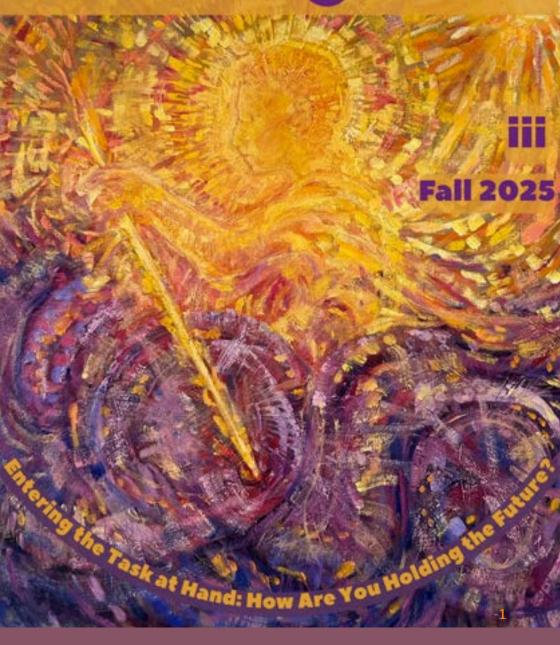
# Futuring Now





### a publication working out of the North American Youth Section



### **Contents**

Introduction	6
Contributors	7
Ourselves: t. The Task in Adelir Sleep Work On Commits Templ	thand? •• painting by Duanning Song the Task at Hand •• article by Gareth Dicker Hand • Lit Within •• poem by Nicholas Budwine • drawing by the Lyons 13 •• poem by Adeline Lyons 14 ment: the Choice to Engage in the Question •• essay by Iona the 15 d •• invitation from Frank Agrama 17
	at hand •• painting by Eloise Avery e Task at Hand: How are you holding the future? •• by Lucien Dante
Lazar The Seven L Through and Lehrn And Now Wo Eloise	19 ife Processes •• paintings by Lucien Dante Lazar 21 d Through • Poem •• drawing by Emily Fecsko • by Berenika
	ng the future? •• painting by Emily Fecsko
Magic Garde Star Seeds • McWil What is God McWil The Stars St Kibby	's Will of Me? • Seed Song •• prose and painting by Bride Alona liam 33 ill Speak: Astrology's Enduring Promise in Our Time •• essay by Ben 34
Past, Presen	tt, Future •• painting by Bella Toso 37
Nathaniel at Archeology Redoing Voc Futuring No Eternal Seec	existing structures ur evolving humanity? •• painting by Emily Fecsko op a timberframe he designed •• film photo by Mischa Collection •• fashion design by Dollhou3e 40 vation •• essay by Adeline Lyons 41 w •• essay by Dante DiBiase 43 d • To Sail a Mountain •• poem by Bride Alona McWilliam • ng by Emily Fecsko 46
New Forms of Virgo • Tem	of Romantic Partnership •• essay by Ezra Sullivan  ple Work •• drawing and poem by Adeline Lyons  as a Response to the Crisis of the Modern World •• essay by Gabel

### Introduction

Thank you for discovering the third issue of Futuring Now.

This issue explores the theme: Entering the task at hand. It asks: How are you holding the future? The upcoming pages will delve into, through visual art, poetry, prose, and essays, what the "task at hand" might be for young adults today and how we can reshape existing structures to better mirror our evolving humanity. Through creative expression, this edition aims to radically rethink how we participate in reality. Additionally, it examines the potential for us to continue the work of creation through our will, attention, and courage.

The issue is divided into four sections. I have endeavored to group contributions into spaces that each address a specific part of this theme.

The first section simply asks: What is the task at hand? These pieces call for courage and independence to walk a path of love. It begins with an exploration of this question from a Waldorf high school teacher, followed by two poems that call on the self to *awaken!* Then, an essay by a young person seeking to renew educational practices; here, she examines whether the task at hand involves committing to a shared goal. The last piece invites you, the reader, to explore the question.

The second section "enters" the task at hand with an essay about the creative-spirit-power of human hands and how the future can be held in the unfolding present. This writer's work is complemented by his visual artistic exploration of the seven life processes. This "entering" is further developed through more visual art and poetry that each, in their way, crosses *through* something.

The third section asks: How are you holding the future? It opens with an article about a man in Utah who is working to reforest the exploited land he inhabits. Subsequently, several visual art pieces and poems engage with "seed" and "star" imagery. Interestingly, these themes emerged naturally from the artists' engagement with the prompt. Also included is an essay by a young astrologer discussing the relevance of the stars today.

The final section addresses the question of transforming tradition and rigid structures into creative forms that better reflect our evolving consciousness. This section features images of building designs from a young carpenter and fashion designs from a young designer. These are followed by visual art and essays exploring the transformation needed in vocation, craft, romantic partnership, and community.

Thank you sincerely for your dedication to this striving publication. Please consider sharing it with your community and spreading the word!

-Adeline Lyons, editor **futuringn@gmail.com** 

### **Contributors**



### Frank Agrama

is an artist, educator, and community builder focusing on therapeutic interdisciplinary approaches and social process. Frank serves as representative of the Youth Section for the North American Collegium of the School for Spiritual Science.

### Luna Arteaga-Laak

is a poet, ceramicist, and community builder who has just completed her residency at Free Columbia. She works in Waldorf early childhood education at Open Meadow.



### **Eloise Avery**

is an artist living in Egremont, Massachusetts. Her work explores themes of human beings and nature, and the ways in which we perceive the spiritual and physical nature of life itself.



### **Nicholas Budwine**

currently lives in New Orleans, Louisiana where he works as a gardener at the local zoo. He spends his time studying natural science, writing poetry, and building friendships. He enjoys traveling and engaging in spiritual life, and loves to cook and go for walks.



### **Gabel Cramer**

lives and works at the Free Columbia artist residency in upstate New York. . He is a ceramicist and an active member of the North American Youth Section.



### Dante DiBiase

is an aspiring stonecarver and artist learning to ride the line between passion and profit in a world that seems bent on cleaving the two in twain. He spends his time tiling, sketching, and trying to find sunshine in the wine barrel.



### **Gareth Dicker**

has lived in Chapel Hill, North Carolina the past seven years, teaching physics and math at the Emerson Waldorf High School. He is deeply interested in the reciprocal influences of education, technology, music, culture, and human creativity. In his spare time, you can find him making music, rock climbing, playing capoeira, dancing, studying esoteric texts, or running through the forests.



### **Emily Fecsko**

is a painter and mixed media artist based in NYC. Her creative process is a deeply personal visual exploration of the human spirit's search for connection. She employs color, texture, and form to evoke familiar surfaces such as skin, plant matter, and folds of fabric, melding them with the brilliance of dreamlike landscapes.



Mischa Fong

lives in Philmont NY and is experimenting with film photography.



### Magdalena Kadula

is currently based between the U.S. and Prague. She focuses on projects in film, theater, and radio. She is also interested in exploring new ways of fostering community.



### Ben Kibby

is an astrologer, writer, biodynamic farmer, and community builder. He is currently living at the Threefold Youth House to create a course on anthroposophic astrology, and to write a thesis on the synthesis of modern astrological traditions.



### Lucien Dante Lazar

is an interdisciplinary creative whose praxis is founded in the intersections of art, science, and spirituality. He attended the Chicago Waldorf School, after which he received his BA from Bard College, and his MFA from California College of the Arts. Lazar is currently working on his PhD in the Philosophy, Cosmology and Consciousness program at California Institute of Integral Studies. He is also enrolled in a full time training at Eurythmy Spring Valley. He also recently completed a training through the Association for Anthroposophical Psychology.



### Berenika Lehrman

is an aspiring performance artist, interested in and working with the Chekhov acting technique, dance, and clowning. She is an active member of the Youth Section of North America.



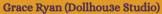
### **Adeline Lyons**

currently resides in the new Threefold Youth House in Spring Valley, New York. She is engaged in various projects mostly involving a combination of writing, acting, event visioning, editing, and anthroposophy. She is committed to transformation.



### Bride Alona McWilliam

currently lives in Denver, Colorado. She wonders how to bridge the gap between inner and outer and is so grateful to have Eurythmy/Eurythmy Therapy as her profession. <a href="mailto:bridemcw@comcast.net">bridemcw@comcast.net</a>





is an artist and designer focused on creating moments of self, community, and place connection through art-based fashion. As the founder of Dollhou3e, she has designed garments for WNBA players, musical artists, collaborated with celebrity stylists, and exhibited art throughout Downtown Seattle. Grace's practice is awakened through daily observation of the city of Seattle and invites viewers to enter her imagination and see the ordinary transformed into the extraordinary.



### **Duanning Song**

is an 11 grader at Green Meadow Waldorf School. She was born in Shanghai, China at two moved to San Diego, California. Her artistic sense follows her through everything she does, especially drawing, which comes as a natural talent to her. She would love to pursue art further.



### Ezra Sullivan

is based at Threefold Educational Foundation and School in Chestnut Ridge, NY, from which he works within the realms of spiritual research, social entrepreneurship, and organizational consulting. threefold.org/introcourse + threefold.org/youth



### **Iona Temple**

lives in Philmont, New York, where she has been involved in various educational initiatives for both children and adults. She is interested in the future of education and how it can support healthy engagement with the world. She also enjoys working with cows, writing, and finding ways to be and create in community.



### Bella Toso

is an artist based in St. Paul, Minnesota, whose work explores the subconscious through unplanned, intuitive creation. Inspired by organic forms and her Waldorf education, she sees art as a direct line to the soul, revealing meaning through chaos.

# What is the task at hand,



### Ourselves, - the task at hand by Gareth Dicker

Rainer Maria Rilke writes: "There is only a single, urgent task: to attach oneself someplace to nature, to that which is strong, striving and bright with unreserved readiness, and then to move forward in one's efforts without any calculation or guile, even when engaged in the most trivial and mundane activities."

The thematic question of this publication—"what is the task at hand?"—is as immanently personal as it is non-specific. Of course, my task is not your task. There is nothing in the world that could be said to everyone. But mustn't there be something singular and exacting that could be whispered to each one of us alone?

I think we know that any voice whispering secret tasks cannot arrive ultimately from outside of us. The only voice we can act from in freedom is our own. All other voices, however influential and instructive, can only be more or less polished mirrors.

Recently, Rilke has become a silver-lined cavern for my ears. Through reading a few excerpts of his, I began to realize something that maybe you already understand. For me this somehow feels like a fresh revelation:

Anything I love belongs to me precisely because my heart reaches to meet it. I possess my tasks only to the extent that I love them. And so if I cease to love them, they cease to be mine in that same moment. I would almost stop writing here, because that's all I really have to say. But I'll go on, if you will go on musing with me.

If I call any part of the world "stranger," keeping my heart narrow and dry, how am I to see into those realities that might just be lovable, hiding behind the face of ordinary things? If I do not really love what is outside of myself, it is no longer for me; I have given it up because I have called it nothing. Then it becomes invisible and inaudible. But, by grace, the moment I stir again in a new question of love, life is immediately reilluminated. Fresh eyes, fresh world.

Sometimes this new life becomes a new task, sometimes a vaster joy; often both at once. Apparently Goethe's last words to his daughter-in-law, Ottilie, were: "Do open the shutter of the bedroom so that more light may enter." When we emanate our inner light and love on outward appearances, quickly they tend to become bright for us, become part of us, become perhaps our own special task for a time.

I also begin to see how the act of loving our tasks is inseparable from loving real beings and places. Because we begin to really know each other when, as Rilke puts it, we give ourselves "without calculation or guile" willingly into the vulnerability of relations like friendships, courtships and communities. At a less conscious but more primal octave of our being, this giving over occurs also with the animals, ecologies, and landscapes we find ourselves amidst. We literally absorb the habitat of a pond or park right into our skin whenever we extend our fingers or nostrils or sweat to greet the day. Even baby calves affirm this kind of knowledge, licking the dirt to invite the local living soil into their many-chambered stomachs.

New places and people confront us, at first, as strange. But if we stay with relationships long enough, then as the seasons spiral on, one day we inevitably wake up able to say: "This place has become my home. This person lives in my heart."

What are our tasks, then, for places and people who begin to belong to us? I think in some ways the answer is quite natural. We do for our home or our beloved companion whatever our love for them asks of us, which is generally neither prescribable nor all too complicated.

With these musings in mind, I wonder: aren't tasks, places, plants, pets, and people all shades of a single fabric of love? I imagine ephemeral fabrics woven of the stuff of all our lives, threaded into innumerable rainbowed fashions. Perhaps some Gods wear our lives as garments at cosmic celebrations, their capes shimmering with our bluest melancholy and our brightest yellow cestasy. For them, no thread is wasted, no color impossible to incorporate. Maybe we, as both threads and weavers, by weaving in our strange, glorious patterns, are—in Rilke's call to attend to "the most trivial and mundane activities"—doing tiny things of infinite significance. Who is to say? Perhaps only us.

No one, not even a God, can resolve the riddle of our personal and collective tasks for us. We are ourselves the riddle—strong, striving, and bright—and, with our chameleon cloaks, perhaps creation's very best answer.

Once, while walking the Camino de Santiago, a simple thought came to me and comes back to me now: "There is nowhere to go, nothing to do." Strange words to tell oneself in a world on fire. And yet I think it is true: there is nothing we must do—only someone we might find ourselves to have become, for each other, for our earth, for whatever Gods may be. Ourselves, all of us: the task at hand!

### The Task in Hand

By Nicholas Budwine

With courageous conviction
To you, starry Altar,
Patiently yearning,
Veiled and silent,
Hear my cry: I do!

I do, I do, I do; As the iron in Thy blood Doth breathe a leader new; Whose calling weaves Falling stars and falling leaves.

So, to the forge of knowing let's go And cast the deed, resolve; Welcoming what comes forth With discerning compassion for all.

Witness our kingly heart beat
Her blazing flame!
Enduring through time
The gravely burning pain;
To be of flesh and far from home
Grants us strength
To transform.

Twilight whispers
"Take my hand, be not alone.
'Tis a task, a gift, a friend,
To wake with Thee,
Love."

Forever I am Accompanied.



Sleep Work by Adeline Lyons

flattening into night takes iron heated by the great blood of the day to red hot attention melting beyond sky to consciousness' task.

imprint of voices on sheaths of burn echo in meeting-space of sleep. gifts of name take aim at listeners. the body breathes.

what sacred motive closes our eyes for higher places? who, unmet, waits in verticality? where, unfound, guilds the horizontal plane?

> I am not you until we agree to cease the beginning— 'til substance transfers through Time's crossing, from all spent, to present, for future.

you are not I until we spare our work the non-essential.

I cannot think you until I take the chance in sleep to recreate myself. you cannot think me until we wake, undone.

let's will each other's words by listening between past and future and know Now isn't separate from the streams of time that shape us, but an opportunity to compound alchemies of epochs into single deeds.

> night iron glows slowly into dawn. when dark of day bursts new— I and you continue.

### On Commitment: A Choice to Engage in the Question

By Iona Temple

"Until one is committed, there is always hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative and creation, there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising to one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance which no one could have dreamed would come their way. Whatever you can do or dream, you can begin it. Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it. Begin it now."

Attributed to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

What happens when a group of people commit to each other? A few young adults in the Hudson Valley asked this question, and a conversation emerged around new forms of education. Young, eager to learn, and disillusioned by the conventional educational streams (or at least not fully fulfilled), a group of us sat down and shared our dreams of an ideal education. We live in a moment where most higher education options are either corporate pipelines or spaces of one-directional information sharing. What is appropriate and needed in the current moment we live in? How can education support the individual's relationship to the world and develop capacities for engaging with reality? Out of these conversations emerged a self-designed curriculum. Seven of us committed to creating a container to explore our interests and questions and to create the projects that usually stay in the realm of imagination. The daily rhythms of this education initiative support our group learning and coming to know one another, and our individual studies and projects.

On Monday mornings, Jon McAlice comes and talks to us about education, philosophy, freedom, community, and learning. He wears Irish sweaters and round glasses, and sometimes we joke that we are something like the dead poets' society, and he is the professor. Afterwards, we drink coffee and talk about the ideas and thoughts that emerged from the conversation. Today, we talked about the ideals of community created in response to a need, communities with a shared purpose. How do we move past ideals of private property and the nuclear family? We wonder, we debate. We pull ourselves away from the conversation eventually and resist the urge to play volleyball, a new group passion that fills the mornings after we finish breakfast. We turn to our individual studies and quietly read and write as the autumn sun shines on the goldenrod and the insects chirp. We spread ourselves throughout the barn and outside until we break for lunch.

On Monday afternoons, we go to the forest. We are helping rebuild a boardwalk that stretches into the woods, which is stewarded by the Nature Institute. It is repetitive work, but the progress is now apparent after four weeks, and the calm, steady work gives something of a balance. Tuesday mornings, we meet to study together. First, we read *Brotherhood and the Struggle for Existence*, and now we are reading *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Something has come from chewing over the ideas of the individual in the community and the structures of oppression.

In the afternoons we work on our projects: architecture in harmony with nature, experiments in vibration, tone, and their relationship to the spiritual world, writing on new forms of wholistic education, investigations into phenomenology, the relationship between biography and nutrition, creating and designing a social game called What's Your Tolerance?, and a one woman theater piece of a story called Mister God, This is

On Wednesdays, we share how our projects are going, finding surprising connections between our different themes, often discovering related questions and findings among them. We are learning how our individual work is a participation in a greater collective learning. On Wednesday afternoon, we sit outside and check in about how we're doing—what is wonderful and what is hard? Even in simply naming these things and witnessing one another, we are learning, slowly, how to relate to one another and the social fabric of the whole group. After this, we all eat dinner and stay up late talking about the future of this project, what to name it, and what we'll do next. The night ends with playing cards until we become too tired to continue.

So, what happens when a group of people commit to each other is that time seems to warp itself to meet the commitment. Three days a week, we create a container where we strive to meet our visions of experiential learning, creativity, spontaneity, and collaborative engagement. We get to explore our thoughts and bounce them off one another, to dive into a project and come up against ourselves and our struggles, and to learn from great thinkers who have focused on questions of education and community. We cook and clean together, and play and learn and create. It's a process that began as an experiment and is now a seed ready to be nourished by attention, conversation, and care. We ask "what's next?" as the time of closing this chapter comes into view.

There is something I've learned in saying yes. To start something before it's perfectly thought out. To dive in and learn by doing allows something to grow. What we are doing is not particularly glamorous, but immensely worthwhile. In making a commitment to ourselves and each other, in choosing to have agency in our relationship to time, and by engaging with the world, something has been born.

TASK@ HAND By US? Aseries of DAAWING INVITATIONS TO DO (DOODLE) HERE (You and I) IN THIS MAGAZINE ((WHO+WHO))
has made it, OR PERFORM UPUN ANOTHER PAGE. or imagine 1. "HARK! The page! I've found you! (FIND PAGE)" 2. Measure how I (the page) am in Similar dimension to your hand. 3. I invite you to find my partner, my pal, Herr Penci 4. Now notice, how I and the Pen: Pencil: friend, form a polarity. 5. Explore this polarity, now in collaboration (you, me, Pencil, boundary)



The task at hand

## Entering the task at hand: how are you holding the future? by Lucien Dante Lazar

Throughout the past many years of being an artist working with a diversity of mediums, I have come to experience that the hands are witnesses of love. We can develop this love organism of our hands by existing consciously in the deeds that from them imbue the world. Their deeds of love are awakened by the spiritual processes that shape our becoming, which, through loving awareness, human beings may learn to experience in the being of our hands. As we open our hands into the being of themselves, revelations of the future impulses of humankind may speak to our souls, and our hands may know this formulation.

Each artwork in this series called upon the loving impulse in my hand spirit, that color could perform itself as mirroring image of the aspects of art which evolution has procured and proclaimed; and how these aspects may surrender their finiteness to the laws of spiritual science as it is revealed through the seven life processes outlined in Rudolf Steiner's unfinished book Anthroposophy (A Fragment).

Like sea sponges, our hands sift the oceans of spirit in soul-ether currents. If our hands are imbued with free conscience, the being of our hands in their making deeds can read the script of spirit life, love, and light. Out of these discernments, the drawings in this series came into being.

We hold the future in the present. And because of this way of holding the future, we understand the future as that which we may receive in infinite possibilities. In this way, the creation of these drawings is a creation of infinite possibilities, finding stillness in form, guided by the soul beings of color. These images are stillnesses that persist in space and time, similarly to the way in which mist hangs aloft in the air, at every single moment, revealing anew what lies beyond its lens.

In this way are these drawings meant to meet the human soul as a certain mist. And, in overcoming this mist—in moving through the gift of its concrete revelation— with interest, we may step into the beyond, into the meaning of itself, where Truth, Beauty, and Goodness stand as pillars of creation; and where they reach out in configuration to behold human work and striving.

The future is being held in these drawings in the way that our hands hold our conscience, our creative life, and our intuitive awareness. In other words, it is our choice how we hold the future. Our organism is blessed with the opportunity to decide, and our decision can meet our death, and stop there, or it can overcome death through the meeting of death's self, and recognize what death beholds: that future life.

In the seven life processes, we encounter the basic training and beingness of human becoming in body, soul, and spirit. These becomings are biological processes, as well as cognitive activities. This series of artworks strives to position the entirety of the human becoming as an artistic expression. In doing so, it contends with the death processes in human perception (perfectly outlined in Rudolf Steiner's *Philosophy of Freedom*). Furthermore, it lives into the life processes in spiritual Intuition, Imagination, and Inspiration.

I view these artworks not as aesthetic per se, as much as *originating* aesthetics. They reveal an aesthetic matter in order to offer to the human soul a vehicle by which their very form and image may be transformed and surpassed. We can see at the end of the series two detail shots of the artwork expressing the seventh life process of *generating*. The material I chose to work with—water-soluble wax pastel—is an ideal material for documenting the map of etheric impulses in the craft of drawing. These photographs capture the artwork as it is angled toward the light in a certain way that describes the architecture of the color's application. This architecture is like a breathing of heart and lungs, and an opening of the spiritual hand organ. The Imagination upon the page is witnessable through the skeletal structure of its architecture, revealed in these detailed images.

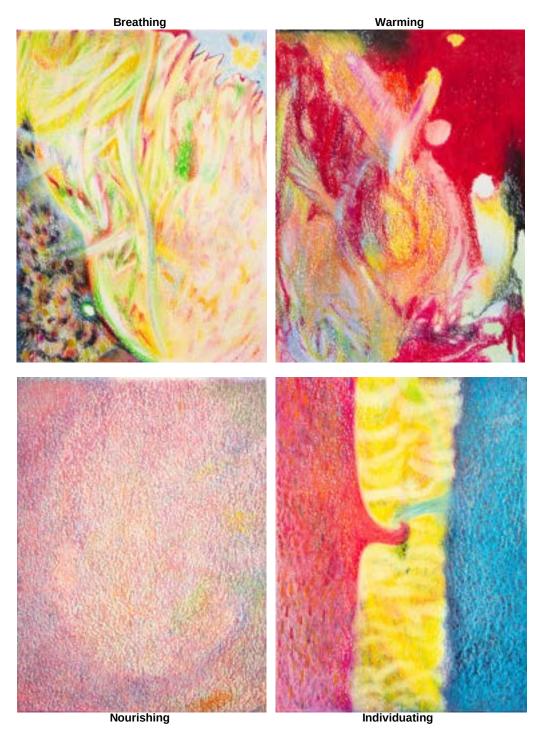
We can imagine the same activity occurring on each of the seven drawings; and know that, through this activity, the seven life processes are each at play. Inherently, the drawings unify the seven life processes—both as biological and as cognitive processes— with the deed of art itself. It is this deed, this doing, into which the future springs. Can we create within ourselves the virtues of future personhood? Can art be a vehicle through which individual universal metamorphosis can spiritual scientifically be enacted? Does art have the ingredients the human being needs to transform the necessary aspects of embodiment for future virtues to create the present times? In this series of drawings, I am enacting these questions and providing a living expression of their responses.

One of the tasks of life—especially today, when so many images and technologies of complex heredity are finely formed in plain sight—is to receive, in waking consciousness, the death of the object, the death of the manifestation, so that it may not beguile our nature; so that it may not turn us in to the adversaries who work in media, for example, and who more subtly work in human personality and technology.

To consciously receive death is to consciously live resurrected life. The *individuating* process, which I only came to at the end of the series—all other artworks were made in order—reveals a most profound mystery of the human being. To fill this artwork with heart, seeing and perceiving, one must strive to stand as the reality of the image; to walk into the image and live within it. It is consecration; it is marriage between I and thou in free etheric life; it is the portal of initiation; it is becoming human as self entrusting self within the Self of the etheric Christ; it is Beauty, Truth, and Goodness moving in human forming.

We know as human beings today that we need only open our hearts, our souls, in communion with another, in order for freedom to occur as living joy. And to create out of this freedom is the task at hand; to receive the revelation of the suprasensory self in the meeting of the ground of existence—the union of souls coming together in the Christ-endowed life. From hands to heart—and through heart-filled hands may the head incline toward personal freedom in universal spirit.

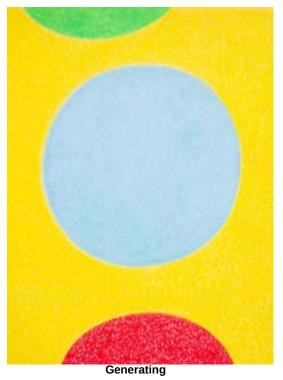
The spirit of ourselves can pour inward from the periphery as future revelation come to bless us. But we can only do this—we can only *perceive* this future ceremony in the present—when our hearts meet our hands, and our heads perceive this meeting place, and allow for the creativity of the Etheric Christ to dwell in us as an overcoming of death, even an overcoming of earthly life, to birth new life of spirit.

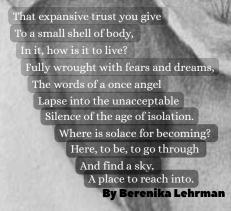


Maintaining Growing









### And Now, We Sing

by Luna Arteaga-Laak

We walked silently,
Past the sycamore
Past the dutch broom
Past the trillium and sword fern
Past the birch.

We did not sart a fire, Though all we needed was there. We did not pause to great the soil, To lay our hands in it Bury them and watch each other Start to grow.



Ricocheted thoughts.

Stop. Unburden yourself.

Let lightness flood through you.

Wafts of breeze bristle listening hairs, effervescent colors on clear days.

Say, what's a-goin' on, to your

Unmistakably mistake-making me.

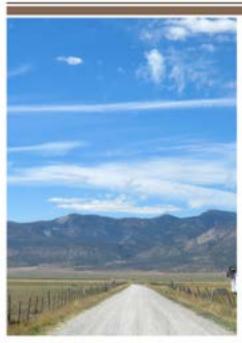


# toware you holding the Future,



*Impasse* by Emily Fecsko

### FRUITFUL SPRINGS



A long dirt road, a trail of dust rising behind us, the slam of our car door breaking the silence. The heat is sweltering, and the mountains tower over the dry plains, humbling us. Inside 51 acres, animals wander freely, each with its own place and task. Nothing is wasted here. Everything is part of a cycle. Emerging from this landscape is a man with a wide grin, eyes bright with enthusiasm - Moshe Rona. He has taken full stewardship here and named his endeavor Fruitful Springs.



He has set himself the task of bringing back life to the dry, deprived plains of Utah. For three years he has lived on the land alone. His work is known only to a few. His will and strong belief in restoration is what have kept him in survival. Yet survival has been harsh - a fight with constant bureaucracy, his land recently sprayed with poison that burned his skin, and a freezing winter when he could hardly walk.

This year - one of the driest on record - Moshe's property is producing when others are struggling Biomass, beef, water. Numbers the surrounding ranchers understand. Slowly, they've begun to look again this time curious with questions.





### Forests of the Future:

We climb into his car, a vehicle barely holding together, the mechanics of the steering wheel jutting out in every direction. We set out across the land. We've entered another world. Building permits are not a possibility. Base camp is a mud hut, willow structures, colorful fabrics strung across lines, and a weathered trailer. Moshe begins to talk.

"On one side of the property is an old guy who owns most of the land down here in the valley. I've never met someone as scary as him. The other guy who owns some of the land is on the other side - both come from generations of ranchers. They're all crazy, and guess what? I'm nestled right in the middle of them. I love it!"



He gestures at the dry land around us.

"Everything in front of us on this land is unheard of. If you ask the ranchers, the professionals, they'll say I'm doing it all wrong. But you don't have to learn from the mainstream culture. If the culture has truth, it will reteach itself from the ground."

"I'd say the concepts and themes of permaculture are my main tool. They're just that - concepts and themes. There isn't one specific strategy, one way to do it. It's about working with that land, this land. I work with nature. The first step is observation. How can I shut up, stand still, and just watch? But really watch. Teach me about pigs. Everyone else does all this crazy learning, but Pumbaa, the pig, he's taught me more about pigs than anyone."



We drive past brittle pastures and stop to greet the cows.

"I'm trying to teach them what it's like to be alive again. They came from a ranch nearby and are a product to make babies and get sold for meat."

He points toward the left.

"This is where the first main forest is going to be. I'm talking about 40-foot trees, all around these wetlands. It takes time. But it's already happening. It's not about planting trees and waiting years. If I fix the soil, convince it there should be a forest, and load it with seeds, it'll jump the gun - fast-track it.



We step out of the car, my sneakers crunching dry soil. The land looks barren, and I almost want to laugh at the idea of a forest here. As we walk, a large area of tall reeds comes into view - a miraculous sight in this dry valley. A fruit of labor for Moshe's endeavor. "I just have reverence and humble myself to the reeds. And not just one kind of reed this kind and that kind. That's medicine. This is the roof for our structures. That's thatch."

### Transforming the land:

We duck under an electric fence. Tucked behind the reeds is a pond two red kayaks sit on, the water is cold and fresh with a spring pouring into it. Just three years ago the spring was nothing but mud pits, trampled by cattle until the water ran red and from a distance it smelled foul. Today it feeds the whole property.



"Everything was salted ground when I first came and very much so. Everyday with the cows out here feels like an eternity, keeping them well is a hard task. The truth is, life revolves around water. If I can keep them in water I can keep everything going."

"I cleaned up this puddle by diving into the mess - cutting, digging, ripping until I cleaned it up. I love the mud!"

Moshe spent three years digging water channels around his property to keep water flowing and moving, chipping away at the ground frozen or in sweltering summer. Moshe's water system looks more like a patchwork invention: tanks strapped together and stacked for elevation, hoses siphoning between the tanks, the land and the spring.

"Even if the solar powered system is not working - which happens a lot because the skies are crazy right now, not much solar gain - I've got wind pumping. A cylinder goes up and down, splashes the water, fills the high tanks, and overflows. And you know, this whole valley used to be filled with windmills. Now you can't find a single one."

### Perseverance:

"My friend who started this endeavor with me, he's an educator. But he may never actually do it. That frustrates me, 'cause I tell him - we need to actually just do it. If we do it and succeed, maybe we can educate from that. But we can't educate first. Somebody's got to do it."



"I knew I had to hold on for three years. I hit the third year, and I was scared everything was going bad. But my permaculture teacher Jeff Lawton: had told me. "When you really follow the concepts and themes, nature will back you up like you can't believe."

"Lay down your sacrifice, and the windows of heaven will open for you. Pour out a blessing so rich you won't have room to receive it. And you can't - because you're not supposed to hold it all. You've got to let it go. Let it flow."

### -By Magdalena Kadula

Where's your heart at, huh?
Not in this writing, I suppose.
Concerned with the unconcerned
Discernment of discipline.
You can't win the game,
Initiation isn't a game.
No way to climb to the top
Just a step and another, don't stop.
Don't let yourself be brought down
By the beginning of a misplaced thought.
We fought
My mind and I,
But she's here, truly

A little unruly, tangled
Like the hair on her head
Like the thoughts she's trying to shed.
Don't tread
Too lightly, my friend.
Dig deep for that sense
Of the yes presence.
Not a past tense,
A fluid of unargued resilience.
Her being's immense,
If she could just say
Yes.

### By Berenika Lehrman



**Magic Gardens by Emily Fecsko** 

### Star Seeds

• we are but seeds that know deep down that we blossom as stars



by Bella Toso



### Seed Song

Now the seeds that in late summer, Under the pressure of Sun, burst forth from the Blossom have found their resting place; cold, dark, still, in the Earth they lie, Enveloped by snow.

I waken!
Waken to the seed song,
The flame, the kernel,
The silent prayer within—
That we fallen stars
Are always praying...



### What is God's will of me?

### -Bride Alona McWilliam

What is God's will of me? Like tree branches flowing through me—blood—warmth leads the way—take care of it—blood flow warmth—go—tree sap—raised into levity. Eurythmy—dance of the stars and planets—make this my prayer that I may be evermore in your likeness—free flowing like the tree—upright, healthy and flexible—bright in the sunlight—and still know who I am in the dark—find land in the storm sea on Noah's ark—look out and believe in the dove with the olive branch—know hope and love and ease and self. Make space for what is to come—without needing to know the outcome



Seed Song by Bride Alona McWilliam

# The Stars Still Speak: Astrology's Enduring Promise in Our Time

### By Ben Kibby

We've always looked up at the stars in wonder. What is it about the vast expanse of space without that evokes a corresponding depth of soul within? When humanity looks up at the night sky, we seek answers to life's greatest mysteries. In the past, we were encircled and influenced by entities of incredible power, whose stories were deeply familiar and whose presence was felt. The lives of humanity and heavenly beings were intimately entwined. Against a canvas of black, the world's great mythologies were enacted; gods and goddesses circled overhead in a rhythmic dance, and cosmic memories were inscribed into the heavens by the fixed stars. The Great Tapestry of Being was a story in which our own lives were a carefully woven thread. Today, we imagine enormous spheres of radioactive plasma lying thousands of light-years away, lifeless balls of rock and gas orbiting our Sun in mechanical motion, and our own planet as a speck of dust in a sea of lifeless space. The scientific revolution stripped the world of its soul, and a *meaningful* connection to the stars was lost. "Stars once spoke to humanity," wrote Rudolph Steiner in 1922, and "it is world destiny that they are silent now."

Alongside this emerging vision of a mechanical universe, the inner life of humanity became equally disenchanted. In response to the demise of religious institutions as a source of spiritual guidance, the discipline of psychoanalysis emerged to help cure the modern epidemic of soullessness. Today, according to the depth psychologist Keiron Le Grice, "we have new gods or, rather, we call the old gods by new names obsessions, compulsions, neuroses, manias and depressions, drives and complexes, symptoms of disease and illness, idiosyncrasies and eccentricities" (The Archetypal Cosmos, pg. 39). We no longer have a means of relating to the unconscious powers that were rightly conceived of as autonomous beings. Just as the tyrannical ego has sought control over the natural world, so has it attempted to protect itself from the wilderness of the psyche. To survive a culture that is dominated by economic incentives, many turn to medications to quiet symptoms that would otherwise initiate a deeper relationship with the soul. Or else we may analyze the contents of the unconscious to gain "some intellectual control over the irrational forces" (The Death and Rebirth of Psychology, 204). This was precisely the critique that Otto Rank—one of Freud's most influential disciples—made against the practice of psychoanalysis, which he felt impeded upon the creative power of the will: "It is not sufficient to see the irrational element in human life and point it out in *rational* terms. On the contrary, it is necessary actually to live it" (Death and Rebirth, 248). The enduring promise of star-wisdom is its ability to "provide some way to consciously recognize and relate constructively to these powers formerly represented by the gods" (The Archetypal Cosmos, 39). With the help of our birth chart, we can begin to recognize the various parts of our soul as unique manifestations of universal spiritual principles, which are known in transpersonal psychology as archetypes. Within the image of wholeness that our starchart presents, both our talents and inner obstacles are recognized as spiritual beings to be related to, not controlled.

Astrology's task today is to help bridge the rift between our mythic imagination and reason, and to illuminate the connection between the self-conscious ego and our inner pantheon of planets; between the Sun and the solar system. When a person embarks on this quest for self-knowledge "to find one's own mythic relationship to the universe" (The Archetypal Cosmos, 49), they begin to tread a path of psychospiritual development that Carl Jung referred to as individuation. It is a process of becoming conscious of our innermost being, the Self, through an effort to develop a relationship with the unconscious contents of the psyche. In the words of Keiron Le Grice, "During individuation, one encounters the 'gods' not through any collective myth or mediated through the external forms of a religion, but directly, as powers to be experienced within one's own being" (The Archetypal Cosmos, 47). The promptings of the Self, our true psychic center, can be recognized "by differentiating and making conscious the images and impulses shaping one's life experience," which are the formative spiritual powers reflected in the planets and constellations (*The Archetypal Cosmos*, 48). One does not attune to the Self by identifying with the psyche's contents, but by recognizing our habits, urges, and unintended reactions, we awaken to our essential nature, which transcends the influence of the planetary archons. Astrology is a mirror through which we become conscious of the gods' influence in our lives, and by doing so, increase our capacity to co-create with them. We can use our star-chart as a map of our unique "mythic relationship" to the spiritual beings above (Archetypal Cosmos, 49), and to recognize their corresponding patterns of expression below.

Once we begin to recognize the planets and stars in ourselves and the world, how do we take up astrology as a means for self-development? Let's consider the fundamental tool used in the astro-psychology of Marsilio Ficino, the renowned "physician of the soul" from Renaissance Florence. Ficino would consult the birth charts of his clients in order to stimulate their imagination, by which the soul can mediate between body and spirit through the alchemical process of solve et coagula ("dissolve and congeal"). It is with this faculty of imagination that we can perceive the connection between our life circumstances and the influence of transcendent archetypal powers. Concrete events melt and meld together to reveal underlying patterns, while abstract ideas are "fleshed out" in relation to immediate concerns. The alchemists were aware that "the water of the psyche not only dissolves," but that "it also forms a uterine matrix out of which something new is born" (The Planets Within, 67). When we study the current positions of the planets or our star-chart, we not only gain access to the meaning behind outer appearances, but we also open the possibility to imagine more fulfilling expressions of deeply entrenched patterns. A compulsive craving for sugar, inspired by Venus, could signal a need to satiate an emotional need with the sweetness of our own compassionate presence. A consuming preoccupation with anger, fueled by Mars, could find a constructive expression through a creative activity or martial art. Standing behind a debilitating depression, addiction, or illness is a planetary archon that can initiate us into a deeper relationship to the Self. Our demons are meaningful because they call attention to neglected parts of our psyche, and by recognizing their specific character with the help of our birth chart (whether it be Venus, Mercury, Saturn, etc), we can identify their proper place within the wholeness of the soul.

In Thomas Moore's account of Ficino's worldview, he says that "[t]o discover one's daimon and genius is also to find one's weakness, the vulnerable spot of the soul." The

influence of this personal guiding spirit can be recognized in moments when we are thrown off center: perhaps in an obsession, fantasy, or inappropriate reaction. By entering into a conscious dialogue with that overwhelming inner force, we can begin to create a proper channel for its "genius." This is the alchemical task of transmuting the lead of personality conditioning into the gold of soulful expressions of the spirit. The metamorphosis occurs when we shift our attitude towards the source of an inner conflict. Through the lens of our defense mechanisms, some aspects of ourselves may appear to be entirely negative, which is just a reflection of the filter we're wearing. The hideous creature in our dreams, our self-destructive compulsions, and our chain of toxic partners are messages sent by the Self to awaken, heal, and initiate us into a higher level of consciousness and capacity. As the eminent mythologist Joseph Campbell assures us, "where we had thought to find an abomination, we shall find a god" (The Hero with a Thousand Faces, 25). If we can release our preemptive judgments towards the unconscious, then the rejected contents of our psyche can reveal their needs and purpose. Astrology helps us expand our awareness by recognizing the spiritual beings that lie behind our life choices. We do not transform the darkness by punishing it, but with the strength and compassion that grows from turning unconscious compulsions into conscious relationships.

A person can only be a conductor of the planets and stars when he no longer waits in longing for Venus, or hides from Saturn's looming shadow. If we are to live soulful lives and be responsive to the *musica universalis*, or music of the spheres, Ficino would advise us to "temper and tune the planetary tonal centers so that each would hum within the surface events of life" (*The Planets Within*, 195). When we fulfill ourselves by experiencing the full array of archetypes within, our true will can weave the fabrics of creation into a life of its own design. By becoming aware of our multiplicity of selves, and responding to the soul so that "it reflects in its innermost structure the night sky with its slow, steady, variegated, rhythmic dance of planets" (*The Planets Within*, 62), we begin walking the path of "becoming celestial" that was Ficino's guiding ideal. His goal was not a final consummation to be achieved, but an ever-deepening relationship to the World Soul.

Soulfulness requires imagination and an ability to recognize the language through which the spirit speaks. Since the psyche is embedded within congruent fields of intelligent activity, our perception of meaning and pattern is an experience of the Universe's interior dimension, and the study of celestial movements is a meditation on its Mind (*The Archetypal Cosmos*, 141). Inner and outer space, like humans and spiritual beings, are intimately entwined. Just as the dreams that shimmer in our sleep reveal realities beneath our waking consciousness, so can the stars initiate us into knowledge that hovers above our sensory perception. When one embarks upon a path of self-knowledge and actualization, one finds that the world responds to our intentions in a mysterious fashion. "In the deepening silence" that Rudolph Steiner thought to characterize our alienation from spiritual beings, we still discover a purposeful Universe that is always speaking. It is through this experience of silence that humanity has been impelled to turn from the hollow shells of tradition to the source of them within. There we will find the gods once more, and in our communion with those inner beacons of light, "there grows and ripens what humans speak to the stars."

#### **Works Cited**

Campbell, Joseph. The Hero With a Thousand Faces. Princeton University Press, 1968.

Le Grice, Keiron. *The Archetypal Cosmos: Rediscovering the Gods in Myth, Science and Astrology*. Floris Books, 2010.

Moore, Thomas. *The Planets Within: Marsilio Ficino's Astrological Psychology*. Lindisfarne Books, 1982.

Progoff, Ira. The Death and Rebirth of Psychology. Julian Press, 1956.



Past, Present, Future

 $\bullet$  holding the future in dreams, the past in no stalgia, and resting in the exquisite ordinariness of the present moment  $\bullet$ 

by Bella Toso





Nathaniel atop a timber frame he designed Film photo by Mischa



Archeology Collection by Dollhou3e Look: Moss Vest Designer: Grace Ryan Model: @impractical\_joker



Archeology Collection by Dollhou3e
Look 1: Arch Vest, Pedestrian T
Look 2: Ethernet 2
Designer: Grace Ryan

#### REDOING VOCATION

by Adeline Lyons

Young adults today are facing crises of identity. In addition to attending a career-breeding institution, they must craft a pristine "self" that can be exhibited or described in a matter of minutes, and then they can expect to be hired. Thus, career has an unhealthy tyranny over identity. What one says about themselves at social gatherings these days is so typical that it could fit into a formula. Usually, it is a litany of careers or career-building activities, or trainings that aids\ the achievement of a position. This reflects a fundamental aspect of today's social paradigm. Identity can be free of a career insofar as it is called "hobby," or "family," or "personal life." I am not implying that *everyone* has become an identity-career person, or that there aren't people out there reimagining vocation through their deeds. There are plenty of teachers who definitely cannot be summarized by the word "educator." They are actually just multi-faceted individuals engaged with the diversity of life itself, who happen to work in a school context because it makes sense for such people to be around children. But by and large, especially in the world beyond spiritual communities, career is the "end" that the means of one's actions lead to.

While what we do can be who we are, it is not ideal that activity precedes self-knowledge to any great extent; meaning, the bullet points on one's resume should not inform me about myself. Rather, self-knowledge should be the impulse of volition from which those activities arose. But I've observed, during my time spent in universities, that the trends one follows, along with personal tastes, political opinions, and quirky skills, all of which can subtly find their way onto a cover letter, have become significant parts of character and, consequently, career potential. Our actions are collected into CVs and resumes that display the activities that constitute our lives, and identity forms a "landing site" for a career. Once we land there, who are we?

We arrive at careers through systemic traditions—family circumstances, economic status, education, and, to some extent, personal interests, none of which are free. Even interests are often confined within the frameworks of career, making us unaware of what life could be like if vocation consisted simply of freely enacted deeds, where my interests cannot be categorized because they are actually the result of my own individual being. Freely enacted deeds are what I can do if I abandon frameworks altogether, leaving behind notions of success, ambition, or temptations of promotion, and give my attention instead to the riddle of *myself in time*. Meaning, to the nature of "me" in temporality in relation to the "I" who guides me in eternity. How I journey through the minutes, hours, and months of linear life is indeed a riddle to solve by attending to the reality of my higher self. What does myself in time actually want to do? Beyond the wants that are fallen-want of money, recognition, validation, etc.-what does my highest self aim for? What need do I perceive in the world that I can meet freely, not out of force or obligation? When I listen to this, "I" can guide "me" through time, as a shepherd guides its flock.

What if cities, communities, and villages were built around the idea of vocation as a result of freely given service, creative expression, or spiritual research? Such a shift would radically transform social, economic, and cultural life, by lifting it out of the "I get paid six figures a year to diagnose people's illnesses" or "I blew up on TikTok and now get paid a lot" paradigm and into a world-village whose workers might say: "I strive to ease what ails thee through the activity of my life," or "I am continuing the work of creation," or "I am researching the mysteries."

I want to form a new covenant between true self and deeds, or what today we would call identity and career. Not the collusion of self and exploits, where the question "what do you do?" ends in "I'm a teacher." Rather, a world in which one's vocation is an outward manifestation of their truest, inner self. A world in which my deeds are relevant to reality—the place and time in which I live, the name I have, the people I know.

The epoch we live in demands that our actions align with our truest selves and highest aspirations. What does it mean to take ownership of your deeds truly? Beyond clichés of accountability and responsibility, how can we awaken to the impact of our deeply individual tasks? Ideally, each action I complete is a whole in itself, not bullet points of feats that my identity encapsulates. Every task I complete in the present is informed by my presence in both past and future, and has the potential to transform reality. I can cultivate the present reality through cognitive willpower, and thus the deeds of my life form my biography. I must see myself as the destination of everything life brings me. I must meet life with a sense of responsibility for the experiences I have, knowing that they are not encounters I am subject to, or operative within, but rather significant events pursued by my higher self in the context of eternity. Freely chosen deeds create destiny.

So what do I mean by the title of this essay—Redoing Vocation? Partly, it involves changing our relationship with language, which has become more and more categorical. What does "writer" truly mean? Or "teacher"? Or "farmer"? How might we combine these labels into a new one—perhaps "writer-teacher-farmer"? This isn't about creating multi-talented hobbyists leading a jack-of-all-trades lifestyle, but rather about asking—how do these roles fulfill real needs? What do those needs look like, both external and within? Of course, it also requires a shift in our relationship to money, which is currently deeply bound to notions of time and labor, but entirely abstracted from the relevance of one's efforts.

Where does free will, the Michaelic impulse, align with the world's needs, or with cosmic needs? While sacrifice is involved, in the sense that we cannot only do what we feel "called to do" all the time, but must compromise so that our I-sense meets world-sense, this intersection doesn't have to mean commodification or the efficiency obsession we see today. Why must every teacher follow the same training and meet identical standards? What are writers really doing? What if a group of people adopted a "vocation" focused purely on bringing social threefolding to an entire county? They wouldn't be working to get paid—utilizing their creative vision on the clock—but would instead engage in the study and practical application of social threefolding, where cultural, economic, and rights spheres work harmoniously, not burdened by collusion between two, or tyranny of one of the other, or dilution. Could twenty individuals' vocation be "social threefolding" without it needing to become a company or organization? Could a bread baker deliver bread within a certain radius without streamlining it through stores? Could a group of gardeners take on the beautification of an entire town? Could police exist as service workers?

As a young person, I don't want to answer "what do you do?" with one or two labels. I'd rather say, "I strive to recreate myself every day." Of course, this may sound poetic or superficial in today's culture. But perhaps a little more vision is needed if we are to preserve the future of vocation.

## **Futuring Now**

by Dante DiBiase

"What then will this art of the future be? The message will still be of nature and man, of order and beauty, but all will be sweetness, simplicity and freedom, confidence and light; the other is past, and well is it, for its aim was to crush life: the new, the future is to aid life and to train it, so that beauty may flow into the soul like a breeze". – William Richard Lethaby, 1885

There was a time, in the not too distant past, when men looked about and found themselves in the midst of a depressing reality. We oftentimes idolize the late 1800s as an era of romantic Victorian exploration and the comeuppance of the working class, when the growing pains of a burgeoning entrepreneurial phalanx clashed with safety, monarchy, and the natural world. A time of towering chimneys and jammed harbors, awash in the noise of steam whistles; the clean, honest work of blacksmiths, weavers, and machinists. But certain men and women of a different cloth sought a way forward from the truly crushing side of this "Progress".

The Arts and Crafts architectural movement began as the children of wealthy landholders and white-collar careerists ventured forth from the conformity of the rigid Classical environment around them, when ladies were forbidden solitary travel and Catholic priests preached the sanctity of humanity to industrialists who filled their workers lungs with sulfur and soot. These artisans, William Morris, John Ruskin, and Augustus Pugin (amongst many others) had grown up steeped in the relics of a medieval countryside. They had stood on their hilltops as they came of age to witness ancient mills, bungalows, cathedrals and forests fall prey to the expansion of a world whose progress was couched in the lexicon of domination, submission and eradication. They sought change, and made a run at the towering structures their very progenitors had erected during the industrial revolution at such great effort.

To understand the impact of their movement, which encompassed tens of Guilds, architect's offices, political movements and copious amounts of literature and art, we need only turn our focus to Frank Lloyd Wright, who built his name on (and later bastardized) the concepts of "changefullness" and "vernacular" (of it's place) in architecture he borrowed from his erstwhile friends. The works of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. combined the tapestry and textile skills of Morris and his daughter, along with celebrated frescoes by the painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Countless architects all the way into the 1930s suffused their creations with attempts at blending building and place, bringing the laborers and artisans into the design process to add their own stamp of inspired genius, much as the gargoyle carvers of the Gothic age were wont to do.

Of course, as is often the case, the subsidies that wended into the hands of the artisans were mostly gleaned from upper-middle class benefactors, those who chose art as a stamp of legitimacy for their newfound social standing. And, though they maintained an honest relationship with those re- chiseling the face of England to reflect it's faery past, like most who channel their incomes to create their character, their tastes wandered elsewhere.

The Arts and Crafts movement, though it had a solid hundred years to unspool its momentum, really had never built up stage or audience large enough to compete with the excitement and raw performance of the industrial age. Peasants living on turnips and broth weren't feeling keenly the loss of local blacksmiths to lathes, weavers to mechanized looms. Countless forges and mills were only too happy to "economize" chintzy patterned fabrics, cast columns and cheap prints, all of which rapidly reduced the ability of the artisan to apply creative though to their work. But, much like the way we can't quite understand what it is we are losing to the onslaught of the large-language computer models today, there were just too many masons, plasterers, tin-smiths and slaters to ever imagine that every building craft would go the way of the candlemaker. Craftsmen became increasingly subservient to the new governing bodies and policy monopolies dictating the fabric of the world. Distance between architect and artisan drifted atmospherically apart.

43

So we've been left with a world; our grandparents bore witness to the last generations that strode confidently from apprenticeships into the ranks of millennia of supremely capable humanity, whose hands could shape the elements of the earth. Where plastic takes the place of prowess, we find ourselves at a critical juncture in the lives and legacy of artisans. Art has been divorced from the built world, whose aesthetic and social fabric ensures our lives are complete, that we can touch that beauty alluded to by Mr. Lethaby. We've lost the ability to integrate sculpture, decoration; any touch that once left an indelible imprint of integrated imperfection on the homes and businesses we've built, is gone.

Art itself has often been defined as humanity's striving to replicate the natural, to draw down the untameable currents that swirl in the depths of the forests and the shadows of tree-lined brooks. The Greeks took the human form and sought to hone its transmutation into marble, then on the isles of the United Kindom, great cathedrals were wrought with trunk-pillars fanning up into canopies of enmeshed branches, weaving the carver's handiwork with the divine of ancient groves. Even to the Victorians, who came long after, the inspiration for copperplate scrollwork and ceaseless ornamentation of the built world, still came, for the most part, from the idyllic wrangling of things outside the mechanical realm. The spirit we feel in something even as mundane as a crumbling brick knitting mill, a cozy brownstone home: this is the vegetable mind and mechanical in synchrony.

But this spirit has clearly flown the coop in the glass-wrapped skyscrapers and apartment towers, vinyl homes and cardboard shopping malls of the post-modern era. Having erased the human from the fabric of architecture, construction and urban guidance, the only place to turn for inspiration was the economy. Much in the same way that money dictates where competitive excellence occurs, like sports or the pharmaceutical complex, mechanical comforts and the bottom line rule the world of building. The masses of humanity are assaulted daily by an increasing invasion of faceless corporate architecture in the city and the countryside. It's strange to think that, at one time, industrial barons and even insurance firms competed for the most ornate offices and sculptural accommodations, like the baroque Chartered Accountants' Hall (1893) in London.

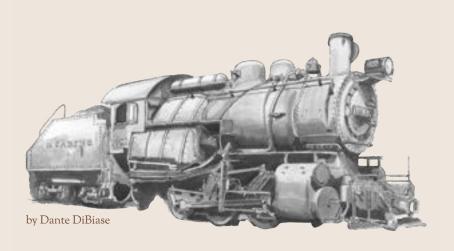
As a builder, an artist, and someone constantly drawn toward the allure of the corporate world that promises dividends to those that side-track a portion of their humanity, I've struggled to find a place in the word of faceless construction. Growing up in the farmlands of Pennsylvania, I worked with a natural builder who sought methods that integrated homes into the landscape, unfolding naturally along contours, plastered in shades that reflected the rooted foundations of the very soil upturned to make a place for them. Hand-planed lumber, creamy stucco and multi-paned finestrations: these caught the echoes of the soul and held space for the unfolding of a curious mind.

After years of apprenticeship, and a move to the rural lands of Vermont, I struck out on my own as an idyllic contracting entrepreneur, and was met with a plethora of work. Plastering chimneys and building fireplaces, chipping at the core of what to me seemed a limitless marketplace in which to stretch my newfound legs of independence. Quickly, however, I was disabused of this notion that the masses of humanity were just ravenous for beauty, as my plans for ornate mantles and rippled woodworking fell flat in the face of "considerations", which meant death to the soul that wished to probe the possibilities of materials like stone and tile. Gradually, I began to understand that in the 21st century, much in the light of Le Corbusier's infamous utterance, "The home is a machine for living", and art is further pushed to the sidelines. Not to be part of the wall, but to be hung ceremoniously upon it, created in a studio leagues away for the express purpose of adorning something so bereft of soul. And that's the accepted academic view, for what it's worth. True ornate and creative architecture, once "classically" intertwined in curriculums across the globe, has been shifted out of the classroom and into the separate field of architectural preservation (how best to keep our beautiful buildings limping along on fumes for the next decade). The hilarity in this country to me is that, at one time, our artisans not only outclassed the likes of European craftsmen in their campaigns like the "City Beautiful" movement, but they also outnumbered them! Contrast the United States now to Germany or France, who not only have the preservationists at hand to keep the stones

are actually building new castles and even housing estates in the classical ways. Their robust, government-sponsored craft programs and unbroken chains of apprentice masons and carpenters leave nothing to guesswork. Many of the United Kingdom's youth become world class carvers without paying a dime, competition-worthy frescoers or plaster-runners.

I've spent the past year taking classes with a stone carver in New York City, one of the last trained at the still-uncompleted Saint John the Divine cathedral in the same city. Countless hammer- blows have taught my hands and my heart that, to touch the raw earth, to mold it into forms that delight the eye and soul, is to embrae undying passion. My hope, over the coming years, is that assembling the skills and finances to build anew in inspiring materials, for the common man and the companies of the land, will be a path to sparking that flame of beauty in the world we are surrounded by. Whether it will itself be financially viable, as a means of living, will remain to be seen, but I believe it's our duty, even in the smallest ways, to push back against the tide of machine existence that threatens to cut our senses off from what makes our interactions and very social fabric so worth preserving.

To leave this weaving thread, then, I hope to consider what those Arts and Crafts builders and visionaries sought to construct: a world in which humanity is imbued with the power to take the abundant tapestry of nature, and to wrap that cloth around our objects, our buildings and our integrations with the wilderness, where agency in design is given to those that lay their hands upon it, not those who sit in high towers sketching out the world they seek to drop onto us.



To nurture eternal seed,

Speak love

In holding and expanding

Uprightness.

IAM

mature and to expand

I will rock the boat.

Yes!

-BRIDE ALONA MCWILLIAM



To Sail a Mountain by Emily Fecsko

### New Forms of Romantic Partnership

by Ezra Sullivan

Ethical Individualism is a new paradigm in the evolution of human consciousness, based on human beings awakening the slumbering capacity to realize their humanity. To become truly human means to create meaning out of an intuitive capacity to know right and wrong—morality. The outer moral laws that guided human beings' ethical decisions are now largely irrelevant, and morality must be accessed as a spiritual reality through the super-sensible organ of the heart. This capacity is not a given; in fact, it is the one step that cannot be taken for us. This is what the Mysteries do: they offer what cannot be handled so that a new capacity can be developed. Ethical Individualism calls upon a transformation of every aspect of society, which, of course, includes romantic relationships.

In the past, the majority of people were not capable of making ethical decisions out of their own consciousness. This lack of capacity was compensated for by the introduction of strong moral codes, which were reinforced through rituals, rhythms, and mythology. This was a beautiful development, as the cultural, tribal, and societal forms truly held people's sense of purpose and meaning.

As consciousness developed, humans became more individuated and conscious of ourselves as an "I." With individuation, the outward dogma or moral codes became chains for the human soul, and this process is creating chaos because the fabric of society is shifting so fundamentally. Yes, with a tightly held culture, there was a deep sense of belonging. But with the birth of the true self, or "I," a more solitary nature complements the collective task of belonging. Race, gender, ethnicity, and nation-state become more and more recognized as the semblance of identity than our eternal nature. There is the realization that human beings do not come from any particular place or time, but that people have come to a place and time.

The experience of individualism in everyday human consciousness makes many pre-existing societal forms obsolete. In its role of bringing outer codes of right and wrong to human society, religion is no longer needed. Morality must now come from within the human being as an intuitive capacity rather than an outward structure, like the Ten Commandments. This new inner experience of morality is the foundation stone of the new human society. The mystery centers have moved from the physical temples into the human heart as a super-sensible organ. The heart is the access point for the spirit, and is no longer dependent exclusively on mediators like priests, texts, traditional rituals, etc. This paradigm leads to the dissolution of relevance for every dogma that exists, as every human being becomes a sun, a center point. There is no conceptual framework to adhere to. Through an intuitive capacity for cognizing morality, a capacity for Ethical Individualism develops, arising as a choice point in the present moment. Ethical Individualism allows us to become free from the past.

What is the impact of Ethical Individualism on romantic relationships? When a romantic interest is encountered, any value judgments, desires, or predeterminations obscure the true encounter between the two. This includes: "I want a family," "I don't want kids," "I only want long term," "I want short term," "I am monogamous," "I am polyamorous." To truly encounter another, clear every single concept that lies between. It is a process of peeling back every layer of the given. Why? For the not-given to speak. Then I can do what is truly human and create meaning, letting the future speak. Childhood conditioning, "moon karma," and any other cobwebs of the past are cleared for what is truly imminent in the moment when I meet another.

If all the wants, desires, and dogmas around romantic relationships are removed, what is left? Well, the other person and I. What a concept! We are left with one question: What are the two of us to do together? Relationship becomes a mystery drama, the school of love for which the capacities in the human soul have descended for training. Liberate romantic relationships from all the unfreedoms: instincts, desire, cultural conditioning, and physiology. Relationality can become about the human spirit's love for your future, which begs the question: How can I help you do what you came here to do? Without concern for outcome and how that may affect me. Will love be there tomorrow? Yes. Will the other be there tomorrow? Imagine a relationship in which the partnership holds the evolution of both individuals as the most sacred thing, rather than certainty and security.

New relationship forms like polyamory are a necessary exploration for many to free the human soul from the bounds of unconsciously followed tradition. But these forms, too, have become unfree. If any of the past is brought into the space between us, it only clouds our judgment and capacities for discernment. The past can block the future. Instead, live into the present unfolding of what is becoming between you and me. Anything else blocks the ordering of karma and will no longer do for the unfolding of "sun karma," of the future. Polyamory, monogamy, and celibacy are all possible paths, but relationality is truly found in the heart, not the intellect. Of course, agreements can be made and kept for as long as they feel true. Here, I use "feeling" in reference to an objective sense of truth, not a subjective feeling.

This approach to romantic relationships is the redemption of the Western Mind, which wants to figure everything out first. The new paradigm is: there is no prescription, there is no "how". If the outcome was already known, it wouldn't be life, it wouldn't be learning, it wouldn't be evolution, it wouldn't be a fantastic ordeal of a story. The conscious activity that is now being asked for is to know what I do while I do it, not before. Creativity is improvised even if the act has been done twenty thousand times before. A musician cannot remember how to play a symphony beautifully; the remembered thoughts and the preparation are sacrificed in the act of creation. A romantic relationship is one of the most sacred lessons that the mind will never know and can never figure out. Humanity is moving away from manifestation and even intentionality, and instead opening to a certain quality of faith—faith for the future. How can the intellect be sacrificed to the knowing activity in the heart? The ego, the everyday self, must be annihilated for the birth of the true self.

As the trials of initiation are encountered, the seeker eventually meets the earth trial, which asks: Will you give your life in service toward the beloved community of the earth? The seeker remains with the earth until every being is redeemed. The family can be a vessel for this beloved community, a microcosm, but the vessel must not become an insular distortion of the earth trial's universal humanitarian lesson.

Humanity can develop the capacity to read the world, to read life. The esoteric schooling called life speaks. And if life is not held to a standard or notion that has fallen and isn't truly relevant to the present, then the ordeal of our life becomes education, becomes curiosity, becomes love. And not that life is not suffered. But a capacity is developed for a creative love, which is the pathway to a more human future. Today, love is a conspiratorial act of transformation, and to be in love is to be in intimate relation with the sacred earth.



Unconsciousness

Becomes intentional manifestation

Becomes humble receptivity

Becomes creative love

I am God's will on earth as thou art in heaven

Open the human soul

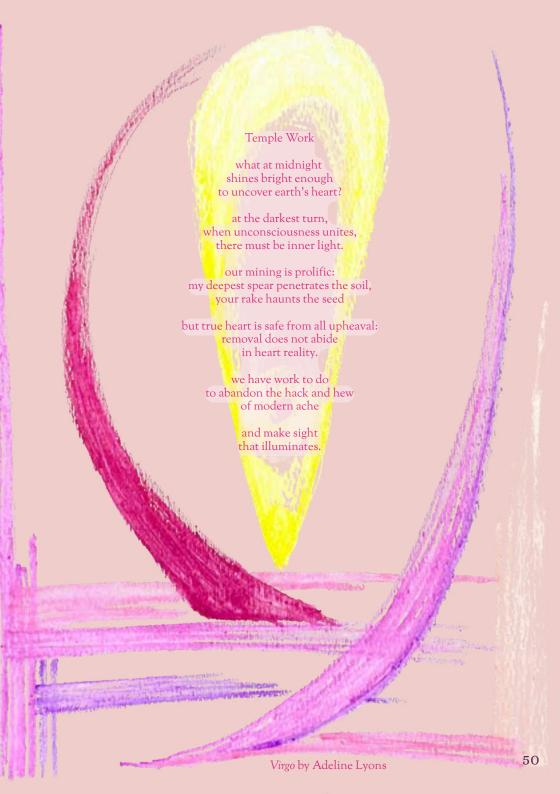
To hold more and more of the beloved

And suffer it

Suffer life

Because the suffering itself is

Love ordering karma



### Community as a Response to the Crisis of the Modern World

By Gabel Gramer

In the last 100 or so years, a certain stream of consciousness and thought has sought to understand how to respond to the vast expansion of systems of dehumanization that have characterized the modern world. These ideas, values, norms, and relations that divide us from one another, create hierarchy, alienate one from their very self, and reproduce in all sorts of manners and scales, typically in the name of 'growth' or 'development'. We are so thoroughly entrenched in the depths of these ideas of 'progress' that often even our imagination is no longer free enough to find the inspiration of radically different ways of existence. Ways to think and be and create and take initiative that actually represent a different impulse from the status quo. This status quo sees the world as exploitable. Sees the other as competition. Births our new generations in caves, and holding up puppets over the light, tells them the shadows that they see are all that exists. Without too deep a dive into dialectics and history here, it seems to me that these pervading tendencies and mentalities represent a dominance of the intellect and a profound focus on the material world of the senses, in which the intellect reigns through 'rational' thought. This worldview has pervaded to a degree that most modern humans simply do not accept anything to be true that cannot be materially sensed and rationally understood. Gone are the mysteries, forgotten are the myths. And the eminence of this material civilization, that has now spread across most of the globe, lacks not only consciousness, but spirit; the embrace of the super-rational and non-material, the interconnected wholeness of the human experience and of life itself.

#### "The more they have thought to exploit matter, the more they have become its slaves" -Rene Guenon

We lie now at a crossroads in human existence, not simply a choice of which path forward to take, but a question of how we proceed on whatever path is that we are destined to take. I myself do not believe there is any single answer. No book we could read and know the way. It is experiential and experimental. Honoring tradition, and yet original.

#### "It is by the new that mankind is saved or betrayed" -Dag Hammarskjold

One of the areas of focus I feel to be of critical importance in the response to the crisis of the modern world lies in the relationship between freedom and imagination. It is through imagination we may become freer, and, seemingly paradoxically, through freedom we may gain greater capacities for imagination. It is here at this intersection that many of the forces of domination seek to pervade. In stripping us of capacities for imagination, how could we ever be free from the veil of the narratives, systems, and peoples who benefit from this unfreedom? Though there is an inherent ability humans are born with to both be free and imaginative to some degree, there are certainly ways to positively affect this relationship—to bring more freedom, more imagination, more freedom, and so on. To educate in such a way that deepens our individual relationship to the world and transforms our ability to participate in it. That leaves us more able to intuit and beckon a future full of virtues, and reflect the wholeness of reality amidst our individual existence.

# "The one Moon reflects itself wherever there is a sheet of water, and all the moons in the waters are embraced within the one Moon." -Yung-chia Ta-shih

Around this relationship of freedom and imagination, many other factors may influence either or both, in supportive as well as undermining manners. Already, I have briefly touched on some of these negative manners, namely the centralization and dominance of materialistic ideology, but many others could be examined and are better suited to be examined by others and elsewhere than here. More interesting are the variables that offer the opportunity to affect the empowerment of

both freedom and imagination. And while these are also plentiful and often challenging to discern from one another, I would offer here that community, and the sense of community, represent a powerful avenue in which we may walk towards this looming crossroads with courage.

Community is an offering of solidarity. It is a way to collaborate in a modern context so that we may have courageous conversations, create radical projects, and undergo studies that seek to reexamine the world we live in and how we live in it. To suggest that there are fundamental problems in the very ways we have learned to think and sense, to relate to one another, ourselves, and the world. It is the community that gives us the support and collaboration that we may take apart our conceptions in a vulnerable enough way to reconstruct ourselves with virtue and with regard to a more holistic understanding of the world. And in so doing, truly allow ourselves to be seen by others and to see others in their truth. Full of strengths and weaknesses, gifts and hurts, joy and sorrow.

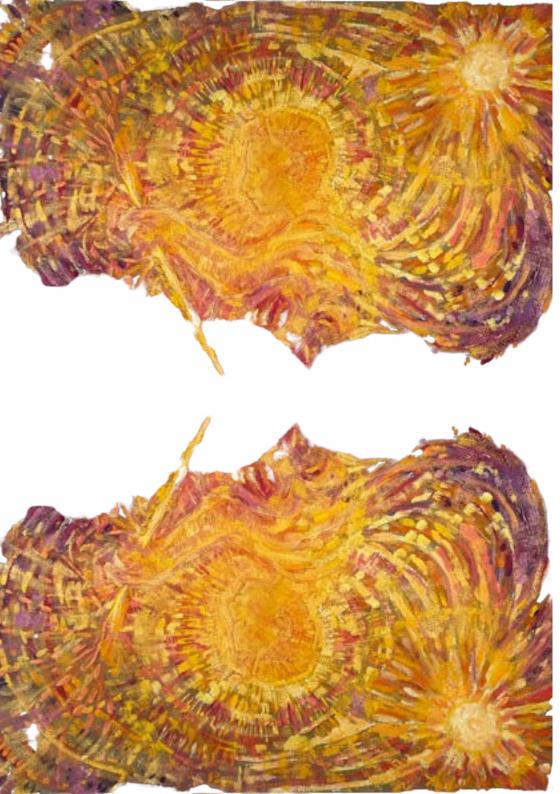
# "Solidarity requires that one enter into the situation of those with whom one is in solidarity; it is a radical posture." -Paulo Freire

To build around community is to decentralize power, and when paired with intentions of dialogue and fluidity, it allows individuals to participate in the co-creation of culture away from the top-down type of culture that stems from the 'mainstream'. In this way, we can embrace community as social sculpture. A place to explore and grow, to engage artistically and ask questions about the world and ourselves, and potentially most importantly, where the way we show up in the world can be reflected to us from a place of love. This level of mutualism should not be a burial of individuality, but an embrace of the individual in a morally imbued relationship. For only through the eyes of those outside ourselves can we gain the perspective for the type of self-reflection that allows us to fully grow. After all, we are relational beings.

It is in this place of community, this realm of mutual interdependence, that the dynamic relationship of imagination and freedom can exponentially expand. Contrary to what many contemporary narratives would suggest, it is through others, not solitude, that we can be freer. And with this, it is also where the imagination can truly flourish, as the interest and enthusiasm of others provide the necessary nourishment that brings growth.

In the current work that I am engaged with, around forming new models of education for young adults, we often talk about the phenomenon of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts. In the past, I may have thought of this 'greatness' as a significant difference in ability, like a machine that, through the combination of many parts, can be assembled, do something more powerful. But this should also be understood in another way. That somehow, when a group of people put their energy into something shared between them, an alchemical reaction happens where there is more energy than what was put in, and each participant may take away more than they put in. It is contrary to the material science of thermodynamics that tells us energy may change forms but never truly can come into existence from nothing. Instead, our participation in community brings to life a spirit outside of ourselves--a spirit of community, of profound abundance.

"If we act or speak, then as a member of such a community, the single soul does not act or speak in us, but the spirit of the community. This is the secret of the future of human progress; to work out of communities." -Rudolf Steiner



# SUBSCRIBE

## CONTRIBUTE

\$15 - \$45 annual subscription
3 print copies a year

Venmo: @Adeline-Lyons

PayPal: adelineroselyons@gmail.com

<u>Deadline</u> to submit for next issue: February 15<sup>th</sup> 2026 <u>Theme:</u> Resurrecting

email submissions to futuringn@gmail.com

