Through a review of the books cited in the notes inherited from Satty, my supplementary research, and close consideration of the art works, a generally chronological format was developed, based on historical events and the prominent themes and topics found within the body of the selected collages.

The book will be 9 x 12 inches, 256 pages, with approximately 120 black and white illustrations (created with images taken from 19th century publications) paired with historical texts. The print run will total 1000, including 200 hardbound copies. Publication is anticipated in the fall, 2007.

Walter Maderos

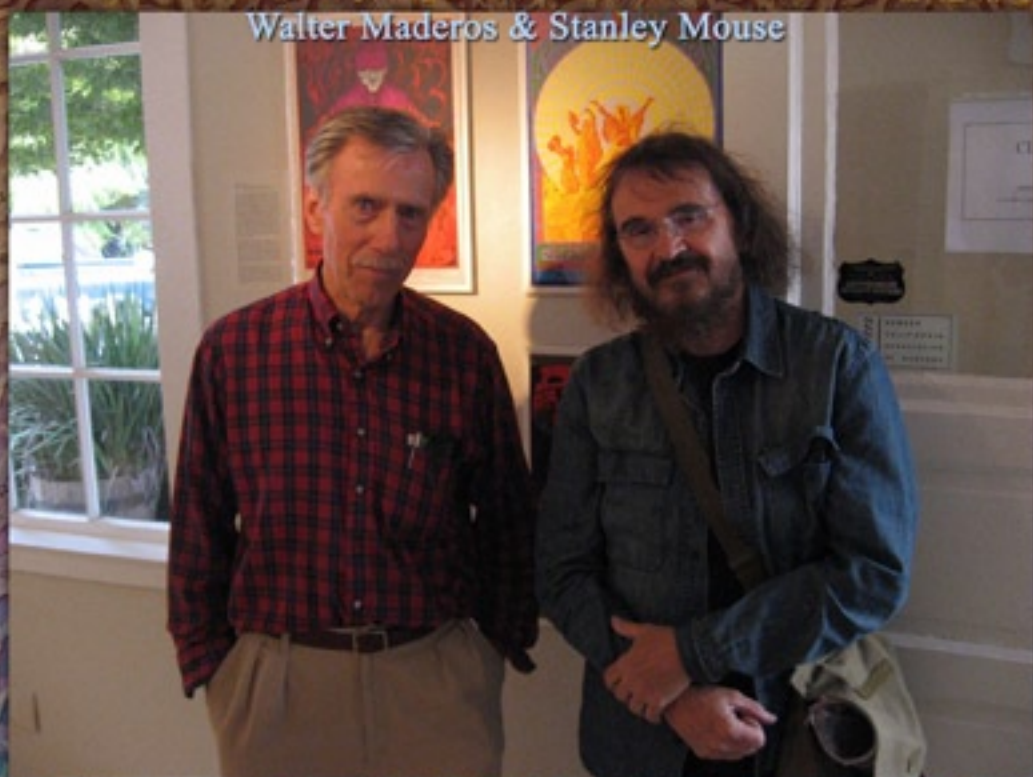




© walter medeiros



Walter Maderos & Stanley Mouse



Walter Medeiros lived in San Francisco during 1966 & 1967, and has been a resident of Berkeley since 1968. He began studying the San Francisco Rock Poster Art in 1971, in preparation for a Master's Thesis in Art History (U.C. Berkeley, 1972). He conducted extensive interviews with the major artists, the proprietor and staff of the Avalon Ballroom, light show artists, printers of the posters, and many others involved in the culture. His research, writing, consulting and lecturing established him as the prominent historian of the psychedelic rock poster art movement and the various cultural sources that influenced it.

As Guest Curator at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, in 1976 he organized a retrospective exhibition (252 posters) of the San Francisco Rock Poster Art and wrote the exhibition catalogue. The catalogue identified the major artists and discussed the sources and significance of their most prominent works. He has served as consultant for many other exhibitions, and his research and essays have been included in several books on the psychedelic poster art.

He was a friend of the collage artist, Satty, from 1971 until his death in 1982. He was called upon to critique and assist with early editing of two of Satty's books, and was designated as Satty's heir.

Walter, Family & Friends







### PRAYER AND ODE FOR SATTY

On the outside is the rational mind,  
the boyish smile, the tall, neat Arayan look,  
the silvery San Francisco light.  
But beneath the streets of Fisherman's Wharf  
lie hidden the labyrinths of the artist,  
the caverns of Poe and Doestoevsky.

You, Satty, had the courage to dwell in the dark.  
Who of us can withstand the pressure of the depths,  
and the everyday journey between the alive, torrential darkness  
and the linear, robot life of the sunlit world?

You fell from that ladder upon which the angel  
in us traverses the inner worlds  
and matter and spirit constantly wrestle.  
You are still climbing upon the spiritual ladder  
while your body, my friend sprawled at its foot.

Now, finally, you approach the purer light  
you dreamed of and envisioned in your collages:  
the light that makes the darkness visible  
surrounds you, and if there is freedom, you are free.

Alan Cohen San Francisco, July 27th 1998



# Sacred Meetings





# notes FROM the HEADLAND



GALES FROM the WESTERN  
SHORE OF IRELAND...

AS TOLD BY  
TIM DALY



# Godhood For Beginners

You know how it is, every time you find something that is so perfectly wonderfully spot-on RIGHT for you, and you cannot stop yourself from humming "What a Wonderful World" on some level or another in some key of your own choosing as it hits you in one vast euphoric wave that YES! This is a thing so flawlessly and completely designed for just you that you must have a Guardian Angel somewhere who is trying to compensate for doing such a lousy job of your Life so far that he/she or it hopes this magnificent Gift will make up for all of it in one Grand Gesture to end all Grand Gestures - is usually the precursor to another moment when you discover that tiny little catch that follows on from it like an irksome yet Karma-balancing companion.

This euphoric enthusiasm had been originally provoked in me when I checked my mail and there mixed amongst a pile of utility bills and fliers discovered that the American university I most wanted to pursue my doctorate in was prepared to offer me an unconditional place.

Gethsemane University, nestled between the only two hills in the hole of Iowa (sic) like a cultural and intellectual Oasis, had earned itself a fast-growing reputation as a sharp-edged research centre to rival Oxbridge, CalTech, M.I.T. and Skibbereen. I thought I had a good idea, from the brightly coloured brochures that had accompanied the offer, of what I would find when I went there in September but when autumn came round I found a revelation.

From the time my plane had touched down at O'Hare Airport to the moment nearly ten hours later I drove the little second-hand Nissan my limited dollars had purchased in Downtown Chicago through hundreds of miles of cornfields randomly punctuated by friendly roadside gun shops and then finally into the tree-lined outskirts of Gethsemane, I had felt an increasing sense of foreboding but that left me as I drove through the University's sumptuous Campus; which was a feast of exotic plants, sculptures and bizarrely beautiful earthworks that seemed to serve no purpose but to please the eye.

So there I stood, barely an hour later, feeling very much the little farm boy raised in a sleepy corner of West Cork (and I defy you to show me a corner of West Cork that isn't), staring up at my course curriculum pinned to the Faculty Notice Board. I'd spotted the flaw in my ointment right there labelled as a Subsidiary Subject (Mandatory) accompanying my Post-Graduate course in Quantum Mechanics.

"Godhood 1:01" with Professor Sheldon.

"What the...?" I stared at it again, wondering and hoping it was a miss-print or some strange midwestern foray into ironic humour, but I felt a sinking certainty that it was neither.

What could it mean? I stared at it again, as if it might resolve into something less perplexing.

"Godhood 1:01" with Professor Sheldon. The words seemed to be literally printed on to the page, and all I got by staring at them was the foretaste of an encroaching headache. The puzzling words remained unchanged and brought to mind something my favourite uncle had told me about America.

I know that most people thought of my Uncle Tadgh as an overweight buffoon who lived just outside Clonakilty, but I knew they were wrong about that. I knew my Uncle Tadgh was an overweight buffoon who lived just outside Rosscarbery. That said, his widely travelled view of the world and tendency to immerse himself up to the neck in local colour wherever he went had led him to form some oddly useful conclusions about the quirky creature that is man.

I recalled him sharing one or two of those insights with me over an Irish coffee some months earlier after I had shared the news of my offer of the PhD course in Gethsemane. A wistful look had come into his eyes as he talked about his own first trip to the US in 1980 as a wild-eyed youth of thirty-two.



The picture he painted was of an America steeped in obsessive certainties: be it in a vengeful right-wing God, the sanctity of motherhood, the laziness of Mexicans, the worthlessness of left-wing ideologies, the untrustworthiness of the Arab and the Asian and the prior claim that Americans could invoke to any of Earth's resources or treasures they damn well fancied for themselves – as if God was from somewhere in Montana and blessed their every whim.

But Tadgh reserved his greatest scorn for American TV news. He said that the Irish, like most other Europeans, are used to watching news from all over the planet. Watching the news in Florida, Oregon or Indiana, you could be forgiven for thinking that nothing of note ever happened outside mainland USA.

Then one day whilst visiting his mother, my Great Aunt Eileen, in Daytona Beach he noticed a TV show that seemed to contradict all of that. It was a documentary about the Russian invasion of Afghanistan that talked of their motives with a fair-minded impartiality that would have done credit to the BBC. Fascinated, he had stopped what he was doing as he listened to the documentary's avuncular anchorman describing the Russian rationale in careful measured tones. Then, just as Tadgh was starting to think he'd got American TV all wrong, the anchorman started his summing up. "And you know" he intoned enthusiastically, "its all there in the Bible!"

Tadgh described himself sitting down, his mouth open with numbing horror as this Network television programme went on to treat arcane Biblical prophecy from the Book of Revelation as a strictly deterministic script we were all acting out with an almost robotic inevitability.

"In 1980 at least" Tadgh had concluded, "the Americans were a people so in love with answers that they had no room anywhere in their mindset for any actual questions – and certainly not if they referred to religion, politics, or NBA Football! They were certain about everything because the very idea of doubt scared them."

Okay... Maybe I hadn't fully subscribed to Tadgh's energetic prejudice against all things American but staring at the printed curriculum now, I did wonder if Godhood 1:01 was some intellectually feeble attempt to square the subatomic majesty of the quantum world with the teachings of the New Testament or, like the quasi-intellectual "argument from design" which attacked the idea of Darwinian evolution, something even sillier.

So it was with a heavy heart that I completed the registration procedure and moved my things into the attractive little apartment that the university had allocated for me. Godhood 1:01 was my first class at ten the next morning and I steeled myself to face it as best I could.

Things started to look up again when I reported to the study room set aside for the course and met the six other students sharing the programme with me.

Easily the tallest of us was a self-effacing Brit called David Tyke with a Birmingham PhD in "Exotic Logics" that I'd enjoyed in its incarnation as a rather surrealistic cartoon strip in the Guardian, and easily the smallest was an elfin-faced Italian girl called Gianna who had a background in Catastrophe Maths and Chaos Theory. Standing beside them, trying to blend into the carpet was an acutely shy and mild-faced Egyptian called Bahaa Seedhom. Bahaa had clearly fallen under the spell of a Russian-Armenian girl called Nadia Katchachurian who, in a throaty accent that irresistibly reminded us of that of some sultry James Bond lady-spy, had invited us to call her "Natch" for short.

The first two characters to introduce themselves to me were Chuang Tse, a physicist from Hong Kong who never quite stopped smiling however much one stared and, as the only North American amongst our motley contingent, was an impossibly good-looking and deeply tanned Californian, aptly named Cal Geach who, we all knew, had made a something of a reputation for himself



some months previously, when a paper he had written at Berkeley called "The Heresy of Quantum Consciousness viewed from a neo-Con perspective" had won him an invitation from the White House to become an official Presidential Advisor, which had then been famously and hastily withdrawn once he'd explained that its intentions had been purely satirical.

Of Professor Sheldon there was, as yet, was no sign.

Then, some fifteen minutes later, she appeared. A voluptuous blonde woman I guessed to be in her mid to late fifties, although it had to be added that middle age had been very kind to her; she glided rather than walked into the room and I felt the space around her to be charged with a fierce charismatic energy. She motioned us to be seated and then reclined into a large leather armchair I hadn't even noticed up to that point and smiled as she introduced herself to each of us in turn. Oddly enough, she knew each of our names already, but that was only one mystery to join the several others that were piling up in my head.

For example, when I had seen how silently she walked amongst us I had glanced down to see what type of shoes she was wearing. That she was completely barefoot was somewhat less surprising than the fact that, in making each sure-footed step, her feet hadn't quite made contact with the parquet flooring.

Her next surprise was on a different level altogether. She asked each of us to recall when, and why, we had first applied for our places at Gethsemane University. It then shocked us to realise that none of us could actually remember applying at all – even though, as each of us readily attested, it had at the time seemed to us so perfectly natural, if somewhat fortuitous, to have been offered both scholarships and positions there.

As she talked her smiling eyes, the turquoise of the Caribbean Sea, rested hypnotically upon each of us in turn and calmed both our turmoil and our doubts with the practised ease of someone who believed the truth of their own word.

She talked of humanity's share dreams and shared nightmares; of terrible wonders and magnificent horrors; of distant pasts and of impossible futures. As I listened to her words flowing like beautiful and semantically rich music from her mouth, I felt my own consciousness lurch onto another level of being.

Now every word she uttered was accompanied by a brilliant visual effect spilling away from her across the room – the bright fizzing energy of verbs driving forward colourful cartoon-like three dimensional pictured ideas so that, for example, when she spoke the word "tree" there suspended in the air we could see the quintessential image of a tree – simultaneously just one tree and also every object that we had ever referred to as a tree.

And so this dazzling light show continued unabated. At some stage she did something fractal with Time, effortlessly cutting it up into topographically impossible shapes so that she could dwell at length on important features of her thesis without any regular time passing at all.

At one point, she reached forward and gently held my hands with her own and I felt my body become flooded with a warm euphoric tingling from my scalp to my toes, and I felt my being swell to accommodate the most enormous happiness.

"We are one," she whispered softly, as I noticed from the corner of my eye six other Professor Sheldons simultaneously holding hands with each of my new colleagues, squeezing their fingers and blessing them with the self-same words.

Throughout all of this, the one sensation that over-rode every other was the overwhelming conviction that all of this was right and inevitable, that this moment was where my life so far had been leading, as a river to the sea. Here, nothing was surprising; nothing was strange, nothing alien.



The dreamer had become the dream, and the dream the dreamer.

Now ideas as sweet and rich as ripened fruit poured from the beautiful professor into our willing and receptive minds, which were awash with the pleasure of the lessons. Then, sometime later, I once again felt the gentle warm pressure of her fingers on my hand.

"Take your mind to a happy place" she urged me.

For a moment I drew a blank but then my mind alighted on that Cornish beach when I was seven years old staring up at the giant thin finger of rock rising from the golden sand. My eyes closed with a flush of pleasurable memories, and when I opened them we were there. Standing in front of us I could see my gently sunburned skin; my right hand protecting my squinting eyes from the bright sunshine. I could hear the lapping of the waves breaking on the beach and the distant cries of tetchy seagulls. Light wind from the sea cooled the skin a fragment, and I could see my sister Caitlin with my parents a few hundred metres behind my left shoulder. The professor released my fingers and looked around her.

"Why here?" she asked, her expression thoughtful as her eyes met mine once again.

I pointed at the craggy finger that stood about a hundred feet high.

"The only moments in my childhood that I ever felt truly alive, or knew any kind of pure joy, were solitary ones," I told her "and when I saw this rock I knew I had to climb it, and that nobody should ever know that I had done so."

As I spoke the child I had been stepped up to, and then started to climb that face of the rock that was obscured to my parents view. My movements were sure and confident until I reached a height of around 85 feet. There, my young head moved this way and that as I searched for my next handhold. The slight overhang that seemed to us to block any further progress shaded me, and I soon slumped down into a crouching position with my forearms

Far below, we could see the young boy wipe bitter and disappointed tears from his/my face, and I turned to explain to Professor Sheldon what we were about to see next.

"Getting to the top was all I could think of," I said, "and although I'm fairly sure I didn't know the word 'metaphor' at the time, I remember having the strongest feeling that to fail to get there would mark a crucial turn for the worse in my life. The idea of failure seemed quite unbearable to me."

I paused as we stared up at my former self. Suddenly the boy stood up with a new look of determination on his face. He punched his left hand into a shoulder high crack in the rock and then, with his body now leaning perilously outwards, stretched up his right hand to feel for a possible hand-hold above the overhang.

For some moments his outstretched hand was a fast blur of frantic searching and then settled into a position over to his left.

"I'd found a single hand-hold on a small spur of embedded quartz," I explained to the professor as, both of us squinting from the strong sunlight, stared up at the action. "the only problem was, I had no way of knowing whether or not it would lead me to a viable climb and only a leap upwards would allow me to grip even that."

"My only choice was to jump and risk falling to my death, or to turn back."

I shuddered from the powerful memory.

"So I leapt, believing it might be the last thing I would ever do," I said as we watched my young self act out my words synchronously, "and as you can see, I made it to the top."

We could now no longer see the boy as, his body currently shaking from the experience, he lay spread-eagled at the very top of the rock basking in the joy of his climb.

Professor Sheldon leaned towards me and I could feel the warmth of her breath on my ear as she softly whispered to me.



"That leap was your first step here," she said, and as she smiled the whole scene dissolved and became, once again, the classroom.

Once more I became aware that the same teacher was singling out each one of my colleagues at the same time.

The illusion of multiple Professor Sheldons persisted for a moment more and then, in a blink, resolved into just one as she sat back in her armchair and regarded us all with a level gaze.

"Still," she said evenly, "perhaps that's enough to begin with. I don't want to work you too hard on the first day. We'll make a proper start to the course from next week." She glanced down at her wristwatch.

"Time for my espresso," she said and then with a final beaming smile, she was gone. For several moments, her departure drained light, colour and sound from the room but, within a minute or so, we felt the classroom shift back to its original appearance and feel. None of us were able to speak at first and the only things we could hear were the gentle sounds of our own breathing, the faint ticking of a clock on the wall and, from somewhere outside the large windows, some earnest but crass attempts by one student to proposition another. He sounded Texan. A pause in his entreaties was followed by the noise of a loud slap.

Cal Geach, for the moment no longer the unflapably mellow Californian cool-dude, broke the silence by telling us some rumour he had overheard about our next day's lesson with Normus Greeley, the wildly eccentric Quantum Physics professor who, for his own pleasure, had double dutied as the university's officially appointed landscape gardener. Cal grinned broadly as he told us of the legendary stories of this teacher's insane sense of humour and his perverse and mischievous application of multidimensional Super-string Theory to the design of the lawns and flower beds, which had reputedly led to consequences that would have turned Maurits Escher into a quivering wreck - had that famous artist, for example, been reckless enough to try to walk across the

Quadrangle from the Coffee Shop to the Library; located as they both were in slightly different dimensions.

Still, that lesson was for another day. Right then I felt the need for a tall glass of iced tea followed by a long nap, and my body was a blur as, taking a hasty departure from my new colleagues, I headed off to my new apartment for both of them.







Jim & Kodi



bayside...



Mags & KODI



KODI, Jim & Kim



Kim



out the bedroom window



# We Tribe

A photojournal of Modern Tribalism  
by Kyle Halley



I'm fascinated by techno tribal-ish gatherings. A gathering on the San Francisco bay one night a couple of years ago became the tipping point in my fascination. My fascination peaked as I watched this group of people dancing in the dark dead of night in the soft red light of a bus parked nearby. This group of counterculture 20 and 30 year olds were dancing to surprisingly moving and powerful distorted electronica in a deteriorating-forsaken industrial spot on the beautiful yet polluted waters of the bay. It was a bizarre mix of nature, destruction and celebration. The celebration in this abandoned spot seemed like some ancient celebration that was reveling in a secrete beauty of life that is usually hidden to the average regard. The photos that follow in this article were taken by me over the past 3 years to capture the magic and mystery I feel at the gatherings of this subculture.

This subculture has yet to be named. Some might call them "burners" a reference to people who attend Burningman. The photo above was taken at Burningman but none of the photos that follow are from Burningman.

The photos come from events such as Shambhala in British Columbia, Synergenesis a visionary arts conference in San Francisco, Spin Cycle a weekly event in Portland Oregon, street fairs, underground parties or just hanging out at people's homes. Growing up in a conservative, culturally poor, and spiritually backward town, I would have rejoiced in knowing that something infinitely bigger existed beyond my confined world. For that reason, I am passionate about documenting and sharing this movement.

The magic, mystery, love and power that I feel at these gatherings has touched my life and has served to influence me on multiple levels: spiritual, social, physical as well as my perception of reality.

I am working on a photobook documenting these gatherings. For more information and photography see: <http://wetribe.com>



# Myth and Mystery

"On the bus" Dancing by the bay  
Halloween 2006



'On the Bus'



'Dancing by the Bay'

The funnest, scariest, most mysterious and beautiful halloween I've had. Friends and I all got "on the bus", headed to a undisclosed abandoned isolated spot on the bay and danced, then headed for Justin Herman plaza and danced right in the heart of the city under the bright lights, finally we headed off to an abandoned crypt to read poetry and share.

# Howard St Fair

San Francisco, Ca

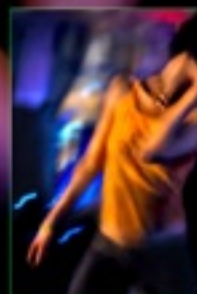
The Howard Street Fair is a yearly street festival featuring electronic music and dancing.





# Spin Cycle

Portland, Or



# Shambhala

Salmo, British Columbia





# Toxic Beach

San Francisco, Ca



# Synergogenesis

San Francisco, Ca

Synergogenesis is a yearly visionary arts-conference in San Francisco where the artistic and spiritual techno tribal energies come out in force.

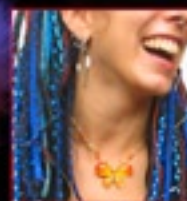
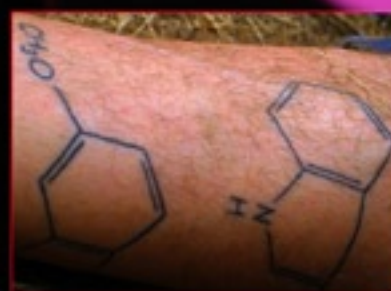






# Symbiosis

Northern, Ca







Above, the author and his wife  
having fun with photos at their  
home in Portland, Oregon...

We are interested in hearing  
your experiences, opinions and  
thoughts on current under-  
ground dance culture.

Write to us at  
[kylelf@gmail.com](mailto:kylelf@gmail.com)





# LUGHNASSADH



DIANE DARLING





At the midpoint between Summer Solstice and Fall Equinox, Pagans celebrate the festival of Lughnassadh, or Lammas. As Brigid or Oemilch is the feminine pole of the year, so is Lughnassadh the masculine pole, when the Sun is in his mature power. It is the first of three harvest festivals, thus the later name, Lammas (loaf-mass), indicates that baked bread is the sacred food of the season.

We gathered for games and races that allow fine sleek men and horses to show off their power. In agricultural times and places, young men might strut their stuff both for the benefit of blushing girls and for the inspection by farmers looking to take on help for the harvest that looms close. In honor of Lugh of the Long Hand and his innumerable excellent skills, men also display the fruits of their labor, crafts, and cunning.

Year-and-a-day marriages, precursors to modern Handfasting, were undertaken at Lughnassadh, thus moving young men away from their mother hearth and into the family of a girl. Such marriages could also be easily ended on this day, simply by the two standing back to back and walking away from each other. Children got in these Tailtiu weddings were raised at their mother's hearth, as most were until the advent of Roman exogamy.

Historically, Lughnassadh celebrated the mother (or foster mother) of the sky god, Lugh, the Earth goddess Tailtiu. Unlike most Irish deities, Tailtiu cared deeply for the proto-Irish people and sacrificed herself by clearing the land (her body) of forest so men could sow grain and prosper. Her son (or foster son) Lugh declared funeral games in her honor, and even today at Teltown in County Meath the form of the ancient horserace track can still be seen.



The succession of Irish invasions can be seen in this story. Tailtiu, the local Earth goddess, was of the Fir Bolg people, who were conquered and mostly displaced by the Tuatha de Danaan (children of Dana, a European foundation goddess). Lugh was the son of Ethniu, whose father was Balor, dread one-eyed giant of the even earlier Fomorian people, and sired by Cian of the Tuatha. After being fostered away from his grandsire's wrath, Lugh was accepted at the court of the Tuatha king, Manannan (as in the Isle of Mann) after demonstrating that he was the most excellent man at all the Celtic skills: fighting, singing, poetry, satire, smithing, harping, magic, and fine crafts.

Later, after a great victory with his Spear of Light, he became king and declared the Tailtiu Games in honor of his foster mother.

Celebrate Lughnassadh by feasting upon the fruits of the season, giving thanks for your bounty, and sacrificing in the solar fire or under the Earth those things that must be recycle for the good of all. Let the guys stand up and be guys! And let the women admire them for their masculine power. Let there be flirtation and beer! Bread and butter, good meat, berries and song! Tell the old stories, toast the old gods, call their names and make them now! And remember, a hard man is good to find!



Diane Darling has lived many lifetimes and performed countless acts of Love and Magick.

She has graced us with her wit, skilled editing and insightful tales over the years.

She has recently been published in Hightimes, and is a regular contributor to Earthrites.org and The Invisible College Magazine.

Diane is the founder of SheShamans which she incidentally put together in her spare time...





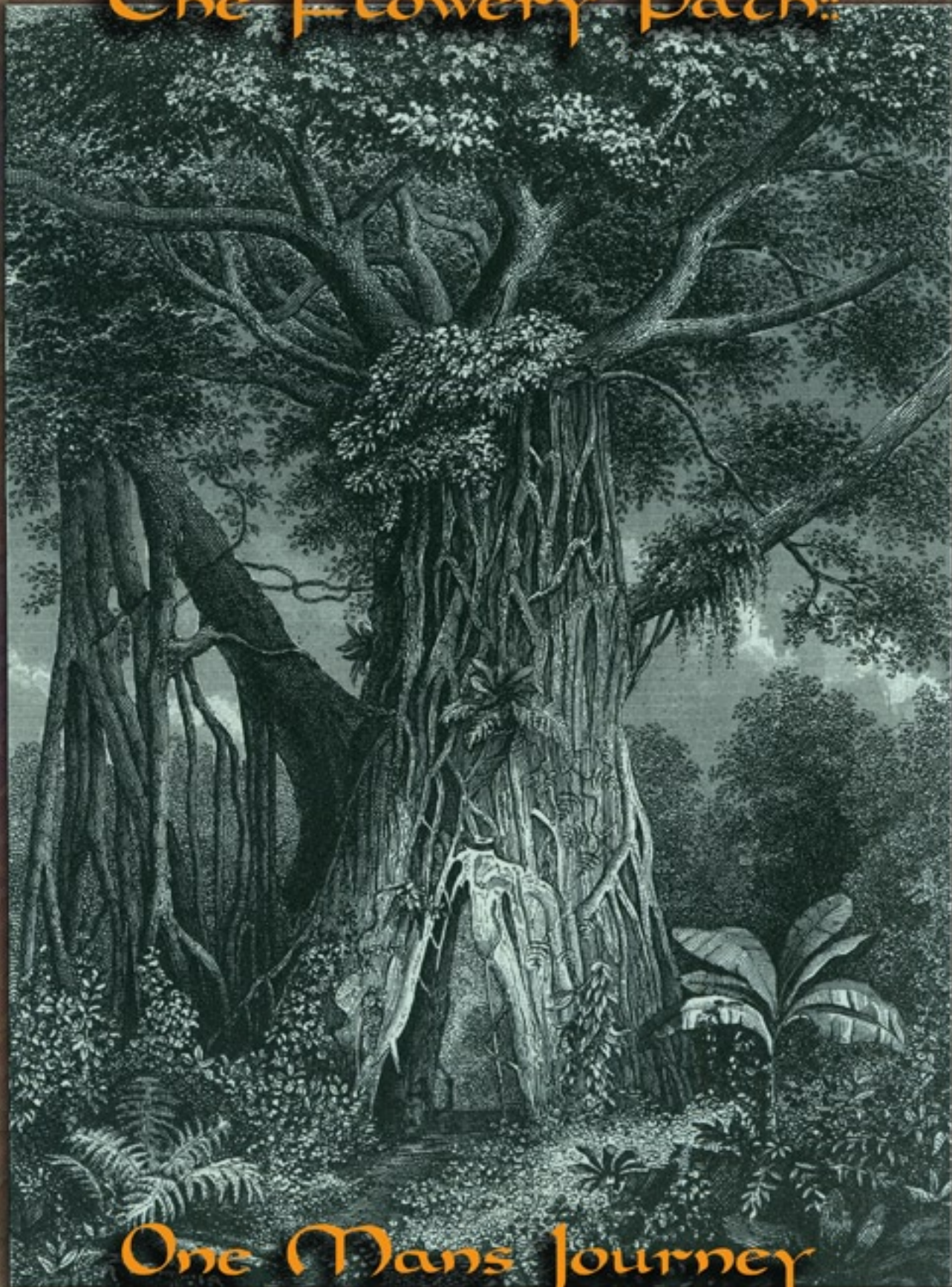
# The Guide - (Seraphim)



GWYLLM LEWYDD



# The Flowery Path:



One Mans Journey



***Would you mind telling about some of your background, and your early spiritual drive?***

I grew up in a small town on the Washington coast in the 1950's and 60's, in many ways an idyllic life at the end of an innocent era. I excelled in school, and at the same time hung out with all sorts of people, from egg-heads to greasers to jocks. I was well on my way as an aspiring party animal to being part of the local culture modeled after guys like James Dean, with drinking and driving fast being favorite pastimes. Yet all the while keeping my grades up.

Then I read the 1966-67 articles in Life magazine on LSD and psychedelics, followed it with a term paper on the subject, and decided that this stuff was for me, finally getting my hands on some on high school graduation night. Well, that night interrupted my alcohol consumption entirely, and I immediately identified with the nascent counterculture erupting on the West Coast and elsewhere. I attended the University of Washington during the years at the end of the tumultuous 1960's, and become absorbed in the political Left and psychedelic movements, which were all stirred together at that time. In those amazing times, much spiritual search and social ferment and exploration were underway, but there was so little precedent or reference points to use in guiding our cultural invention process. "Something's happening here, what it is ain't exactly clear" allowed an open "it's all good" attitude to prevail. However, a couple of important understandings came into my/our awareness pretty/wx quickly:

1. It ain't "all good": e.g., drugs, self-destructive behaviors, and the view exemplified by the political slogan "By any means necessary."

2. Not everyone was getting out of psychedelics what I was: transcendent connections to higher consciousness, ancient wisdom alive in the moment, a commitment to personal inner exploration and work.
3. Not all issues could be resolved through these potent and magical mind medicines.
4. This Revolution is going to take some time, more like putting "rev into evolution."

In summary, the medicine gives us spiritual "homework", which we neglect at our psychological peril. The above insights seem so basic and obvious in retrospect, but in the inclusive enthusiasm of the times, it wasn't necessarily so.

These unfolding insights led me to explore philosophic paths leading to deeper spiritual awareness and personal growth: Hindu and Buddhist texts as were available, the teachings of yogis and other apparently evolved souls, metaphysics in general. In particular, the teachings of Krishnamurti served as a way through the thickets of belief systems, mythic structures, and mental muscle building. Gandhi was very helpful in formulating a spiritual response to the violence of the Vietnam War and the culture that perpetrated it. Theosophy seemed to provide the advanced texts for us as Westerners. I immersed myself in all of this, and sought to bring it fully alive through the use of psychedelics. We early on came to appreciate the value of taking these psychedelics in a natural and quiet setting, with some preparation (e.g., fasting, meditation) and simple ceremony. I moved in with a group of young men practicing the macrobiotic diet, simple living, and kind of a psychedelic monastic life. We shared from texts that came our way through a network epitomized by the appearance of the book *Be Here Now*.

My favorite pre-journey study text was *The Perennial Philosophy* by Aldous Huxley.



On one LSD journey while still at university I received the self-instruction to "Return to the place you came from, find your people, and prepare together for the times ahead," a not-quite apocalyptic but nevertheless powerful injunction which informed the next decades for me. College days were over: "We're taking the Revolution home." Living closer to the land, learning to survive, building community, the Great Experiment was underway. At age 23 I became a father, and the subsequent 18 years were spent more or less as a householder and environmental activist, and pot and beer replaced the more potent medicines of my prior years of inner exploration. Then, at around age 40, I re-engaged with my psychedelic roots, using mushrooms, MDMA, rarely LSD. I and my friends undertook a process I call "Reinventing the Circle" and we were fortunate enough to become acquainted with the Native American (Peyote) Church and with ayahuasca mestizo traditions, syncretically and respectfully incorporating elements of these ceremonies into our own. Pot and alcohol fell away again, no longer serving any observably useful function, basically due to lack of interest. The methods and shamanic models of Michael Harner et al. and the Foundation for Shamanic Studies have been integrated. Powerful transpersonal and personal healing experiences happen within our ceremonial circles. In the 15 or so years now that our psychedelic sangha has been meeting, however, the same issues keep coming up:

Receiving and then doing the homework given to us by the Plant Teachers and our guides and higher selves is essential. Keeping the powerful presence of the Sacred Circle activated and alive within us requires attention and intention.

Commitment to community supports each of us and creates a safe and sacred space for others to be welcomed home.

Addictions and unwise habits can be healed but this is easier for some than others.

Compassion and its corollary, forgiveness, is the most powerful medicine of all.

To respond further to your questions:

When we receive instruction or "homework" from the Plant Teachers, from other transpersonal sources or altered states of consciousness, sometimes it is received clearly and unambiguously, other times it is received symbolically or metaphorically. Sometimes it might be just internal dialog and perhaps even outside interference, like hearing the radio on our dental fillings. Sorting it out can be a bit tricky, so the practice is to develop discernment without skepticism. Walking the line between listening to the little voices and doing what they say, and healthy skepticism calls for a heart-centered awareness. The Witness, our Higher Self, can first dispassionately listen to the inner dialog, "record" the messages in a place of personal compassion for our own human condition while mustering the will to empower those changes which feel right and timely. One of our prayers in Sacred Circle is "to give us the teachings and instruction for which we are ready at this time." An old and useful custom (that admittedly I don't always use these days) is to fast and practice centering for a day or so before a journey.

From wherever the source, when we get good inner advice, it is incumbent upon us to act on it as best we can, "enacting" this dialog in the outer world. It's not really that difficult to recognize good advice and guidance when we hear it, but implementation, cutting some new tracks in our habitual ways of thinking and acting, that is the challenge and the real work of bringing these transpersonal teachings into this dimension.





As within, so let it be without. Now in this psychedelic movement of ours, with such a swirling of images and ideas, torquing of personality by the G-forces of powerful psychotropics, not to mention the metahistoric flux we are all swimming in, who's to say who's wacked-out vision is to be propagated into the garden of the emergent culture? Very early on I was influenced by and used as a touchstone Aldous Huxley's book *The Perennial Philosophy*. This is one place where I have found something resembling "standards" of authentic spiritual experience. There are many others, and if one is really lucky, s/he can find a person who can offer calm insight into what these visions and instructions might mean and suggest behaviorally. Many people who have gone down the medicine path have taken their insights and self-improvement instructions into meditative and yogic practice. One kind of unfortunate and very common thing though, is that many people departed the medicine path after a particularly challenging or "bad" trip, and so left off with a bad taste in their mouth. To those folks I would extend an invitation to step back in some time, with proper set and setting, and check in from most interesting perspective. I have a saying that ayahuasca and some of these other powerful plant medicines (and I don't want to exclude LSD w0] and MDMA here): "Can make a Christian a better Christian, A Buddhist a better Buddhist, and an atheist a better atheist." More and more reports come back now about beneficial use of these medicines as an occasional adjunct to meditation and other practices, and of course vice versa. The future is ripe for complementary use of personal practices and therapies.

So who might these helpful spirit guides and other entities be? We can take a Jungian or similar view of them as archetypes. My own experience and study suggests that there are many helpful discarnate spirits (and no small number of less-than-helpful hangers-on), who make themselves available to our protection and spiritual guidance through our invitation, as subject to the universal law of free will. My understanding is that when we invite them into our lives and energetic field, they use our intention to work with us more effectively. Many are the stories of angels and other interdimensional helpers coming to the rescue unbidden, and in the nick of time. But when we consciously ask for their help, and concurrently put a permeable field of protective light around ourselves and our circles to filter out any undue influences, we have invited in a host of helpful entities. And we make a point of thanking them when we close our ceremonies, sharing our respect and our multidimensional nature. There is thus established a relationship with these seldom or unseen beings, who may take many forms. There is a whole lot of personal testimony to support this transpersonal ecological view, and from my perspective they are real.

Two things in particular are missing from our Western style culture: rites of passage for young people entering adulthood, and a council of elders within the community to cultivate wisdom and pass it along. We have a long ways to go in both categories, and a prayer added recently to our ceremonies is: "May we w0] become elders worth respecting." I am encouraged by the convocation of the Council of Indigenous Grandmothers, also known as the 13 Grandmothers, who are coalescing and renewing an ancient wisdom tradition, except now at a planetary scale. Three of them coincidentally represent the medicine traditions of peyote, ayahuasca, and iboga. You go Grandmothers!



In our medicine circles, as we begin to come down for a landing, I like to remind folks that we are engaged in a powerfully transformative process, which actually exists outside time and space, encouraging ourselves to stay centered in this eternal space, which is so much more than a "soon-to-be memory," however pleasant. I encourage folks grammatically to remain in the present tense with their language, as best they can, which can be an interesting exercise in itself. The sacred space we create is ours as a living reference point. I like Andrew Weil's formulation that these medicines don't necessarily cure what ails us, but it does give us the experience of knowing what being healed and whole feels like, as a point of reference. This is good medicine in itself.

For the last decade and a half, since I reengaged with the medicine path (after taking almost twenty years off during the child-rearing "householder" phase of life), I have worked at convening and being part of a somewhat informal spiritual community, or sangha to use the Buddhist term. Such community is a beautiful and empowering thing when it is happening, like during our times of gathering for ceremony and celebration. In our case, though, we do not particularly operate as a community in terms of living together, shared right livelihood, etc., unlike the communal experiences of yesteryear or the spiritual communities that have grown up around particular spiritual paths or teachers. It's more difficult in some ways to keep that communal spirit charged within our community, but it also lessens the pressure-cooker effect of close quarters and day-to-day interpersonal tensions. Our ceremonies actually sustain and define our community, making it all the more important to ask for and do spiritual "homework" in the times between our gatherings. When we come together, it is really a homecoming, and one in which new friends are welcome.

One note, however, is that we have agreed that a new person in our circle needs to be "sponsored" by a community member, who more or less mentors her/him through a ceremony, and with whom there is an agreement to be available if things might get a bit weird. And sometimes weirdness happens, and is a test for the group mind as well as individual responsibility when it does. There are times when a person's processing requires that they leave the ceremonial circle for some more one-on-one interaction, and it is important that the focus of the group and our intentions not be completely distracted. Holding space, attention and intention, is important and is everyone's responsibility.

All kinds of teaching, individual and shared, happens in the classroom of Sacred Space. But thank Spirit that we have brought it together as we have with what I call spiritual common sense, respectfully bringing elements from diverse traditions into our own syncretic process of reinventing the circle. It is a safe and powerful place to work together, each and all of us.

"Welcome Home" is a sentiment commonly felt and expressed in our ceremonies.

For me, all of my adult life (all of my life actually, as I recall now), I have been seeking to be part of a community, a spiritual community. Elusive as this has been, I have held that image and vision, and enacted it whenever I could. It

feels so good to be with one's "tribe" and I thrive on it, when that is happening. This year I plan on spending some time in Mapia, the Santo Daime community in the Brazilian Amazon, to soak myself into that extraordinary medicine community. I will report back what my impressions are after I return, if I return! I

am at stage of my life now where I am ready to follow my vision where it will lead me, and when we do this the Universe has a way of taking us by the hand. I am excited about the opportunities I might find (or might find me) to be of service and deepen my inner work along the way. The law of free will has it that when we give ours to the work of the Holy Spirit, retaining our intelligence and discernment as useful tools, we will indeed be provided with





the work for which we are ready and qualified, with on-the-job training as required! Signs along the way of this happening are synchronicities, large and small. Look for 'em!

For our society addictions and their treatment are a huge issue, staggeringly so. The dominant culture tries to suppress some, substitute some, markets extensively to others, and tries to present some of them as virtues! Addiction is at the heart of our human condition, and spiritual practices are all about confronting the monkeys on our backs. Emotional misplacement and broken trust are at the heart of it. Our broken hearts, yearning for love and peace, need the complementary medicine of deep insight, the power of willingness, transpersonal and community support, and forgiveness to be healed. This very tall order and complex prescription is nonetheless essential if we are to heal ourselves and the planet. Plant medicines like iboga and ayahuasca offer remarkable efficacy, when used with spiritual purpose, set and setting, and good medical and nutritional support.

Addiction as a disease, is a spiritual disease. Addiction as a crisis of personality is a spiritual crisis. Addiction as a rut too deep to climb out of may be treated with a psychedelic depth charge, but that can be only part of the treatment. How we treat ourselves as humans is also at the core of how we experience ourselves in this fucked-up world. Who we associate with, each breath in and out, what we eat are also part of the medicine, we need to treat ourselves right. Meditation teaches us that discursive thought is maybe the bottom-line addiction of all. Perhaps rather than our usual way of positing things as either/or, we might find good results from meditation plus medication (and you know what I'm referring to here). The self-talk of victimhood (and an all-too-accommodating social jungle) takes our power away. The peyote way has had better effect in Native American communities than the famed 12 Step program because it is culturally connected, and because the medicine can give us that view of ourselves as healed and whole as a reference point, rather than being a perennially suffering sinner/addict.



And stay tuned as Iboga/ibogaine, this amazing African "addiction interrupter" medicine, begins to make its presence felt.

The medicine path has a lot to offer, but of course will have to work its way through "taking a drug to cure a drug habit" apparent paradox (which is not really so paradoxical when one considers the pharmaceutical model of medicine after all). What is really objected to (by the mainstream) is the visionary, transpersonal aspect of hallucinogens, but we can learn a lot from cultures where these plant medicines are embedded in the culture itself, a part of essential rites of passage, healing ceremonies, etc. Tim Leary really was on to something with his prison work, but alas! Now it is a ripe time to pick this research up again, especially since the prisons are full of mostly addicts.

The medicine that could be most widely prescribed for all of us, old and young, privileged and disadvantaged, self-administered and put into the water system if we could is compassion and its corollary, forgiveness.

I got this teaching directly and simply put from the Plant Teacher Ayahuasca, who said to me: "Forgiveness is the only way out." Out of this social quandary of blame, shame, and cyclic violence. Out of the anger and frustration of a world run amuck. But I would suggest this is not the forgiveness of idiot compassion or irresponsibility, or simplistically to (try to) forgive and forget. It is: Forgive and Remember and Forgive. I use this as a kind of mantra in ceremony sometimes, and it is helpful in freeing up the energy bound in places in our psyches caught up in unforgiveness. This bound energy can be liberated for creative and uplifting purposes, and it is remarkable how heavy can be the weight lifted from our souls by engaging in this practice. Again, there is the aspect of the medicine's altered space giving us the deep feeling of what it is like to be free of such a burden, but we will have to continue with the day-to-day homework of forgiveness, which is a process more than an event. But once lifted for a moment and allowing the light to flood in, the soul rises to the occasion and welcomes the freedom that forgiveness facilitates. Good Medicine indeed!





# SUMMERS OF LOVE



WILL PENNA



## Where in Mill Penna Tales of 2 summers, 1967 and 1997...

"The Summer of Love never really happened. Invented by the fevered imaginations of writers for weekly news magazines, the phrase entered the public vocabulary with the impact of a sledgehammer, glibly encompassing a social movement sweeping the youth of the world, hitting the target with the pinpoint accuracy of a shotgun blast." - Joel Selvin, Summer of Love (1994)

It's a warm, late spring afternoon. You meander along the street, past familiar neighborhood stores and equally familiar, usually smiling faces. You smile back to some, chat with others. You haven't decided which party to go to tonight. With summer exploding, more and more are happening all over the City.

Here in the Haight you can always count on making your connections for right-on records or rags, mind-blowing potions and philosophies. You dig what's happening in the scene with its realization of no boundaries and abundant love, all coming together. There's electricity in the air as you turn off at Ashbury to see what the haps are with the folks at the old Victorian at 710. Nobody's home, but from the sweet herbaceous smell in the air, you know you're on the right track.

Now is always a state of mind in the Haight. Since it's just a little after four, you decide to mingle in the afternoon tribal rituals down in the Park. There's inevitably drumming in the distance, smoke going around, brothers and sisters on the road arriving and leaving. Somebody says there's a far-out house party in the works across the Panhandle in the huge pad at 2400 Fulton. You've dug the gigs that the kids that live there have played and word is out that they'll break out their latest recording tonight.

First Printed 1997 in XLR8R Magazine...  
Since 1993, XLR8R magazine has covered electronic music, culture, style and technology - blending edge of design, the best in photography and a good dose of accelerating music and culture. Now online at <http://www.xlr8r.com/index.php>

Somebody in the circle says how the media got it all wrong again about that big event in the Park earlier this year. When they finally pick up on something really happening all they see is kids on dope! You're grooving on the rhythm of voices, the beat of the drums, someone's tape, and the rush of feeling free and connected at the same time. This is love, the ultimate trip. And the media, well...

And then you instantly flash back to that state you entered two years ago. Your friends Dave and Sulyn had brought you your first hit on a Thursday night. 'It's now or never, Willy baby!' What a whole new experience the job was the next day--and all the days following that! Your sensations, your thought processes, your consciousness, your total life altered forever in a few hours.

Was that 1967 or 1997? For me--with the exception of a few details--it could be either. How soon you detected that we were in the Haight of almost thirty years ago might reflect either that you were there, too, or that you are a student of recent American pop culture. When I reflect on the 'summers of love' I see the commonalities, the ties that bind, between the 'psychedelic dance culture' in the City of the 60s and the City of the 90s. In the summer of 1967 I was 29 and music was--and still is--central to my life. It is the transcendent sacrament of my spirit, the healing medicine for my soul, the rhythmic rites of passage in my life. The people who make it--singers, instrumentalists, and those composer-performer DJs who create at their tables--are my urban shamans.





And San Francisco has always had world-class musicians to put on world-class parties. Jefferson Airplane for awhile had parties at their huge Fulton digs. Grateful Dead were frequently in on Ashbury. Not far away were Big Brother & the Holding Company (with Janis Joplin), Quicksilver Messenger Service, Country Joe & the Fish, the Charlatans, Moby Grape, Sopwith Camel, Great Society, Steve Miller (Blues) Band--the list was long and rich then as now. But I won't even attempt to make a similar list, for these 'electric gamelans' (to use Joel Selvin's term) of the 90s are in the pages of this publication each month.

For me what happened in the sixties was the beginning of a new but also the continuation of a very ancient social and spiritual paradigm. Chet Helms' Avalon Ballroom where friends and family danced and tranced was a prime example of what I mean. Unlike traditional venues with their auditorium seating and cordoned-off stage there was no distance between performers and partyers, just like dancers and DJs at most of today's parties. The lysergic light shows, creative clothing and bold body art, ecstatic and idiosyncratic dancing were the prototypes for much of today's scene, and we were the pioneers. The origins and models were as wide ranging for rock as they have been for rave--and they took some time to enter the larger culture. Now many of you have seen me at parties. (Some of you even think I'm Cap'n Crunch!) Perhaps you don't realize that there were few elders and far less diversity in all ways at the parties and shows I went to in the fifties, sixties and seventies.

Within a year of that summer some of the same people in the Haight held a public funeral, announcing 'The Death of Hippie.' The monster that the media had made of 'hippie' would have delighted Dr. Frankenstein. But the vibe wasn't dead, even though the spectre of speed and speed freaks filled both the popular imagination and the clinics.

The true summers of love are still alive and with us--seasons of growth and abundance--within each one of us alone, and also for all of us together. To me, the following quote best expresses this power of music. It's been around me so long I don't know when or where he said it:

"Part of music's primary function has always been to get people to celebrate or to produce changes of consciousness. That's what music is about. It changes your mood; it produces the heroic background music for your life." - Jerry Garcia

*(From 1960 to 1995, Will Penna was a public high school department chair and teacher of English and English as a Second Language. He counts his first and subsequent psychedelic/entheogenic experiences as encounters with great mystery teachers. Many of those meetings took place in and around the Haight and in Santa Cruz. After those 35 years he is now a full-time student again, living in the small town of Sonoma.)*





# DODIES'

## WORLD OF ART



DEERAMID



Sifting through the images which have evolved into my lexicon is much like putting together a puzzle without a box to follow. I do not use computers in constructing these pieces (though I enjoy some photoshoppersy from time to time). Juxtapositional challenges are built in by using images at their found sizes, colors, and styles. These limitations make the process more difficult and I seek end result more satisfying. If I can coerce the elements to fit the idea, it is hoped that the viewer might laugh along with me. In the decision to limit my palette to vintage source material and primeval further distance from my, and the viewer's, ordinary reality and evoke a dreamlike feeling, my use of outer space and standing in for earth as backgrounds, with animals frequently standing in for humans, is intended to heighten this feeling.

Luckily enough, for a person who can't draw, the illustrators of 50-75 years ago had a booming business in children's science texts. These and the home science libraries, with a few old women's magazines thrown in, form the bulk of my palette. It's all there, everything I could ever need or want. As an added bonus, these books happen to contain actual information about the plants and animals depicted! These are some of the books I remember from my childhood, slinking away under a tree somewhere to read about the strange creatures I had seen mounted and stuffed at Harvard's museum (one of my favorite temples). Sitting in the woods today, I'm in the midst of an illustration I have used as a background several times. A surreal experience.

Most of the pictures are simply dreamscapes, or story cues. Once in a while, a little joke about social issues or religion-the most dangerous and widely abused opiate worldwide. Occasionally I do a bit of reflection on interpersonal relationships, or philosophy, or spirituality. Most recently, I've enjoyed working on some symbolic portraiture. There have been a few times I have started a morose little book intended to illustrate some personal tragedy, only to find myself, long before the end of the project, laughing as I work. Catharsis-who could ask for more?

As I work, catharsis has fed into my style, as they have with psychedelics have naturally fed into my style, as they have with so many artists over the years. My first experience of this kind is clearly reflected as a style shift in my drawing journals. This is also the period where I took up sculpture. If I should like something to exist, and it does not, why not force it into existence with my experiences with non-ordinary reality fit perfectly with my adoration of the natural world. It's just us monkeys, until we pick up a pen-or are somehow handed one.



# ORIGIN





VISION



SWIM





## seaman's rest



## medicine





IBOGA







DODIE WAS BORN AND RAISED IN THE BEAUTIFULLY WOODED, YET STIFF AND PRUDISH LAND OF RURAL MASSACHUSETTS. MOST PEOPLE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF HER. EARLY ON SHE WAS INFLUENCED BY TRAVELING ON THE 1970'S ART AND CRAFT SHOW CIRCUIT, WHERE SHE WAS ENCHANTED BY THE AFTER HOURS PARTIES, THE CHEERFUL SILLINESS OF THE ADULTS. MANY YEARS LATER, SHE FIGURED OUT WHY, AND IT ALL MADE SENSE. SHE ALSO SPENT A GOOD DEAL OF TIME WATCHING HER FATHER MAKE MOLDS OF GRAVESTONES.

HER MOTHER, A SERIOUS PAINTER, LET HER KNOW EARLY ON THAT SHE COULDN'T DRAW, SO SHE WENT AHEAD AND PURSUED OTHER AVENUES OF EXPRESSION (THOUGH SHE NEVER STOPPED DRAWING, DREAMS, VISIONS, AND CONCEPTS FOR SCULPTURE). SHE LATER ATTENDED SEVERAL ART SCHOOLS IN THE BOSTON AREA, BUT WAS SEGUEMED BY THE PREVALENCE OF HER ARCH ENEMY-PRETENSION.

LONG AGO, SHE REALIZED SHE WOULD PROBABLY NEVER BE A BIG-SHOT GALLERY ARTIST, AS THE NECESSARY SCHMOOZING WAS TOO FAR OUTSIDE HER COMFORT ZONE. SHE LEFT SCHOOL AND WENT TO WORK IN ART REPRODUCTION, ADAPTING AND RE-CARVING ANCIENT ARTIFACTS TO BE SOLD IN MUSEUM STORES. OVER THE TEN YEARS OF THIS ENJOYABLE NONSENSE, SHE SPENT MOST OF HER FREE TIME RECLUSIVELY CREATING HER OWN OBJECTS AND COLLAGES IN EVERY POSSIBLE MEDIUM. SHE ALSO FILLED SCADS OF VISUAL JOURNALS, ON WHICH SHE CAN LOOK BACK AT THE MISFORTUNES AND MISTAKES OF THE PAST, AND LAUGH AND LAUGH.

FINALLY IN 2001 SHE RAN AWAY BY AIRCRAFT TO THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST, DISREGARDING THAT "WHEREVER YOU GO, THERE YOU ARE". AFTER A LONG FIRST YEAR, AND QUITE BY ACCIDENT, SHE RAN SMACK-DAB INTO TBOGAINÉ. SUCH LUCK!

DODIE IS HER WINKER NAME. SHE CAN BE REACHED AT  
[dodie45@gmail.com](mailto:dodie45@gmail.com)



## A DRUM I'LL NEVER MEND



"What rocks my world is driving a country road, topping a hill, and having reality reveal itself in gruesomeness and/or grace. That makes me go, AAhhhhhhh. Trudging along, eyes down, finding a child=s wrist watch crushed into the gravel of a parking lot stops me hot (not cold). And . . . SNAP . . . I have that image in my mind forever even if my camera is at home. So many stories it will tell me while the rest of the world is glued to the tube."

-Chaffyn Lovejoy



## A DRUM I'LL NEVER MEND

by Chaffyn Lovejoy

Gave up, locked up, gone home.

Political deconstruction of the domestic oil industry coupled with Walmartization drove the dagger into the heart of small town North Texas. Decades of drought did its part as well.

The wheat, hay, and cotton farmers along with cattle ranchers struggle on, maintaining acreage family-owned for 150-plus years in some cases.

Town folk, those who don't work the local grocery or gas station or bacon plant, commute sixty or fifty miles one-way to jobs. But they won't be uprooted.

These towns are small. Maybe four to eight hundred people counting all outlying farmers and ranchers, goats and dogs. Some one hundred households. This makes for model citizens. You can't break wind without everyone knowing and commenting on it. Front doors are unlocked. Keys dangle in ignition switches awaiting their drivers. Children play out of doors and speak to strangers. Folks apologize right up front if a smile is missing from their face: "Sorry about my grump. That gall derned two hundred thousand dollar tractor the bank owns broke down this mornin' and fixin' it's gonna cost me the payment."

As for religion, you're either a good Baptist or one of them Methodists. The Methodists park their cars and trucks in front of the liquor store; Baptists park in back.

Politics. There are two tribes in these small towns. Some of the people have no earthly idea what's going on out beyond the wheat fields. The other group is extremely opinionated. They are a surprise. While your chances, if you're cussing and discussing politics, are good you'll uncover an angry, diehard Bushite,

the majority are leave us alone libertarians quite willing to join in damning the powers that be.

Part of that condemnation still focuses upon the misguided politics which destroyed the true wealth of this region, the oil industry. We're not talking here of Exxon and her six sisters. We're talking "mom and pop" oil and natural gas wildcatters.

A wildcatter is a positive thinking fellow who says, "Well, back in '58 Humble Oil bypassed this field over here. I wonder if their geologists were dumb. Think I'll give it a shot."

These entrepreneurs drilled wells where others dared not tread. Nine of ten were dry holes.

But the ten percent which hit oil made these small North Texas burgs into boomtowns. Sure, millionaires were made. But all boats rose with the tide.

Everyone had a job, a good job. Even at the bottom rung the sometimes hard drinking, fist swinging roughnecks who manhandled the mighty equipment lived solid middle class lives with their families.

To put the importance of this North Texas economy on the map, note this: My father was among a small group of men who met early each Wednesday morning at a small café in Burkburnett, Texas. Over coffee and cigarettes these men set the world price of oil.

Then OPEC picked up a big stick. An artificially manipulated gasoline shortage drove America berserk. So Congress reacted ingeniously by instituting a windfall profits tax and a bevy of regulations to punish the domestic oil industry, the most visible target though not the perpetrator. Accountants were tied up with paperwork for months at a time.



Magnificent fines were levied against your next door neighbor. The big oil companies giggled for the disruption drove the domestic oil and gas independents, whose very independence and success strongly held the major oil companies in check, off the playing field and set the stage for every mess we now enjoy internationally. Follow the money.

In their graveyards drilling rigs turned rust then dust. Marginally producing wells were capped off, forgotten. Oilfield supply companies went out of business. Everyone from accountant to roughneck went begging for minimum wage jobs. The new rich millionaires filed for bankruptcy, for they were.

Oklaunion, Harrold, and Pumpkin Center continue to wither, the towns' children growing up and taking logical steps to Elsewhere. Quanah, the last home of the great Indian chief, is now but a blink of the eye at highway speeds as you pass through. Doan's Crossing which hugs the Red River and in older times was the thriving jumping off place before cattle drives entered into 'injin' territory, is but a moment on a curve on a farm road barely traveled. And then there is Electra.

Electra is 'owned' by the Waggoner family. Electra, not to mention land in counties to all points of the compass, lies within the fences of the Waggoner ranch. On the ranch is the last bastion of the independent oil industry of North Texas with thousands of tiny, sissie, toy-like pumping units sucking out petroleum drop by drop. It adds up.

You may never have heard of Electra, but you may remember the Buick Electra, named as was the town after old man Waggoner's favorite daughter.

The Waggoner stripper well operation keeps a handful of people busy day and night, but Electra's semi-success at maintaining itself as a viable town has more to do with its proximity to Wichita Falls, a small city once the tenth richest per capita place in the world which survived the downfall of the oilmen by attracting gobs of new industry lured by generous tax breaks and a non-union work force willing to do anything to put food on the table and send the kids to college.

These photographs were shot in and around Electra.



Miles and Miles of Texas.





Their choir a mainstay of my childhood nights lying awake listening, the coyotes are elsewhere. Decades without rainfall crispy fried all the succulent rodents coyote papas brought home to the dens. Stories which are to be believed tell of the odd farm dog who would be called out by a coyote pack to run the night with them beneath a full moon.



"Check Yer Awl for Ya?"



Gave Up, Locked Up, Gone Home



The Den Done Been



Texas Champs 1985...



Where the Reincarnation Squad Comes for Parts







These landscapes, photographed within three miles of each other on different years, illustrate the gamble which is agriculture in this neck of the woods. Currently the wheat fields are flooded and cannot be harvested. Note the soil's color which gives its pigment and its name to the Red River, el Rio Rojos.

The Lone Star & Some Friends

Basic



Roadtrip - Framed





## Chaffyn's Bio



Chaffyn, according to intimates, devotes twenty-three percent of his life to the study of the mystery that is fungus. When asked by The Invisible College to comment, Chaffyn began laughin=:

'I'm low down and dirty, Momma. Baby, I got low down, dirty ways.'

"I am a dangerous man. I take my music loud, my graphics lewd, my reading material nearly incomprehensible, and I truly doubt that folks take enough of their drug of so-called choice. They chip at it. They dabble. They lick around the edges. Come on folks. Git down. Eat it up. Let's see how close we can get to lethal dose for gawd sake. Let's find out what this molecule can do. Let's cream in our jeans, test out our screams. Such panty waste you are. Come on. Follow me. I'll go first, sillys. Tell you what: Lay out that maximum dose you dare take and I'll take twice as much -- just so you'll see it don't hurt, much."

In his spare time Chaffyn collects silk, Italian neckties.



# THE SERPENT AND THE LIGHT

PART I - WHEREIN I RANT A BIT AND TALK  
ABOUT ANCIENT SUTTER...



BY LYTERPHOTOS



Animalia Chordata Reptilia Squamata Serpentes  
I Invoke Thee!!! Colubridae Elapidae Viperidae  
give me your wisdom! Ophion, Ningishzida, Ne-  
chushtan, Nebhkhau, Asclepius, Muchalinda, and  
IAO.... Be with us here. Breath taker, paralyzer,  
giver of searing pain... Lightning striker, ever-  
gazer, re-birther, and healer be now manifest...  
The serpent, feared in dominant western culture  
since the overthrow of tribal wisdom, would  
appear to also have a much brighter side in his-  
tory. For many, it not only did not strike fear into  
their hearts, but it filled them with awe, wonder,  
and perhaps even a sense of pending transcen-  
dence. Though I make no arguments that in  
many cultures there was of course an honest re-  
spect for the danger of the serpent, I will say that  
the equally dominant early motif seems to be one  
of admiration, respect, and awe for the biological  
genus Serpentes. In fact, I would go so far as to  
say that, to me, it appears as if perhaps the snake,  
as much as the mushroom, Cannabis, or other  
vegetative teachers, may be responsible for  
bringing the light of gnosis to humanity. This  
series of articles will attempt to build upon  
myths starting in ancient Sumer, winding  
through the early Hebrews, Egypt, Greece, and  
Rome, and finally settling within the early Gnos-  
tic myths before being plowed under into obscu-  
rity. From there we will fast forward to current  
research and personal accounts which would  
seem to heavily support the idea that the Serpent,  
while potentially deadly, may be one of the  
greatest allies human kind has ever known.

Before getting too far into the article I must tell  
the reader that I intend on trying to use many of  
the precepts of e-prime herein. I do this to avoid  
sounding like a fool as, to be honest; I really  
don't claim to "know" anything. I've found a lot  
of odd coincidences and what I consider to be  
profound revelations, but there are of course  
missing pieces. In fact, we may never know to  
what extent our ancestors lived in a symbiotic re-  
lationship with the serpent; much less know if or  
how often venom was used for entheogenic pur-  
poses. There seems to be strong evidence how-  
ever that points toward the serpent being revered  
as a bringer of health and illumination.

From Ancient Sumeria:

"Lord, your mouth is that of a pure magician, lord  
Ninjiezida...! Ninjiczida, your mouth is that of a  
pure magician, lord Ninjiczida, ...! Ninjiczida,  
when you ..., who can find out your intentions?  
Your holy word is known to them that know it, but  
is unknown to them that do not know it. To them  
that do not know it, to them that do not know it, ...  
Ninjiczida, to them that do not know it, ... When  
your great word comes to the earth, you are indeed  
a..."

From The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Lit-  
erature

Out of the cradle of Civilization, early Sumer, arose  
the multiple legends of animal deities. Among these  
are found perhaps many precursors to our familiar  
Bible Canon, including the tale of a wise snake  
deity in a garden. Far from the feared Tiamet, Le-  
viathan, Python, or even "Nachash" (the Hebrew  
Snake on the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil)  
our deity of note, Ningishzida, seems a virtual op-  
posite to the Titanic forces of Chaos represented by  
the most well known of ancient serpents. This  
snake god, Ningishzida, compellingly had multiple  
facets that were, oddly enough, primarily benevo-  
lent and oftentimes seemed to be forerunners to  
many more well known stories found in other cul-  
tures.

First let it be known that although there is some ar-  
gument as to the "true" translation, one particular  
translation of this deities name is "Lord of the Tree  
of Truth." While this name alone can imply the  
notion of a secret knowledge contained therein,  
there are several more curious facets to this deity  
which may make one wonder at who or what this  
deity represented. To start with he was very closely  
associated with Dumuzi (a.k.a. Tammuz) who, ac-  
cording to those who look at syncretism, was the  
equivalent of a Sumerian Jesus (or Osiris/Dionysos  
to those who prefer the other dying and reborn veg-  
etation deities). In fact, not only does Ningishzida  
make appearances as the associate and companion  
of Dumuzi but on occasion even appears to be him.  
In these stories we find some which place Ningish-  
zida at the gates of the Sumerian Heaven (Anu's  
realm) as a gatekeeper and guide while other stories  
have him



as one who goes to the underworld and returns. Still other accounts place him (along with Dumuzi) as a bringer of a rejected eternal life to humanity. In addition, Ningishzida served as a deity of magic and of medicine.

In short, though he was referred to as strong and fierce on occasion, his associations always seem to reference him as a bringer of profound life changes and potentially eternal life. As for his place in Sumerian culture, far from being just a minor tribal deity he appears to have been the patron deity of King Gudea of Lagash (One of the largest and most important cities at the time). Strangely though, in modern representations of Sumerian myth he is often a side note or entirely forgotten. Perhaps, as with many things, his worship and associations were merely washed away with time and sand. However as we move forward through the stories of other Near East cultures we may want to note that not only was Ningishzida considered to be a god of Medicine but one of his representations appears to be one of the first depictions of the serpent entwined staff most often called the Caduceus. As we will soon see this symbol seems to arise several times through the serpent myths across the Mediterranean region.

Before leaving the Sumerian culture for more contemporary pastures let us consider one further, somewhat odd, story out of Sumerian literature. I present it as a form of balance, as in reality most of the Sumerian literature does present the serpent in a baleful light. The following is an excerpt from the "Epic of Gilgamesh:"

Utanapishtim spoke to Gilgamesh, saying:

"Gilgamesh, you came here exhausted and worn out. What can I give you so you can return to your land? I will disclose to you a thing that is hidden, Gilgamesh, a... I will tell you. There is a plant... like a boxthorn, whose thorns will prick your hand like a rose. If your hands reach that plant you will become a young man again."

Hearing this, Gilgamesh opened a conduit(!) (to the Apsu) and attached heavy stones to his feet. They dragged him down, to the Apsu they pulled him. He took the plant, though it pricked his hand, and cut the heavy stones from his feet, letting the waves(?) throw him onto its shores. Gilgamesh spoke to Urshanabi, the ferryman, saying:

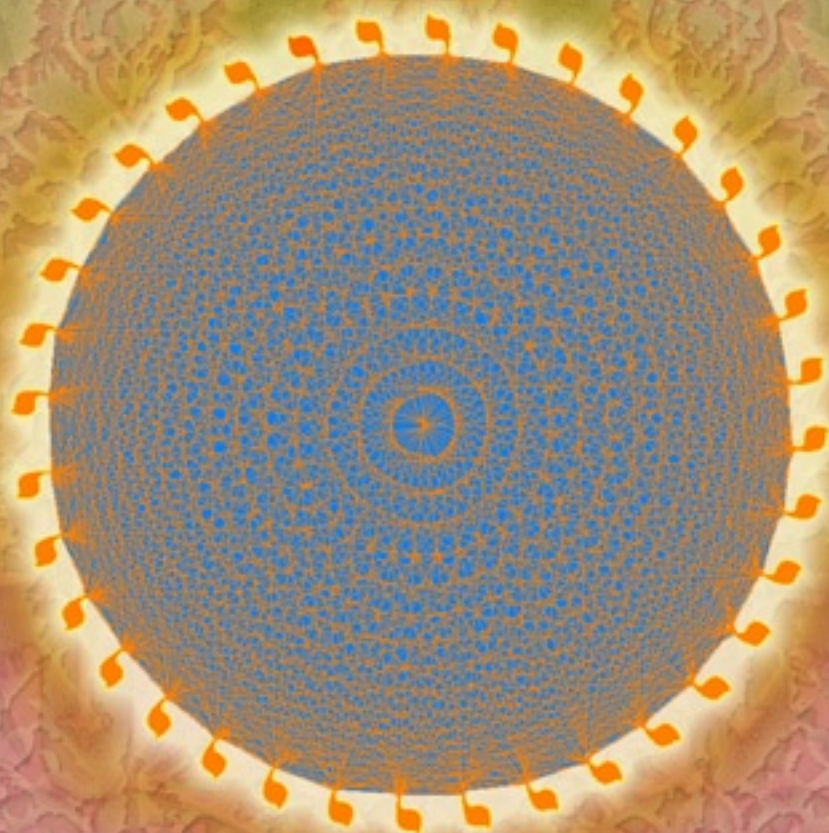
"Urshanabi, this plant is a plant against decay(!) by which a man can attain his survival(!). I will bring it to Uruk-Haven, and have an old man eat the plant to test it. The plant's name is 'The Old Man Becomes a Young Man.'" Then I will eat it and return to the condition of my youth."

At twenty leagues they broke for some food, at thirty leagues they stopped for the night. Seeing a spring and how cool its waters were, Gilgamesh went down and was bathing in the water. A snake smelled the fragrance of the plant, silently came up and carried off the plant. While going back it sloughed off its casing. At that point Gilgamesh sat down, weeping, his tears streaming over the side of his nose..."

Though on the surface the story seems simply of immortality lost combined with reference to the serpents apparent rebirthing during a shed process, could we not also recognize it as the serpent carrying within it the secret to our own youth? As we traverse the years and cultures we shall explore this idea further but for now let me leave you with this little tidbit blog link for thought: <http://tinyurl.com/36axsr>

Coming next edition : "Genesis and Isis... From the Early Hebrews to the Egyptian Gods"





LYTER PHOTOS  
IS A PSEUDONYM ROUGHLY  
TRANSLATED AS "RELEASER OF LIGHT."  
HE RESIDES IN THE NORTHWEST AND  
SPENDS HIS SPARE TIME STUDYING THE  
HERMETIC ARTS AND OBSESSING OVER  
CONSCIOUSNESS.

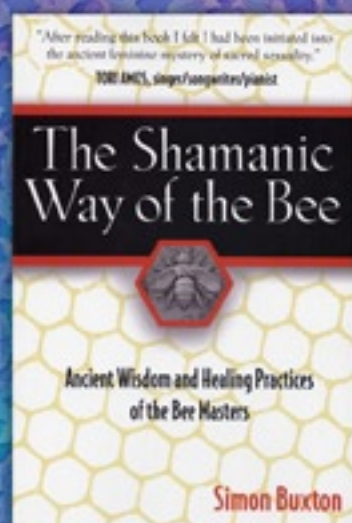




# THE SHORT REVIEW

Short, sharp to the point reviews...

We cover newly published, recently published works as well as books that we have just discovered...



The Shamanic Way of the Bee - Simon Buxton

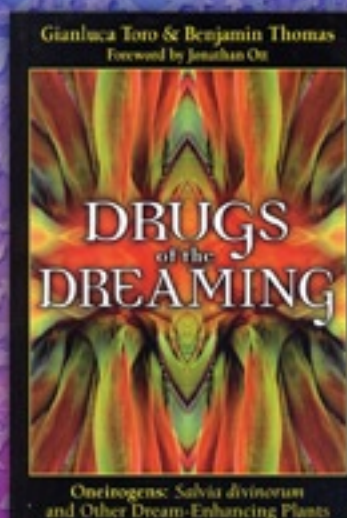
ISBN 159477119-7

Destiny Books

[www.DestinyBooks.com](http://www.DestinyBooks.com)

Whether this book is purely or partly fiction, or straight out truth, it is a fascinating, and engaging read. It tells an excellent and thought provoking tale that moves along at a good clip. Simon Buxton, is a graduate of the Harner Method, and you can see some of his training surface in his writings. His take on the Path of Pollen is quite enjoyable, and at times very moving.

Recommended



Drugs of the Dreaming - Gianluca Toro & Benjamin Thomas

Foreword by Jonathan Ott

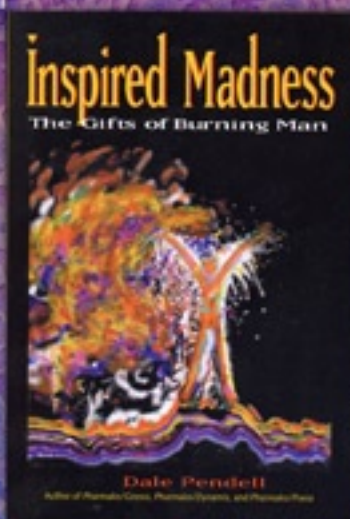
ISBN -13: 978-1-59477-174-3

Park Street Press

[www.ParkStPress.com](http://www.ParkStPress.com)

This book is subtitled: 'Oneriogens: Salvia divinorum and Other Dream-Enhancing Plants'. We had high hopes for this book from the pre-release information that we had received. It does cover much ground in a slender volume of 103 pages with some 12 pages of appendices. Sadly though it does not go into any great depth on any of the plants. Salvia divinorum warrants no more than a page and a half, though it is featured prominently in the subtitle. Good for general reading, but not if you are interested in going deeper than a cursory glance at all the various plants and additional substances covered in this volume.





### Inspired Madness

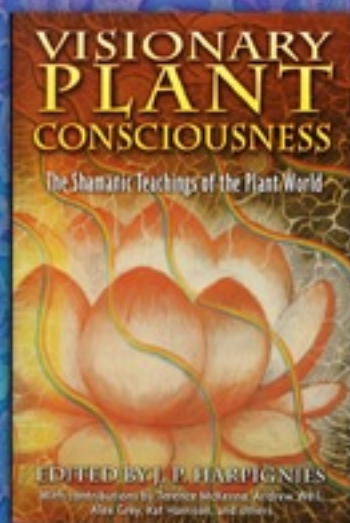
The Gifts of Burning Man - Dale Pendell

ISBN: 1-5894-172-X

Frog Ltd. - [www.northatlanticbooks.com](http://www.northatlanticbooks.com)

Inspired Madness came out in early 2007, and it has been on our reading desk pretty much since then. This is an excellent volume, whether you have been at Burning Man or not. You find yourself transported to the Playa with Dale and his companions, and I swear, you can almost taste the dust. It is nearly impossible to put down once you start it. This book has everything, from anarchism to lust in the dust, to mystic and magical moments of transformation. If you don't have it... get it - if you have it, then read it again!

Recommended.



### Visionary Plant Consciousness

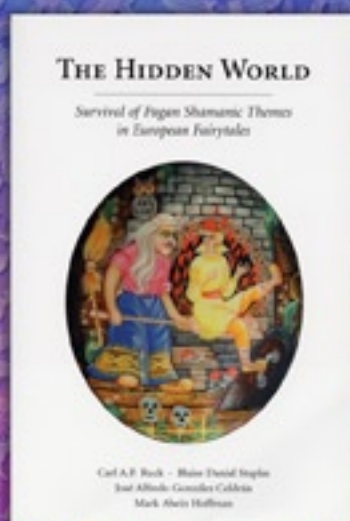
The Shamanic Teachings of the Plant World - Edited by J.P. Harpignies

ISBN-13: 978-1-59477-147-7

Park Stree Press - [www.ParkStPress.com](http://www.ParkStPress.com)

I don't think you can afford not to have this book in your library if you are interested in the world of plants, plant and human consciousness and psychonautical musings... Selected Lectures from the Bioneers Conferences over the years from Kat Harrison, Andrew Weil, Terence McKenna, Dennis McKenna, Wade Davis to name but a few. This book delivers wisdom, depth of subject and well edited selections. Jeremy Narby does the Foreward and has a couple of very interesting chapters... I believe this one may be a volume referred to in years to come when research from our time is referenced.

Recommended



### The Hidden World

Survival of Pagan Shamanic Themes in European Fairytales

Carl A.P. Ruck - Blaise Daniel Staples - Jose Alfredo Gonzalez Cel-

dran - Mark Alwin Hoffman

ISBN-10: 91-59460-144-5

Carolina Academic Press

If you like origins, and the beginnings of matters deep and hidden; this is the book for you. It is dense, packed with information, layers upon layers revealed in the ancient folk & fairy tales of Europe. From tales of lycanthropy, to witches, warlocks and hidden within plain view stories of the entheogenic ecclesiastical elites, this volume delivers beautifully. Being the last work that Blaise Daniel Staples participated in creating makes it even more of a must have volume. A 45 minute DVD is included produced by Peter Webster and narrated by Carl Ruck, nicely rounds out the gifts of this brilliant collaborative effort.

Recommended



# Mantis 1.



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## Mystery

Looked at but cannot be seen - it is beneath form;  
Listened to but cannot be heard - it is beneath sound;  
Held but cannot be touched - it is beneath feeling;  
These depthless things evade definition,  
And blend into a single mystery.

In its rising there is no light,  
In its falling there is no darkness,  
A continuous thread beyond description,  
Lining what can not occur;  
Its form formless,  
Its image nothing,  
Its name silence;  
Follow it, it has no back,  
Meet it, it has no face.

Attend the present to deal with the past;  
Thus you grasp the continuity of the Way,  
Which is its essence.

(Tao De Ching - Lao Tze)



the invisible college



yogini

A. ANDREW GONZALEZ

[PREDICATED ON THE FIRST CAVE PAINTINGS]

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