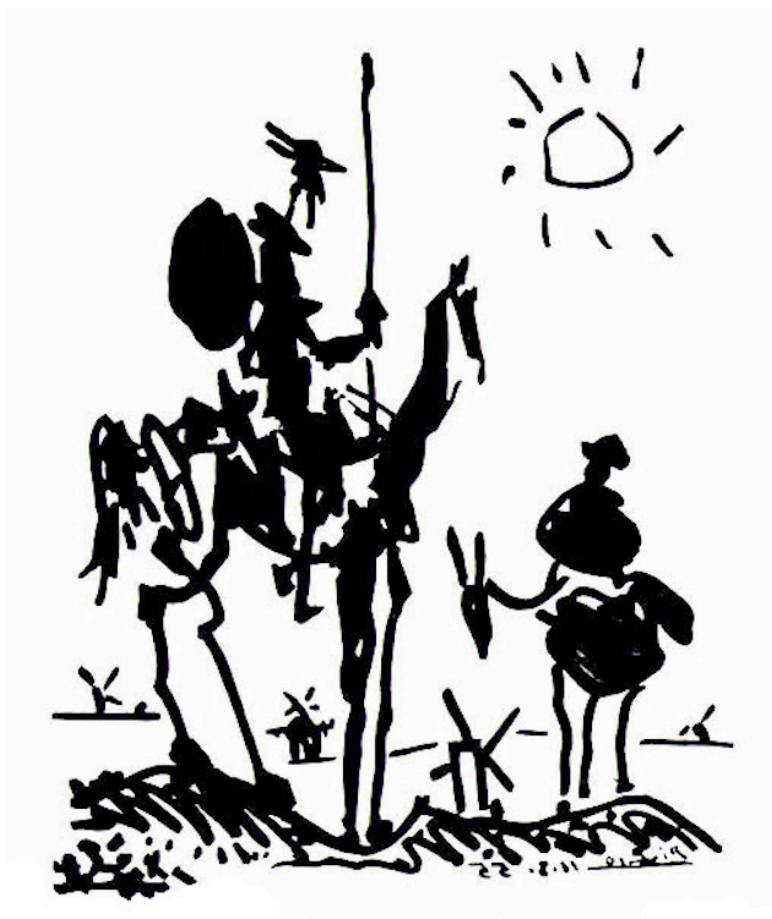


The Stillness Before Time

Reflections from a Fellow Sojourner



MICHAEL J. HOLSHOUSER

The Stillness Before Time
Reflections from a Fellow Sojourner

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*All have the express written encouragement
To distribute this creation freely to any and all
Who have the eyes to see and the ears to hear
The mystery in which each and every one
Equally participates in so many ways.*

What is written here
Has been spoken, written, and lived
By many in many times and places in human history.
Ever disguised by innumerable masks, costumes, concepts, and technologies,
Its mysterious nature has timelessly confused and frightened
Those unable to discern beneath the surface.

This aphoristic vision is simply another attempt,
Using contemporary masks, costumes, concepts, and technologies,
To illustrate in thought something as old as old is,
That which has ever yet never been.

It is for those who desire nothing from this manifest dream
But that it be a journey into freedom.

Best wishes.

**There is really only one Way.
It is without division or boundary.
It is without name or theology.
Awareness is its scripture,
Here now its venue,
You its witness,
Your life the journey.**

**You are perfect.
Pure gold.
Brighter than the sun.**

– Dean Evans –

I

Before all experience,
Before all thought of identity,
Before all mirrors and photographs,
Before all vanity, gratification, and delusion,
Before all vexation of desire and fear,
Before all suffering of existence,
Who-what-when-where-why,
How are you, really?

* * * *

Move prior to concept, prior to known.
Return to the untainted awareness of the child,
The uncarved freedom of the empty tablet,
Prior to all said, all done, all imagined.

* * * *

You are the source,
The quantum ocean,
The absolute supreme,
The eternal unicity of isness.

* * * *

Discovering your true birthright
Requires the persistence
Of an aloof scientist,
Gradually scraping away
At the layers of conditioning
Until at some point there is nothing left,
And what you truly are, and are not, is quite apparent.

* * * *

There is really no death,
Only the departure of the senses
And the dissolution of imagined identity.

* * * *

When in every moment
You see without a trace of doubt
That there is no master other than you,
That those many pedestaled images of great souls
Were projections of the inherent longing
To awaken to the birthright
That is prior to consciousness,
You will be free of artificial limits,
You will have triumphed over illusion,
You will have discovered the indelible truth:
That you are, indeed, sovereign, indivisibly absolute.

II

Everything that appears real,
Everything that you have been told,
Everything that you have come to believe,
Is all the fabrication of your mind.

* * * *

There is no path.
There is no dogma.
There is only the absolute,
And a universe of appearances
Disguising the way home.

* * * *

There has ever been now, is ever now, will ever be now.
Never has there been any time other than right here now.

* * * *

When you are satiated of identity,
Weary of meaningless experiences,
When you would even die to be free,
You will do whatever needs to be done
To spin no more on the web of suffering.

* * * *

When struggle and resistance end,
When surrender to what is, is complete,
You will be the awareness that is home to all.

* * * *

Love can only be total, unconditional.
Other uses of the word are of self-absorption:
Incomplete, limited, conditional, manipulative, painful.

* * * *

It is natural to want to know who you are,
But the thoughts of self, the attachment to persona,
The encasements of identity: labels, definitions, assumptions,
Are not the instruments that will truly get you home.
All concoctions, all speculations of mind,
Are only obstacles to the journey.

* * * *

Call it by whatever sound you will:
God, Allah, Brahman, Tao, Buddha, Krishna,
Christ, Great Spirit, Way, Absolute, Supreme, Totality,
Or any of the many other labels it is given throughout the world,
It is ever the same indivisible mystery cloaked by the illusion of diversity.

III

The manifest dance is timeless, ever-present, undying.
A dreamtime without beginning, without end;
Without cause, purpose, or meaning;
Neither definable or explicable,
For it is beyond all rational appearances.
It can never be known, comprehended, or understood,
Except in the most roundabout, circumspect, oblique, effortless ways.
And in that which is intuited there is no gain or reward.
One simply wanders spontaneously free,
Whatever the course.

* * * *

Taste the tasteless,
Hear the soundless,
Touch the untouchable,
Smell that which has no scent,
And you will see the unseen.

* * * *

All identity is make-believe, a collusion of human scale.

* * * *

Manifestation is simply mask after mask
Disguising an artful, mischievous trickster,
Playing an eternal game of hide-and-seek.

* * * *

The many teachers of suffering:
Illness, injury, aging, dying, and death,
Would you, could you, awaken without them?

* * * *

You who seek are already that which is sought.
You are the unequivocal source, the mystery, pure and simple.
Discerning it clearly in the everyday, without a trace of doubt, is the challenge.

* * * *

There can be no serenity, no contentment, in the restlessness of desire,
The dread of fear, the isolation of anger, or the arrogance of pride.

* * * *

Occasionally, attentively reflect within ... "I am."
That unadorned thought is the first and foremost assumption.
Contemplate it closely, thoroughly, add nothing to it.
See its subtle movement to the source within.
Those persistent and discerning enough
Will dissolve into the inexplicable.

IV

This fleeting mystery is a whimsical kaleidoscope.
An eternal, immortal weaving; without beginning, without end.
A boundless, indivisible ocean of light and shadow in which all forms dance.
All one can observe of the mystery are the countless manifestations;
Never the dispassionate, unwavering witness beneath.

* * * *

All mythos, all sense of time, all sense of history,
Is nothing more than the make-believe of adults.

* * * *

What you call real
Is merely a reflection;
A temporal, dreamy illusion;
An enticing, ever-changing lightshow.
Your true nature is none of it.

* * * *

So many words you cleave your Self into.

* * * *

The infinite source of manifestation
Is tasteless and untouchable;
Without vision or sound or smell.
What one perceives is but the mind's reverie.
The vague, obtuse, ephemeral quality of awareness called intuition,
Is as near to understanding as any one can ever come.

* * * *

Be serene, content, alert, cheerfully at ease.
It is your original state, your birthright.
It requires no choice, effort, or contention.
No outward manifestation or proof is required.
It is a natural state of awareness, of simple beingness.
An effortless wander in the unconditional, timeless aloneness.

* * * *

To maintain any one path most true,
To insist on duality in any way, any shape, any form,
Is to completely misconstrue the relativity of this manifest dreamtime.

* * * *

Worship martyrs, crosses, statues, crystals, photographs,
Nature, wealth, words, ideas, or whatever your own will manufactures,
Or simply attend nothing but your own momentary awareness.
But for the sorrow of continuity in all but the latter,
All dreams pass in the same manner.

V

Put aside all hope, all gain and loss, all dreams of glory,
All yearning, hate, anger, fear, envy, and jealousy,
All dread of sickness, injury, aging, and dying.
Your mind-body is but a temporal dream,
You are eternal, sovereign, absolute.

* * * *

There appear to be many paths
In the return to isness.
All are equal in the quest home,
Because, like Dorothy's adventure in Oz,
No one ever really left Kansas.

* * * *

Understand the subtlety between
Claiming you are god,
And knowing you are godness.
One cannot be, and the other never was not.

* * * *

You are a window to the eternal,
But must part the tattered curtains
And wipe away the smudge to see it.

* * * *

There are the ignorant who think they know,
And the ignorant who know they do not.

* * * *

Whether you were born by chance
Or chose your parents through karmic design,
Whether you exist just once, or well past a gazillion times,
With a succession of identities playing out through the abyss of eternity,
From the indivisible perspective, it is all very much the same.

* * * *

Explore love as much as you might with all your beingness,
It is the awareness within all that is its unfathomable cradle.

* * * *

You may sit quietly and breathe with your eyes wide open or tightly shut;
Chant spiritual songs or hum mantras until your mind is three shades of blue;
Practice every sort of rigid, dogmatic, death-defying diet or prescribed exercise;
Submit to ancient beliefs, rituals, and traditions; wear costumes and deify symbols;
Practice any discipline, worship any form your mind or another's might conjure;
Real meditation is the serene awareness of every moment's birth and death,
And no system is required to discern and freely perceive your birthright.

VI

You are the ground,
The splintered I Amness of isness,
Creator and witness to an inexplicable theater,
A dreamer dreaming the kaleidoscoping quantum show real,
The timeless nature masked by endless variations of laughter and sorrow.
Why? No one can know. That you are is surely enough.

* * * *

Nothing wrought of this quantum genesis is ultimately real.
Everything is imagined, everything is dreamily timeless.
All indivisibly appearing, all indivisibly disappearing,
Within and without the eternal matrix of awareness.

* * * *

Surrender your identity:
Your concepts and cravings,
Your fears, irritations, and doubts,
Your knowledge, opinions, and routines,
Your ambitions to achieve one glory or another.
Surrender everything you believe you are,
That you have never really been.

* * * *

There is no Eastern or Western thought,
Only an awareness manifesting consciousness,
Blanketed by an innumerable array of mythologies.

* * * *

If you smugly believe yourself more spiritually significant
Than a cockroach, grain of sand, or pile of dung,
Then you are missing the real point.
There is profound wonder in realizing you are one
With worms, snails, lice, flies, toads, salamanders, and snakes.

* * * *

Are you able to scrutinize your existence
Without any attachment, any craving, any trepidation?
Dispassionately, objectively, reserving all pride-filled judgments;
Discerning forthrightly, clearly, without ulterior motive;
Observing closely the many joys and sorrows;
The likes and dislikes, the loves and hates;
The thoughts, beliefs, opinions, conclusions;
The endless flow of people, places, things, ideas;
The seemingly boundless array of passing experiences;
And come to the realization that it was really all your creation;
An inexplicable, intangible, ungraspable, timelessly indivisible journey;
Imagined by a dreamer whose ultimately choiceless nature is prior to all imagination.

VII

How will you be psychologically free?
There is no method.
It happens when you will abide
No further infringement from any portion of the illusion,
When you are at last sovereign enough to journey alone, whatever the course.

* * * *

No word touches it, no language explains it, no mythos contains it.
You are it, you have always been it, you will ever be it.
Polish that mirror until all you see is you.

* * * *

Too big to see how small it is,
Too small to see how big it is,
You are, nonetheless, all of it.

* * * *

There is really no religion, no Way,
Just keen observing of a passing mystery
Beyond comprehension or conclusion.

* * * *

The senses tease and taunt you.
They are lies of the delusional mind.
You must ascertain the witness within,
Discriminate the freedom that they cannot,
And know with every particle of your beingness,
That only in the timelessness of awareness are you real.

* * * *

To discover your true Self, you must explore your self.
To see the many others, yet see no other, that is the razor's edge,
Upon which all seers timelessly traverse this reverie both real and unreal.

* * * *

To identify with thoughts is akin to the ocean believing it is the sound of waves crashing.

* * * *

Symbols, mantras, postures, diets, attire, practices of any sort,
Are nothing more than tantalizing, captivating distractions,
Until you sharpen your attentiveness and discernment,
And fully grasp it can only be puzzled out very much alone.

* * * *

Any given mythos is essentially an unspoken agreement, a set of rules,
With language, rituals, and symbols to impose its continuity in the unborn.
When you see the collusion of tradition for what it really is, all become relative.

VIII

Polish mirrors that never reflected,
Clean stains never spilled,
Mend tears never torn,
Perfect that never flawed,
Illuminate shadows never cast,
Give purpose that requiring none.
You are ever unfathomable and unknown,
A timelessly whimsical enigma dancing in stillness.

* * * *

Your vain existence is as secure as that
Of a clay figurine created by a child playing,
And then delightfully shattered with a laugh of glee.

* * * *

There will never be political, economic,
Or social resolution to the human condition.
Consciousness itself must make the paradigm shift.

* * * *

You will never be free
Until you can say no to your parents,
Your ancestors, your mythos, and finally, yourself.

* * * *

Take a lump of clay, divide it in two,
Sculpt them into any forms that come to mind,
Call one evil, the other good; one black, the other white;
Or any other fabrications of the dualistic mind;
Both ever remain the same clayness.

* * * *

Study anything and everything,
But neither follow nor imitate anyone.
What is the point of listening to any teachers
If you do not intend to someday grasp the teaching?

* * * *

It is consciousness that suffers, not you.
The awareness is without laws or principles or ideals.
What consciousness believes are but choices founded in delusion.

* * * *

Geographic isolation has spawned a broad diversity of mythoi,
Each grappling to protect ancient beliefs, customs, and histories.
Humanity's clinging to what was, is becoming less and less viable
As the stew of a shrinking world continues to simmer in dreamtime.

IX

What is enlightenment but simply awakening
To the innate awareness, to the timeless birthright.
Liberation is abiding freely in that discerning ignorance.

* * * *

Identity is like cotton candy bought at a carnival,
A lot of puff concocted from practically nothing.

* * * *

When you awaken after sleeping,
There is a moment when the awareness
Resumes remembering the patterning it plays.
You could be anywhere, anything, anybody,
And what form and identity do you choose
But that which you are least able to resist.

* * * *

Though no one really knows anything, more than a few spout what the masses follow.

* * * *

Desire for gratification of the senses and thought,
Despite its ceaseless tangle of suffering,
Is what binds you in time.

* * * *

Duality is the outcome of ignorance,
And ignorance of the false nature of opposites,
Is the vain prison that identification ceaselessly fortifies.

* * * *

Why cater to something an individual or group
Said or did tens or hundreds or thousands of years ago?
History, whether personal, tribal, national, or world,
Is perhaps the greatest misery of consciousness.

* * * *

When you discover what you truly are, what you truly are not,
What is left but an inexplicable sense of awareness, unchained.

* * * *

You are the nexus through which the mystery manifests a personal view of time and space.

* * * *

Groups of any spiritual persuasion are social crock-pots
For those agreeing to collude to the dogma of one mythos or another.
To regard any as exclusive bastions of wisdom and harmony
Has repeatedly proven to be hollow self-deception.

X

Since the dawn of consciousness, mind has grappled
With the mystery of birth and death, creation and destruction.
It has used every device to explain that which can never be explained.
Only in complete surrender to the awareness prior to thought's linear conception,
Can there be any insight into the choicelessness of the indivisibility.

* * * *

Unconditioned, immutable, changeless, untamed, amoral, lawless,
Unburdened, nameless, imperishable, timeless, formless,
Eternal, sovereign, total, absolute, supreme.
Apt descriptions of those rare few
Who discern and reside in the immortal origin.

* * * *

There are teachers at every turn.
Be watchful, they take every form.

* * * *

In the struggle with the indivisible nature, you must lose to win.

* * * *

The frailties of all life forms are within you.
Your empathy and compassion are warranted.

* * * *

No one can tell you what truth really is.
You must discern and explore it your Self.
You must also grasp that it is very much akin
To fine dry sand in loose fingers on a windy day.

* * * *

The eternal quest for understanding,
For emancipation from that which is known,
Is a convoluted, subtle, puzzling, chess-like maze,
A timeless game of strategic and tactical finesse,
Which only the most earnest discern and mate.

* * * *

Words, concepts, similes, metaphors, analogies, parables,
Are teaching tools, study guides, not ends in themselves.

* * * *

Everyone has a mindset, a filtering process that interprets
The reality appearing to appear about them.
The challenge is discerning the relativity of all experience;
That everything is temporal, ephemeral illusion, nothing more or less real;
That, from beginning to end, each and every moment is but the fleeting dreamtime of awareness.

XI

Mythoi across this shrinking planet
Migrate in every possible direction without respite.
The geographic isolation that created this remarkable manifest diversity
Is less important than discerning the thread of indivisibility
With which all creation is woven together.

* * * *

If ... you only had better health;
A stronger, younger, more vibrant body;
A highly capable, nimble mind;
Wealth, power, status;
Lived in a different place or time ...
If ...
Would make no difference.
All destinies are only variations
Of the same unfolding dream.

* * * *

Before light and dark,
Right and wrong,
Birth and death,
Yes and no,
Good and evil,
Have and have not,
Compassion and cruelty,
Knowledge and ignorance,
Order and confusion,
Sage and fool,
Before duality in any form,
You are.

* * * *

Your real parent is a now long before time.
All creation is immaculately conceived.

* * * *

If there is any attachment,
Any desire to be bound,
One cannot discover the ultimate.
Even the yearning for liberation must die away.
You simply become what you are, what you have all along been.

* * * *

Claims of religious persecution are absurd, fictional paths to glory.
Countless peoples of every persuasion have suffered throughout history.
Many, perhaps most, have claimed themselves chosen by the divine.
The arrogance of collusion has always been an enticing delusion.

XII

Thought is a reflection of an illusory past
And the projector of imagined futures.
Awareness is the tentative, ungraspable now.
It is boundless, eternal, neither identity nor persona.
It is the mysterious origin, the vapor of insight and intuition.
From its unknowable nature thought springs into being,
But without it, none of this would ever have been.
It is the parent of manifest consciousness,
The source prior to all perception.

* * * *

Dread of times to come,
Of the unknown yet to manifest,
Overwhelms those who have not realized
That it is their own imagination that cripples them.

* * * *

The meek will inherit the earth
Because it requires great courage
To discern and surrender to heaven.

* * * *

The sovereign witness you truly are
Is neither the body nor the mind.
It is untouched by action or result.
It is unburdened by pain or pleasure.
It is unconcerned with right and wrong.
No matter the circumstances in which it abides,
It timelessly remains undefined, unfettered, unattached.

* * * *

The sciences have in every manner
Scrutinized the unitary movement of this illusion.
They have stretched the conceptual mind in innumerable ways,
Yet none will ever succeed in determining its origin.
All they can ever do is dance with Maya
On the floor of manifestation.

* * * *

You are the gold, not the jewelry into which it is made.

* * * *

At some point, books and their many concepts must be set aside.
Scholars journey the dead-end path of dualistic intellect.
Reclaiming your birthright is direct perception,
Not the cataloging of manuscripts.
The truth you seek will not be found in them.

XIII

The divisive world we have created
Is an outcome of separation from the totality.
Dualistic solutions to all the ignorance, all the confusion,
Posture upon the same conflict-ridden paradigm, and resolve nothing.

* * * *

A gourmet craves taste, a musician sound,
A perfumer scent, a masseuse touch,
A painter color, a scholar thought.
How enticing the play of senses and mind,
That to become a connoisseur in one field or another,
So many dedicate their brief mortal existence in endless pursuit.

* * * *

Virtual reality is not just a computer fantasy.
The senses have created the cosmos with such precision, such exactness,
That you have yet to truly fathom, to indelibly discern,
That none of it is ultimately real.
It is software born of quantum programming.

* * * *

When one surrenders to insight, eternity emerges:
Infinite, timeless, pathless, unencumbered, serene.

* * * *

All paths to glory attain the same grave.

* * * *

Science dissects and names with great finesse,
But of what use is a universe torn to pieces?

* * * *

All life in the unfolding present
Has survived since the immaculate genesis.
The unyielding capacity for domination of this manifest realm
Will be humankind's inevitable unraveling
If it does not instead collectively
Attain a unified sense of guardianship.

* * * *

We are all spontaneously making up the rules as we go.
Playing so everyone wins is not a game easily learned.

* * * *

Right living is not a statement of morality.
It is a moment-to-moment feeling of intuitive rightness.
It is playing out this illusive dreamy theater as effortlessly as possible.

XIV

To know you are one with totality
Seems so simple, so freeing, so real,
Yet so many cling to this belief or that,
As if their clutching complexity and strife
Is so much more important than simply being.

* * * *

To own your birthright, you become less and less
Entwined in the distracting narrowness of self-absorption.
You intuitively fathom expansiveness in every moment possible.
It is the end of paradigms emerging from any mythos.
It is the ever-unfolding realization of unicity.

* * * *

There is nothing to become, nothing to prove.
There is no description precise enough
To express what you truly are.

* * * *

You do not exist in the way you think.

* * * *

The colluding dreamtime of humanity
Conditions each of us to pretend something
No other manifest life form requires of its kind.
It is very arduous to be free of all claims.

* * * *

Essential nature is not divisible.
There is only totality, oneness, isness.
Nothing greater, nothing lesser, nothing but.
We are all in reality an indivisible, indelible enigma,
Quantumly dancing center stage in every form imaginable.

* * * *

All the observations and experiments of the sciences
Explore, measure, and explain only illusion.
The ultimate teaching offered by the rational mind
Is insight into the confines of dualistic sensory perception.
Scientists must at some point bridge the chasm as irrational mystics
If they truly seek to comprehend this theater for what it in reality is, and is not.

* * * *

Endless debate over which religion, which dogma, speaks for god, for truth,
Is sophomoric and only obscures the possibility of genuine awakening.
It is the time-bound distraction of priests and scholars and undiscerning followers,
Who have little interest in anything more than the false security of one collusion or another.

XV

The ancients passed on their wisdom
Through parables and analogies.
A neat trick, but one the literal-minded
Have historically taken to one extreme after another.
All the philosophical inventions contrived since the beginning of time
Have never for a moment encapsulated the ultimate nature.

* * * *

Imagine a nearly imperceptible bubble of foam
Riding the flowing crest of a small wave
On just one of an infinity of shores
Of an ocean beyond measure.
That all but insignificant fragment of illusory reflection
Is analogous to the entire human reverie
Across this spinning orb.

* * * *

Words can only feebly point out the one and only way.
The discernment of their meaning is prior to all concept.

* * * *

The tenuous belief that science will be the cure-all
For humanity's plight is self-deception on a grand scale.
Any conceptual tool is only as beneficial as those who wield it.

* * * *

More than enough, probably far too much,
Has been said of the spiritual quest through the ages.
The delusional, divisive conceit surrounding and permeating it,
The dogmas, temples, money-changers, and Pharisees,
Are burdens that each must over time shrug off
To discern and wander freely in Eden.

* * * *

The irony of spending so much of your existence
Trying to solve the questions:
Who, what, where, when, why, and how,
Is finally realizing they have no answer words can grasp.

* * * *

No other creature on this planet
Has taken naming to the extreme we have.
They do not separate themselves from their experiencing.
They have never believed themselves or others to be what words imply.
They do not slaughter or maim one another for the myriad reasons we endlessly concoct.
They endure passively, helplessly, for us to realize some insight, some rationality,
And perhaps one day return to the garden in which they have ever resided.

XVI

Stars, planets, and moons traveling from horizon to horizon,
Cycling springs, summers, autumns, and winters,
Clocks you watch, watches you wear,
Calendars whose pages turn and turn again,
Are tricksters in this three-dimensional, illusory weaving.
Time has never truly passed as you have been conditioned to believe.

* * * *

Suffering is the outcome of attachment to the fictitious mind-body identity.
All endeavors to ease the sorrow of consciousness are ineffectual
Without the realization of your true indestructibility.

* * * *

Some answers are too large for any questions.

* * * *

Clothing, jewelry, make-up, and hair
Cloak the stark reality of the human body,
The various orifices of its physical functioning.
What is beautiful, romantic, and essential to the deluded
Takes on another appearance when the veil
Of genetic gratification unravels.

* * * *

The tombs in which you cloak your vanity cannot lock out the dust of eternity.

* * * *

Being born into illusion
Does not mean you must reside there.
You have never been bound by the original separation
But through your conditioned collaboration.

* * * *

Humanity must accept total responsibility
For its impact on this garden world.
Do not put the burden on god.
There will be no messiah,
Nor hordes of angels to save us.
Each alone must make the paradigm shift.

* * * *

You spend your life believing the part you play,
But contrary to what the senses fool you into knowing,
All your thoughts, concepts, theories, images, hopes, and dreams,
All the kaleidoscoping reflections of those many mirrors passing before you,
All the vain paths to glory you or anyone else have ever concocted,
Have no ultimate reality or lasting importance whatsoever.

XVII

There is really only one Way.
It is without division or boundary.
It is without name or theology.
Awareness is its scripture,
Here now its venue,
You its witness,
Your life the journey.

* * * *

Sculpt a vast number of clay figurines,
All different shapes, sizes, and colors,
Give them every sort of name and belief,
They are ever of the original lump of clayness.

* * * *

Serenity is the outcome of integration, not an ideal.
Ideals are merely abstractions of unresolved duality
Ceaselessly playing hide-and-seek with themselves.

* * * *

Neither hard nor soft, sharp nor dull,
Wise nor foolish, humble nor vain,
Sweet nor bitter, long nor short,
Strong nor weak, large nor small,
Good nor bad, intelligent nor stupid,
Truth nor lie, far nor close,
Stirring nor still, love nor hate,
Light nor dark, perfect nor imperfect,
Nor duality ad infinitum,
You are.

* * * *

Supreme being, or supreme beingness?

* * * *

Your dream is an outcome
Of the mirrors streaming alongside you.
Transcending all manifest reflections is the challenge.

* * * *

Psychologists, with their countless labels and gimmicks,
Have yet to discern what the mind really is, and is not.

* * * *

Any existence is like a sailboat journeying to and fro upon the surface,
Creating ripple after ripple ever merging with other ripples,
All coming and going, while the ocean remains.

XVIII

To invoke a name of god
In any conflict is unutterable vanity.
There has never truly been a spiritual conflict,
Only the countless petty squabbles
Of self-serving dogmas.

* * * *

As large or small as you may take it, what you must really discern is your own eye.

* * * *

Do not allow suffering deprive you
Of a golden heart, joyful eyes,
A genuine smile, dancing feet,
Real friends, and a child's laughter.

* * * *

You suffer the linear continuity of time and space
Because your view of awareness is locked
Into a constricted conscious identity
That is not, has never been,
Will never be, real.

* * * *

True science would not disregard common sense.

* * * *

Whatever path you may be inclined to wander,
Whether good works, devotion, intellect, or meditation,
In any combination, weighted in any manner,
All meander the same vast mystery.

* * * *

There appears to be a path, but in reality there has never been a footprint to make one.

* * * *

Philosophy not culminating in the serenity of timeless indivisibility,
Is merely desolate wordplay pandering to the desire for continuity.

* * * *

Without the eyes, you would not observe.
The ears gone, you would not hear.
The nose, you would not smell.
The touch, you would not feel.
The tongue, you would not taste.
The mind, you would not discern.
Remove them all, and you would be,
What in awareness, you have been all along.

XIX

The countless sanctuaries and monuments humanity has built
Pointlessly clutch at that which can never be possessed.
All temples, all forms, are as dust to the eternal.
Mankind's organizing the spiritual quest
Arises from the mind's ceaselessly futile attempts
To fabricate an order upon that which can never be tamed.

* * * *

Do more, be more, get more.
More, more, more, more, more.
Will you ever have enough?
Will you ever be content
With what you have
Or what you are?

* * * *

You are free to do whatever you will,
Live whatever dream you are inclined to entertain,
Play out the endless fantasies your restless narcissism creates,
Until its shallow nature sustains you no longer.

* * * *

Continuity is illusion, a subtle trick of memory, of imagination.
The indivisible waves of reality timelessly break ever anew.

* * * *

No matter how many words you use, it is not they that bind all this together.

* * * *

Who would not like to meet and hear what was actually said by the many seers
Before the propaganda mills of time usurped them to their own ends?
Histories have always been written and edited and rewritten
By those who won, survived, or passed by later.

* * * *

Do you not grow weary of tyrannical forces?
The tyranny of politicians, priests, and educators,
Of the bureaucrats and self-interests in every realm,
Of the endless disparity between the haves and have-nots,
Of this concept or that, of the corruption, however it may flow?
Seek out your real community, your tribe, your brothers and sisters.
Your family is out there: intelligent, simple, honest, virtuous, just like you.

* * * *

Just as you have looked down at an arm and hand, or a leg and foot,
So has every other human who has ever been, or will ever be.
Your uniqueness is pervaded by an eternal commonality.

XX

The differences inherent in cultures
Across this garden world are to be transcended.
Emphasizing ancient traditions is increasingly dysfunctional,
And only inhibits the potential for the unmanifest
To blossom into manifest sovereignty.

* * * *

The introspective mind must often face
Countless painful obstacles of its own creation,
Until the clarity of the sharpened blade of discrimination
No longer cuts with such uncoordinated ferocity
That which never existed in the first place.

* * * *

Neither birth nor death can touch what is real.

* * * *

This world is a birthing ground of consciousness,
Away from which the only earnest heading is awareness.
When your vision tacks this direction there may or may not be
Acceptance from the relatives and friends you value.
Unresolvable differences may be unavoidable,
But whatever course ultimately unfolds,
Your revelation must carry the day.
Neither seek nor expect the sanction of those
Lacking the insight to comprehend your journey home.

* * * *

When communities are no longer functional,
New adaptations form to iron the disarrayed fabric.
Human civilization is navigating through a teetering zenith.
A cooperative paradigm, one crossing all boundaries,
Awaits shaping into common consciousness,
The potential toward which all humanity
May or may not choose to journey.
The epic is already complete,
And though none present
Will ever see its end,
Your presence contributes
To the future this time is shaping.

* * * *

We paint ourselves into corners with our habits and traditions.
Nothing need stay the same, nothing can stay the same,
But the rigidity of the linear mind is ever an obstacle.
Endless attempts to achieve security make us even more insecure
In ways threatening our kind and every other life form on this whirling sphere.

XXI

What so many believe religion to be,
Is acted out as self-serving, improbable propaganda.
It is a secondhand act of memory, of recollection and regurgitation.
Real revelation comes spontaneously from union within.

* * * *

To believe godness is only that which is out of the ordinary,
Is an error humankind succumbs to again and again.
All manifest forms persevere in the same field.
A particle of dust is as much an unfathomable mystery
As the most astounding, most wondrous miracle ever performed.
There is absolutely nothing ordinary about anything in this quantum matrix.

* * * *

Many operate thinking that something outside themselves
Will foster everlasting happiness and contentment.
Only because they are not paying attention
To that from which all things flow.

* * * *

We are rapidly approaching the inevitable reckoning point
In the dynamic movement of human consciousness,
When we as a tentative life form have no choice
But to reconcile the countless differences
And see the unmanifest universality,
The absolute unicity of awareness.
Our many differences are imagined,
But the results of this continued delusion
Are inescapably devastating to all life on this sphere.
To maintain this paradigm as it has evolved is indescribable madness.

* * * *

You have the advantage of history
To thoroughly witness the enduring confusion
Wrought by the delusional rigidity of organized religions.
When will you wrest your sovereignty from those who would tame it?

* * * *

What unutterable vanity to believe that this timeless quantum mystery
Needs to be, much less can be, systematized into any so-called religion.

* * * *

Your craving, your dread, your suffering,
Your delusional hope that some other can or will save you
Has been wielded against you since the seeds of consciousness took root.
It is time to clearly discern that you know as much as anyone,
That it is you alone who must choose to be free.

XXII

Jesus is rumored to have declared, "I Am The Way."
Was he imparting, as many believe, that he alone was "The Way"?
Or was he perhaps suggesting that we are all "The Way"?
Perhaps he intended, "I Am ... is ... The Way."
Or simply a definitive, "I Am, The Way."
Or perhaps, if paradox was at play,
As is often the case with seers,
Any and all of the above.

* * * *

One man's law too easily becomes another's dogma.

* * * *

You are a part of the whole, not a part distinct from the whole.

* * * *

Do not equate any groupthink,
No matter how convincingly obstinate and persuasive,
With truth.

* * * *

Nowness, all but done just as soon as it fleetingly happens,
Requires memory to pattern out what it believes occurred.

* * * *

To state simply, "I am the Way."
Means you no longer identify with the theater
Or the partial role your body once fooled you into believing.

* * * *

When languages are made an end in themselves,
We forget their original purpose was communication.
No word, no concept, has ever, or will ever, capture reality.

* * * *

That which is prior to all cannot be bound by any limitation.

* * * *

Disentangle your consciousness
From all the compromises organized religions
Have made with ignorance, superstition, and myriad other delusions,
Born of the illusory craving to know fostered by the sensory dream of the mind-body in time.

* * * *

In any theater production, there are many parts, many characters.
The road to tranquility is spending less time envying roles others play,
And at some point choosing contentment with the hand you have been dealt.

XXIII

The immutable requires neither approval nor sanction.
The manifest resolve of the skittish herd is the synergy of delusion.
Reality ever stands alone, aloof, free, without concern.
There is no other between you and the source.

* * * *

Do not make the mistake of fashioning
Prophets, mystics, saints, seers, and sages into idols.
They may well have been awakened mortals, models of realization,
But they all began with the same primal awareness,
The same timeless potential as you.

* * * *

Those lost to materialism seem to think
That through endlessly gorging their senses
With sights, tastes, smells, sounds, and sensations,
That they are somehow living more fully.

* * * *

Avoid moral dilemmas and quagmires.
Good and evil are the stillborn of duality.

* * * *

Humanity as a whole has not yet fully comprehended
That its continued existence in manifest time
Is entirely based on its many choices.
The clayness of the essential nature is not concerned
What forms it manifests, what dramas it plays, or for how long it lasts.

* * * *

The mind's endless quest for some formula
Or capsulated conclusion is doomed to failure.
The river captured by a snapshot is not the river.
The pacifier is no replacement for a mother's breast.
Concepts, equations, or symbols can never touch reality.

* * * *

The stillpoint of awareness you are is the keystone to reality.
It is the point from which all manifestation is created,
And the point of oblivion to which all returns.

* * * *

As consciousness grounds in awareness,
As you clearly perceive illusion is not reality,
As you discern duality is the source of all suffering,
As the birthright of beingness resumes its rightful function,
There is nothing left to do but whatever needs doing.

XXIV

Since the origin of manifest consciousness, humans
Have been raised and patterned in accordance
With the varied responses to geography.
They have played, fought, and mated,
Sought power, fame, and fortune,
Worshipped innumerable idols,
Lived desperately, nobly, and vainly,
Suffered sickness, injury, aging, and death.
To what end the speculations are beyond number,
But ever the source has been the same quantum essence,
Inexplicable, unknowable, sovereign, timeless, indivisible, omniscient.

* * * *

The way you perceive existence is the way
The winds of time have molded you to perceive it.
It is all subjective projection based on countless circumstances
Which have conditioned the manifest spirit-mind-body identity in time.
Whatever your attitude, whatever your belief on the matter,
No projection is really more true than any other.

* * * *

The fleeting window of this modern time and space
Has offered every excess, every decadence,
On a scale never before experienced
By as many in one era of history.
What have you seen and learned
But that sensory-level experience
Leaves you desolate, angry, weary,
As full of rancor and discontent as ever?
That flame of angst within, if not too deadening,
Can be a catalyst to the discernment of the unconditional.

* * * *

Despite attempts by sages of every era and geography,
The human psyche remains dominated and shaped
By primal instincts and urges bred into the mind long ago.
The many masks of fear have diversified into innumerable forms,
And are as blinding, paralyzing, and destructive as they have ever been.
Transforming consciousness into its fullest potential is not for the meek of spirit.

* * * *

To discern serenity, you may well know the calamity and horror of battle.
To discern integrity, you may, indeed, be a great liar, cheat, or thief.
To discern compassion, you may have caused much suffering.
To discern discipline, you may have partaken thoroughly every excess.
To discern the unicity of all creation, you may have lived in ravaging separation.
Sometimes those most divided without are nearest to discovering the eternal nature within.

XXV

You wander through cities, down paths, along rivers,
But who was it wandered where and when?
In all those walks, those thoughts,
Those many acts and deeds,
Woven into each and every one
Was the unwavering, choiceless awareness,
The witness you are, have always been, and will ever be.

* * * *

Your appearance in this manifest world is unimportant.
Whatever your attributes, whether you run barefoot or wear shoes,
Are clean or unclean, crippled or healthy, intelligent or simple, female or male,
Poor or wealthy, strong or weak, ugly or comely, named or unnamed,
Each and every one is the same essential quantum nature.

* * * *

Do more, do more, do more,
So many always crying out do more.
Yet if more would live simply, with less effort,
If more would subside their desire-filled, fearful frenzy,
This drama might manifest something more compatible with reality.

* * * *

The quantum nature can be challenging to ascertain
Because you only perceive the shortcomings of this dualistic world.
Quest within, discern the essence, unify with the totality,
Realize the perfection you have ever been.

* * * *

You believe because you move your hand from side to side,
That time has passed and movement in space transpired.
But what has created that reality but the timeless stillness,
That ephemeral essence in which you as witness truly reside.

* * * *

The essential purpose of the senses in this manifest play is survival.
Over time, every human being evolves a personal mythos
Based on the mind's interpretation of the data.
Who is the director of the theater but the witness in all.

* * * *

We rationalize the spending of untold wealth
On weapons of destruction, temples of vain worship,
And countless other entertainments and self-absorbed exploits,
When peoples across the world strive merely for a few handfuls of food.
The suffering and horror of our synergistic expression
Is a dark legacy for those yet to come.

XXVI

Followers have all too often made the desolate mistake
Of paying homage or worshiping whoever said it,
Rather than understanding what was said.

* * * *

From genesis to now,
Life's origin to now,
Human evolution to now,
Geographical separation to now,
Technological advancement to now,
Your own mortal birth to now.
Timelines within timelines,
Linear, dualistic, divisive.
Unify them intuitively within.
Eternity is ever the timeless nowness.

* * * *

The challenge set before you is to wipe the full slate clean,
And not write anything new, and only just less deceiving.

* * * *

The world economy is dominated
By vested interests, feudal corporate entities,
Whose spiritless, pagan idol is the ledger and its bottom line.
The web they spin is of destruction, pain and remorse,
To which no mortal life form is immune.

* * * *

Premature judgment of anyone's past
May deny the wisdom they have gleaned,
Or be in the unfolding process of discerning.
Allow others the sovereignty you yourself request.

* * * *

No matter how insane the unfolding human drama appears,
Remember always that it is being played out in perfection.

* * * *

Though all that is, is the unicity of the great quantum dreamtime,
Few deeply discern the ever-present, unborn-undying state.
Many are called, few are chosen, fewer still volunteer.

* * * *

The mind incessantly projects purpose and meaning,
Fabricating one worry after another in the resulting process.
Perhaps the only real purpose or meaning is to discover there is none,
That living is enough, and no problem need be made of it.

XXVII

Since civilization's beginning, the haves have controlled the have-nots to their own ends.
Conquests and revolutions are merely exchanges of power, of might makes right.
The masses whine and grumble, but ever accept the crumbs and carnivals.

* * * *

How many more concepts there are
With the passage of time.
In every realm there are vocabularies
Which did not even begin to exist in prior times.
The impetuous, harsh sharpness of our unsheathed scholarship,
Is an undiscerning blade of creation and destruction
We are not even remotely close to mastering.

* * * *

What is there to be but what you already are?
How can fruit know what it is to ripen?
Caterpillars to fly? Buds to flower?
Any pattern to reach maturation,
But through faith in nowness
That isness will ever be so.

* * * *

Any given mythos may try to explain the journey,
But none can convey any to where all paths end.

* * * *

Real suffering is that of a physical nature,
Of sickness, injury, aging, and dying,
And those only while they last.
All psychological pain is self-inflicted.

* * * *

Humankind has but a fleeting window of opportunity
To observe beyond its destructive attachments
To geography, culture, politics, economics, and religion,
To perceive, to distinguish the broadest picture, the greatest whole.

* * * *

All humankind seems to have really gleaned from history's passing
Are endless techniques and might to ravage the garden
And its little folk with savage efficiency.

* * * *

Coming to grips with the realization of your ultimate nature,
With the fact that you are the clayness of which everything is founded,
That you are one with the power, the light, and the wonder,
Is a journey limited only by your inner vision.

XXVIII

Because isness is, you are.
Because you are, isness is.
Without isness, there would be no you.
Without you, there would be no witness to the mystery.

* * * *

Many would call it sacrilegious
To state, "I am that which is godness."
But it is far more so to deny it.

* * * *

Meditation is awareness of the unfolding moment.
It is the dredging of the accumulated sediment of identification;
That which inhibits the timeless discernment of what you truly are, and are not.

* * * *

Walk a few paces from where you stand.
Look back to where you think you started.
Time and space are the illusion of perception.
You will never wander through any instant again.

* * * *

Prior to consciousness, prior to the sensory theater,
The stillness before time is what you every moment are.

* * * *

Who sees the wind tipping the trees in spring?
Hears the busy chatter of squirrels chasing?
Smells the mid-afternoon coffee brewing?
Feels the piercing of the kitten's playful claws?
Tastes the chilled chocolate melting?
Who has all those memories?
All that knowledge and capability?
All those assorted opinions and values?
Who desires, dreads, angers, laughs, suffers?
You do.
You are the power, the light, a drop of all that is, and is not.
You are creator, quantum dancer, eternally, immortally absolute.

* * * *

You have always been a quantum being.
There has never been one moment when you were not.
All you need do is discern it, and allow the witness to take wing within.

* * * *

A drug may help you find it, but cannot keep you there for long.
The challenge is to perceive eternity in the everyday mundane.

XXIX

Death is never easy for any to face.
It is the ending of identity, personality,
All that is known, possessed, and held dear.
It is the end of attachment to this material plane.
From whence you came, you return again.

* * * *

All across the world at this very instant,
Diversity suffers and perishes in countless ways
Because of the juggernauting inertia of consciousness
Fashioned by geographic notions Gaia will not forever sustain.

* * * *

The mind-body is a temporal vessel of finite patterning,
In which the infinite has potential to consciously manifest.

* * * *

It may be fairly frightening, even irritating,
For many to begin fathoming they are godness,
Because up to this point, their manifest consciousness
Has not even begun to open to that expansive an inner vision.

* * * *

So many human beings spend a great deal of time rejecting their animal nature,
Yet evidence of our basic instincts underscore everything we have ever created.

* * * *

Even the most healthy and beautiful men and women
Strain, sweat, smell, and ache when they toil;
Blow their nostrils clean each morning;
Eat, urinate, defecate, and pass gas
More than a few times each day.
Women bleed and swell with milk
For continuation of their genetic line.
Men ejaculate their seed for the same end.
What exactly does one love in another's body?
A vat of bones, organs, muscles, mucous, and blood,
Sheltered by nerve-ridden, porous, lifeless skin and hair,
Shaped in ways we instinctively find appealing or revolting.
All of which, to the dread of many, must unavoidably be recycled,
Perhaps even as a brief but mouthwatering feast for one beast or another.

* * * *

Free your Self of the notion of original sin, that you were born evil.
It is nothing more than an idea inspired by ignorance, by greed, by the need to control,
That the pure awareness you most definitely are, did not choose at birth.
There is no sin, no iniquity, only dualistic whimsy.

XXX

Contrast your entire existence with geological time,
In which the longest stretch might at best equal
A mere fraction of a moderate layer of sediment.
We are each witness to a fleeting span of manifest time.
The relentless narcissism, fantasies of glory, and empire-seeking,
Are, from an across-the-board perspective, such trivial, meaningless pursuits.
The arrogant pinnacles humankind devises across this garden world
Are barren and desolate when viewed for what they are.

* * * *

Reincarnation is the moment-to-moment fabrication of the identity you imagine you are.

* * * *

You came into this world with no allegiance to anything.
What happened?

* * * *

The part is never apart from the whole.

* * * *

Your life's destiny is founded
Upon everything you desire right now.
If you would choose to disregard life's opportunity
To merge into the awareness of the changeless,
What, exactly, is it that you crave so much,
That you would choose vain mortality
Over that which was never born?

* * * *

A hindrance many have in considering themselves godness manifest,
Is that they believe it should entail having all sorts of innate supernatural powers.
The fact that they see, walk, talk, and create every sort of mischief,
Does not register because everyone else can, too.
Well, of course they can.
They are also godness manifest.
It is the concept of god that needs changing.

* * * *

Look back closely at your life.
See how every moment was necessary
For you to arrive at this apparent point in time.
That it has all been completely, perfectly, effortlessly
Choreographed, costumed, and rehearsed for the original run.
An epic, time-bound play produced and directed by you, starring you.
Be on good terms with your spontaneous, manifesting reverie.
Enjoy the myriad players appearing in your production.
All are teachers and students in your eternal journey.

Of the Human Journey

Mortal existence is not easy. It never has been, and never will be for any creature sown of this garden world. What follows are thoughts about the human journey, the fare existence offers, and the choices each must resolve alone in the sojourn through the veiled maze of space-time, of consciousness with all its dualistic notions. It is a journey of ecstasy and agony, courage and fear, love and hate. It is the mystery born of the passionate mind, and the flowing array of perceptions every human being faces in the movement through birth, sickness, injury, aging, dying, and death.

These reflections are written to help promote a larger vision of where we as a species are heading; one that attempts to look beyond humanity's many seemingly irreconcilable divisions, one that values insight and wisdom, one that elevates rather than detracts, one that seeks to foster a sense of guardianship, rather than destruction and manipulation, of our little dust ball and the many life forms it has spawned.

We live in a time period similar, yet increasingly unique among the many cycles come and gone before. Excessive population, coupled with unprecedented, unrestrained technologies, are driving our petri dish experiment of free will toward a rather bleak outcome. All the insanities we have so carelessly, foolishly, needlessly wreaked upon the earth's magnificent diversity, are huge rebounding tsunamis awaiting our arrival in time. The rules of the manifest game are simple and uncompromising, and those who bend and break them must eventually pay the price that Mother Nature is more than capable of exacting.

As long as we human beings battle over pride-filled differences, we inevitably embrace a fate of our own synergistic, instinctual, self-absorbed design. The monopolistic win-lose divisiveness wrought since history's invention, since our egocentric, competitive, voluntary secession from the garden, spirals us down a path of annihilation. What we have done in all our arrogance has created a time already nightmarish for many, and will only exponentially accelerate for those to whom we are now ancestors. And we are nowhere close to discerning a common vision, a truly cooperative paradigm that might sidestep it.

We leave it to future generations to create solutions to problems we have all aided in forging. We vainly hope that political, economic, and religious leaders will shepherd us to salvation, but they cannot because the collective vision is too full of limitation and division. Despite all our canny attributes, we as a species have not yet fully fathomed our interconnectedness, our inherent kinship to the indivisible totality. We have not grasped that time does not exist as any more than a play of consciousness, a collusion of imagination. Nowness is the only ephemeral, eternal reality, and the decisions each of us make in this moment-to-moment flowing create the dreamtime future.

So many of the leaders we have chosen to follow with all their insecure, parasitic ambitions for power, glory, and wealth only wax the slide with empty promises and compromising, shortsighted decisions. Though many are highly intelligent in many clever ways, too few have the wisdom and integrity to truly serve those they pretend to lead. The result is that along with there being no political or economic solution to the dilemma now unfolding, our dysfunctional paradigm has created a spiritual crisis well beyond all the vain pretensions so many call religion.

No one will ever see the world exactly the same as anyone else. We are like snowflakes and fingerprints, patterns woven of a mystery to which all creation is witness in one form or another.

Time and space are magical illusions, and each and every one of us is an equal participant in a vast theater of consciousness spontaneously playing itself out in seemingly every possible way. All our knowledge, all our histories, all our schools of thought, the countless frames of reference we imagine individually and collectively, dreamily overlap and merge like ripples crisscrossing to and fro upon the same sea of relativity.

Words, whatever the language, are conceptual icebergs each and every one of us envision differently. Thoughts of god, love, morality, money, tradition, politics, ad infinitum, inspire a myriad of responses, often conflicting because of rigid, dogmatic attachments to time. Yet, at the origin of all consciousness, that quantum field from which this grand three-dimensional mirage has come to pass, is very much the same oneness, the same universal, eternal truth, despite all our sophomoric arguments over the endless permutations of knowledge we ourselves have contrived.

All differences are fabrication, fantasy, make-believe, delusion, born of imagination. All polarizations, whether cultural, racial, sexual, geographic, economic, political, religious, mythological, and on and on, are illusive deceptions born of the play of light and shadow, and the musings it weaves. Each of us imagines a personal universe in which all travel very much alone, despite all the sensory evidence to the contrary. Until one can see past the attachments to an individual life, the many differences seem real, but, ultimately, they are not, never have been, and never will be.

We are passing through a holographic sliver of time in which the seemingly countless dramas of human existence are available for all who have capacity and means to explore. What evolved of geographical isolation can now be witnessed in whatever fashion predisposition allows. There is a tendency, due to the aberration of pride and the quest for false glory, to argue one mythology's supremacy over another, yet is any collusion more than a conceptual adaptation to time and circumstance? Is any one version, any one play of consciousness, in reality, ultimately superior to any other?

No one gets out of this manifest existence alive, and every human being ever born comes to grips with that truth in whatever way capacity and limitation allow. Some create hells for themselves, while others discern within, a quality, a harmony that has been given countless names across the world. Most of us, of course, wander the purgatory between. In the journey of life, each of us swims an ebb and flow in which the individual mind plays out incalculable variations of passion born of desire and fear.

The life any of us creates, with all its perceptions and interpretations, is a blend of voluntary and involuntary choosing. Traditions are creations every cultural grouping, every societal mindset fabricates in order to maintain continuity in those the genetic lottery casts into its geographic realm. No one is bound to continue believing anything but through the conditioned choices of imagination that some call free will. Those who discern their own law see this manifest play far differently than those who, for whatever reason, cannot see past their attachments to the narrow propagandas of history, whatever the scale.

The gist of these reflections is to encourage those who see their immeasurable nature to become that to which they aspire; intuitively, spontaneously free to meet the moment as it unfolds, whether or not it fits the vision of any other individual or group. In the statistical bell curve of any rise and fall, of any creation and destruction, there are always the initiators, and those who tag along well after. Those who entertain the greatest vision are already among the many who do not. Whether the reader sees it as a fact or not, we are all that which is the same indivisible upwelling, the same inexplicable mystery. Eternity is very much present within every part and

particle, every quantum of the drama to which all are witness. It is a vision so infinite as to include each and every one of us, along with all the other myriad life forms across the planet, as its source.

Is the human species, with all its competitive predispositions, capable of comprehending and responding to a larger vision of itself? With all that is facing us, do we have the luxury of time? Probably not. Though the transformation of consciousness is an instantaneous matter, we are caught in the juggernauting wave of collective delusional ignorance and countless attachments to choices made in times long before our brief little window. We may agree the problems ahead are nearly insurmountable, but a paradigm shift into a cooperative, balanced, intuitive, holistic, realistic mindset, is too much of a change for most to even begin to fathom, much less enact, at this point in time.

Despite the countless lessons offered by history, we are too attached to building mountains of false gold, practicing divisive religion, maintaining rigid traditions, following insincere leaders, promoting the idolatry of personality, supporting destructive institutions, fabricating egocentric class structures, producing adverse technologies, consuming insatiably in every way imaginable, destroying irreplaceable diversity, and killing one another because our ancestors could not get along any better than we, for all the same myopic, greedy, time-bound, evolutionary reasons.

Recognize it or not, the human species is fast-approaching a tailspin of its own design. It is inevitable that this garden planet, and all life that dwells on it, will someday return to its origin. That is the nature of the vast changing, the creation-destruction of each passing moment in which we all choicelessly, spontaneously participate; the indivisible, impersonal totality relatively few truly discern.

The question is, will we go out with nobility, humility, integrity, and discipline as true human beings, harmoniously realigned with the source of our origin, guardians of what is left of the garden that birthed us all? Or will we exit like fruit flies churning feverishly for the last dollop of honey in the bell jar; like rats vying savagely for the last crumbs at the bottom of the cage?

Each of us makes that decision in every step, in every breath, in every deed, word, and thought. We individually create our own unique version of the universe, and how we work it out together in the theater of consciousness, only time will tell. The essential reality is not about contrived differences. It is not about futile, conceited pursuits, meaningless paths to glory. Life is an opportunity to discern within a vision of an integrated relationship with that which is infinitely, infinitesimally greater than its many parts.

It is the true discernment that each and every one of us, including every angel and every demon, including all creatures great and small, including every infinitesimal, absolute speck of quantum dust swirling within, to the furthest indivisible reaches of the unknown, is equally That I Am to which mystics across the world throughout time point. There is no other.

Each and every one of us is the same indivisible clayness, the same absolute, immeasurable, eternal oneness, playing out the relativity of dreamtime. We are all connected, no matter the exterior, no matter the capacity or frame of reference. No religious middlemen, no stairways to heaven are necessary. This indelible insight is free to all discerning enough to see that truth is the momentary, intangible, undeniable birthright within. This intuitive vision of the clarity beyond form, and the exploration of right living it brings about, is the only true revolution.

This inexplicable mystery we call life is an opportunity to witness the vast unfathomable diversity of this manifest theater, this grand play of creation and destruction, of known and unknown, in whatever way each imagines. It is the potential to see that every form born of space-time is merely one of an infinite array of masks veiling the same source, the same awareness, the same witness; nothing more, nothing less, nothing but.

The singularity of totality is beyond the scope of the mind, beyond the irrational concoctions of superstition or the rational explorations of science. It is beyond the wordplay of any belief system, beyond the egocentric weavings of individual persona and the countless delusions spawned of ignorance. We are all alone together, and how we as a species finally choose to dance the dance, sing the song, walk the walk, and talk the talk, is ultimately, in this mind's eye, the true legacy of the human journey.

Best wishes.

Ten Reflections

I

Become a conscious, sovereign human being, awakened to the intuitive wisdom of Self, witness to the reality and unreality of this eternal mystery of time and space.

II

Respect this diverse garden world and the inherent rights of all creatures great to small. They are all masks of the same creation. There is no other.

III

Treat others at least as well as you would prefer they treat you. Do not expect them to return the favor, or to learn from your example. No one will ever be you.

IV

Live and let live; live and let die; grasp and release; give and take; win and lose; forgive and forget; inhale and exhale; fly and land; swim and drift; rise and fall; open and close; lock and unlock; come and go; start and stop; begin and end; flow and resist; tense and relax; be and allow; create, preserve, destroy.

V

Moderation in all things. Gluttony, greed, sloth, envy, wrath, lust, and pride are the roots of limitation, the source of suffering. Take delight in simplicity.

VI

Share what you have to share. But not in such a manner that it is degrading or disempowering to those you serve. Giving to get is not sharing.

VII

Play win-win whenever practical. Unmitigated competition is ultimately a dysfunctional paradigm. Avoid unnecessary conflict. No one really wins a fight. There are plenty of cooperative opportunities for those seeking the inherent ground.

VIII

Bring children into this world only if you intend to truly care for them. There are far too many human beings already. Life is arduous enough without a harsh, imbalanced beginning.

IX

Do not put false wealth above real relationship. Learn to listen to the many voices of nature. Learn to see with its many eyes. Mountains of gold do not compare with a child's joy in a mound of sand, a bird's in the morning sun, or a dolphin's in the passing wave.

X

Creation, preservation, and destruction are equal partners in this vast kaleidoscoping lightshow, in the infinite aloneness of this dreamtime theater. Deeply understanding this may lessen the suffering of your brief existence. Try not to take it all so seriously that you cannot laugh, at least occasionally, at this temporary identity, this brief ever-changing, three-dimensional illusion to which you are so attached.

Got God?

Do you believe in God? If so, describe what you mean by that?

Godness is the “I am That I Am” within each of us. It is the everything and the nothing. It is the smallest particle to the greatest whole. It is the isness, the nowness, the awareness, the timeless indivisible, unborn, undying source of this infinite, unknowable mystery. It is the creation, preservation, and destruction of every part and particle playing out the grand theater, the eternal kaleidoscoping holograph of space-time. That spark of divinity, of the Self within all selves, is the witness acting out every drama imaginable.

Each and every life form is the immortal totality splintered into mortal fare. The source of life, of creation, is more than any measurement can ever explain or define. All attempts to grasp it, all the traditions, symbols, rituals and concepts, all the speculations ever devised in this garden world, or any other, are equally limited as anything but intuitive reflections. They are all merely a means to an end, not an end in themselves.

Time is a fabrication of consciousness. It is the virtual reality of the mind, the cotton candy of imagination. The ephemeral, momentary nowness is the only reality. Every life form, no matter who, what, where, when, why, or how, is very much of the same evolving creation, the same source, the same light, the same dreamer, the same witness, the same amness, the same uniqueness, the same absolute oneness. No matter how you slice and label it, we are all holographs of the same essence.

If you were raised in a religious environment, has that had a positive or negative impact on your life?

Organized religions across the world clutch vainly to beliefs founded upon geographic assumptions whose foundations have all become brittle and stale in this shrinking world. Groups throughout time have again and again claimed to be the standard-bearers of truth, but have all too often created far more conflict than community in their ethnocentricity. The net result is that the many propagandas of history are weighing us down with clashing notions. Notions that no longer hold water when examined closely.

The fact is that we are all the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and those blind to this most simple, obvious understanding, those attached to literal translations and dogmatic collusions, cannot help but perpetuate unnecessary confusion and disintegration.

Religious traditions, with all their customs, folklore, symbols, rituals, and concepts are products of time and its inevitable limitations. Their value is that they remind us of our relationship with the mystery of our existence. But to vainly cling to any as more than temporal tools, to battle over them in any way, to use them as anything but maps home, presents a narrow vision of the eternal quest. The word is only sound, and no sound can more than echo though the expanses of eternity.

Organizing the spiritual quest tends to box godness into a concept. And in the journey beyond concepts, into that which is immeasurable, there are no boundaries, no assumptions that withstand

that which creates, preserves, and destroys all illusions. The source of time is bound to no form, and inevitably harvests all.

Do you believe in heaven, hell, and judgment day?

Heaven and hell are states of mind, plays of consciousness, that only seem real where the now of time meets the road. Heaven is a sense of intuitive unity, an understanding, a clear harmony, a serene contentment. Hell is its divisive counterpart filled with unending prejudice, complexity, and contention. It is the passionate mind playing out the dualistic weavings of desire and fear, and the suffering they endlessly bring to fruition. Every day is judgment day for those confined by the illusory, dualistic play of the senses. In separation we are demons, in unity we are angels. Who has not tasted every potential to some degree?

Can prayer heal the sick?

If you really have faith, do you need to pray? Sickness, injury, aging, and dying are inevitable in this mortal theater. Oblivion of personal identity is the undeniable fate of all forms. Yet that quantum essence each of us truly is, is immortal, and this very simple realization creates a far different view of life than most seem destined to entertain at any given time. What each of us really is, is far greater than birth and death, and the limitations of any manifest theater. And praying to imagination for mortal immortality is rooted deeply in the quicksand of ignorance.

Are your religious/spiritual beliefs separate from your political ones?

Every action ripples. Every cause creates effect, and every effect becomes cause to the next effect. Those aware of this tend to walk more attentively in their day-to-day actions. Separative choices lead to disintegration; holistic ones to integration. Through interactions with others we show what we value. Are religion and politics separate? All division is the play of the time-bound mind. As long as we as a species value power, fame, and fortune more than we value right relationship, as long as we are in the grips of worldly attachment, as long as we worship mammon and idolize form, we journey toward an inevitable, synergistic fate of our own creation. The paradigm from which we spawned is no longer functional, and the bell is daily tolling louder.

Describe a spiritual experience you have had recently.

Is there any moment that is not spiritual, magical, mysterious? Whether sitting on the porcelain throne, or caught up in an inexplicable vision, every moment's unfolding is ultimately very much the same. We may or may not be tuned in, we may prefer some moments to others, but in reality the ungraspable is source to all creations of consciousness, wherever or however they unfold. Pay attention to the vastness within, or meander through every sensory, dualistic diversion the world offers, it is all the same ephemeral virtual reality. Life is an opportunity to reflect upon the oneness within and without, and to take it as any more than a three-dimensional, quickly passing mirage, misses its greatest potential.

What is the soul?

What is not the That I Am? What is not the ground of all creation, preservation, and destruction? What is not the indivisible, immortal, absolute reality that permeates all seen and unseen? What is not the same quantum mystery residing in everything from the smallest particle of an atom to the farthest galaxies of all creation? Godness, as seen through consciousness, is as expansive or limited as any given personal vision, yet cannot be confined by any. Ultimately, there is no other. The ocean of godness is all, including the drop of awareness reading this. The proof of it is that no one, no creature ever birthed upon this spinning garden has ever, will ever, or can ever discern more than a reflection of its own face. All forms are splinters of the same witness, the same oneness, the same faceless unknown. All attributes, all measurements are born of the illusion of space-time, and to be bound by any reverie is the delusion of ignorance.

"Got God?" was a response to a seven-question survey of Chico News & Review readers published in April 1996.

Books

The Song of God: Bhagavad Gita How to Know God The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali Shankara's Crest Jewel of Discrimination	Prabhavananda Christopher Isherwood
Bhagavad Gita	Barbara Stoler Miller
Bhagavad Gita	Juan Mascaro
The Heart of Awareness A Translation of the Ashtavakra Gita	Thomas Byrom
Ashtavakra Gita	John Richards
Duet of One The Ashtavakra Gita Dialogue	Ramesh Balsekar
Bitten by the Black Snake The Ancient Wisdom of Ashtavakra	Manuel Schoch
The Perennial Way	Bart Marshall
Avadhuta Gita of Dattatreya	Ashokananda
Dattatreya's Song of the Avadhut History of Mysticism Mysticism and Science	S. Abhayananda
Astavakra Samhita	Nityaswarupananda
Back to the Truth: 5000 Years of Advaita	Dennis Waite
Vasistha's Yoga	Venkatesananda
I Am That Talks with Nisargadatta	Maurice Frydman
Prior to Consciousness: Talks with Nisargadatta Seeds of Consciousness: The Wisdom of Nisargadatta Consciousness and the Absolute: The Final Talks of Nisargadatta	Jean Dunn
Autobiography of a Yogi	Paramahansa Yogananda
Sermon on the Mount According to Vedanta The Eternal Companion	Prabhavananda

The Upanishads: Breath of the Eternal	Prabhavananda Frederick Manchester
Pointers from Nisargadatta Maharaj	Ramesh Balsekar
Spiritual Teachings of Ramana Maharishi	Ramana
Tao Te Ching (Lao Tsu) Chuang Tsu, Inner Chapters	Gia-Fu Feng Jane English
Tao Te Ching (Lao Tsu) The Classic Book of Integrity and the Way	Victor Mair
Think on These Things The First and Last Freedom Freedom from the Known The Ending of Time Commentaries on Living Series The Awakening of Intelligence Education and the Significance of Life	Jiddu Krishnamurti
Where Are You Going? The Perfect Relationship Secret of the Siddhas Does Death Really Exist? Mystery of the Mind Reflections of the Self Play of Consciousness	Muktananda
The Way of Siddhartha A Path of Righteousness: Dhammapada Mulamadhyamakakarika of Nagarjuna: The Philosophy of the Middle Way	David Kalupahana
Taking the Path of Zen	Robert Aitken
Three Pillars of Zen Zen, Dawn in the West	Phillip Kapleau
Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind	Shunryu Suzuki
Zen Flesh, Zen Bones	Paul Reps
The Enlightened Mind The Book of Job	Stephen Mitchell
The Gospel According to Zen	Robert Sohl Audrey Carr
The Sound of One Hand 281 Zen Koans with Answers	Yoel Hoffmann

Zen Koans	Gyomay Kubose
Zen to Go Portable Curmudgeon Return of the Portable Curmudgeon	Jon Winokur
Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance Lila	Robert Pirsig
Zen in the Art of Archery	Eugene Herrigel
Jewels within the Heart Verses of the Buddha's Teachings	Laurence Mills
The Religions of Man	Huston Smith
Siddhartha Steppenwolf Demian Narcissus and Goldmund The Glass Bead Game The Journey to the East	Hermann Hesse
Tao of Physics	Fritjof Capra
The Dancing Wu Li Masters	Gary Zukav
Lazy Man's Guide to Enlightenment	Thaddeus Golas
The Way of the Peaceful Warrior	Dan Millman
Razor's Edge	Somerset Maugham
The Mystique of Enlightenment The Unrational Ideas of a Man Called U.G.	Rabbi Alvin Bobroff
The Courage to Stand Alone Conversations with U.G. Krishnamurti	Jeffrey Masson
Emmanuel Emmanuel II, A Choice for Love	Pat Rodegast Judith Stanton
Life After Life The Light Beyond	Raymond Moody
Mystics and Zen Masters The Seven Storey Mountain Thoughts In Solitude No Man Is an Island The Wisdom of the Desert Ways of the Christian Mystics	Thomas Merton

A Thomas Merton Reader	Thomas McDonnell
The Education of Littletree	Forest Carter
The Tao of Pooh The Te of Piglet	Benjamin Hoff
Jonathan Livingston Seagull Illusions: The Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah One The Bridge Across Forever	Richard Bach
The Path of the Masters	Julian Johnson
Mutant Message Down Under	Marlow Morgan
The Experience of No-Self A Contemplative Journey What is Self? A Study of the Spiritual Journey in Terms of Consciousness	Bernadette Roberts
The Spectrum of Consciousness No Boundary Eastern and Western Approaches to Personal Growth Eye to Eye The Quest for the New Paradigm Sex, Ecology, Spirituality One Taste A Brief History of Everything The Eye of Spirit An Integral Vision for a World Gone Slightly Mad The Marriage of Sense and Soul Integrating Science and Religion	Ken Wilbur
Mahamudra: Boundless Joy and Freedom	Ole Nydahl
The Interior Realization Zen and the Psychology of Transformation: The Supreme Doctrine	Hubert Benoit
Journey of the Enlightened Mind The Only Dance There Is Be Here Now Grist for the Mill The Journey of Awakening A Meditator's Guidebook	Ram Dass
The Everything and the Nothing God to Man and Man to God	Meher Baba

The Lottery	Shirley Jackson
The Fountainhead Atlas Shrugged	Ayn Rand
Stranger in a Strange Land	Robert Heinlein
The Bible	
The Qur'an (Koran)	Muhammad
Lust for Enlightenment, Buddhism and Sex	John Stevens
Practical Vedanta	Vivekananda
Mahamudra: The Moonlight Quintessence of Mind and Meditation	Takpo Tashi Namgyal Lobsang Lhalungpa
The Thunder: Perfect Mind	
Ken's Guide to the Bible	Ken Smith
The Source	James Michner
The Urantia Book	Urantia Foundation
Course in Miracles	Inner Peace Foundation
The Miracle of Mindfulness A Manual on Meditation Being Peace A Guide to Walking Meditation The Sun My Heart Peace Is Every Step The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life	Thick Nhat Hanh
Our Kind Cows, Pigs, Wars and Witches	Marvin Harris
Cat's Cradle Slaughterhouse Five Bluebeard Hocus Pocus Breakfast of Champions Welcome to the Monkey House	Kurt Vonnegut
Knee of Listening Method of Siddhas Dawn Horse Testament	Da Free John
The Celestine Prophecy	James Redfield

The Road Less Traveled	M. Scott Peck
Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha	E.A. Burt
The Masks of God Series Primitive Mythology Oriental Mythology Occidental Mythology Creative Mythology	Joseph Campbell
The Power of Myth	Joseph Campbell Bill Moyers
Catching the Light The Entwined History of Light and the Mind	Arthur Zajonc
The Naked Truth Matrix of Power Egypt, Light of the World Ancient Belief Systems	International Research & Educational Research
Caretakers of Wonder The Art of Longing With Secret Friends Hugh's Hues Now is the Moon's Eyebrow The Star Cleaner Reunion If You're Afraid of the Dark, Remember the Night Rainbow	Cooper Eden
Original Blessing	Matthew Fox
Beyond Culture	Edward T. Hall
When Society Becomes an Addict	Ann Wilson Schaef
Candide Zarire Henriade	Voltaire
Titus Groan Gormenghast Titus Alone	Mervyn Peake
Animal Farm 1984	George Orwell
Brave New World The Doors of Perception and Heaven and Hell	Aldous Huxley

The Grand Inquisitor	Fyodor Dostoevsky
Tom Jones	Henry Fielding
Gulliver's Travels	Jonathan Swift
Fahrenheit 451	Ray Bradbury
Hope For the Flowers	Trina Paulus
The Stranger	Albert Camus
The Myth of Sisyphus	
Power Tactics of Jesus Christ	Jay Haley
The Holographic Universe	Michael Talbot
The Living Tao	Stephen Kaufman
The Art of War	
Book of Five Rings	
The Shogun Scrolls	
Spiritual Literacy	Frederic Brussat Mary Ann Brussat
Earth Abides	George R. Stewart
Dune	Frank Herbert
Lao Tzu: Tao Te Ching	Ursula K. Le Guin
A Book About the Way and the Power of the Way	
The Lathe of Heaven	
The Telling	
A Wizard of Earthsea (The Earthsea Cycle)	
The Chronicles of Tao	Deng Ming-Dao
365 Tao	
Everyday Day	
Scholar Warrior	
Entering the Tao	Master Hua Ni
Religions of the World	Lewis M. Hopfe
We Are Three (Rumi)	Coleman Barks
Unseen Rain	
Open Secret	
Delicious Laughter	
Feeling the Shoulder of the Lion	
The Essence of Rumi	John Baldock

The Universe in a Single Atom	Dalai Lama
Transcending Ego: Distinguishing Consciousness Everyday Consciousness and Primordial Awareness	Thrangu Rinpoche
Jesus and Buddha The Parallel Sayings	Marcus Borg
Choosing Civility The 25 Rules of Considerate Conduct	Dr. P.M. Forni
The End of Faith	Sam Harris
The Atheist's Bible An Illustrious Collection of Irreverent Thoughts	Joan Konner
The Herald of the Coming Good All and Everything Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson Meetings with Remarkable Men Life is Real Only Then, When 'I Am' Views from the Real World	G.I. Gurdjieff
Living and Dying in Zazen Five Zen Masters of Modern Japan The Grass Flute Zen Master: Sodo Yokoyama Mud and Water: The Teachings of Zen Master Bassui Warrior of Zen: The Diamond-Hard Wisdom Mind of Suzuki Shosan	Arthur Braverman
The Wisdom of Insecurity A Message for an Age of Anxiety The Book: On the Taboo Against Knowing Who You Are The Way of Zen Tao: The Watercourse Way Nature, Man and Woman The Essence of Alan Watts	Alan Watts
The Four Agreements A Practical Guide to Personal Freedom The Four Agreements Companion Book The Mastery of Love A Practical Guide to the Art of Relationship The Voice of Knowledge: A Practical Guide to Inner Peace	Michael Ruiz
Stillness Speaks The Power of Now: A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment Practicing the Power of Now Essential Teachings, Meditations, and Exercises A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose	Eckhart Tolle

The Ends of Time, the Roots of Eternity Tales of Myth, Nature & Culture The Water of Life Initiation and the Tempering of the Soul Branches of Mentoring The World Behind the World Living at the Ends of Time	Michael Meade
The Art of Peace Balance Over Conflict in Sun-Tzu's Art of War	Philip Dunn
No Way for the Spiritually "Advanced"	Ram Tzu
Mirrors: Stories of Almost Everyone	Eduardo Galeano
As A Man Thinketh	James Allen
Fragments: The Collected Wisdom of Heraclitus	Brooks Haxton
The Stonecutter: A Japanese Folk Tale	Gerald McDermott
The Essential Epicurus Letters, Principal Doctrines, Vatican Sayings, and Fragments	Eugene O'Connor
Pooh and the Philosophers Pooh and the Millennium Pooh and the Psychologists	John Tyerman Williams Ernest H. Shepard
Looking at Philosophy The Unbearable Heaviness of Philosophy Made Lighter	Donald Palmer
50 Rules Kids Won't Learn in School	Charles J. Sykes
Plato and a Platypus Walk into a Bar ... Understanding Philosophy Through Jokes	Thomas Cathcart Daniel Klein
The Constant Companion	Eknath Easwaran
Jacob the Baker, Gentle Wisdom for a Complicated World	Noah benShea
The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge A Separate Reality	Carlos Castaneda
Marcus Aurelius: Meditations	Gregory Hays
The Art of Worldly Wisdom (Baltasar Gracian)	Martin Fischer
The Art of Worldly Wisdom (Baltasar Gracian)	Christopher Maurer
The Sage's Tao Te Ching Ancient Advice for the Second Half of Life	William Martin

Movies

1 Giant Leap	Natural Born Killers
2001, A Space Odyssey	Paths of Glory
A Crude Awakening: The Oil Crash	Physics: The Elegant Universe and Beyond
An Inconvenient Truth	Planet in Peril
Baraka	Powaqatsi
Before the Rain	Powder
Black Robe	Powwow Highway
Born Rich	Ralph Nader: An Unreasonable Man
Contact	Razor's Edge
Conversations with God	Rumi, Poet of the Heart
Deliver Us from Evil	Sicko
Dogma	Star Wars
Dune	Taxi to the Dark Side
Faith and Reason	The 11 th Hour
Fast, Cheap, and Out of Control	The Believer
Gandhi	The Celestine Prophecy
Garbage Warrior	The Corporation
Gormenghast	The Creation of the Universe
Into Great Silence	The Day the Universe Changed Series
Jesus Camp	The Gods Must Be Crazy
Jesus of Montreal	The Journey of Man
Joseph Campbell and The Power of Myth	The Last Temptation of Christ
Koyaanasqatsi	The Matrix
Last Days on Earth	The Mission
Little Buddha	The One Percent
Merton: A Film Biography	The Peaceful Warrior
Microcosmos	The Secret
Mindwalk	The Thin Red Line
My Dinner With Andre	The U.S. vs. John Lennon
Nanking	The Waking Life
Naqoyqatsi	What the #\$*! Do We Know!?