Friends of Silence

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"Is there enough Silence for the Word to be heard?"



In a time of mass shootings, refugee crises, and environmental degradation it is hard to speak of the need for art and creativity. One wonders what, if anything, they have to do with changing the heartbreak of the world or serving a greater good than personal growth and pleasure. Yet why is it that those who would control and bully us feel threatened by musicians and artists and poets? How can we envision a better way if not by searching deep within the imagination and stirring creative reservoirs into a provocative, life-giving "re-presentation" of the world and our place in it? It seems important to tap

these wellsprings for the sake of our own souls' transformation. But it is also time to send these creative energies out into the world because we are in desperate need for resistance, for saying no to death and destruction, for boldly setting forth an agenda of life and love and respect. That these works are beautiful and inspiring and authentic is what arrests attention, what causes people to listen and see, to stop and think. We need soulful media, less rhetoric and more poetry, less shouting and more music. Photographers would say their craft is all about capturing the light. And we are all desperately in need of light. Annie Dillard speaks of the art of writing: "Why are we reading if not in hope that the writer will magnify and dramatize our days, will illuminate and inspire us with wisdom, courage, and the possibility of meaningfulness, and will press upon our minds the deepest mysteries, so we may feel again their majesty and power?"

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Creativity is, foremost, being in the world soulfully, for the only thing we truly make,
whether in the arts, in culture, or at home, is soul.

~ Thomas Moore

In order to tap the uniquely creative in ourselves, it is important to honor the four ways of deep listening: intuition, perception, insight, and vision. Many indigenous cultures recognize that intuition is the source that sparks external seeing (perception), internal viewing (insight), and holistic seeing (vision). Paying attention to these modes of seeing is a way to honor the sacred and fire the creative fire. The Creative Spirit—the relentless power within us that constantly invites us to be who we are—requires the capacity to be open to our authenticity, vision, and creativity.

~ Angeles Arrien in THE SOUL OF CREATIVITY, ed. By T. P. Myers

Once a reporter asked Einstein, "What is the most important question in the world?" He replied, "The most important question in the world is, do you want a peaceful, happy, abundant world in which to live, or do you want a foreboding, fearful, and scarce world?"

The reporter slightly puzzled, asked, "Why is this the most important question in the world?"

Einstein replied, "Because whatever you choose,



you will create."

The beauty of Your creation is painted in my interior as a colorful Voice.

~Rabindranath Tagore

One hundred years ago the painter and poet William Blake lamented the everincreasing violence of industrial society with these words: "Art Degraded, Imagination Denied, War Govern'd the Nations." The dominance of war and war mentalities...all this is the price we have paid in the West for denying imagination, repressing or forgetting it, and thereby degrading art... To create is always to learn, to begin over, to begin at zero...With art as meditation we truly listen to the cosmos within us and around us and give birth to the

ongoing cosmogenesis of our world...

~ Matthew Fox in ORIGINAL BLESSING

Religious truths have not been expressed throughout time as mathematical formulas, but in art, music, dance, drama, poetry, stories, and active rituals. ~ Starhawk

From the very beginning of time, human beings have celebrated divine visitations by speaking, writing, singing, drawing, and dancing them. We cannot tell of God's presence in our souls. We create, we build, we choreograph; we play music, paint paintings, or write poetry to communicate this divine presence. For the essential place, the point within us penetrated by the Spirit, is our creative soul. The Creator Spirit seeks out our creativity. Fire begets ~ Meinrad Craighead "Drawing Your Own Story" in SACRED STORIES ed. by C. Simpkinson

Embedded within our souls and DNA are the creative possibilities of our enlightenment and future. Our communities, art, music, scientific technologies, and businesses can become life-affirming, harmonious, beautiful, and healing institutions if we are willing to awaken to inspired states of creativity. These soul gifts are the means through which we manifest our individual sparks of divine light. By practicing these gifts with wisdom, love, and compassion, we can contribute to a spiritual renaissance: one in which our creativity reflects the true light of divinity and can remake our world. ~ Judith Cornell in THE SOUL OF CREATIVITY ed. by T. P. Myers

...a work of art opens a void, a moment of silence, a question without an answer, provokes a breach without reconciliation where the world is forced to question itself. ~ Michel Foucault





Keep your mind clear and quiet like the waters of a deep lake, as transparent as the crow's eye. The bottom of the lake is deep, below the water is still. There is no need to stir it now and make it turbulent. Then on that untroubled soul, shadows of the events of this world will cast themselves—but be at peace with yourself. Accept everything calmly, accept the truth in good grace. There is an exquisite creeper of beauty in you, its roots will go deep down and on the surface it will bloom flowers—just wait...

~ from IT DOES NOT DIE by Maitreyi Devi

My greatest challenge is to live the daily life. To create a life that is aware, when all of us fall into unconsciousness all the time. To bring some modicum of consistency, of heart and caring, to every moment...And the other challenge is to render this. To be available to bring beauty through, or bring awareness through...To open the eyes, to open the heart, to feel compassion on a regular basis. To strip myself down to wherever I have to go.

~ Deena Metzger in VISIONARY VOICES

To live a creative life, we must lose our fear of being wrong. ~ Joseph Chilton Pearce

Into this Dark, beyond all light, we pray to come and, unseeing and unknowing, to see and to know the One that is beyond seeing and beyond knowing...That is to do as sculptors do, drawing the statue latent there...and displaying the beauty hidden there. ~ Denis the Areopagite

Creativity reflects our uniqueness and infuses energy and spirit into life. Creativity plays with the possible and when we are being creative we feel fully alive and vibrant, celebrants at the liturgy of life.

~ from RISE UP WITH A LISTENING HEART, The Monks of New Skete

All things speak to me. Now this color, now that shape. Now the clear call of the loon. The forest sees me coming And each tree says, "Look at me.

See, I reveal the Beautiful." . . .

~ from FROM THE CENTER by Robert J. Hope