

THE KALEIDOSCOPE OF SIMULTANEITY

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If every art and science were a vast city and at any given moment hundreds of thousands of workers in every field were creating and re-creating it, even as we sleep, we'd merely intuit any unity faintly, by analogy, but, confronted by multiple *Megalopoli*, vast experiences, inventions, events, ineffable *lives*, analogy flutters like a wind-torn prayer flag before the unknown. It is impossible to know what really transpires at any given moment, yet everything has always happened at once.

Everything has always happened at once. Yet without time there'd be no movement of objects in space. The past and future co-exist as time when we perceive as we simultaneously disclose the paradox of living—once. The only response when the imaginable regards the unimaginable is awe. Perhaps wonder begins our discovery of our place in time, how we fit, or not, to be singular enough to join the human race. No one soul can encompass it, though this “*All*” is reality. Art, however, can, with philosophy, experimentally symbolize while focusing our choices of not only what or whom but how we notice.

Since every unity instantly vanishes before novel experience art (as the true conveyance of the All as metaphor) and philosophy (as concept) exist to help us choose not simply among facts but to cast a symbol, or image back to the origins of consciousness in awe, the sole authentic response to the kaleidoscope of simultaneity.

When Yahweh reveals to Job His Creation, the universe, Yahweh thunders: "Can you bind the chains of Pleiades/Or loose the cords of Orion?" (38/31) Job replies: "What shall I answer thee?/ I put my hand over my mouth, in awe" (40/3). In *The Baghavad Gita*, on the field of battle, when Arjuna laments he must kill half his family, Krishna responds by revealing the universe in an infinite vortex of appearing and disappearing: "See now the whole universe with all things that move and do not move ... "(11/7 pg.89) "And Arjuna saw in that form countless visions of wonder... (11/10) [And] ... "in that radiance the whole universe in its variety." (11/12).

If we study pre-Socratic philosophy from Thales to Socrates, *philo-sophia*, the love of wisdom, begins with the seemingly naïve need to account for everything by a unifying substance or concept: *Thales' Water*, *Parmenides' One*, *Heraclitus' Fire*, *Democritus' atoms*, even *Pythagorus' Music* and, for our keen interest *Anaxagorus' Mind*, *Nous* or *Psyché* which is everywhere. Our noticing is: the invisible *All*.

If we aspire to the *All* through things, however, if every *thing* surged to the fore, we might provoke a private traffic-jam of impulses, facts and fantasies. If we include the unconscious we could suffer the specifics of depth awareness: buried memory, childhood trauma, last year's bills etc. The huge mnemonic storehouse would crowd our "thrown" intentionality into chaos. We clearly must focus, but how if we are not to contract, exclude, exile or ignore our once on earth, and the next great thought, movement or archetypal artist?

If the *All* is reality, how much, what, *whom* should we notice?

To further explore the *All* as a nightmare scenario: Imagine Proust's mind-lantern theater blighted by all the voices on earth speaking at once; they're almost audible through the internet; we'd suffer an Isle of Sirens to blast the wits even of Zurich's Club Voltaire's Dada Bruitists into stupefaction.

Now that technology allows us to access a version of this *All* we can, with rudimentary typing and some imagination, globally access information, expose ourselves at least to an *All* that someone puts on-line. We could plot revolutions as the millions of dispossessed citizens of Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain and Syria, in what began as *Arab Spring*, or with the *Occupy* movement as it has spread globally (and we hope, lives on), or access "all" artistic creation throughout the world, if lucky enough to find true talent, even in the smallest hamlet and obscurest place on earth.

There is a down side to technology, however. It is a self-betrayal to click a mouse to correct one's spelling before one understands a word, to voyeur sex, economic collapse, rape, murder as one reaches for a cracker. The *Arab Spring* revolutions revealed to the *Occupy* movement the virtue of instant popular contacts to spread revolt below the radar of government-controlled or financially interested medias. Yet on Facebook one can accrue a virtual aggregate of strangers as networking tools: why have a friend when we can collect one? The very word "chat" belies that we may neglect even saying goodbye or writing complete sentences.

Much has and will be said of instant communication as access to everything, and it is astonishing. Yet to not be lost in an atomic cloud of virtual noise, to be poked, pricked and prodded by what Ezra Pound called, "the accelerated grimace of our age," to suffer the cannon-blown confetti of disparate facts, a delusional flurry of false causes and didactic nonsense, slogans concocted by advertising vampires, we need pass from empirical communication (mere information) to artistic creation, to render this chaos a cosmos. Indeed the very immensity may favor the contracted or narrow-minded who actively ignore not only the universe, or world, but other humans by reducing us to objects of self-interest, to dehumanize our noticing to set-responses and behavioral reductions, to money and private neurosis from solipsistic crawl-spaces. Then this contraction of soul amplified by technology may misinform,

shrink, derail the most elemental curiosity into an amplified argument for ignorance.

When does what we know add to our ignorance?

First let us consider consciousness as not a mere multiplicity but instantaneous synthesis of multiplicities, like a kaleidoscope with multiple, shifting perspectives.

A kaleidoscope suggests a medley of colorful worlds, minds, rooms, times shifted at whim, but without commitment, engagement, or embodiment. One may entertain everything without understanding a thing. Yet let *this* kaleidoscope suggest not the volume *en masse of everything-at-once* but our freedom to perceive itself, given our mortality, to anticipate the *All* with awe, especially if this whim incarnate as embodied will.

Let us never then claim to know what we do not. There's no need to disembodiment into a transcendent New Age "infinite". We never experience the infinite beyond a mathematical symbol. Precisely by the modest accuracy of the immanent we are "connected" to the *All*—and to each other.

Our guide is the elemental gratitude that we *can* perceive; for awe is the radical modesty that everything we can know—or ignore—is possible only because we can be aware of it. What blocks our gratitude denies our awe, manufactures a replacement, a gauze, *ignores*, whether it be "informed" by a

shower of sound bites and eye-candy to distract, to shrivel us into the (s)hell of *know-it-all-ness*, even if it be from a vantage-point of a mountaintop—or outer space, but rather, let us focus like Whitman on a “mere” leaf of grass.

What should we *not* experience? That which contracts rather than dilates our souls—that which alienates our awe.

If one loses one’s origin in awe confusion begins at the beginning. As one’s perceptions scatter they need be bundled together with belief, by a self-dazzlement or hypnosis of accelerated, random images manufactured to distract. This arch-*All* scatters us to stave off the dread that we betray ourselves when we ignore who first we are. We are alienated from awe when products are valued at the expense of those who create them. From the chaos of things, then, to the cosmos of perception, from the kaleidoscope of whim to focused will, we are free to be bewildered, or ponder what we please, in freedom.

Perhaps then: We must know our limits without living *for* them?

Our choice of what or whom to notice is not a matter of “aesthetic theory” but of life itself. It is not the once remove of “art” or a philosophic “argument” when we perceive one thing or soul and not the other. But when we are in a constant stream of choices on what or whom to focus art suggests the creative freedom of our mind’s metaphoric invention from the origin as our first

celebration, our play, and philosophy, our wonder. Utility-first perception disengages our freedom from its source to its use, as profit and acquisition interconnect (alienated) determinisms of an other to screen the *All* from our apperception—so too the negation of all utility to disembodied paraphrase in romantic fog.

What and whom we choose to perceive is how we spend our lives in time.

If “the guide” (artistic or conceptual creation) reflects that through freedom we will affirm our brief sojourn here as practically as an empirical reduction, more so, given that this *interest* may splay our vision, splinter our focus, or, as in romantic paraphrase, we may prefer what will prop our affective fantasy into a waking dream—into *illusion*.

Any discovery can be covered-over as it arrives, but in *beholding-so-as-not-to-grasp*, our envisioning of the possible *makes* as it embodies a seeming mirage or fleeting image dissolve from mere shimmer to an embodied actuality—as art. Art anticipates a new way to perceive immediately to affirm life with freedom, just as we are “from the start” our origin in awe in time. Philosophy is our understanding as “it” arrives (us)—with our resolve. Through philosophy we reclaim a mere image to the real. This is the “philosophy of the future” (Nietzsche) but also how to accurately re-interpret the past, live, create, exhaust the present, to perceive the becoming of authentic novelty.

Illusion resembles the visionary precisely by *how* it imitates. Yet a visual image can seem wrong well before we consciously judge it. It flashes or lingers to offend our taste well before our judgment. It hovers. The illusion beguiles then offends but to express why requires some experience and honesty as duplicity evolves with technology:

Progress seems to occur in technology but rarely in wisdom.

We need cultivate the means to critique quickly lest it invade our mental “theaters” just before it decays into kitsch. The visionary, by contrast, reflects back to our origin(s) to forward our future, striates-out in flame a pre-cursing intuition, a Heraclitean fire, a Promethean fore-seeing, and even if not slickly produced, its value immediately exceeds the klieg lights of those (the spirit-killers?) who seek to obscure perceptual freedom.

No one can encompass all knowledge. Yet must one define oneself by how *much* one knows or by knowledge that evokes gratitude that one *can* know? If one notices first with gratitude might one’s knowing be less unfocused and scattered? Might the fineness of knowing echo a fundamental choice to affirm or deny that one never take awareness for granted?

We need not exhume total memory when perceiving from the full draft of our being, precisely because the total mind is not a Pandora's, nor a collection box. We need to focus but not contact, block nor filter precisely that which will dilate our souls to an elemental gratitude that we *can* perceive.

We put our hands to our mouths, as did Job, to perceive the universe, *accurately*.

But this is the vigilance of awe, to restore original dilation of the soul, to risk radiance *before* its imitation.

We are small in size but not in imagination.

For it not our size, given the immensity of the universe but our consciousness of it.

Open to the *All* by awe our noticing anticipates by *making* a poetic image to envision the possible. Philosophy conceptually understands as we “catch up” to our visions if we’ve the courage to embody, to make them *real*. Without poetry our noticing is no longer a *making* but “being-made,” even “being-had” by images-with-interest. Our *vision-as-project* either passes into cliché and product-mimicry (anxiety) or we move on to create our next truth:

When we keep a promise to our selves, *to change how we perceive*.

Conceiving also means birthing. Philosophy conceives as we risk new ways to perceive. Contracted souls monopolize professions and trick the “un-

initiated” with angel-pin deflection or issue control-edicts reversing the time of conception into a hall of mirrors of “received ideas”(Flaubert). But to deflect here is to betray. It’s elusive but while a play of perceptions rush in or by, one may with scant evidence of effort, with surety and speed, make a series of judgments occurring faster than the influx of sensation. When intuition suffuses long dilated experience—with the quick of the mind while the soul’s in repose:

Could this be wisdom?

The *All* happens just beyond our ken. Our “ken”: the rich English word for the limit of how far our understanding may venture without losing our way. We will never know the worlds into which we could plunge, the depth, beauty and surprise, the knowledge gained, the joys surmised. We can splay or omni-direct every instant, yet we remain alone before the *All*. We espy an endless road, unknown loves, lives fluttering off like windswept leaves. We try our best within our scope, not merely to see our mortal breath evaporate like a ghost on a mirror. We look through our window of intent to dwell within the trajectory of what we can perceive. We try never to exaggerate, rarely to exclude, and not to reify our finitudes, prejudices, our myopic self-interests nor to contract our souls—*and* to accept our limits—yet to perceive as broadly as the gods.

As each note intoned in a symphony flows in the time-signature or tempo interpreted by the conductor and musicians for a performance, the conductor of intentionality, the “self,” signs with each intention, each choice constitutes a style, inflection, a lilt, a unique “take” on experience, even at rest. We add a note or notes, or a silence, yet no one feature noticed can stop the world’s movement. Each fiber plucked, tapped, struck, each sound-filament intoned reflects as it returns to the origin of time-recognition of how we perceive, so the performance of logos evokes the full draft of being as activity, to our once on earth as a movement in time.

To freshen our time-perception allows us to witness and invent vast pluralisms, fresh multiplicities. The fear of “being torn apart” by experiencing too much, having one’s wits blasted, is natural if our perception discloses only that which amplifies our alienation. But if dilated inward to our soul as outward to the *All* we can risk an astonishing variety of experience.

A kaleidoscope suggests a multiplicity of worlds, a universe to be visited by whim, but what if by will? The childlike power-fantasy is dual: a facile glitter of telescoped perspectives, but if focused by awe, the delight in pluralism of perspective, a playful wonder at all the ways one can see *anything*, and perhaps the admission that these simple devices can only suggest what it is to experience it; *All*.

If awe is our momentary and original openness, and dilation of soul its on-going immanent integration, we originate ourselves every moment we immediately intend.

No matter what planet or within what solar system we draw breath we will occupy a corner of a vastness onto which we tack zeros to unimaginable distances yet to know we exist is already a miracle. Shall we re-consider “miracle”? May we reel it in like an *ionospheric* kite from a violation of physics or a transcendent that so violates logic and common sense that we shalt kneel in abeyance, “stretch the eye of credulity” and believe in nonsense? In The Great Word Robbery “miracle” must be in the forefront of losses to religion and to self-proclaimed shamans and self-bedazzled saints. The miracle is: we live. And lest we forget, our true friends in deep council, please call us out to remind, poke, paradox us with the sublime largess of immanent kindness not only to know but feel (again!) that every grain of experience is our first moment.

Noticing is the great democratic experiment, to which governments or small egalitarian communities, even lovers aspire. Noticing, not ideology, religion nor the nation state, is our greatest community. Kant mentioned a *sensus communis*, or an invisible community of everyone who has taste if they judge something beautiful, if not reflecting a private self-interest, but why limit this

community to taste and the beautiful, or to aesthetic experience? Awareness is our first community. Everything that has, does or will ever happen presupposes someone is aware, someone notices. From the advent of awareness, from our long rise up and into consciousness, from researches in every art and science, from the most intimate, individual experiences, what is “happening” reveals what is noticed.

In this brief experiment on earth, from our origin in awe to the kaleidoscope of simultaneity, we notice focused by the experimental medium for the invention of metaphor, poetry.

Even if: *every metaphor has a moth's life before the incept-flame of novelty.*

We aim our arrow each day to issue a new awareness. Our intent whispers as it sails past our ears. We walk the shore of becoming, we spread our canvas wide to paint, sing, to play, to create from nothing a passing image of our courage to be surprised, *and listen for the cascading transport across the world of those who risk perceiving beyond themselves.*

Without weathervanes or radar, we dwell within the trajectory of what we can perceive, not to favor the familiar but to sift dust from our horizons, slip out the mirror of self-consciousness with its facile glitter to delight in radical invention, the playful wonder at all the ways we perceive, *anything.*

If we attach ourselves like barnacles to the hull or prow of a ship without dwelling on its deck, or better, in the captain's quarters, we will take emotional paraphrase filtering through our bodies for love. We mistake a biologic or socially conditioned response for mind and soul. Our noticing, leased to our professions feels alienated, wearying, our awe shrouded in nostalgic mist, until their rapprochement. Radiance rises, exotic but wise, ancient; like the sun visible after a long solar eclipse.

If we collect experiences like seashells to stand in for, or to replace the ocean, opt for nostalgia, or the fastidious owning of objects, we deny experience itself. Neither need we beg the sky to rain down constellations of meanings; tablets, scripts, maps on which our fates are "written" to determine the architecture of our destiny.

And what of two dilated souls? This is the "stuff" of poetry—*this is love*—and to answer the "why" of existence by which the *All* blossoms like myriad fireflies glittering amidst unknown souls around a darkened globe. We often blink at dawn, but why trade wild fields for hothouse flowers? We are all amateurs in expressing the ineffable, though approached in gestures and too often in partings.

We can strap our lives in (contract), perhaps quote the famous dead (in an imaginary lexicon pageant) while neglecting the most talented and revolutionary of our contemporaries: each other. We explore without worshipping.

We value not idolize. We are the authors of the uncanny.

If we risk dilation our "space" is potentially as vast as the universe. We delight not in commercial advertising skill nor the agog worship before the reified enigma of awe as an icon, but when we greet each other in this ephemeral life with fresh irony about its "point." We need not scale corporate ladders, hoard gold, nor slave for fame. We do not need to be "stars."

The star is experience.
