

TEMPORALITY

Phillip Pulfrey

*To The Great Spirit
that is Life itself*

Now,

is time...

TEMPORALITY

In this forest
I begin to comprehend time,
Caught between present
And ancient memory:
The murmur of the stream
Framing eternity
In moment.
The whisper of breeze,
Vibrating leaves
Giving form to light
To the delight of birds.

Temporal and timeless,
The presence of centuries
And seconds
Now beckon
Across memories
Beyond the dreams of men,
A context of the eternal;
Passage and renewal.

WALKING

I take a step
Unique, separate
From the next
Yet it escapes me,
Like this breath
Never to return.

I take a step,
This in spring,
This in snow,
Yet I forget
Where I began,
Where I go.

I take a step,
A transition,
Beginning to end,
Weighed with memory,
A continuity
From then to now
Which evades me;
For the step exists
In movement.

A present,
Always becoming.
Walking:

Thus,
Always now,
In the condition of time,
This perception.

*One step,
At a time...*

ANOTHER SELF

In the country churchyard,
Ten chimes strike the hour with decision,
While the ancient tombstones
Mark time to another rhythm.
And the returning flowers
Divide year and season,
In the gentle sway
Of this animating breeze
Witnessing passage.

Here, across time,
Another self greets me
Through haze of memory:
The one who came before,
Who stood often here,
Innocent of passing years.
In this moment,
The veil so thin:
A barrier lifted,
A centre shifted,
From me to him.
And in this returning
I try to seize,
This confusion of becoming;

This essence,
An eternal presence,
Of self. Of meaning:
Movement and stillness,
Then and now,
The consciousness of being.

In this churchyard
Those that mourned the dead
Are now buried in their turn;
From this we can learn
The nature of Life
Is in this returning:
Continuity and change,
The same pattern rearranged
In endless variation,
Connected to mother earth
By death and birth.
Yet we ignore this relation,
Turn our backs on history.
Seduced by technology,
We destroy and change,
Endlessly rearrange
Breaking the fragile thread

Of continuity.
Egocentric perception
Suspended in time and space,
Imposes our subjective vision:
A single model of reality,
Still caught in metaphors of fixity
That we take for Absolute.

This other self
Has another vision,
Looking forward
As I look back,
The result of his decision.
Yet, our separation
Is but continuation.
We are but temporal flow,
Reflections of being,
Ways of seeing,
Patterns of experience
Learnt and inherited
Generation to generation:
Sculpted time,
A divine consciousness
Evolving
Outside human perception.

THE OAK TREE

For three hundred and fifty years
This oak tree has witnessed patiently
The passage of men:
Their three score years and ten
Soon over.

While this rich panoply
Expressing seasons,
Renewal and continuity,
Endures.

It has framed my life
From youth to age,
From hopes and dreams
To what has been,
And gone;
Providing consistency,
A point of return,
A link of time
From which I begin to learn
Of a nature divine.

NARRATIVE

Born into separation,
A centre of sensation
Thrust into existence;
A thread of connection,
Of past and future
That we weave into stories:
The narrative of reality.
This specific perspective,
This centre of self,
Our mirrored reflection
Still, yet still moving,
Flowing
Through the current of time,
Dasein.

THE THEATRE OF TIME

I seek myself
Among the wreckage of experience,
The infinite decisions
And reactions
That trace the patterns
Defining this being.
Fragments of reflections
In the infinite mirrors
Of other.
This complex
Caught in mixed narratives
Of roles and games
Donned and discarded
In the theatre of time
To applause
And cat calls.
And I wonder,
When the curtain closes,
The make-up removed,
What is the narrative of me,
And who tells the story?

ECHOES OF INFINITY

The mountains speak
In echoes of infinity
Framed by birdsong;
The sound of wind and water,
Orchestrated by moment.
The voice of each
Specific to time and place,
Reverberation of texture and orientation
Echoed in the sculpted form of rock;
The ever-varied resonance of space
Which trace hour and season,
Centuries beyond human reason,
To the very essence of being.

*In the mountains
are many silences*

RIVER

A transition

From beginning to end,

Weighed with memory:

While this continuity

Escapes me.

Currents of time

Blending

Within the river of passage.

“Still and still moving”

ROADS

We concrete here
To get to there
Only to find
It concreted
To get elsewhere:
Here, there,
Everywhere
Roads,
Going
Nowhere.

DRIVING

Like preoccupied drivers
On a motorway of time
We drive towards death
Wrapped in stress
And the mess
Of our own devising,
All this striving
To avoid the present,
Being where we are.

Silence and birdsong mix on the breeze
Here becomes
Now
And all these strivings cease,
Peace.

Here and Now...

My heart beats human time,
Echoed in my measured tread,
While in my head,
Past
And future jostle
Until
Birdsong calls me
To the Here of Now,
Framing Silence,

Stand: still.
Here, in this place,
Understand the nature of grace
And consciousness:
Neither still nor moving,
Being
In time
Now

AORNOS

"Hell is a place without birds"

Bathed in birdsong,
Purified and blessed,
Magic richness,
Unheard orchestration of our lives.
This sweetness saves my soul
From the intransigence of mind
And the perdition of concrete.
We need birds and flowers,
Grass and trees. Without these
We cannot breathe
And the fragile chord of time
Is broken.

MULTIMEDIA

A rich harmony of birdsong
Mirrors the complex weave
Of this tapestry of growth,
Nuanced with texture and scent,
Orchestrated by the delicate touch of wind
And the nuance of light.
Marking time and transparency,
Defining space and place.
While men watch screens,
Seeking always new means
To destroy this harmony.

SPRING

A yellow splash of colour
Erupts from the tired winter earth
Heralded by birdsong:
A patchwork of colour,
The impatient spring,
Bursting forth:
Amid the receding snow,
A thousand tiny sparks.
Beyond all our strife
The spirit of life
Returns.
This elation of being,
This miracle of sensation.

While we explain and dissect
And meanwhile forget
This direct connection,
Exchanging experience for idea:
Advertising
For an open-top car,
And Fashion, the star
In shop windows,
Marking seasons.
Dominance of reason;

A detachment of deduction
Leading only to destruction.
Human decisions,
Nuclear fission;
A radio-active cloud
Threatening this return.

*Spring is,
The season of Now,
Becoming*

'Spring' was written directly after the disaster in Fukushima

VIRTUAL REALITY

Man,
Thinks he's so clever,
That he will live forever,
Even now he has severed
His connection with Life.
Many methods he employs
To ignore what he destroys:
All the new digital toys
To distract and enjoy.
Tap the screen,
Watch the moving scene,
Forget that you stand
In a wasteland
Once paradise.
Not going to stop it:
Make a quick profit,
Buy the latest gadget
And ignore the dying planet.

SEDUCED BY SCREENS

Seduced by screens
And abstract dreams
Man forgets, it seems,
To stop and feel
His place in the universe.
We behave as observers
Of that which we are part:
We belong to the earth,
Not the earth to we,
Who would control destiny.
Caught in time,
Yet playing with eternity;
Detaching experience from idea,
Playing control and mastery.
Trapped in minds,
We become blind
To the dynamic of energy
That should be harmony,
The condition of wholeness
Beyond the boundary of self:
The wealth of life beyond
Human bounds
That founders
Under the weight
Of our destruction.

MOUNTAIN AND TOWN

It was in the mountains
That I discovered Life;
Away from human strife:
Dappled light through trees,
The sound of leaves
In the rustling breeze
And birdsong.
Everywhere
Growth and abundance,
Endless variety,
Constant change
And renewal:
Flowing energy
And temporal rhythm
Maintaining harmony.
A delicate balance
Framing eternity
In Time.
While in the town
An arid landscape
Suffocates this natural world
Under tarmac and concrete
Turning variety to sameness,
A pale imitation of life

In virtual pictures:
Abstract conception,
Idea torn from sensation,
Reduced to symbols,
Severed from nature
And the power of metaphor.
Mirrored images
On screens
Of richness and variety lost
In conceptual dreams
Of human power.
Buy, consume
And forget
Your slavery to a system
Out of control,
Asphyxiating Life,
Denying a connection
Without which
We cannot live.
Creating this deception
Of a discrete reality
Viewed from a distance
Detached from sensation.

*“The term Shizen implies that nature is the root of
life in a spiritual or religious sense”*

SHIZEN

We are too much and too many,

A heavy mass of humanity,

Arrogant imposition

Ignoring a system

Necessary to existence:

A persistent blindness,

Mindless exploitation,

Deforestation.

Pollution for profit,

No one will stop it

Until it's too late.

We ignore this connection,

Our origin:

The source of life.

This earth, our Mother,

Which we cover

And smother,

Tearing our own roots

We despoil our own soil

Tearing apart

That of which we are part,

Without which

We cannot exist.

LANGIAN: *"It longs me"*

Bereft,
Grief tears and mangles words,
Primeval power
Rents the veil of self,
Mocking human arrogance:
Not "I live", but
"Life lives me".
The centre moves,
Time fragments,
Disconnects:
No longer ordered
In familiar ritual
And gentle presence
Choreographing life
To the accompaniment of fur
And purring.
A narrative suspended,
Yet not ended,
Carried in me:
Not just memory,
But this energy
Wrought through years
Of life shared,
Entwined with mine.

The power of the inner world
Overwhelms the outer
Creating a parallel time
In which her presence
Persists.
Evoked with inner yearning:
It longs me.
To a deeper reality.

“When someone loses his partner and says a part of him is gone, he is more right than he thinks. A portion of his neural activity depends on the presence of that other living brain. Without it, the electric interplay that makes up him has changed. Lovers hold keys to each other’s identities and they write neurostructural alterations into each other’s networks. Their limbic tie allows each to influence who the other is and becomes.”

Lewis, Amini and Lannon (2000)

LIKE SUNSHINE

Like sunshine,
You permeate me;
The warmth of you
Reviving
This life of mine
Like spring
Illuminating
Unsuspected corners
Filling days
With light,
With new life,
Abundant.

ENLIGHTENMENT

Without you I am nothing
With you I am everything
Now I understand
This perimeter of self
Is not an impermeable barrier,
Not a fixed limitation,
But an ongoing conversation
Of life with itself:
A constant becoming,
A gentle strumming
On the strings of existence.
No more resistance
Of the ego's insistence.
Now I begin to see
Beyond me
A new perception;
This connection
To everything.

DANCING

This dance of continuity and change

I can no longer rearrange:

This becoming that became

Me,

A snapshot album of memory

Ordered and reordered,

Grafting past to present,

Ungraspable and effervescent;

Mind changed with age

Hopes and Desires that fade

In currents of time.

DEATH

Before death there are no excuses
It shines the harsh light
Of irrevocability,
The shock of reality,
We are not other, but so.
Fooled by our own pretending,
At the centre of our stage
We invent our world.
Death lifts this fabrication
We weave across our lives
You were thus,
Are no more
Now accept, you must,
This end,
Life does not bend
To Will.

BEYOND

Beyond this separation

Is connection,

Beyond analysis

Is Meaning,

Beyond explanation

Is feeling;

Different ways of knowing,

Awareness of life flowing;

This fine gossamer of being

Woven across time.

Infinite complexity,

Nuance of sensation

And relation,

Escaping categorization

And reduction

To labels,

Binding perception.

LAUGHTER

Laughter:

There is no answer

Because

There is no question.

Complexity dissolves

In sensation.

The ongoing narrative

Melts into Time.

Here, now, forever, find

This, thus:

Birdsong and rain

Melt the pain

Into Being,

Present.



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