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"After 30 years I no longer do art; I do ME, ME, ME!"  ~ Nguyen Ducmanh.

"This issue of Bern Porter Cosmographic is devoted to: ME, ME, ME!"

Material included here was composed during the month of August 1999 in Orland & Belfast, ME.  

~ Sheila Holtz (a.k.a. Natasha Bernstein)
the power of surrender, the austerity of self-restraint, the goldengem of wisdom, the austities of silence, gentleness, tranquility of mind (peace) and purity... these are the goldengems that lead us to the millenium. it would be a lie to say that we are not all full of some deep hope for a great transformation. I know I am not alone in this although it seems at times that I am the only one to speak it among those of my outer world, but those in my inner world, those of us who know we are the same Self, of the same Self and from the same Self, we share the same inner world, for there is only One of Us here. the real sense of separation is an illusion and this is the only veil that stands between "us" and "them" (thou art tat: (that) tat twam asi)

the wind has risen. rain in a year of drought. a cold damp sea air has brought fog and dampness in the night. I sit in the warmth and protection of four walls, the darkness outside windowscreen rising and falling like ocean waves' tattoo against the shore. for all this wild wind it is really a tame sea, not the sea at all but the bay, salt bay, albeit, but not the ocean pounding surf, just an amniotic swell of backwater tides.

here in solitude I seek The Real.

nourishing the great power that has come to me through a lineage of Masters that stretches back to the very beginning of time."

...at the very beginning of time lives now, breathes now, pulses now in ME. om Namah Shivaya pulses in ME. we all find this awesome power hard to grasp at times. that it lives within our mortal being bodies and minds can be fearsome, makes us wonder, how can we as fragile human forms contain it? it is so vast and powerful, the force of creation: SHAKTI! SHIVOM HAM!

what audacity! we reason with our limited sense of limited sense of self, ahankara.

seeking the Real (Self) not the unreal (existent) is what we are seeking: and the wisdom to know the difference.

I sense that only in solitude will The Real reveal itself to me daily, hourly — the experience of the Real, that is. Only in experiencing it can we know it. there is no other knowing it other than direct experience.

The Real speaks to me in image and metaphor, living metaphor, image, as in IMAGO

critical junctures. I feel I am at one, approaching one now, but then I always feel like that, every day is a critical juncture in the living awareness of the Real. i.e. "this is it, man!"

what is a soulmate and what is its significance, how does it come into play with the life of silence and solitude that I have been idolizing these past 16 years? As great a gift as was my Shaktipat, with it came a great loss, coincidentally in time or perhaps at the intention of the larger hand of fate. this loss has haunted me and I have denied it. the loss of love that surpassed love, the love that binds souls together from lifetime to lifetime, to eternity and back again

this is rare, a rare gift, and acknowledge, I bow to its uniqueness. Shaktipat is even more unique, and yet a part of me was never willing to consider it a fair trade. Part of me dares to want both immortal love AND immortal vision.

the wind kicks up, the night moves on.
I'm home. Home. Home. What is home? My body is the land. My body.

I was invited by Judy Belasco to go to satsang tonight in Pemaquid. I decided after finishing work at 2 pm that I am, that I was, too tired. I am still too tired. I am experiencing a negative state of mind. I am angry. I am tired. I am still angry and ready to take up arms against fascism. Only problem is: I am too tired.

I am a poor person. I am a homeless person. I don't have a kitchen where I can cook a meal. I don't have a shower or bath. I don't have hot water to wash with. I do have this room where I can hide from the world, my sanctum sanctorum, a room of one's own. and I have this electric typewriter and a new $6.00 ribbon and $10.00. I have this negative state of mind somewhere between outrage and self-pity. This typewriter more or less works. Sometimes more, sometimes less.

I was really feeling quite fine til I listened to Bobby Seale talk about the Black Panthers and fascist conspiracy to crush them. I was really quite fine. I ran into Judy Belasco at the Belfast Food Coop. Do I really care what is home? And does it really matter if I have one or not? I keep telling myself that I do. But at the moment I suddenly think it is of little consequence. Home. Comfort. A cooked meal. A hot shower. What are these things in comparison to generations and generations of fucking fascist racist oppression? Who do I think I am any way? What am I, some kind of fucking princess?

This is what the oppressed and the poor have to deal with under capitalist fascist oppression. Typewriters that only half work because they cannot afford one that does. They cannot afford anything adequate, they cannot afford the things that the middle class, the employed, and the rich fascists take for granted. It is always and continually "making do." Some might call it resourcefulness and up to a point there is a certain glamour in it (generally when one is young.) I am not going to fucking kill myself trying to work a 40 hour week so I can have adequate "things." Fuck things. And I am no longer young. Fuck youth.

I am having second thoughts about living at H.O.M.E. this winter for that very reason. I see now, today I realized for certain that I cannot work a 40 hour week, my one chance at hot showers and a kitchen has evaporated. But I do not give a fuck, not even half a fuck.

I need to figure out some covert devious way to wage a guerilla war against the fascists, without a gun.
HOW TO WAGE A COVERT GUERILLA WAR AGAINST FASCISM WITHOUT A GUN. WELL, THE TED KOSZYNSKI MODEL. BUT HE HAD BOMBS AND BOMBS ARE EVEN MORE HIGH TECH AND HARDER TO GET THAN GUNS. LLLLLLLLLLRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR SOMETIMES MORE. SOMETIMES LLLLLLESS.

really smart and hightech people use computers to wage covert war. they hack into top secret defense files. the lone gunmen for example. but computers are even more inaccessible to me than bombs and guns.

sex. aha/ my one remaining weapon. the bdsm group in washington dc is called BLACK ROSE, and undoubtedly there are many government employees, members of the defense department and even up to congressmen and senators who are into the scene down there. EVERY CITY IS RULED BY A SUN SIGN. DC IS RULED BY SCORPIO: SEX, MONEY, POWER, AND DEATH. AHA. MY WEAPON HAS BEEN REVEALED.

now all i need is a strategy...... strategy.

my one hope is that i will not be too tired to carry 1t out.

* * * * * * * * * * *

i am sequestered in my room avoiding all contact with the outside world, despite obligations and commitments. to quote pattie toy's unique and pleasant phrasology, i am "reclusing". "reclusing" (forgot "l") LLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL LLLLL

i just cleaned the typewriter with a compressed gas aerosol. and was hoping that might sold the i l problem but it doesnot

i am also realizing i am a lousy typist, but so what.

the compressed gas aerosol cost $5.00. i certainly have invested all of money in this $10.00 typewriter.

keep telling myself i will go to suzettes and work later this evening. whether i will or not remains to be seen. i realize what i am doing with these two jobs (so-called) is exactly what i did during my last days at the lab. ll l l l l now there is a fucking "l" problem. lower case l l l l l l l l l l works slightly better.

okay. i have also so far today managed to avoid any and all news media. reclusing in my room does have some restorative qualities. media/media would the / make a better replacement than the 1 ???? media media/media media/media media/media/media 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patience is the key to all endeavors. patience is the key to all endeavors. now is the time for all good men to get down on the floor and party. now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their party. now is the time for all good men to whip out their dikes and party. carbon paper could be the answer to the problem of the fact that the does not advance the other answer could be to get some dw40 and spray it down in their where the ribbon moves. Or maybe the thing that makes the ribbon move is not conm connected maybe there is just a loose sporing or something down there buyt it is impossible to dassee underneath the people who make these things deliberatly make it difficult to diagnose and solve your own probelms, they are in cahhoots with the typewriter repairmen but now with computers all the type EXECUTRON and it has a daisy wheel. why would anyone want to make a typewriter like this? So far every typewriter I have encountered at R.O.M.E., when whether t for sale in the Bargain Barn or in the spare machine room in the office have this n one thing in common, they are all fucked up and not one of them works properly, or at all. amen the goddess of type fonts has apolen. I am going back to my my nibs and inks. AVE AVE DOMINE PATRE FILIO

Ave ave domine patre filio dont tell me now this one is fucked too no. I just have to push the little leaver. The problem with all machinery is that it eventually breaks, malfucntions, wears out and dies, includi gn the human body. the simpler the tool, the fewer things there are to go wrong, I am going back to my nibs and inks I will reproduce medieval manuscripts domini patri filio spiritu sanctus ave benedictum santum sanctorum secula secularum om om shant shanti shanti I will write in etruscan cuneiform on clay tablets I will scratch crude fig res on cave wall with red ocrhe and charcoal i will leave my footprints in the mud as the only traces of my having traversed the paths of this world and these too will soon dr up and blow away as dust, dust in the wind as will my body and all out our vain and futile civilizations om shanti shanti shanti.

well anyway I have cleaned the platen and the keys of this olivett german manual I have an unending roll of paper on which to enact "spontaneous prose" a la Kerouac I have taken ON THE ROAD out ot the Belfaast Libray for the bus ride to New York, D cmanh called said I'll see you Monday. I kiss you. Godd bye.
I have given up on the FACIT. The Facit is not facile, it is difficult! muy, muy dificil!

I have put the new ribbon in the olivetti and will struggle along typing slowly and banging with all my might on the keys, in the great tradition of Maine, "making do."

It is a beautiful breezy evening. Very beautiful, very breezy. I am debating whether to go to the laundromat, or if even that much exertion will be more than I care to deal with. What I should and most likely will do is go to the library and check my email.

In a letter to Maureen I struggled with thinking through my dilemma and I have reached a point. What that point is I am not sure. I guess it is a point of satisfaction that I have thought it through as far as I can for right now.

the point. the point. what is the point? the point I have reached is the point of the absolute present. bindu. yeah. I have reached the point of emptiness. I have reached the blue sky mind. At least for now. at least for the moment.

I have decided that the way to write on the road in the twenty-first century is to copy Jack Kerouac's spontaneous prose method for ON THE ROAD. i.e. an endless roll of paper in a manual typewriter. I have scooped out the very roll of paper. it is sitting on top of the defunct xerox machine in the big classroom at H!O!M!E! and I have the typewriter. and I have the new ribbon. I am all set. As they say in Maine: I am all set.

Now all I need is time, uninterrupted sequestered time. someone to bring me meals and coffee.

Notice how I am always making excuses and concocting reasons for not doing things instead of merely doing them. I perceive this to a common trait, particularly among women of the artistic persuasion. Not that I really consider myself, nor have I ever considered myself a "woman". the truth is I have always considered myself a, well, man. And now I come to realize that, actually hormonally, I probably always have been a man.

The difference between myself and Jack Kerouac is: I talk about what I need to write this novel/memoir/document. He merely sat down and wrote it. Perhaps that is the traditional and stereotypical difference between men and women: men do things. women whine about why they can't seem to do things.

I have never been very charitable toward my fellow females have I? When I was young all the literature I read was by men dead white men to be precise, even gay men like walt whitman, but he was still white and he was still dead. so I considered myself a writer and it seemed like all writers were men and so therefore by the transitive property of equality, I must be a man. But actually, it was even more subliminal than that. I imbibed the literature I read and thus I imbibed and came to totally identify with the all male viewpoint. To quote the illustrious Jeff Tirante (whose name means "tyrant" I have learned) "It's as simple as that."
Dear Duke:

Last night with my friend Mary I watched a very strange, fascinating old movie, A MAN AND A MERMAID (or something like that!) Perhaps it is true that men fall in love with mermaids and other magical beings when they attain "the old age of youth." (50) Or, perhaps, as I propose, it is rather the quest for the Eternal Feminine within, for the Holy Grail, that is, the Womb of Spirit/Life. ("The Eternal Feminine leads us on." Goethe, FAUST) Perhaps they project this object of vision outward onto a young woman, an innocent magical child / virgin / siren / goddess of love / Artemis / Diana...

But it is their own True Self they seek, their other half, their anima, their shadowsoul. Karl Jung called it a quest for psychic wholeness.

Men and women are separate during youth... the strange battle+/ war of conquest, seduction, and reproduction... but at midlife we unify, we integrate. This is called ANDROGYNY, the union of our masculine and feminine souls, the Shiva-Shakti principle, or Quantum Tantra.

It is at this stage of our lives when love and lovemaking become a truly spiritual experience, if it hasn't been already, through the process of the awakened KUNDALINI, and, if one chooses to pursue it, the difficult or rather, arduous discipline of Sexual Tantra.

The energy of the divine flows through us, body and soul. Such a union, such an exchange, can allow us to break through into the realm of

EX STASIS
Ecstasy

Yes It is as simple and as complex as that; come, let us breathe together.

August 27, 1999

Sheila
Hot blood of the living earth...tribal secrets and the secrets of the solitary...journeying within, she walks and waits, walks and waits for direction...she breathes and waits, breathes and waits for the spirit breath, she waits in her enclosure, in the womb of light for the ball of sight to burst in her eyes. Breathing, waiting, walking, dreaming...

"Many called, few are chosen, some baptize by immersion some dare to cross river. I walk with you to the of rainbow."

-- Duke

... an invitation or an invocation? Come let us campout under the Aurora, as far North as we can go, hike, bike, train, or plane if only a distant flashing? This is more than an invitation or even an invocation (VAC) this is a command, sankalpa, the Will of Heaven. Oak, ash, spruce, pine, canopy of star point flicker. This love demands a tangible setting, this love demands complete surrender. There is only one love, one heart, one mind, one vision and the face it wears is unimportant. All it asks for is a willing victim. I am she.

Worship is a strong word, all our words are strong words. There are no weak words in the realms where we travel. This is the power of my word, my love. This is the power of surrender, this is the dust of my body scattered in the wind. There is no applause, there is no witness, everything dissolves into the dark night sky -- fireflies or Northern Lights, the stars are as common and as precious as this offering. These words are a thousand years old, my love is ancient, holy, common as garden dirt beneath my fingernails. Yes we dare to speak the word, what of it?

Nothing to protect, nothing to repeat, nothing to devour.

8/23/99

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