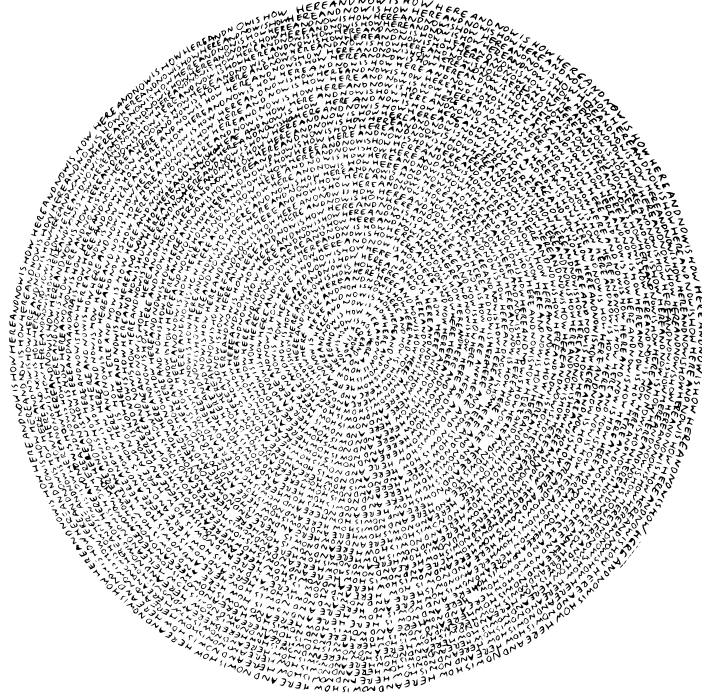


H(OM)ECOMING TO COSMIC 'I'



By

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A thesis presented to OCAD University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts

in

INTERDISCIPLINARY MASTER'S IN ART, MEDIA AND DESIGN

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As a student of OCAD University, I would like to begin by acknowledging the ancestral and traditional territories of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Haudenosaunee, the Anishinaabe and the Huron-Wendat, who are the original owners and custodians of the land on which I stand.

As a frequent visitor to High Park, I acknowledge that we are situated upon the traditional territories of the Wendat, Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe and the Mississaugas of the Credit. For over 10,000 years Indigenous peoples have lived in this area and we recognize the enduring presence of Indigenous peoples on this land. I acknowledge that High Park is located within “Dish With One Spoon” Territory. The “Dish with One Spoon” is a Wampum Belt Covenant between the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and Mississaugas to share and protect this land together by using only one spoon to eat from the Dish and ensuring the Dish is never empty. When I am in High Park, I am all part of this agreement and am also responsible for respectfully sharing and caring for this land and the animals who live here¹.

¹ High Park Land Acknowledgement <https://highparknaturecentre.com/2/indigenous-programs>

ABSTRACT

H(Om)ecoming to Cosmic 'I' is an ontological, metaphysical investigation of what it means to be authentic in our time. It addresses the intertwined relationship between making, healing, knowing and our *being* i.e., not the physical existence but rather the essence of a person. Since spiritual practice and art practice inform each other in my research, Here x Now = How is a key function in the methodology for my making. This methodology sustains my experience of 'what is' without limited thought or knowledge which, according to Indian thinker Jiddu Krishnamurti, has its source in the past as a product of time and thus finite. In addition to this, I explore Zen with an inquiry with open mind to discover 'what am I?' The research advances into analysis of our fundamental *being* by looking into Heidegger's Dasein as 'the way,' along with Earth-based spirituality, and combines the opposites of West and East thinking on Nature, or the moments of the Divine. Inspired by Rudolf Steiner's *Calendar of the Soul* (1925), and informed by practice-led research, my studio practice is divided into four parts and reflects four seasons. The research ultimately suggests reclamation of spiritual ways of knowing for restoration of wholeness and an evolving process of our consciousness.

GRATITUDE

Like any master's students out there, I suspect I encountered more inspirations, wisdoms, joy and hope than I had ever found elsewhere or any other moments in my life, and certainly much more than I deserved while completing my thesis research during this uncertain unique time in history.

Though physical conversations were replaced by Microsoft Teams conversations due to global pandemic in 2020, I absorbed greatly from the regular conversations I enjoyed with Professor Stan Krzyzanowski, a beautiful soulful person first foremost. Oh boy, have I been lucky to have him both as Zen practitioner and as a primary advisor. With an uncompromising honesty and abundance of playfulness, he continuously advised me not to start with 'thinking' but start with making – which essentially framed my main methodological premise for the duration of this research. Humble as he is, Stan once said that my main advisor is actually High Park – nature itself. Though that is also inarguably true, Stan has probably been the main force determining the course of my artistic and spiritual practice, imprinting a huge shift in my mindset, valuing the process of making, and has continued to challenge me with the same question: *where is the art?*

I also, however, consider myself very fortunate to have Dr. Barbara Rauch as my secondary advisor, who not only constantly challenged me a great deal about research and the nature of methodology, but who taught me of the etiquette of academia. She has pushed me to embody both academic languages while still honoring my spiritual interests and has navigated through the positioning of my research. This dynamic harmony between Stan and Barbara's direction is more than a thesis warrior can wish for.

To this day, they both have a big influence on my approach and literature I have read to help my thesis research to come into being. For that reason, I cannot thank enough.

I like to take this opportunity to show my gratitude to Writing & Learning Centre for helping me tower this academic edifice through our weekly meeting, preventing it from collapsing. I also like to thank Dr. Martha Ladly for connecting me to Stan, who just mentioned that she ‘knew’ that he would be a good fit to me when I asked her why Stan. I thank my partner for supporting me with delicious dinner when I am tired and lastly my cat – a living authentic wholeness who sat through hours and hours of my writing next to me even right now and showed me how to breathe and just *be*.

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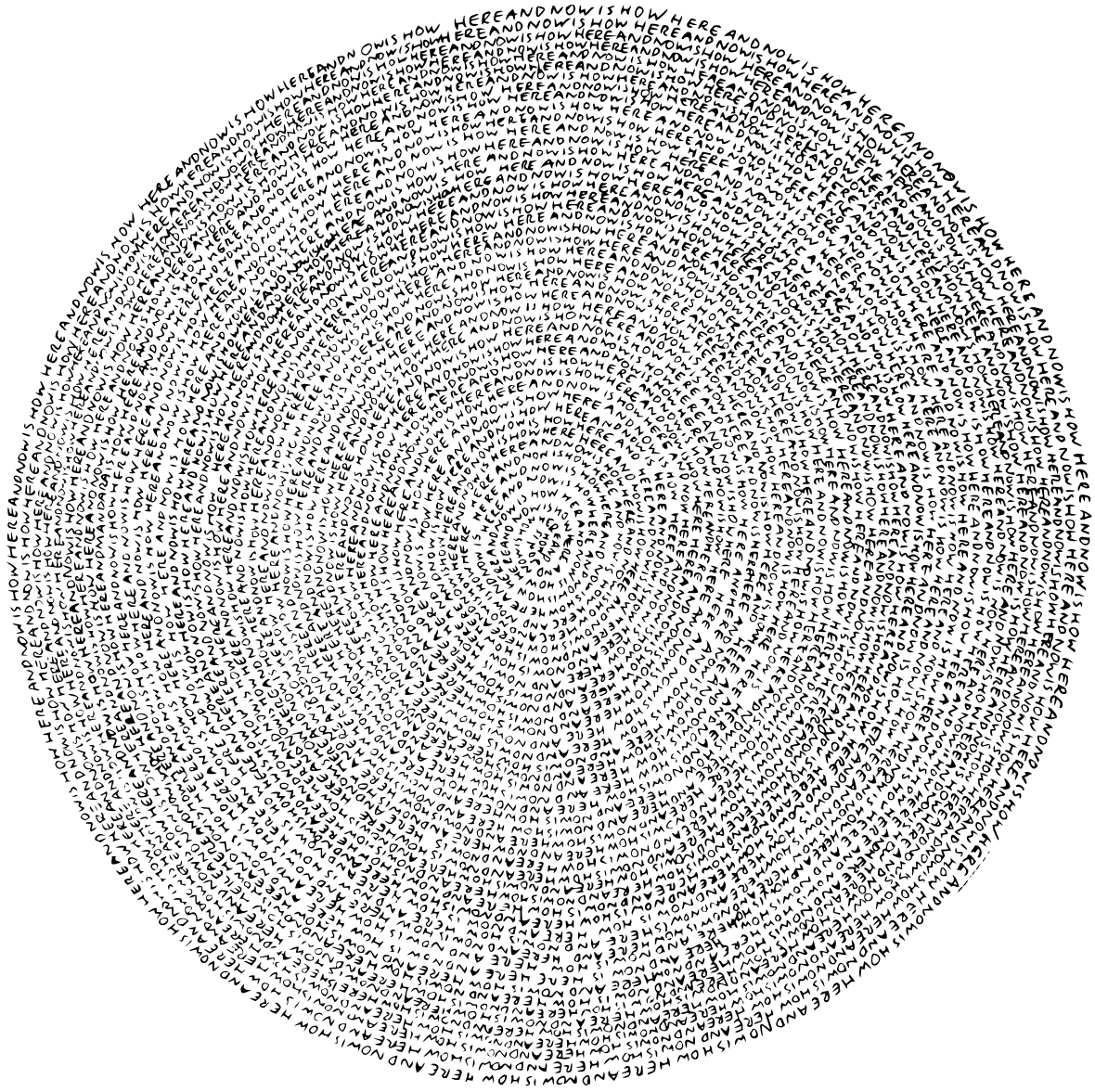
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PREFACE



0: SUFFERING AS PREREQUISITE

*“Suffering is the means the Buddha used to liberate himself,
and it is also the means by which we can become free.”*

— Thich Nhất Hạnh, *The Heart of the Buddha’s Teaching* (3)

Although my sufferings vary and they still come and go, the position of the sufferings in the scale of my thesis research is quite eloquent. Suffering is something that I had experienced prior to my admission to OCAD University (2019), and it is/was what fueled me to conduct this research as a way to cope with my sufferings towards healing – homecoming. Suffering to me is both a means for making and prerequisite but also *truth*, which I decided to confront with courage and curiosity. In this light, there is no denying that my whole thesis project represents the last part of *Four Noble Truths* of Buddhism, the essence taught by Siddhartha Gautama, commonly known as Buddha to deal with human sufferings. Four Noble Truths are as the name suggests the four truths in this world as experienced by Buddha:

FOUR NOBLE TRUTH

FIRST TRUTH: The truth of suffering (Dukkha)

SECOND TRUTH: The truth of origin of suffering (Samudaya)

THIRD TRUTH: The truth of the cessation of suffering (Nirodha)

FOURTH TRUTH: The truth of the path to the cessation of suffering (Magga)

*“Dear friends, with humans, gods, brahmans, monastics,
and maras as witnesses, (...) I myself have identified suffering,
understood suffering, identified the causes of suffering, removed*

*the cause of suffering, confirmed the existence of well-being,
obtained well-being, identified the path to well-being, gone to the
end of the path, and realized total liberation.”*

— Siddhartha Gautama

Essentially, methodology *Six Paths Sutras for Authentic Making* becomes an aspiring tool, useful for the Fourth Truth, the last dimension of the Four Noble Truth: The truth of the path to the cessation of suffering, the way out toward wholeness. The recognition of sufferings as a basic condition for our life is also mentioned in *Man's Search for Meaning* (1946), a memoir of time spent in Nazi death camps by psychiatrist and a Holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl:

If there is meaning in life at all, then there must be a meaning in suffering.

Suffering is an ineradicable part of life, even as fate and death.

Without suffering and death human life cannot be complete. (Frankl)

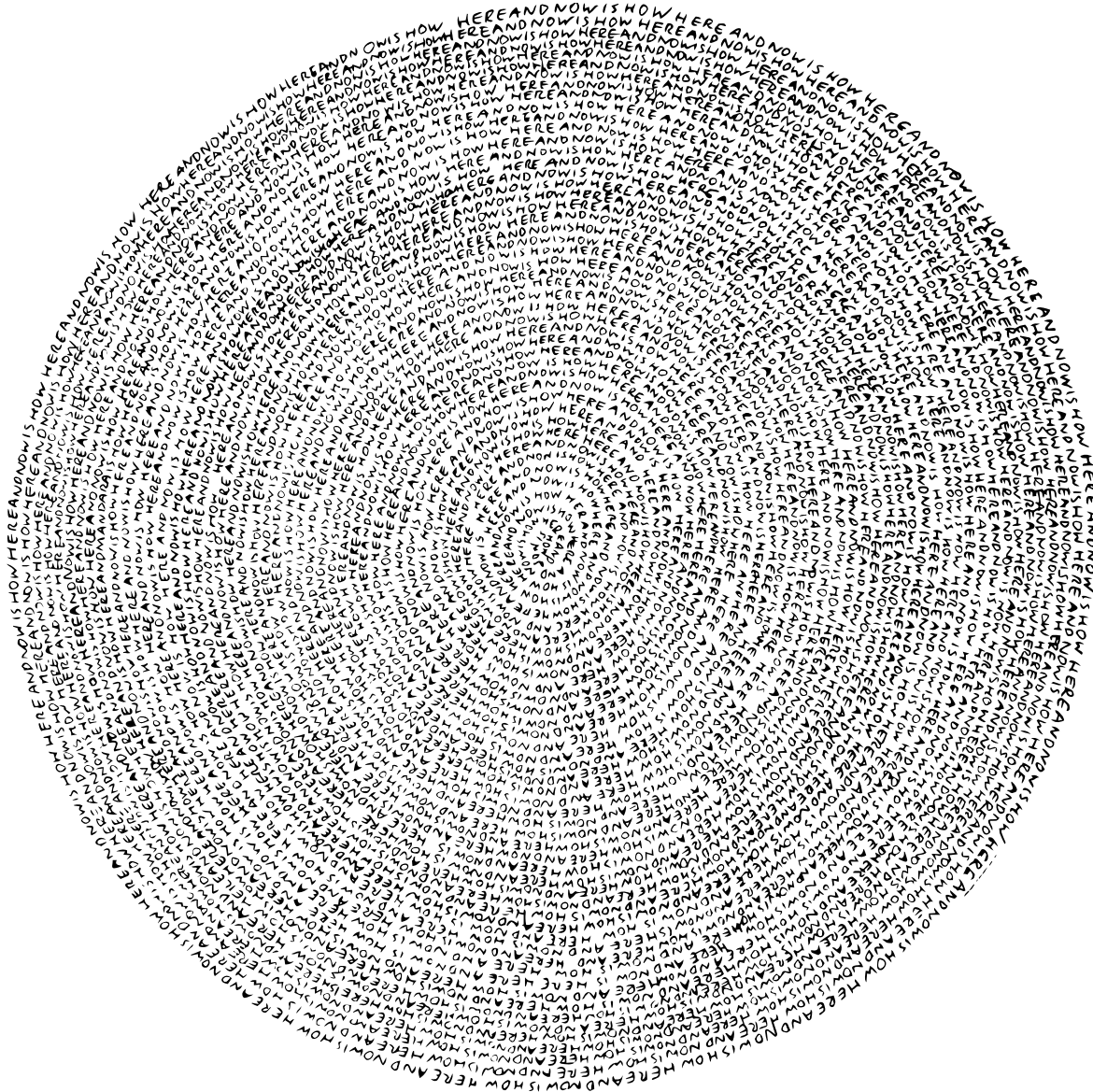
My sufferings may sound insignificant compared to what Frankl went through, but I was piled with neurotic questions around my small self and artist identity. The predicament around identity crisis is a naive and complicated matter as there is no way to scientifically measure its degree of collapse and may remain ambiguous and unrecognizable to others. It seems that the rise of data-oriented information technology and utterly objective social networks multiplied my sufferings, inauthenticity and dishonesty. Every event and experience became what to prove and how 'I' should be projected to others. It reached the point where I could not breathe, and I was lost in false beliefs. As much as it is uncomfortable, suffering allowed me to doubt around this default state of reality in which the egoic self always seemed to win and manipulate my true self. Suffering thus becomes prerequisite. Buddhist monk Thich Nhất Hạnh summarizes suffering as follows:

Without suffering, you cannot grow. Without suffering, you cannot get the peace and joy you deserve. Please don't run away from your suffering. Embrace it and cherish it. (Hanh 5)

Suffering is also discussed by existentialist philosopher Martin Heidegger using the term anxiety. He states anxiety as an “attempt to interpret this phenomenon in its fundamental, existential ontological constitution and function” (Heidegger 184).

According to Heidegger, anxiousness is a fundamental mode of being-in-the-world and basic attunement from which one works with an “uncanny” feeling of not-being-at-home (Heidegger 182). My research thus departed as an acceptance of suffering, acknowledging that I am the very suffering.

INTRODUCTION



H(Om)ecoming to Cosmic 'I' is an ontological, metaphysical investigation of what it means to be authentic in our time and deals as a way to first cope with my personal sufferings. In this document h(Om)e and authenticity are equitable in a sense that they both refer to one's inner most place. Hence, *H(Om)ecoming to Cosmic 'I'* refers to restoring my Self through making that underpins cultivation of presence. *Om*² in the bracket, pronounced as A.U.M is a primordial vibration frequency found in all living beings often interpreted as Cosmic Sound. One of the contemporary exponents of Yoga Swami Satchidananda³ states that "OM was not invented by anybody" and has "the creative capacity to manifest the entire world" (Satchidananda 43). Its infinite potential mirrors our innate being. The term 'Cosmic I' was taken from anthroposophist Rudolf Steiner who often used it to indicate shifted altered state of consciousness in his poetry book *The Calendar of Soul* (1925). Thus, *H(Om)ecoming to Cosmic 'I'* represents my inward journey to the core of my *being* – inner change and adventures of consciousness from 'every day I' to 'Cosmic I,' back into the Universal spirit, which I call spirituality. To better guide through, a page defining terms such as spirituality, authenticity and Self can be found in glossary section.

I like what a late social scientist and spiritual teacher Ram Dass said about how "we are busy trying to be *somebody*" (Becoming Nobody), which is to identify with an

² Om or Aum (ॐ). "A is the beginning of all sounds" (Satchidananda 41). "It represents God in the fullest sense" (42). "Every language begins with the letter A or "ah." "A is pronounced by simply opening the mouth and making a sound. That sound is produced in the throat where the tongue is rooted. So audible sound begins with A. Then as the sound comes forward between the tongue and the palate up to the lips U or "oo" is produced. Then closing the lips produces the M. Therefore, AUM include the entire process of sound, and all other sounds are contained in it. Thus, OM is the origin, or seed, from which all other sounds and words come" (41-42). See page 40-43 *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*.

³ "Sri Swami Satchidananda (Sri Gurudev) is one of the most widely known and well-founded contemporary exponents of Yoga" (Satchidananda xii). His direct experience underpins the basis of *Yoga Sutra's of Patanjali* (1978).

‘image’ about ourselves such as the role we have, with cultures we belong to, with physical condition we have, forgetting our innate essence being. The result of forgetting who we are at the core is separate self⁴, which only serves as a false delusional security for our functioning of everyday. Trapped in our false identity, we have been entangled with mental illness and neurotic thought process, affecting the people around, and the world around negatively. What then is the quality of art produced by such an individual who is separate from their inner being? How do we come back to our authentic wholeness – h(Om)e again?

SPECULATIVE MEASUREMENT FOR AUTHENTICITY -H(OM)E:

But perhaps before I go any further, I should define what I mean by H(Om)e – authenticity. The problem for authenticity is twofold: 1) authenticity cannot be grasped by the scientific measurement, so what are the ways to be understood? 2) Is scientific mechanistic interpretation the most appropriate way to understand the quality? Words and data may never be successive in conveying its true nature of authenticity. I, however, decided to tackle the challenge by first developing an imaginary measuring criterion for authenticity as a way in which I intend to comprehend and experience what it means to be authentic. As a yogi who leads practice, I learned that cultivation of presence is a key in the path to self-realization – an inward journey towards my authentic wholeness. Therefore, I first foremost underpin the magnitude of here-ness and now-ness accountable for the greater or less estimate of authenticity. Similarly, the way how I use

⁴ Please see Glossary section for more metaphors on separate self

authenticity is in an alignment with some of the characteristics of ‘aesthetic feelings’ argued by French philosopher Henri Bergson in his book *Time and Free Will* (1913). For instance, authenticity is analogous to quality of ease – “ease in motion passes over into the pleasure of mastering the flow of time and of holding the future in the present” (Bergson 12). Authenticity could also be understood by looking into what it is not. As an example, “effort is accompanied by a muscular sensation” (7), therefore authenticity is detected in effort-*less*. Furthermore, authenticity is not about sorrow as “sorrow begins with by being nothing more than a facing towards the past” (11) and contradicts with the premise of my making – being present, where here-ness and now-ness are constantly intersecting toward future with a sense of joy. I also blend Bergson’s determining conditions for “fundamental self⁵” (129) and view authenticity as “ever-changing (...) perpetual state of becoming” and “the fleeting duration of our ego” (130), which has no relation to quantity, but rather a pure quality (137). Never being solidified, authenticity is an ungraspable “qualitative progress” (123), which “permanent external object” such as language nor numerical multiplicity can never express (130). I concurrently investigate what it means for art to be authentic in the contemporary art field, arguing that identification of art through aesthetics exterior style or medium is understood as metaphors for the delusion of our own *being*.

The accuracy, success or even failure that might occur in this way of measuring is not where I stress in my research but rather, *how* I attempt in progressing through that qualitative process is focused throughout.

⁵ See Two Aspects of Self section p129-139 in *Time and Free Will* (1913)

AUTHENTICITY AS BEING

But now that this speculative measurement for authenticity is set, I am inversely confronted by a new realization that this may not simplify my research at all until I analyze what it means to *be* in the first place in order to *be* authentic or even to *be* present. This is where I refer to the concept of Dasein, a term coined by German philosopher Martin Heidegger to explicate human *being* in his book *Time and Being* (1927). Dasein clearly has many interpretations but I most simply interpret as ‘the way’ and it voyages along my research creation. In fact, my research can be aptly described as a documentation of what is unfolding in the process of exploring what it means to be. How would my making inform knowing?

INAUTHENTICITY

Essentially, this paper considers inauthenticity has emerged from egoistic identification as an outcome of three things: 1) modernity’s tendency to separate, which then took the location of our spiritual side of our *being* and our connection to the Earth, and 2) material culture’s tendency to neglect ‘the way (it is)’ and the process, as a result of being preoccupied with forms, end, result and speed. 3) civilizing process that divided our consciousness from the instincts. All of which mistakenly changes our fundamental ‘knowing’ which then affects our *being*. I seek to show that my innate being is dependent on how I know things, not just through visible appearances, nor through our limited mental conception, but rather by actively participating and channeling to the total community of life force. The limitation and challenge in this investigation lies exactly

here but it is also what fuels my research.

STRUCTURE OF THESIS PROJECT

This whole thesis project is organized in two parts: (1) *H(Om)ecoming to Cosmic 'I'*, this document, (2) and studio practice which informs my research and is available online⁶.

I should also draw attention to how *H(Om)ecoming to Cosmic 'I'* has been written through a spiritual, yogic, ecological lens, but avoids physical, biological, social, cultural identification of the author, myself as Japanese, minority, female artist and so on. The omission of these objective identification is my will to stop trying to be 'somebody' as the first step to homecoming and dealing with my original suffering over neurotic questions around artist identity. Similarly, there are many people who identify themselves with their role or companies they work for in Japan particularly affecting negatively upon their retirement. I anticipate that this research will serve as a means in which every culture might reevaluate 'the way' we live, identify (know) and simply be, reforging our natural authentic state, that was so effortlessly accessed in childhood but lost as we have become adults. In this light, my questions are:

- How might visual art accelerate the process of reaching the heart, bringing me back to forgotten place of pure awareness⁷, and the softening sensation of

⁶ <https://leeay-aikawa.format.com/>

⁷ By pure awareness, I mean this point of awareness where all creation proceeds. It is a "tiny point of awareness in the total unconscious, that is called supra conscious" (Satyananda 63). See *Yoga Nidra* (2013) page 62-63. It is also called total awareness or Supraconscious in the book. It is equivalent to what J. Krishnamurti calls Choiceless Awareness.

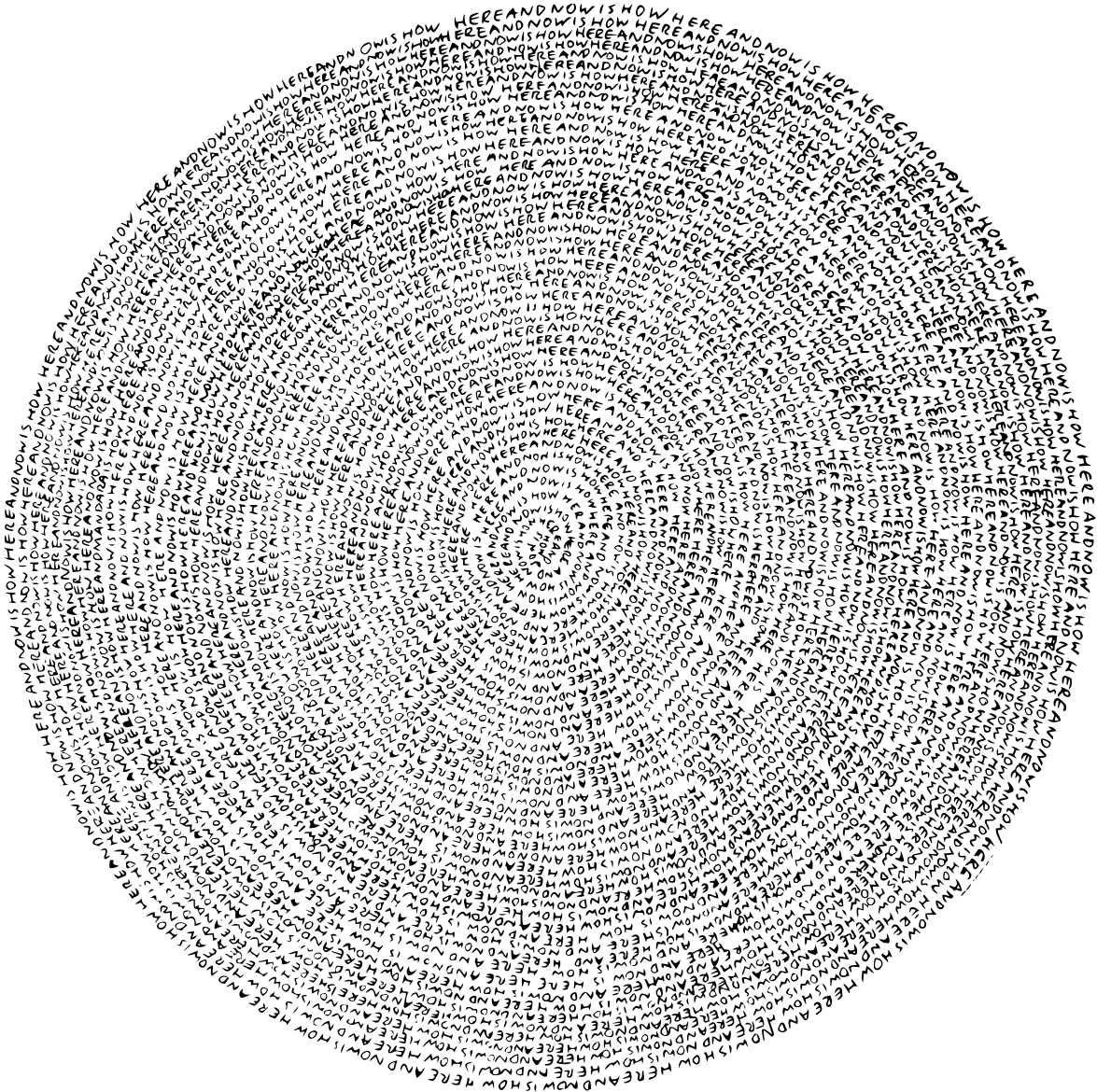
childhood, serving as an instrument in which I reclaim the core of our *being* and ultimately rethink our moral ethical values?

- How does process-based making function as a guide that nourishes my soul and the soul of the world, in this materialistic world that has forgotten the sacred dimension of creation?
- How are process-based making serve as authentic making and contribute to my well-knowing (authentic knowing) and well-being (authentic being)?

OBJECTIVES

It is my wish that this research will achieve five things: 1) establish personal soul-nourishing process-based making; 2) link healing and learning about Self through making; 3) demonstrate importance of spirituality and link my well-being (authentic being) with my 'well-knowing' (authentic knowing), and 4) awaken myself to issues around epistemology of Western civilizations and highlight 5) ancient ways of knowing and soul searching as relevant in our time.

SIX PATHS SUTRAS FOR AUTHENTIC MAKING



WHAT IS IT?

Six Paths Sutras for Authentic Making systematizes and summarizes the philosophical, theoretical, spiritual ideas in my making and considers intrinsic connection between making, being, and knowing (about Self⁸)– which happens here and now. This was made for me to organize my research investigation. Indian thinker Jiddu Krishnamurti states that “learning Self always is in the present” (Total Freedom 110). In this light, making is a method in which I inquire who I am, seen as *well-knowing* (*authentic knowing*) and is always *ing* – present mode. Only in the light of well-knowing, only in the light of well-making, can we have well-being. The trinity of making, knowing, and *being* is explored through six aspects. The understanding of six aspects is implicit in my practice and inseparable in terms of positioning. Therefore, despite the paths being listed as six aspects, they are all one participatory act and in no specific order.

It is important not to search for authentic in my making, inspired by Taoist thought. In the book *Tao te Ching*, Lao Tzu says, “those who following the way become the way” (33). Similarly, Krishnamurti discusses the nature of searching and why one should not search, in a book *Total Freedom* (1996):

Where there is the implication of search, there must be contrast and duality; where mind is seeking, it must inevitably imply a division (Krishnamurti 37).

My preoccupation with ‘wanting’ that leads to separating must be transcended. I just must practice and *be!*

⁸ The word Self does not imply ego here. In yoga, capital ‘S’ is applied to mean atman or transcendental awareness. It has nothing to do with name and form, etc. (Satyananda 63) See *Yoga Nidra*, Page 63.

Suffering⁹ acts as an engine that fuels my research and serves as both means and prerequisite in *Six Paths Sutras for Authentic Making* and available for further read in the Preface section. The diagram below illustrates this system of *Six Paths Sutras for Authentic Making* (See fig.1), whereas the table below is an iteration for *Authentic Making* (See fig.2).

⁹ Read Preface

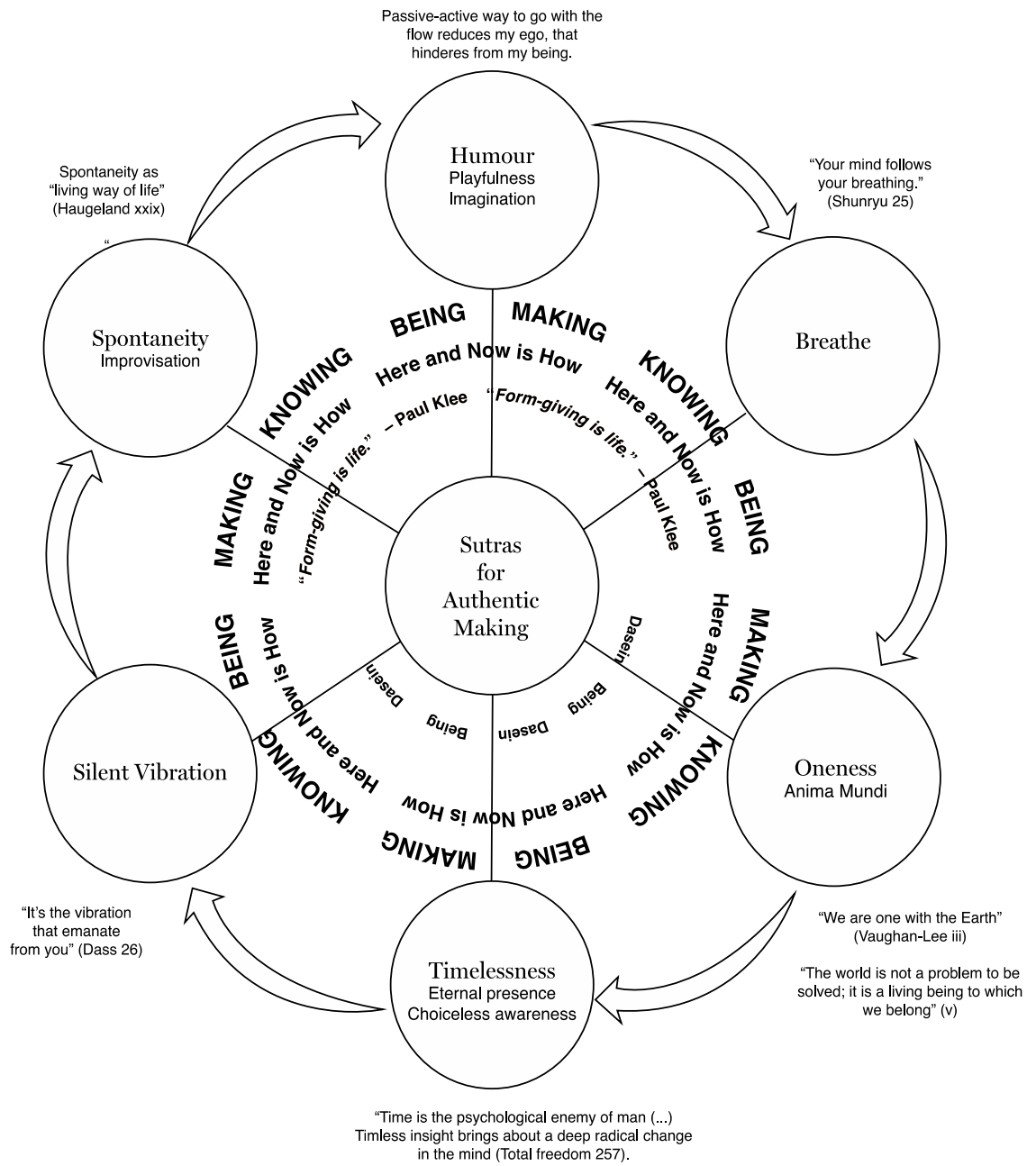


Figure 1: Six Paths Sutras for Authentic Making

PERSONAL GUIDES FOR AUTHENTIC MAKING

Formula	Radically playful, compassionately imaginative, Responding from right here right now. My project is courageous processual play
Function	Here x Now = How
6 Ingredients (PATHS/ ASPECTS/ themes explored)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Breath; 2) Oneness; 3) Timelessness 4) Silent Vibration; 5) Spontaneity; 6) Imagination, Playfulness and Humour
Companion	Dasein
Prerequisite	Suffering
Mantra	Here and now is how, here and now is how, here and now is how...
Stress	HOW I come h(Om)e – authentic wholeness
Made for	Myself first, but could be used for others as a point of their healing process
Key mode of making	In the absence of 'thinking' (what to do) and 'separating' (subject/object), 'being' (present) and 'surrendering' (improvisation) occur at the same time.
Forget	Sorrow, fear, effort, thought and time
Reclaim	Wholeness, sacredness of individual, that is connected to the wholeness, sacredness of the Earth and beyond

Figure 2: Personal guide for Authentic Making

GENERAL INFLUENCE

The structure of *Six Paths Sutras for Authentic Making* is inspired by *Yoga Sutras¹⁰ of Patanjali*¹¹ (2012), written from the recorded conversation of Sri Swami Satchidananda to his students. I employed the term *sutra* as threads of theories and thoughts, which supports my methods. As Satchidananda suggested, every day, I check my progress and see that I grow a little better. Every day should elevate me a little, broaden my attitudes, reduce my selfishness. This is an essence in authentic making with one truth, but various paths.

As I mentioned, “practice is the most crucial factor” (vii). Therefore, the theories of this system, methodology, is an outcome of practice-led research and realization. With a strong emphasis on journey and process itself, I came up with a personal function: **Here x Now = How**, which served as a mantra for my practice. Such an approach is heavily influenced by Stan Krzyzanowski, my primary advisor and Zen practitioner, who continuously encouraged me not to over-think and just do it. His insight is in an alignment with Tim Ingold (2012), an anthropologist who proposes “thinking through making” rather than making through thinking. This was ‘the way’ in which I attempted in coming back h(Om)e. As a matter of fact, it was all about *how* – the way. I engaged with moment-to-moment modality with a strong emphasis on ‘becoming toward,’ which has made my work process-based without a fixed plan as opposed to making from aesthetic ‘styles’ in mind, which I used to. Such a vision is also suggested in yoga philosophy. It

¹⁰ Sutra means thread in Sanskrit (Satchidananda xi) and considered as discourses of teachings on mind and consciousness by yoga masters to his students. The estimates of the Sutras range from 5,000 B.C to 300 A. D. (Satchidananda xi-xii)

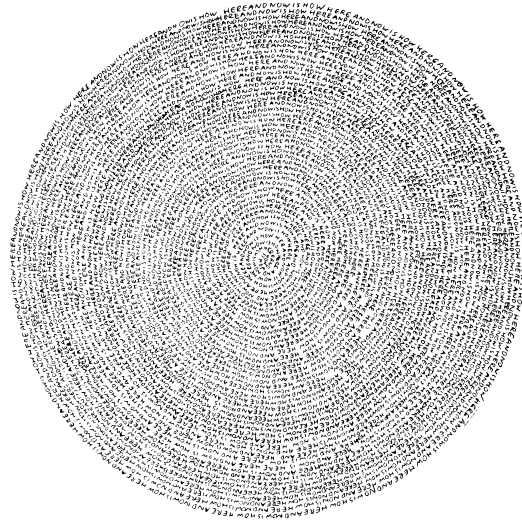
¹¹ Sri Patanjali is considered as ‘father of Yoga’ and his Sutras are the basis for all of the various types of meditation and Yoga which flourish today in their myriad forms” (Satchidananda xii). “Sri Patanjali was the epitome of acceptance of all methods and of broad-mindedness of approach. He did not limit his instructions to one particular technique, to members of any particular religions or philosophy, or in any other way” (Satchidananda xiv). It is not known exactly when Sri Patanjali lived, or even if he was a single person rather than several persons using the same title. In any case, he did not in any sense ‘invent’ Raja Yoga, but rather systemized it and compiled the already existing ideas and practices.

presumes that how one moves through poses is more important than pose itself. As such, spiritual practice and art practice are informing each other in my research.

AUTHENTIC MAKING TOWARD DEATH

I shall also mention that this methodology is enveloped by *Dasein*, a term coined by German philosopher Martin Heidegger to explicate human *being* in *Time and Being* (1927). *Dasein* voyages along my making as an imaginary formless companion throughout my journey, showing me ‘the way’ – which transformed the function to **Here x Now = How (the way) = Dasein**. Heidegger addresses *Dasein* as an existential project of an authentic being-toward-Death¹². He states, “the delineation of the existential structure of being-toward-the-end helps unfold a kind of being (...) whole” (Heidegger 248). Being whole is considered as ultimate destination, the “extreme not-yet” and “the most extreme possibility of this being” – the end, the death (248). In this light, the *Six Paths Sutras for Authentic Making* always implies “toward-Death” at the end of the title because making deals with ontological possibility of becoming form and artifice, but “showing as little as possible of its possibility” (of Death) (250). This connects to artist Paul Klee’s quote: “Form-giving is life (...) form is death” (qtd. In Ingold 91). The processual nature of my work reflects as an evidence of the immediate givenness of my experiences, contained in hopeful in what Heidegger termed *toward* (Heidegger 250-254).

¹² See the Division Two, Chapter One: The possible Being-a-Whole of a *Dasein* and Being-toward-Death in *Time and Being* (1927).



1

BREATH

“Your mind follows your breathing.”

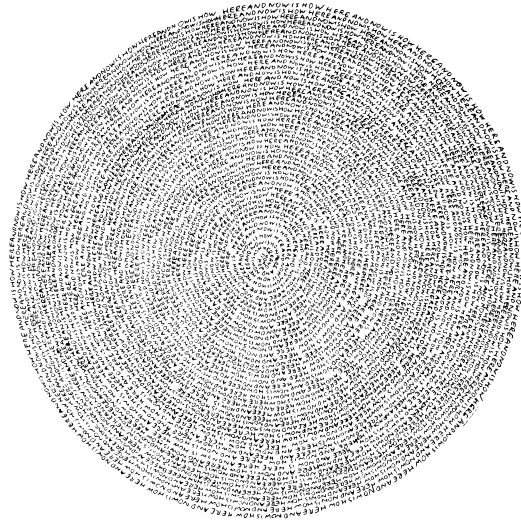
— Suzuki, Shunryu. *Zen Mind, Beginner’s Mind* (25)

Paying attention to the space between inbreath and outbreath was critical in my approach in authentic-making-toward-death. The core of my research lies in the sense of the process of what’s passing and unfolding between nothingness and manifestation. Breathing is the home base for our fundamental being in many aspects and bridges to new insights and to a sense of well-being (Sieczka 85). According to Sri Swami

Satchidananda¹³, “the calm is retained by the controlled exhalation or the retention of the breath” (54). In other words, to regulate breathing is to regulate mind, essential for healers. Breathing also has the ability to strengthen inner world as well as an ability to bring me back with beginner’s mind in which “there are many possibilities,” Zen master Shunryu Suzuki¹⁴ states in the book *Zen Mind, Beginner’s Mind* (1970) (2). I interpret beginner’s mind as childlike playful heart, that’s pure because it’s not disturbed with ego yet, and guides me into subconscious realm and then access my unconscious for creativity. Similarly, psychiatrist C.G Jung argued “everything that we reject as mere fantasy because it comes from the unconscious is of extraordinary importance” (qtd in Sabini 95). Echoing Jung, this was particularly important in authentic making for my awareness to stay innocent and stay present, not buried by preconceived ideas developed in the past. Krishnamurti states that the preconceived idea, which is a product of thought “has its source and root in the past” (Total Freedom 267) and therefore measurable and limited (159). With breathing, I am here. It’s just happening right here, going to my inner world as I inhale and then to the external world as I exhale.

¹³ Go to Page 20 for information on Swami Satchidananda.

¹⁴ Shunryu Suzuki Roshi (b. 1904) was the disciple of Gyokujun So-on-roshi. His most influential teacher was Kishizawa-roshi, who emphasized a deep and careful understanding of Dogen, the koans and the sutras (xvii). Suzuki Roshi was only twelve when he began his apprenticeship in 1916. Contrary to his master Daisetsu Suzuki who focused on Satori, Shunryu Suzuki stressed on Beginner’s mind part of Zen practice, which made it accessible for Americans. Roshi is “a person who has actualized that perfect freedom which is the potentiality for all human beings” (Suzuki xix)



2

ONENESS

“The world is not a problem to be solved; it is a living being to which we belong.

The world is part of our own self and we are a part of its suffering wholeness.”

— Thích Nhất Hạnh, *Spiritual Ecology: The Cry of the Earth*

“As long as you are caught by duality you cannot attain absolute freedom,

and you cannot concentrate.”

— Shunryu Suzuki, *Zen Mind, Beginner’s Mind* (102)

“Our separation from the natural world may have given us the fruits of technology and science but it has left us bereft of any instinctual connection to the spiritual and soul of

the world, the knowing that we are all part of one living, spiritual being.”

— Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee, *Spiritual Ecology* (vi)

Oneness is the second aspect I reflect from my making. The section attempts to establish a rather simple point: oneness, we are all connected with one universal consciousness. Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee, contemporary Sufi Teacher and the editor of *Spiritual Ecology* (2016), says having that awareness, “of the unity and interconnectedness of all life” is oneness consciousness¹⁵. To give a quick overview, *Spiritual Ecology* is a name of the book and a “field of study encompassing the internal subjective emotional, mystical, or religious connection between humans and the rest of planetary life” according to Dr. Elizabeth Allison, who is a faculty member of *Ecology, Spirituality and Religion* program at California Institute of Integral Studies (Allison).

Both *Spiritual Ecology* and the Nature/Earth based spirituality are equitable in a sense that it involves with learning about Self in relation to our spiritual connection to Nature environment. Such a connection is also central to land-based learning of Indigenous culture. Nature can help us reawaken the forgotten sacred dimension of our being, because nature just *is*, and it *feels*. Vaughan-Lee states “it (nature) is full of invisible forces with their own intelligence and deep knowing” (296). Such an understanding was evident among Vedic¹⁶ people who lived as early as 1500-1200 BCE

¹⁵ Throughout history, various metaphors were employed to comprehend this mystery of *one*. Anima Mundi is the living spiritual aspect of the world, the soul of the world mentioned by ancient Greek philosophers. Plato, for instance, adhered to this view and saw the world as “a living being endowed with soul and intelligence, (...) a single entity containing all other living entities, which by their nature are all related” (Cashford 197). This expands to what C.G. Jung called Collective Consciousness with the central idea that “the archetype of wholeness is not confined to human Self but embraces the whole universe” (197). Indra’s Net relates to Oneness Consciousness in the way that “the universe is seen as an infinite net, whenever the threads cross there is a clear shining pearl, that reflects and is itself reflected in every other pearl in an infinite pattern of reflections” (197). Jewish-Dutch philosopher Spinoza could not make it any clearer: “God and Nature are two words for the same substance” (qtd. in Cashford). Alchemists called this The Golden Chain, which was called Great Chain of Being in Medieval times (198). And finally, Gaia is the origin of cosmos, – the vision of the Earth as a living spirit, and the universe as one dynamic living whole – the expression of the Soul of the World that works through the Collective Consciousness (Cashford 201-203).

¹⁶ Vedic people lived for 2,500 years around c.500 – c.500 BCE mainly along the banks of the Saraswati River, which was located in Northern India between the modern Ravi and Yamuna Rivers down to what is now the desert of Rajasthan. (See Nadabindu & Dhyanabindu Upanishads Page 6-7)

with a complex multi-layered view of the universe, in which humankind, nature and the divine are intertwined. A senior sannyasin¹⁷ Swami Satyadharna¹⁸ states in her last book *Nadabindu & Dyanabindu Upanishads* (2019) that Vedic people “had a deep knowledge of the oceans, mountains, deserts and forests of the physical world, as well as of the subtle worlds of deities and different levels of consciousness” (6). Vaughan-Lee, however, laments over our “little awareness of the relationship between our individual soul and the world soul (what the ancients called the *anima mundi*)” today despite the recent comeback of spiritual practice in the West to access inner dimension of our Self (Vaughan-Lee 296-297). I, myself started with yoga philosophy to build spiritual knowledge on Self but didn’t particularly pay attention to the dimension of the larger soul (296) – the living presence of the Earth as a means through which I can see my place and understand Self.

My nature-based project *Anima Mundi* (2020) and *Reverence* (2021) marks shift in my awareness. The project required engaging and communicating with materials from inside and shortened the distance between myself and Nature. It was a living practice of oneness. Controlling part of me as a maker/subject has subsided as I worked with the subtle colours of natural ink. I listened and respected Nature because it knew the best. I ‘felt’ simply wrong to add or fix. My work *We have never been divided* (2020) (Figure 4), was a realization that nature always wants to be one, only my ego tried to separate. By working this way, I gained a valid knowledge – the truth that we are one.

¹⁷ Hindu religious mendicant

¹⁸ Swami Satyadharna (b. Connecticut USA) was a senior sannyasin, a yoga acharya , and a versatile teacher of yogic meditation and allied philosophies. Having Master of Arts in Yoga philosophy with First Class Honors from Bihar Yoga Bharati, India.

But now a question rises; how did I lose the sacred knowledge of oneness? Vaughan-Lee argues that “in the birth of the scientific era that saw the emergence of Newtonian Physics, – which positing the physical world as unfeeling matter, a clockwork mechanism and control – effectively cut human beings off from the awareness of our deep interrelatedness to our world” (294). Thomas Berry, contemporary father of Earth-based spirituality, echoes in his essay *The World of Wonder*, that our attitude as settlers were beginning of all conflicts. Berry states that we saw ourselves as:

the most religious of peoples, as the most free in our political traditions, the most learned in our universities, the most competent in our technologies, and most prepared to exploit every economic advantage. We saw ourselves as a divine blessing for this continent. In reality, we were a predator people on an innocent continent (23).

Berry further argues that we have followed figures like French mathematician René Descartes (b. 1596) and English philosopher John Locke (b. 1632), who urged the control of nature and promoted separation of the conscious self from the world of matter, we have stopped *seeing* from the whole of this land and we have never experienced this land as living presence (24-25).

Two centuries later, psychiatrist C.G Jung (b.1875) was busy developing an attitude that could not substitute scientific certainty for what the union of Nature and Spirit might offer to heal the disenchantment of the age (Sabini 91). This is evident in the book *The Earth has a Soul* (2002) by psychologist Meredith Sabini, a collection of Jung’s ‘Nature writings’ and Sabini’s narratives. With his central interest on unconscious and dream, his own entanglement with tribal and indigenous cultures established his

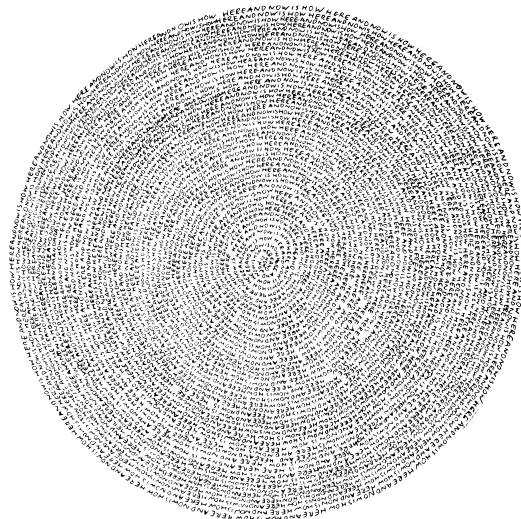
argument that “our psyche is profoundly disturbed by the loss of moral and spiritual values that have hitherto kept our life in order” (qtd in Sabini 86). Jung viewed Nature¹⁹ as a primary source in which we should work around our unconscious and archaic mind, which he equates as Voice of God (91-95).

It is regrettable that the delusion of modernity has over-favored analytic scientific mind, and we now live in a world where nothing is sacred. In the book *We have never been modern* (1993), French Philosopher Bruno Latour offers versions of separation of modernity. He states that being modern is about being thrown into the middle of a fight, in a quarrel where there are winners and losers, or Ancients and Moderns, which makes it doubly asymmetrical invisible only to the rich Western democracies (Latour 9-10). By double asymmetry, Latour means the separation between nonhumans (nature) and humans (culture) on the one hand, and between what happens 'above' and 'below' on the other – heaven from the earth (10-13). Philosophy professor from CIIS, Dr. Jacob Sherman²⁰ summarizes as “*alienation* – the psychological, cultural, political and imaginative situation in which we find ourselves increasingly alienated both from nature and our primal experiences of reality” (Sherman). Further, he states that we have lost the place for spiritual side of our *being*, not knowing where to put ‘it’ in this double processes (Sherman). The gestures of split between the world are seen in places such as the churches, where the architecture is used to direct the view upward for connection with God, giving the false impression on us that spirit is only up there in heaven rather than around us and within each other (Vaughan-Lee 00:52:32-00:53:30).

¹⁹ Jung states Nature and psyche are identical to Collective Unconscious, in the sense that it contains the unknown. “In my opinion the collective unconscious is the preconscious aspect of things on the ‘animal’ or instinctive level of the psyche. Everything that stated or. Manifested by the psyche is an expression of the nature of things, whereof man is a part. (LT, II, P. 540)

²⁰ Listen to his lecture *Philosophy in the time of crisis* (2020)

Krishnamurti most frankly explains that “as long as we accept that idea that we are separate you must have a conflict and therefore, division and confusion” (Total Freedom 325). Echoing that, Vaughan-Lee points out that “the world is not a problem to be solved; it is a living being to which we belong” (Vaughan-Lee v) and we need to see the Earth as the primal source of our spirituality and that the change from deep in our soul must occur (Berry 25-27) and making through natural materials has been definitely helpful.



3

TIMELESSNESS

“Thought is time (...) man is always a slave to the past.”

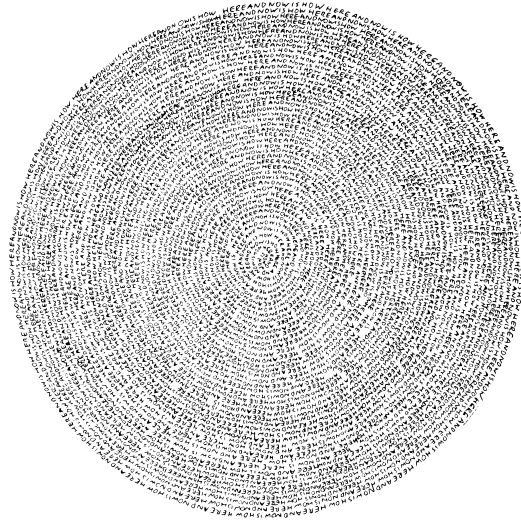
—Jiddu Krishnamurti

It has been important to free myself from the concept of time in authentic making for two main reasons. 1) It allows me to release ego in connection to the realm of unconscious 2) it allows me to stay present, in absence of thinking mind. Surely, I should not miss the deadline for thesis nor my dentist appointment as a responsible individual to function in a society. But that is a social role, which Ram Dass would call as ‘somebody’ and still in the spectrum of ego self, which exists in time, rules and constitutions. In authentic making, it is important to lose that somebody-ness – social self, because healing

only begins with personal and does not start from social level. In fact, it is about ‘nobody-ness’ and nothingness on which my h(Om)e finds true security because the illness of our mind is always associated with the relationship with society, which forms concepts around self. Such a material, chemical process of thought is limited and not welcomed in my making.

Expanding from that, I’d like to mention “choiceless awareness,” Krishnamurti’s recurring theme in his teachings. It is an awareness that is free from limitation (Total Freedom 181) because it does not exist in time. Krishnamurti states that “time is psychological enemy of man. Our action is based on knowledge including choices which are product of time. So, man is always a slave to the past” (257). It is only in choiceless awareness that one can find freedom – to free from being a slave to the past (257). He further states, choice is perpetuating conflict and duality, which results in fear and never helpful in authentic making, nor maintaining that awareness (Truth and Actuality 60).

Following the weather was a key in decreasing my choices so that I can decrease the chance of me getting caught in thoughts (past). Any day sun is out, I would just go to the park and see what nature had to offer me. If it started to rain, I would go home. This released me from much thinking and rather connected me with instinct. To follow the weather was even more effective in the midst of the global pandemic. Because both pandemic and the weather share uncertainty and so are we – we are ephemeral changing beings. Aiming for choiceless awareness that exists in timelessness enhanced my momentary action because I never had to think if other options would have been better.



4

SILENT VIBRATION

“It’s the vibration that emanate from you.”

–Ram Dass

In this section, I discuss theories I employed to support my vibration investigation project called *H(Om)e Sweet Home* (2020). The project considers all things in the cosmos including human beings, consist of vibration (Krishna Das 18). Krishna Das²¹, Kirtan artist and the author of *Nada Yoga* (2013), states that each of us is vibrating on various levels (18). Nada Yoga is a metaphysical path to unity by responding to inner silent vibration *anhata* and external sound of *ahata*. Never being distorted by thinking mind,

²¹ In August 1970 Krishna Das traveled to India and met Ram Dass. Both became a devotee of the Hindu guru Neem Karoli Baba (Maharaj-ji).

anhata is a silent vibration that reflects the order of our mind, but only heard through silence, where there is no “egoic self” (18) and not accessible by others. According to Sri Satchidananda, the author of *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* (2013) “anhata sound is always in you, (...) and it can never be destroyed” (Satchidananda 42). I looked at these two types of sound through Japanese marbling technique Suminagashi²² to understand Self. But before I go further, let me discuss Samadhi as a dimension of consciousness toward which I attempted in going.

Loss of ego, according to Swami Satyananda Saraswati, the author of *Yoga Nidra* (2013), is one of the indications of Samadhi²³, which occurs between subconscious and unconscious. It is a state where all the contents in the consciousness are cleared and thus “there is only behavior, which is order” (Total Freedom 281). This deep tranquil wakeful sleep state of Samadhi is the synthesis of relaxation, silence and total awareness. It is “this point (of experience), where only the fundamental vibration of the unconscious remained, without fluctuation or modification (of mind)” (Satyananda 55). I learned this through Yoga Nidra course I took in the summer 2020 as a part of self-study. Yoga Nidra is a Tantric²⁴ technique to awaken to divine faculties of Samadhi and involves maintaining our “a point of total awareness in unconscious” and often understood as sleep meditation (Satyananda 63). Swami Satyananda Saraswati who constructed a system of Yoga Nidra based on his own experience states that “the nature of the total brain is actually unconscious” (63)! This is which our rational intellectual mind has to

²² Suminagashi is an ancient marbling technique that originally started as a play within palace around 9C. Using Japanese ink that's made of animal glue, which is non-toxic, they used this technique to see the current of the river. The first official Suminagashi master (Holder of intangible cultural property) is Tadao Fukuda, living in Fukui Japan.

²³ Samadhi is the ultimate blissful state of consciousness, also known as Nirvana in Buddhism.

²⁴ Tantra is an esoteric tradition in Hinduism, commonly known as Mantrayāna (Mantra Vehicle) and Guhyamantra in Buddhism.

understand. Jung's insight on the unconscious is in an alignment with Satyananda: "the unconscious is not limited only to the instinctual reflex processes of the cortical centres; it also extends beyond consciousness and, with its symbols, anticipates future conscious processes" (qtd in Sabini 81). As Satyananda points out, a question arises: "From this total unconsciousness where no differences are perceived from this point of perception (...), how to awaken the consciousness?" (Satyananda 62-63)

In this light, Suminagashi – Japanese marbling – was a method I employed in which I responded to this question by combining theories of Nada Yoga and Yoga Nidra. It was my attempt to remain awake in the 'almost' unconscious with sensory perception of visual only, while responding to two types of sound.

To give a quick overview, Suminagashi method is very simple. To me, it is to surrender to the water, letting the water to touch my "subtlest sound vibration" (Satyadharma 14) who is holding a brush with Sumi ink (calligraphy ink) and another in pine resin (or I used liquid soap). Alternating the brushes by touching the same point on the surface of the water, the classic tree trunk look of concentric circles is achieved. I have experienced Suminagashi in various ways in terms of place where I practice and the container in which water is held: first, most conventionally with available tray and inside the house, second Suminagashi in nature where the wind can affect the current of the water, third, Suminagashi in a bathtub in which my physical body was bathing in, and lastly Suminagashi within a singing bowl, which I talk about in this section. Either way, the key is to let the water to suck the ink and do its work, which becomes meditative. However, I could manipulate this pattern by creating more frequency in the water by

blowing or hitting the singing bowl as I did²⁵. After I create pattern in the crystal singing bowl²⁶ which produces G note frequency, I transferred this pattern by carefully placing a rice or washi sheet of paper on the water surface. The G note sound is known to enhance the receptivity of our heart, through activation of heart chakra²⁷ along the human spine, often known as spiritual highway.

Since it involves with staring at the same centre point on the surface of the water, the point has served me as a *bindu*²⁸, symbol employed to remain in the bosom of unconscious, helpful for beginners (Satyananda 63). This also served me as a reminder of now, now, now, now... (Reference [video](#))²⁹ It was this soothing relaxing duration during which I lost sense of time. Though I didn't have access to scientific analysis, the brainwave of Delta (1-4Hz)³⁰ is said to be one of an indications of Samadhi state. I used following signs of Samadhi as point of measure for the magnitude of my h(Om)e-ness achieved by my practice: no sense of time, space and object and loss of ego (63). I do think all of these may have happened in a sense, but it might have been very brief that I would not 'know.' This original technique I came up with, became a means in which I captured the inner subtlest vibratory and the external sound of singing bowl. The method also manifested different paths of yoga traditions into one and connects back to oneness.

²⁵ Visit <https://youtu.be/L9IPGsSr92Y>

²⁶ G note crystal singing bowl permits 128 Hz frequency that encourages cells to communicate with its environment and relieves pain and promote relaxation and health.

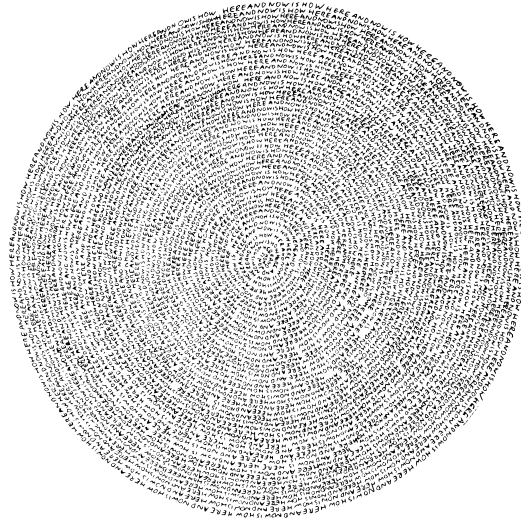
²⁷ Chakras are centres of energy and consciousness within the subtle etheric body. They are the human being's main focal points of vital energy. Chakra is a Sanskrit term meaning 'wheel' and spins in a circular motion constantly. For more detail, see page 25 *Chakra Breathing* by Helmut G. Sieczka

²⁸ In Tantric tradition, it is said that everything has emerged from the bindu – a point which can be visualized as tiny light. This inner point of illumination, which emanates from trikuti (a place between the two eyebrows on the forehead), is known as light of Self. Bindu is quite helpful in order to transform typical sleep into Samadhi. For more information, see page 63 *Yoga Nidra*. In the book *Nadabindu & Dyanabindu Upanishads*, the author Swami Satyadhama Saraswati states that the bindu is a psychic centre located in the brain at the top back of the head, on which upanisads focus during meditation (9). Bindu is "the source point or origin of individual creation, where begins the primal sound or first vibration, the mantra Om (9).

²⁹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HDPalpjWZkQ&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=LeeayAikawa

³⁰ During Samadhi, one's brainwave is supposedly in Delta. (Satyananda 63)

To conclude, unconscious domain is critical in working with ego-less self from which the silent vibration anahata emerges from. As a maker, Suminagashi has become a great instrument for me to substitute conventional forms of meditation.



5

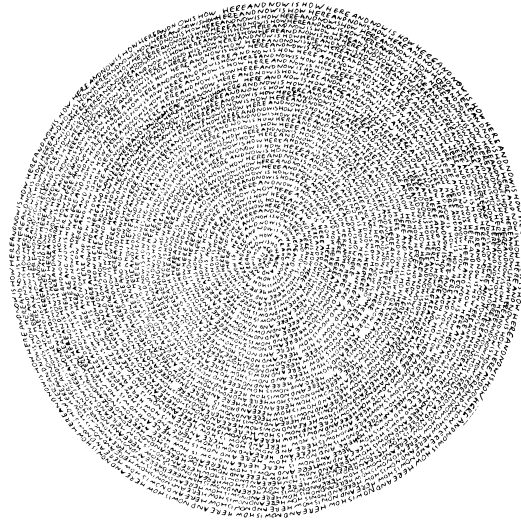
SPONTANEITY

I bring spontaneous energy and attitude to improvisation. This is a key discovery which informs my methodology and a step towards authentic making. I realized that, **in the absence of ‘thinking’ (what to do) and ‘separating’ (subject/ object), ‘being’ (present) and ‘surrendering’ (improvisation) occur at the same time.** It reflects one of the interpretations of Dasein by Heideggerian professor John Haugeland. He states in his book *Dasein* (2010), that Dasein is to “live the living way of life” (Haugeland 12). This to me is an indication of improvisation. It is about surrendering as a result of releasing ego as subject. It has become a method in which I interpret the world around me, including weather, seasons and global pandemic. With the lockdown in 2020 and no access to studios, the majority of my practice took place in High Park working in the natural environment. This spontaneous way of living and making was a unique situation of 2020. An example of spontaneous process is my work *Consequences 2020* (See Figure

7). I welcomed an ant who appeared on my paper, on which I was painting. I let the ant to be the ‘performer’ and gave up my role as a ‘painter,’ which was a point in which I merged with nature. I think of Deleuze and Guattari’s quote: “it is about the way in which materials of all sorts, energized by cosmic forces and with variable properties, mix and meld with one another in the generation of things” (qtd in Ingold 93). Similarly, Heidegger states that “understanding and interpretation constitute the existential constitution of the being of the there” and “understanding always concerns the whole of being-in-the-world. In every understanding of world, existence is also understood, and vice versa” (Heidegger 147)³¹.

Improvisations were key to *Still Small Voice* project, which I categorize as improvisational sculpture (See Figure 11). The act of improvisation is a method in which I work around situations I have been put in, given opportunities by chance, and the specific materials available to me in the moment, which I take part in through making.

³¹ See Division One, Chapter Five, section 32: *Understanding and Interpreting in Being and Time* (1927).

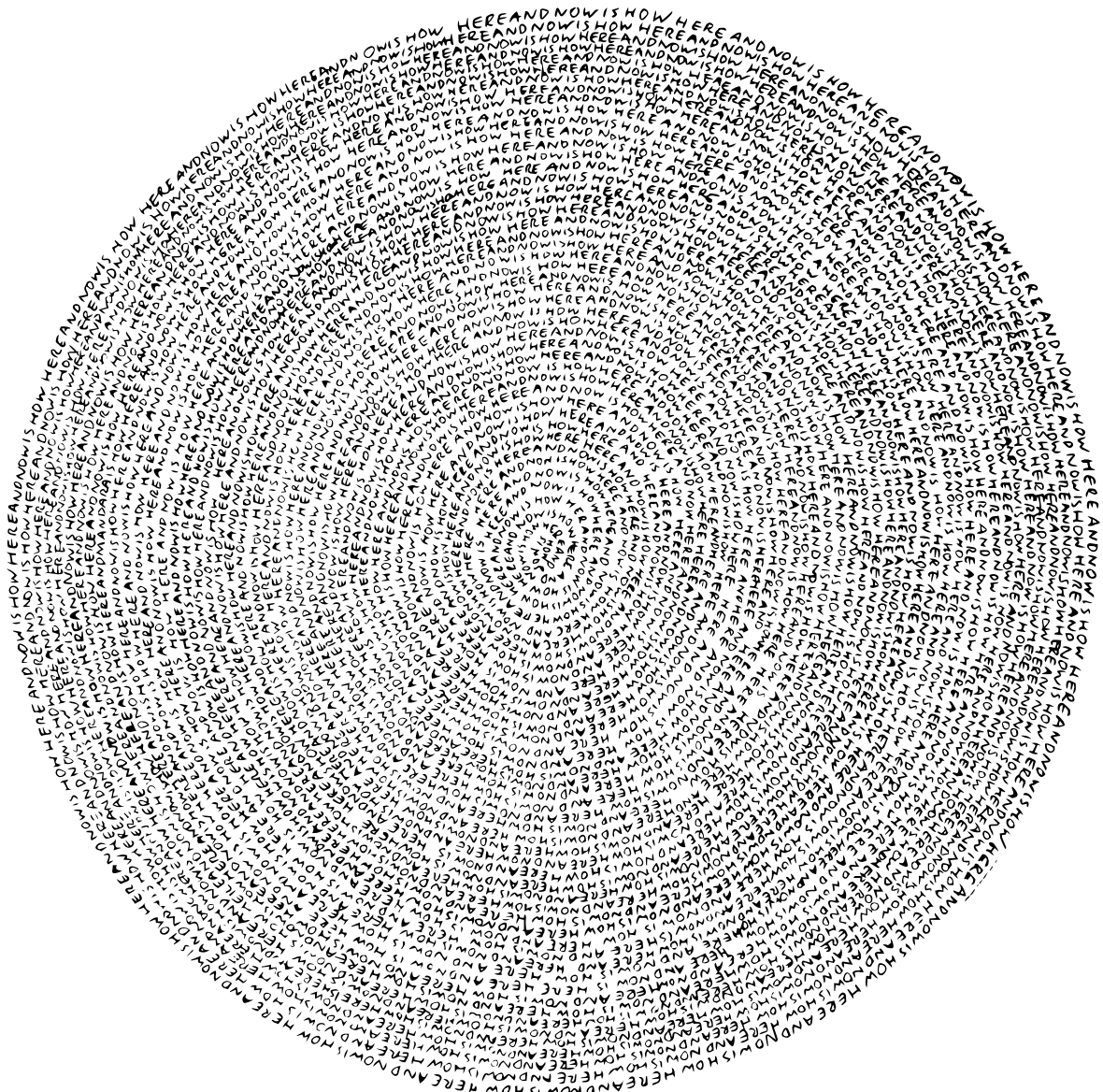


6

IMAGINATION, PLAYFULNESS AND HUMOUR

All Imagination, playfulness and humour are exactly how I was joyfully able to cope through this entire journey. They are what bring about new technique and solution in my making with no judgement. That is all.

PRACTICE-LED RESEARCH



Overview

In this section I delve deeper into the practice-led research that informed my theory and methodology. My online website³² functions as a place where I gather my images, words, and videos of the processes and experiences. The site will be indefinitely accessible as a solitary form of record of discourses around my thinking and making in a visual format. It is a means through which I keep growing and learning about Self.

Calendar of the Soul

It is one of the most difficult tasks to divide process-based work into categories. For the enhancement of reading, I divided my studio-practice largely into four projects in which these processes unfolded over each season (2020-2021). My structure is inspired by the *Calendar of the Soul* (1982) by Rudolf Steiner. His calendar (Figure 4) divides the year into two halves, from Easter to Michaelmas (Week 1-26), and back again to Easter (Week 27 – 52). Steiner saw that the “course of the year has its own life. With this life the human soul can unfold a feeling-unison” (Steiner 1). He made the calendar with an idea that it would enable the soul to participate actively in the progressing life of the year

³² www.leeay-aikawa.format.com or see Accompanying Digital Materials or visit <https://www.iheartiamd.com/leeay-aikawa>

as it unfolds from week to week with a healthy feeling of at one-ness with the course of Nature” (1).

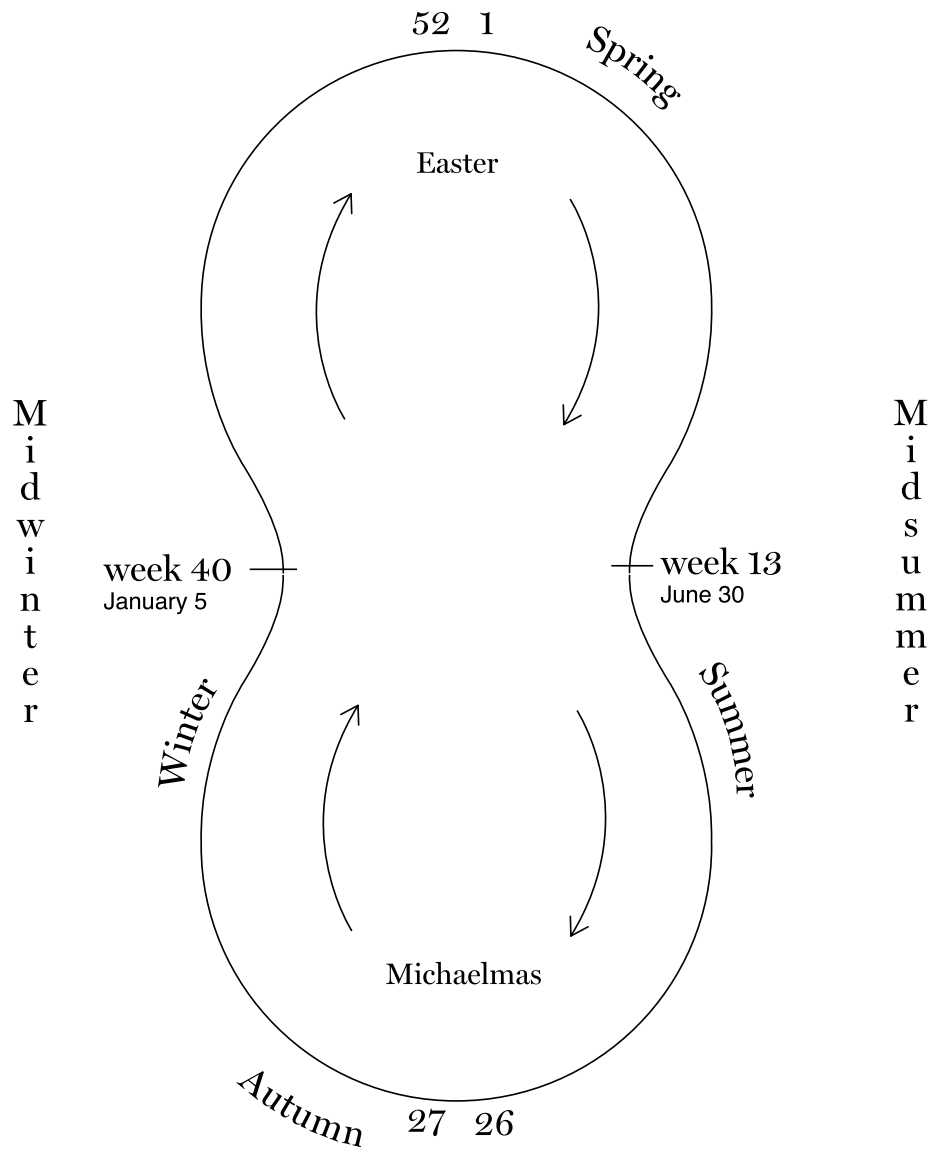


Figure 3: Calendar of the Soul by Rudolf Steiner (recreated version)

The same holds for the ways in which I analyze my practice. My four projects are:

- 1) *Anima Mundi* (Week 1-20); 2) *H(Om)e Sweet Home* (Week 21-34); 3) *Still Small Voice* (Week 35-46), and 4) *Reverence* (Week 47-52). See Figure 5.

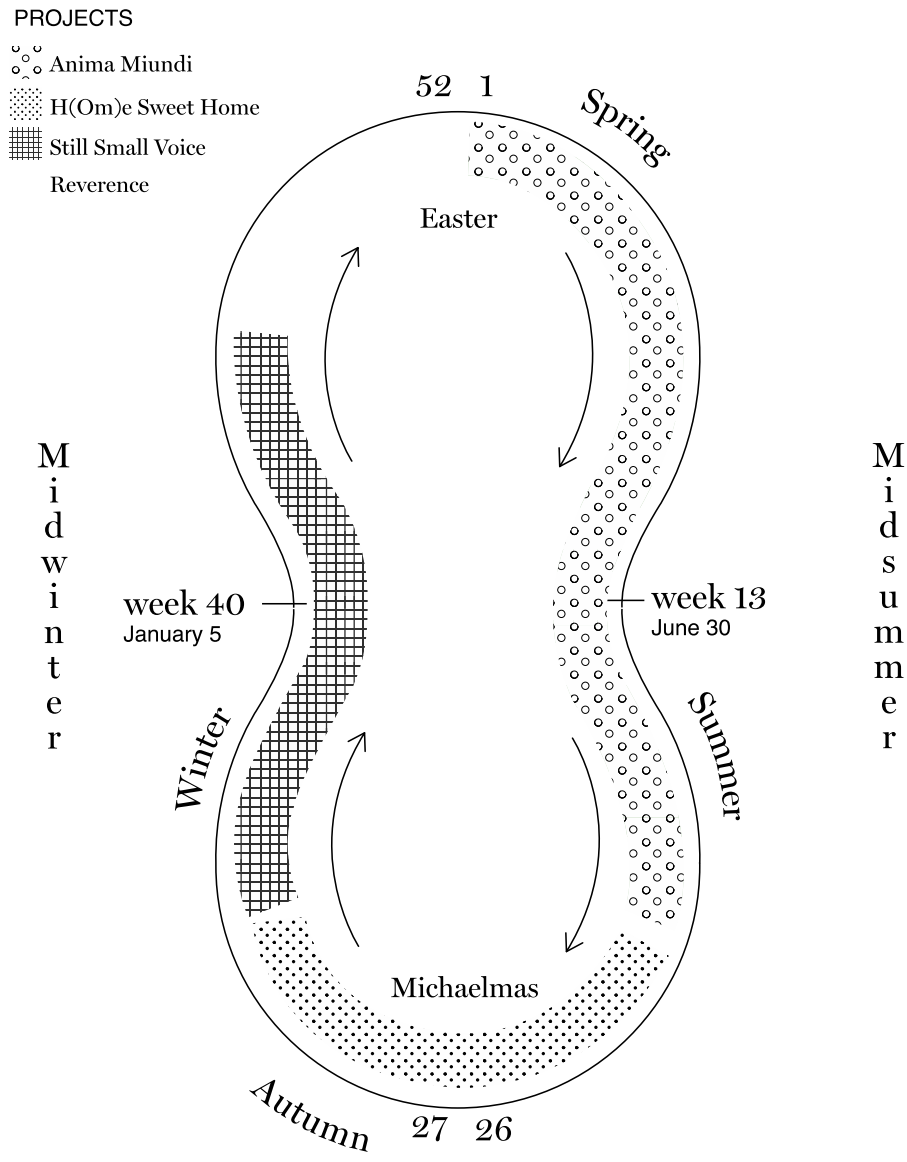


Figure 4: Calendar of my projects

The table below (Figure 6) demonstrates an analysis and reflection of each project from various aspects: seasons, methods, main function of the process – as what I learned and the function of the finished artifice, emotions during the process, theories that supports my process of making.

PROJECTS ANALYSIS ACCORDING TO CALENDAR OF THE SOUL

Seasons	Easter and Midsummer →	Over Michaelmas →	Over Midwinter →	Midwinter to Easter
Project	<i>Anima Mundi</i>	<i>H(O)m(e) Sweet Home</i>	<i>Still Small Voice</i>	<i>Reverence</i>
Product	Paintings, book tank top	Performance art, Work on paper,	Temporal Sculptures	Collage, Bricollage sculpture installation
Week	WEEK 1- 20 Apr 7 – Aug 24	WEEK 21- 34 Aug 25 – Nov 30	WEEK 35 - 46 Dec 1 – Feb 22	WEEK 47 - 52 Feb 23 – April 6
Duration	Over 4 months	3 months	3 months	2 months
Methods employed for making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • natural ink making • engaging with materials • communicating with materials by knowing from inside rather than outside • following shadows • surrendering • testing • healing/ mending • becoming (form) • painting • hand-sewing • performing • meditating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suminagashi • performing • meditating • surrendering to water • being aware (bindu) • hearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improvising • collaging • not fixing • adding • removing • responding to 'it' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collecting natural objects • hanging what I've collected • seeing as a whole • hand-sewing • pressing • collaging • improvising • bricolaging • arranging • putting • gilding (gold leafing)
Function of process of making (What I learned)	<p>allowed me to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •nourish my soul by engaging with the soil • recognize nature reflects our well-being • realize that nothing in this world that has form is permanent • connect with my childhood like heart that's usually buried under ego • be less judgemental learning from nature • to be joy itself • to free from attachment 	<p>allowed me:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to deal with anger • to calm • to see immaterial • to cultivate one-pointed awareness that remains awake in the unconscious • to practice uniting of external sound and inner sound • to understand Self as vibration • to experience a taste of Samadhi, 4th state of consciousness • functions same as Yoga Nidra or Nada Yoga 	<p>allowed me:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be playful • to be collaborate with 'it' • to explore space in which objects perform • to be present • to stop my thinking mind • to be imaginative • to explore possibility of 'it' in form • to free from attachment • to join the world • to go with the flow • to be open and flexible 	<p>Installation work allowed me:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to listen to the cry of the Earth • to see it as a whole • to attempt in uniting spirit and matter • to care for soil then care for my soul • to explore death <p>Wearable (Crown and the chair) allowed me:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to communicate with natural object • to experience the smell of nature • to pay respect to the real presence <p>Sculpture (web of light)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functions as a reminder that we are all connected and that we need to take care each other <p>Collage(Cosmos)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functions as how to care and be
Function of finished product(s)	<p>Work on paper</p> <p>Function as a reminder of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anima Mundi • that we are ephemeral being • of nature of impermanence in all things • of interconnected web of all life • the way it is and accept what is • Functions as record of my presence <p>Tank Top</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functions as Sadhana wear 	<p>Work on paper</p> <p>Functions as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a record that documents my vibratory field • a cosmic map showing my place in the universe, which expands my yearning to be one with universe consciousness • s a tool that makes me question where I come from • Enables me to see more than appearance <p>Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functions as a meditation or performance art that blurs line 	<p>Sculptures</p> <p>Functions as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a symbol that represents divine • an object on which I show my respect • a tool that represents the duration I responded to the brief moment of the sun (daylight) that hits my studio • a tool to practice letting go 	<p>Installation: Functions as tool through which I humbly join with Nature and cultivate compassion</p> <p>Collage(Cosmos)</p> <p>Functions as a cosmic guide showing me how I can respond</p> <p>Assemblage Crown and chair</p> <p>Functions as a object through which I pay respect to Nature</p>
Theories dominant order	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Oneness (Spiritual Ecology) 2) Choiceless Awareness 3) Timelessness 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Silent Vibration 2) Breathing 3) Timelessness 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Spontaneity 2) Humour 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Oneness 2) Breathing 3) Timelessness
Emotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Joy •Content •Nostalgic •Positive •Chill •Safe •Relaxed •Uplifting •Mystical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calm • relaxed • introspected • Surrendering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease • Concentrated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respectful • Silenced • Safe • compassionate • Nourished • Surrendering

Figure 5: Project analysis according to Calendar of the Soul



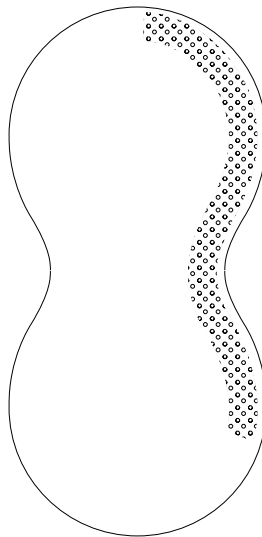
SEASON 1

ANIMA MUNDI

Over Midsummer

Week 1 – 20

April 7 to August 24



Between Week 1-20 (April 7- August 24), around Midsummer³³, I began experimenting with natural ink as an attempt to be present. The author of *Chakra Breathing* (1994) Helmut G. Sieczka says, “By regularly spending time outdoors and in nature, one can charge the etheric body and strengthen its protective shield against stress and negative thinking” (Sieczka 20). This is because the Earth and the sun nourish the etheric body that envelops a visible body. Looking back, this might have been one of the reasons why I started to feel more joy in everyday life. Engaging with materials I find from nature or food I consumed, I named this whole Earth based project *Anima Mundi*.³⁴ According to Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee, the author of the essay *The Call of the Earth* in the book *Spiritual Ecology*, Anima Mundi is the living spirit of the creation that holds the light of its divine nature (299). This [link](#)³⁵ illustrates my engagement with natural environment as well as the process of ink making. I experimented with various ingredients such as avocado skin, strawberry, cherry seeds, spinach, turmeric, beets, purple potato, cabbage, yellow onion skin, pink onion, and some found plants and tried to learn about the materials from inside rather than outside. This is to honor Tim Ingold’s approach in knowledge production affecting my methods I have taken. Ingold says in his lecture *Thinking through Making*:

Knowledge is not created through an encounter between minds already furnished with concepts and material worlds already populated with objects. But rather knowledge grows from the crucible of our own practical observational engagement with the materials, beings, and things or around us in the very

³³ See Figure 3

³⁴ <https://leeay-aikawa.format.com/animamundi> or see Accompanying Digital Materials or visit <https://www.iheartiamd.com/leeay-aikawa>

³⁵ <https://leeay-aikawa.format.com/animamundi> or see Accompanying Digital Materials or visit <https://www.iheartiamd.com/leeay-aikawa>

processes of thought. This is knowledge that does not wrap things from outside. Knowledge that grows from inside. (Ingold).



Figure 6: We have never been divided (2020)

Natural ink on paper/ 24 x 18" (60.96 x 45.72 cm)

The work *We have never been divided* (2020), at first, felt like a failure. I tried to paint colours in the divided units using masking tape just as I would do with synthetic polymers, but the paint bled through. I later came to realize that nature always wants to be one, only my ego tried to separate. By working this way, I gained a valid knowledge— the truth that we are one.



Figure 7: W(h)oly Dot Series (2020)

Natural ink on paper/ Each is 11 x 15 " (27.94 x 38.1 cm)

The multiplied paintings of circles *W(h)oly Dot Series (2020)* are not the result of planning but a result of a process of improvisation and testing out. The circle evokes archetypal symbolism and *Bindu*³⁶, a Sanskrit term for the point or dot from which all creation begins and ultimately unites. The softness and ephemeral colours of natural ink is metamorphic and has become my personal reminder that *nothing* in this world is permanent, only the radiant overflowing energy is. This was a great visual lesson through

³⁶See Footnote 28.

which I understood one of the source of my sufferings as my desire to keep things permanently.



Figure 8: To catch the Shadow (2020)

Natural ink on paper/ 11 x 15 " (27.94 x 38.1 cm)

To catch the shadow (2020) (Figure 9) documents my time spent in the woods, away from the complexities of social institutional self. It evolved in direct response to the ephemeral phenomenon of shadows of the trees and plants around. The work serves as a palimpsest containing interconnected webs of all living beings, wherein I am part of.



Figure 9: Consequences (2020)

Natural ink on Yupo Paper / 8" x 10"

Consequences (2020) (Figure 10) was conducted in the woods during summer, employing Yupo paper which allows natural ink to stay wet for a longer duration. It captures the shift of my role as a painter who paints, to a role as a photographer who documents an unexpected visitor – a hungry ant – who slurped the ink, intermingled the surface around and ‘performed.’ The project became a means by which I re-evaluate my relationship to the earth community: I am part of it rather than a manager or saver. This

was also a moment of realization that the materials I use affects the environment and the potential of natural ink to be sustainable.



Figure 10: Anima Mundi Tank Top (2020)

This tank top is a final project in whole *Anima Mundi* project in the duration of 2-3 months as a result of experiencing oneness. The material pattern is executed again by catching the shadows of the tree, which precipitated out of my pure awareness. Material was then cut and brought to nature where I hand sewed. The threads, random in colours and length, flow into each other as I *unsolidified* the knot to nothingness from my sewing box. The ink at time was visually perceivable – now it's barely visible – only individual stitches remain, operating as notations of residues from moments in which I experienced *Anima Mundi*.



Figure 11: My Notes became poems became notes (2020)

As a researcher, spiritual ecological artist, and as one *being*, the *My notes became poems became notes* (2020) evinces my self-referential processing, often dealing with natural phenomena, accompanied by daily natural ink drawing and lingers between notes and poems. The title is a reflection of my challenge in categorizing my work. The imagination was key in making these poems rather than words that conventionally ‘make sense, as Bergson said, “we fail to translate completely what our soul experiences” (Bergson 164).



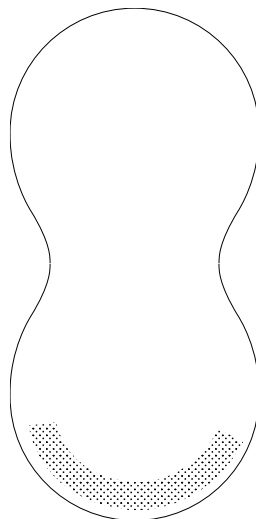
SEASON 2

H(OM)E SWEET HOME

Over Michaela's

Week 21 – 34

August 25 to November 30



Dealing with emotional anger, I began experimenting with Suminagashi – Japanese marbling technique as a method to silence my mind over two months over Michaelmas in the calendar. It involved investigating field of vibratory frequency that reflects the state of my consciousness, which I call *H(Om)e Sweet Home*. I first employed SOC Journal (Stream of consciousness style writing), which is also called *H(Om)e Sweet Home*, as a method of depicting free flow thought processes from the series of Suminagashi experiments to represent the stream of my consciousness as it was. This method allows me to articulate my feelings creatively and access my subconscious mind, that is otherwise blocked and constricted in the realm of academic text. To access the writing please visit [here](#)³⁷.



Figure 12: My Hz – What a Drop of Bliss (2020)

³⁷ <https://leeay-aikawa.format.com/blog> or see Accompanying Digital Materials or visit <https://www.iheartiamd.com/leeay-aikawa>

After SOC journal *H(Om)e Sweet Home*, I still continued my practice with Suminagashi, only this time, I practiced Suminagashi inside a crystal singing bowl that contains water. I call this project *My Hz – What a Drop of Bliss*³⁸ (2020), of which process is two folds:

- 1) Practice Suminagashi in the crystal singing bowl³⁹ in which water is held. Here, ink is rather still on the surface of the water.
- 2) Hit the bowl (that contains work of Suminagashi work already) and pressing the mallet in a circular motion against the bowl's outside edge or rim. Here, I see the ink starting to jump and shake. ([Link](#)⁴⁰)

Again, Suminagashi to me, it is to surrender to the water, letting the water to capture my vibration, who is holding a brush with Sumi ink (calligraphy ink) and another in pine resin (or I used liquid soap). Alternating the brushes by touching the same point on the surface of the water, the classic tree trunk look of concentric circles is achieved. The key is to be as passive as possible so that the water can suck the ink and do its work.

The darkness of ink against white allows me to see that vibration enters my perception visually. As an art critic John Berger pointed out, “it is in seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world” (7). I transferred this brief momentum in which ink was animated as the water vibrates. The work has become a visual interface, recording how my inner vibration and external sound engaged each other.

³⁸ <https://leeay-aikawa.format.com/myhz> or see Accompanying Digital Materials or visit <https://www.iheartiamd.com/leeay-aikawa>

³⁹ G note crystal singing bowl permits 128 Hz frequency that encourages cells to communicate with its environment and relieves pain and promote relaxation and health.

⁴⁰ <https://youtu.be/L9IPGsSr92Y>



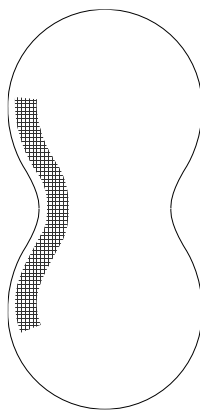
SEASON 3

STILL SMALL VOICE

Over Midwinter

Week 35 – 46

December 1 to February 22



Pondering categories between sculpture and collage, *Still Small Voice*⁴¹(2020) anticipates possible ways for real presence of 'it' to be in form and explores themes like deity, relics and symbolism.

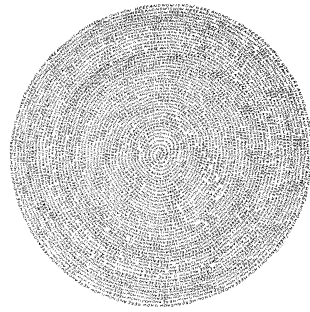


Figure 13: Still Small Voice (2020)

Sculptural improvisations with found objects/ variable dimensions

These objects were found in my surroundings, to be arranged, added, collaged – but never to be fixed. Removed, returned, uninstalled and often destroyed as soon as documented, the work is a result of practicing going with flow of life. In that passive-activeness, my ego might have disappeared a little. The work blurs the distinction of composition and improvisation and seeks for 'its' temporal being in which 'it' appears. Improvisation in this sense is just a name that describes how I playfully communicated with living presence.

⁴¹ <https://leeay-aikawa.format.com/still-small-voice> or see Accompanying Digital Materials or visit <https://www.iheartiamd.com/leeay-aikawa>



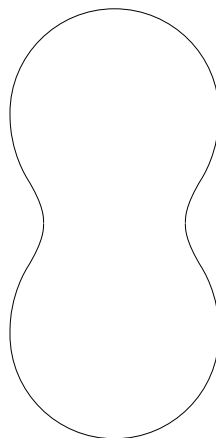
SEASON 4

REVERENCE

Midwinter to Easter

Week 47 – 52

February 23 to April 6



*Reverence*⁴² (2021), my winter project is composed of several works using natural objects that are considered 'dead' in a usual sense. ([Link](#)) The project is homage to the land, particularly to High Park, from which I continuously received inspirations and energy. This is also a name of the exhibition that takes place in my apartment room for private viewing. The project began by collecting natural objects, such as fallen oak leaves, acorns, pinecones, and dead plants as I walked the streets or park. In this light, the project is actually longer than two months in its duration as collecting is a big part of my methodology. I remember my parents never liked when I brought things from outside, and I grew up with an idea that bringing things from outdoor is dirty and not appropriate. Now that I am older and living away from my parents, I came to realize how much I was conditioned by their ideas. Not that I planned it, through this project, I have renounced this old knowledge that I had around natural objects. In fact, I actually love picking up plants that are considered dead, because the dead plants are by far easier to pick up than plants that are still 'alive.' The expression of dead plants are just neutral, subtle and quiet. It is like they already became 'nobody' and been liberated. It is as if the death of these plants is teaching me how to surrender and die to my old identity. Then I realized that I did not know neither many of these plants' names nor how they looked like during summer or spring when they were still alive. But I am thinking that my experience of these plants was pure because I did not know their name. Every time I picked them up, I told them that they were beautiful, and I thanked them. I love this sense of deep respect, that rises up naturally, which is why the project is called *Reverence*.

⁴² <https://leeay-aikawa.format.com/reverence> or see Accompanying Digital Materials or visit <https://www.iheartiamd.com/leeay-aikawa>

*Duration*⁴³ (2021) is earlier part of *Reverence* project and is an installation work that became the work as a result of collecting, shopping, making, hanging, shuffling and bri-collaging. With the stage two lockdown, even going to art stores was restricted, which was problematic for me who adores spontaneity for inspiration. This is where my visit to Dollarama increased for spontaneous looking, hunting and shopping that required no planning. After purchasing multiple Styrofoam balls, I began wrapping some of the balls with Suminagashi-ed paper (from H(Om)e Sweet Home project) and some with water-activated tape, that was recommended by Mitch, a nature-lover technician at OCADU. While wrapping the Styrofoam balls with all-natural tape, I was pressing as if to shape into an onigiri⁴⁴ rice ball putting my soul into the soulless products. Object by object, I began hanging what my hands were making without any rules nor any particular skills, as if to let the suppressed psyche to express itself. It was gradually filled with what was progressing in conjunction with what I made in the previous seasons, or what I found, making the installation work this hanging wall itself.

⁴³ <https://leeay-aikawa.format.com/duration> or see Accompanying Digital Materials or visit <https://www.iheartiamd.com/leeay-aikawa>

⁴⁴ Staple of Japanese bento lunch box



Figure 14: Duration (2021)

Dollarama products, natural objects and found objects on 10 ft wide wires

The particular nature of each hanging object is heterogeneous and unforeseeable, and the same object (moment) does not occur twice, which reflects Bergson's testimony of conscious being, i.e., *Duration*. (Bergson 200).

Duration concurrently represents my access to inauthentic 'things' in the capitalist society where everything is commodified as opposed to nature that is just there, belonging to nobody and everybody at the same time. By working with both inauthentic materials and natural materials of opposite forces, I seek to gain knowledge around authenticity.



Figure 15: Indra's Web (2021)

Hand sewn with fallen leaves /Approximately 20" (50 cm) in diameter

I made *Indra's web* (2021) with fallen leaves and handsewn to magnify my experience with glorious winter light. The sensibility of the leaves requires great amount of care and compassion for handling, nourishing the soil of the land that nourished my soul. The slow hand-sewing process has become a means through which I understand the structure of the reality: Everything is interconnected and dependent on each other.



Figure 16: Spirit Seated (2021)

It is said that chakras – the vital life force located along the human spinal column – underpin the well-being of our psychic and physical health. The harmony of these chakras allows the Spirit to unfold, finding its place in all things. *Spirit Seated* (2021) may offer an expression of Divine Consciousness, that has been united with that of human individuals ‘up there’ and brought down to the earth for the evolving process of our spiritual *being*.



Figure 17: Crown of Devotion (2021)

Gilded leaves, and lotus roots, weaved, hand-sewn and wired to wax flower ring

Crown of Devotion (2021) is a headwear made with collected fallen leaves and lotus roots. I gilded⁴⁵ their surfaces with gold foil in order to reference old ways of knowing. This is an old technique employed throughout history. The base ring is made with Chamelaucium⁴⁶ given to me, which smelled lovely when I was making the piece. Putting these fragile materials together is an act of care and compassion. I made the piece

⁴⁵ The process of applying gold foil

⁴⁶ Chamelaucium is also known as waxflower.

to express my deep respect to the land that has given me so much inspiration and support throughout my thesis project, in response to the writing of indigenous scientist and scholar Robin Wall Kimmerer from *Braiding Sweetgrass* (2013):

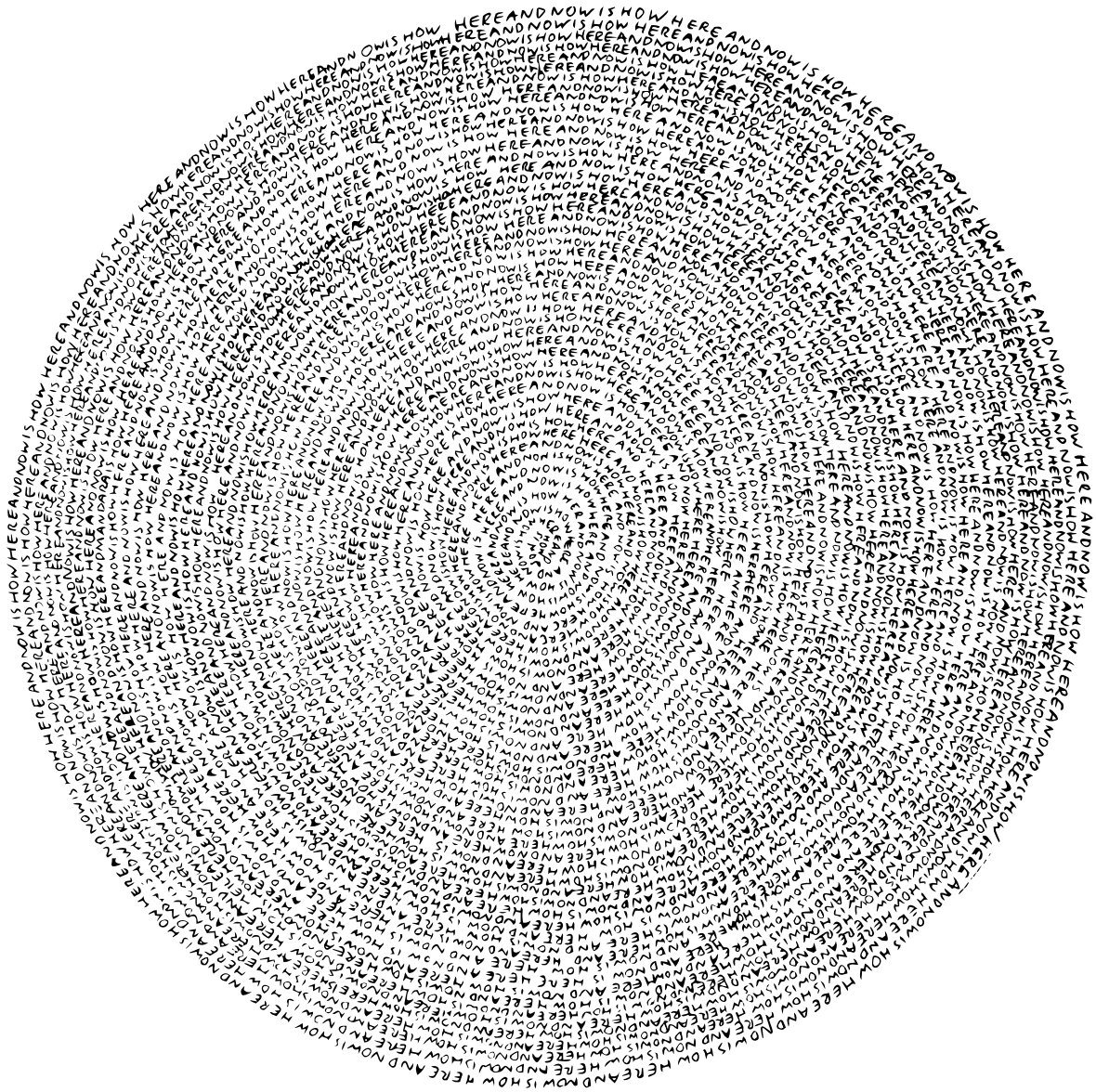
“The moral covenant of reciprocity calls us to honor our responsibilities for all we have been given, for all that we have taken. It’s our turn now, long overdue. Let us hold a giveaway for Mother Earth.” (Kimmerer 384)

Though the crown was not initially made for ‘me,’ I can feel that respecting Mother Earth is equitable to an act of devotion to my personal Divine, similar to Bhakti⁴⁷. I felt quite sacred and dignified when I tried this crown on especially with the winter sun light shining. It was like communicating with the pure spirit of gold. This crown, hence, is a tool that is “widening into the Light”(Aurobindo 40) – “the sacred energy of the sun” (Kimmerer 342), preparing my head as a pathway for the double movement of ascent and descent of the Spirit (40). This aspect of personal Divine is similarly expressed by poet Walt Whitman⁴⁸: “I know the spirit of God is the eldest brother of my own” (qtd. In Bucke 227) and I may add, that of humanity. It is all shared.

⁴⁷ “The nature of Bhakti is adoration, worship, self-offering to what is greater than oneself; the nature of love is a feeling or a seeking for closeness and union. Self-giving is the character of both; both are necessary in the yoga and each gets its full force when supported by the other(...) Bhakti is not an experience, it is a state of the heart and soul” (Aurobindo 159).

⁴⁸ According to psychiatrist Maurice Bucke, Walt Whitman is “the best, most perfect example the world has so far had of the Cosmic Sense” (Bucke 225).

CONCLUSION



It is late sunny afternoon on February 11th – I am sitting by the south facing window where the winter’s radiant light permeates through my desk. I scarcely predicted how my thesis would unfold over the course of two years, but I am more or less proud to say that I put the best of me into this yearning to know myself better, toward my H(Om)e.

Authentic-Knowing

The research led me to realization that my well-being is affected by how I know adequately and completely, which is to know well – authentic-knowing. How I know things including my own self as a part of a whole. In other words, it is the way in which I ‘am knowing’ (learning), responding, and surrendering in relation to the world, that can bring spiritual change within. Slow moment-to-moment making can produce spiritual knowledge, which is key to my spiritual being. It is in this process, sometimes even in very brief moments prior to becoming knowledge (by then, it is product of the past), that possibility of one’s wholeness– authenticity –h(Om)e resides. I am not stating that I have gained permanent authenticity but at least I have understood that my sufferings through my life have derived from three *things*:

- 1) focusing on the end only, forgetting the way
- 2) being judgmental about myself and comparing myself to others
- 3) identifying myself through personality

Things are solidified, limited and not exactly what makes our *being*. Human *beings* are just process and it is what happens over the course of lifetime. Bergson similarly states that “in the human soul, there are only processes” (131). However, the reality of our current science-based culture underpins mechanistic objective thinking, where

categorizing is encouraged for the sake of ‘faster knowing’ as a result of being bounded by time. Contemporary spiritual teacher Jean Klein says in his book *I AM* (1989), that “we are encouraged to be more and more specialized. It takes away from our real global nature. But domination, assertion and manipulation can never bring wisdom and healthy society” (153). This must be brought in light for the sake of our well-being. Authenticity (well-being) of art is very much dependent on the state of the makers and methodology employed.

Any art practice can help heal the individual to some extent, but process-based ‘slow’ making, has deepened my healing experience. To me working with natural objects was excellent source in learning to cultivate compassion while relinquishing old thoughts. It is an evolving method that allowed me to 1) accept what is; 2) be here and now; 3) surrender; and 4) free from attachment to things. In healing, there is no rush but remember to evolve, learning about myself is always in the present and knowledge is always in the past (Total Freedom 110). To practice is to know and to know is to be.

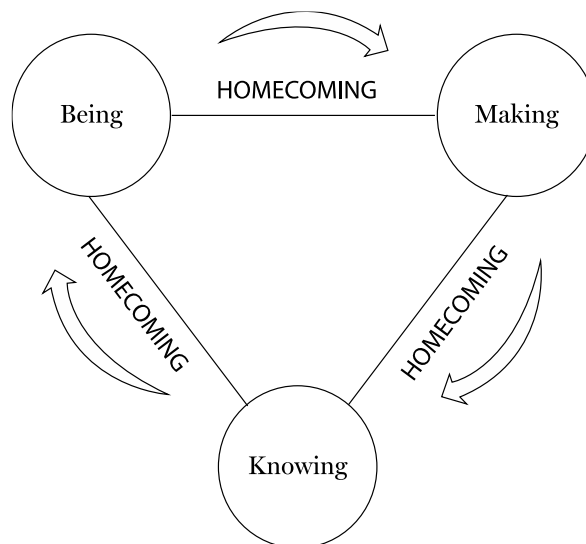


Figure 18: Trinity of Making, Knowing and Being

As I aspire to be a teacher and recognizing there are many intersections between art practice and spiritual practice, I see the importance of integrating spirituality⁴⁹ into education for younger generations. Because spirituality can balance out our outward thinking that often gets caught in toxic ego motives. This began my interest in pedagogy and land-based education because I strongly believe that we need to rethink this current systems that have produced mental illness, traumas, collapse of identity and ecological devastation. We need to actively explore how we can ethically, sustainably, morally participate in our own transformation first. This reframes my question: how do process-based making and spirituality contribute to both *students*’ and teachers’ authenticity?

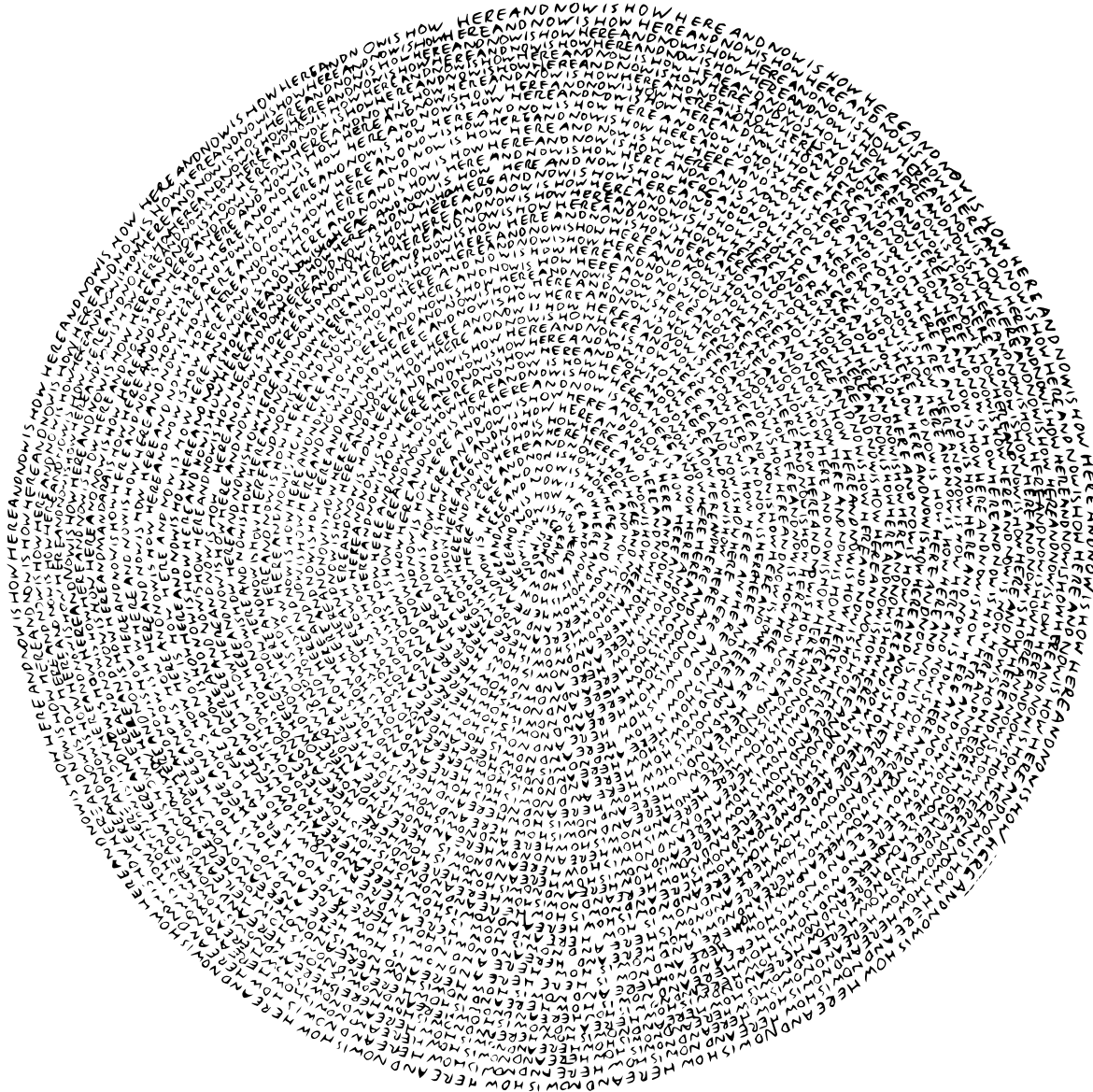
Lastly, I want to delve deeper into exploration of nothingness and death. Considering that death and life (birth) are two branches of the same thing: *Being*, it is in understanding the process toward death/silence, that I can reflect my own *being*. I am not planning on dying anytime soon. But I need to explore both sides and look for things between life and death. This is illustrated by a certain law of evolution: Steiner’s *Calendar of the Soul* is composed of bringing two opposing weeks of the year side by side, which allows us to experience the ‘octave⁵⁰,’ – “balance between the opposites, enhancing the polarities to forces of inner growth and maturity” (Pusch). I wonder how learnings from process-based work with natural phenomena can be applied to my own death process. It is a life-time process that has already begun. To do so, I will delve deeper into Dasein and *The Tibetan book of the Dead*, a manual of useful instructions for facing our death by liberation through understanding the in-between of subconscious and

⁴⁹ See Glossary section for more on spirituality.

⁵⁰ In music, octave is known as an interval state between one vibration frequency and another with double its frequency.

the unconscious. These are things that I might know intellectually but in continuing my practice, I hope to understand what it means to *be*. Again, to practice is to know and to be, which becomes the living language. Everything that comes out of any practice may, after all, teach us how to take our last exhalation. I am in that process right here right now.

APPENDICES



Appendix A: A brief outline on Yoko Ono

In this section, I write a brief outline on Yoko Ono and how her Buddhist koan⁵¹ like influence is imprinted in her work and engages with shift in mind of the viewers. Apart from positivity, humour and imagination, recurring themes in Ono's art practice is the natural phenomena and Buddhism, which is not surprising given that she was born in 1933 in Tokyo, Japan. Ono became one of the first women to study philosophy in Japan in 1952. Taking philosophy as a major offered an immediate connection with the general outlook on her work and developed "artist's fundamental interest in the nature of reality, existence, and mind" (Munroe 16), seeking relationship to the past and therefore our self-understanding as part of a continuum and present. Her belief "mind-world is superior to the actual world that defines our 'cluttered' lives because it goes 'beyond time'" (qtd in Munroe 20), affirms why a lot of her work encourages viewer participation and their interpretation but it doesn't necessarily require interaction with others, nor necessarily takes place in the white cube.

Premiered in Kyoto, Japan, Ono's performance art *Cut Piece* (1964) invited viewers to come on to the stage where Ono was sitting wearing the best suit she owned. Allowing only one person at a time to cut off her suit, the performing process of *Cut Piece*, according to the critic Alex Munroe, projects the idea of selflessness, and create a space for the audience to "confront questions of violence around the world and personal violation" (91), which requires introspection on "one's moral ethical values. The outcome of this performance is completely up to how viewers engage with the work and the result

⁵¹ Anecdote or riddle used in Zen Buddhism.

is uncertain and uncontrollable. Ono's role becomes both artist and facilitator. I saw the process of her suit, i.e., social uniform, being cut as representation of the process in which one releases themselves from social egoic self – as what Ram Dass would say as becoming 'nobody'(Dass). It is considered performance art in the public but really, what Ono achieved at personal level might have been letting go of worldly duties. I enjoy the paradox she created: how this process of becoming nobody is achieved through viewers – others.

Appendix B: Divine Puffer

Divine Puffer (2018- present) is an ongoing project to practice humour. It involves collecting inhalers as a method in which I raise my awareness while connecting with humorous part of who I am.

Incapable to breathe, a person's desire to fix and breathe is a direct embodiment of the innate characteristic of his/her very existence and temporarily magnifies the *presence* of an inhaler. Yet, this *presence* is only one mechanistic push away from its *absence*, as soon as his breathing condition is fixed. It is in this onto-phenomenological paradox, I witness my own increased awareness. Simply blue, synthetic, and 'L' shaped, nowhere near striking – this external aesthetic condition of an inhaler – presupposes my purely subjective preference for forms that emerged from mundane and intimately ties to what is of central importance in my life – humour.



Figure 19: From Divine Puffer Project (2018 – present)

The picture you see above is a method I employed to see the holy and cultivate sense of gratitude in mundane inspired by Tantric tradition, one of the Hindu paths. But later it became more about ‘unlearning.’ What I mean by unlearning is to empty my knowledge and concepts around inhalers, – to let go of what I know of these inhalers as inhalers. This is a method to be present, as a result of attempting in emptying thought. I consider knowledge and thought as a product of the past. This was inspired by Krishnamurti’s teaching around thoughts: “The space that thought creates is measurable and so is limited, cultures and religions are its product” (Total Freedom 159). I discussed more about absence of thought as a critical component in my making in *Six Paths Sutra* for Authentic Making.

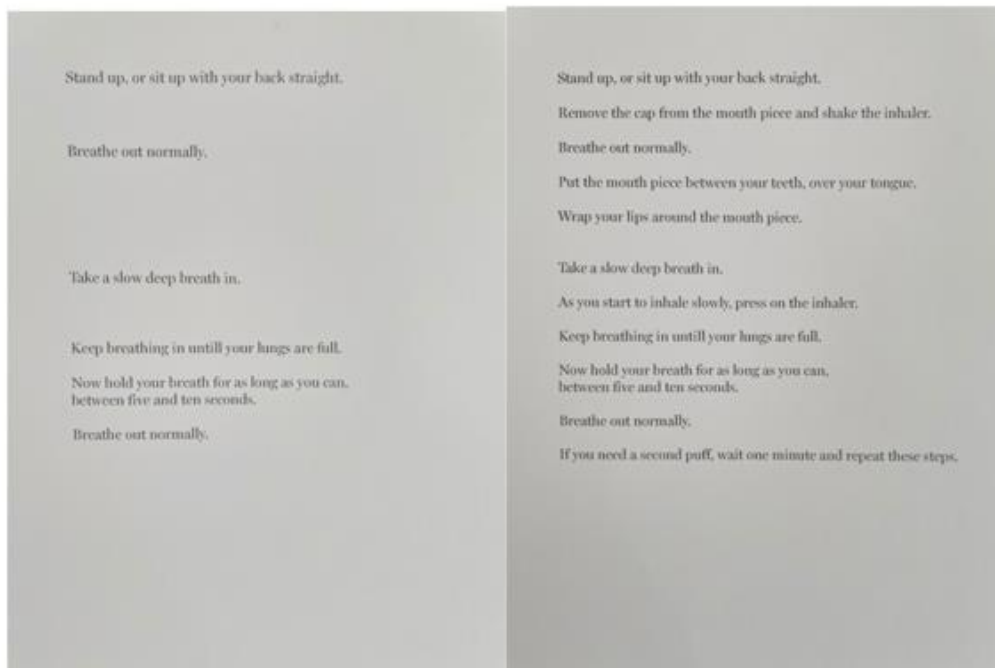


Figure 20: (L) Typical meditation instruction (R) Instruction for inhaler, which is wordier

The work also is accompanied by two pieces of instructions: One that shows how to use an inhaler and one that shows how to meditate. These instructions are analogous to the situation of our modern *being*, usually buried under layers and layers of words – roles, egos.



Figure 21: Wearable puffer (2020)

This human-size wearable inhaler is a method in which I practice non-dual. By experiencing an inhaler from inside rather than outside, I can stop looking at an inhaler as an object and me as a subject, as dualistic thinking is source of suffering. Krishnamurti says: “When there is a division between the observer and the observed there must be conflict” (Total Freedom 319). While I was wearing this wearable inhaler, I was particularly thinking of C.G. Jung’s quote “Am I the one who is sitting on the stone, or am I the stone on which he is sitting?” (MDR, PP. 19-20) and now I was asking myself a

question "Am I the one who is inhaling the inhaler or is it the inhaler who is inhaling me,
who is inside the inhaler?"

Appendix C: Accompanying Digital Materials

Anima Mundi, 2021, pdf,

Divine Puffer, 2021, pdf

Duration, 2021, pdf

H(Om)e Sweet Home, 2021, pdf

My Hz – What a drop of bliss, 2021, pdf

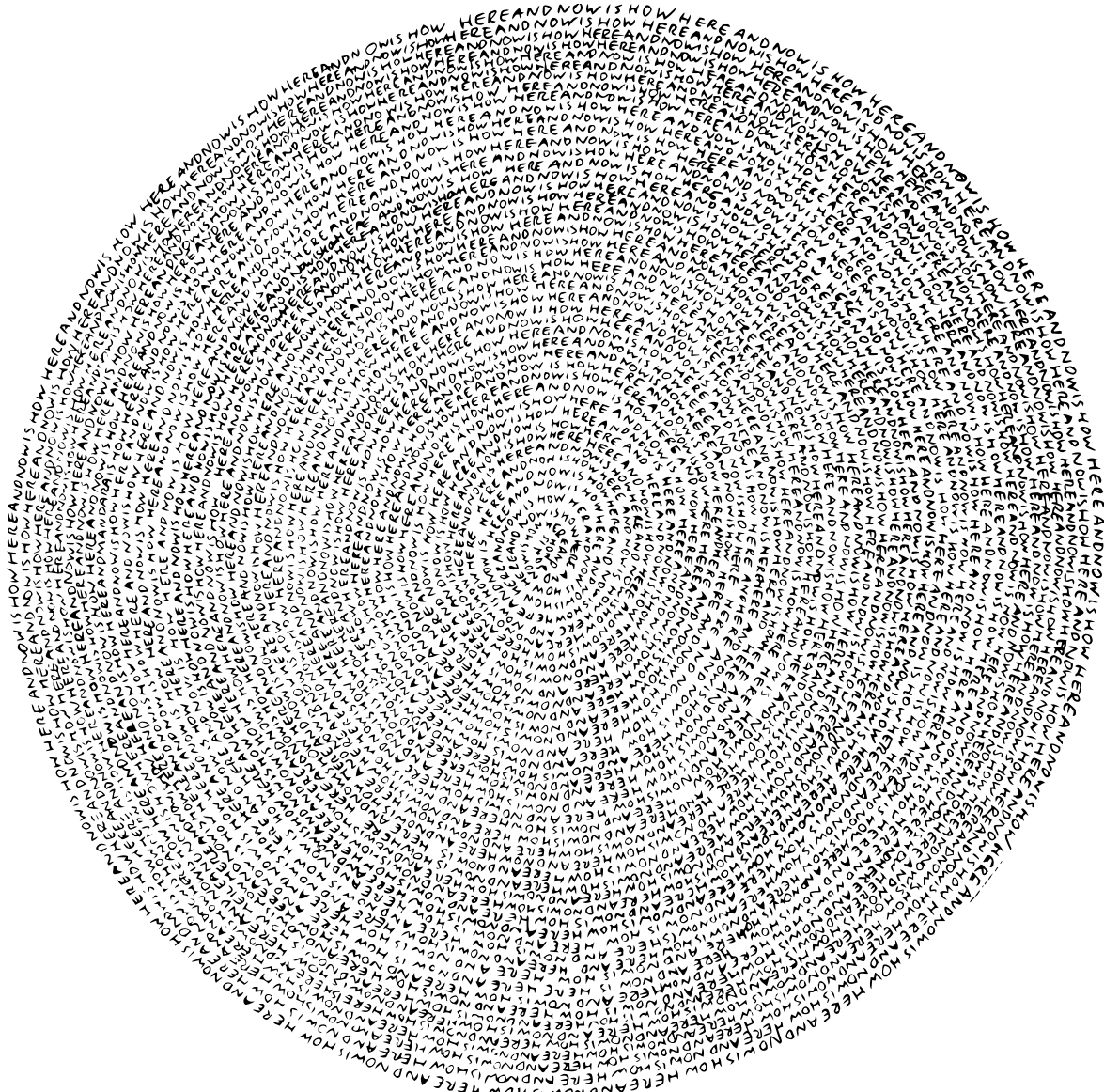
My Notes became Poems became Notes, 2021, pdf

Reverence, 2021, pdf

Still Small Voice, 2021, pdf

Spirit Seated, 2021, pdf

GLOSSARY



My intention is everything but to impose my readers with dogmatic, institutional beliefs that may numb the soul of a unique individual. The following terms are defined based on my study from spiritual literatures and experiences. I invite personal interpretation based on personal cosmology.

Authenticity: An ungraspable, non-dualistic ‘becoming’ condition in close proximity to being here and now. (Paradoxically, these are also inseparable.) Authenticity is a quality of ‘toward’ own most and always in mode of unfolding in an effortless manner.

Authenticity is in opposing direction from fear and sorrow.

Samadhi: Trance, silence of the mind, altered state of consciousness, Nirvana

Self with big S: who you really are, the core of your being, pure being, Atman (individual soul), Brahman (Universal soul), Vijnana (Consciousness), pali, the Divine (There are many levels), buddha nature, natural state, true self, authenticity, authentic wholeness, pure consciousness, real you, innate being, being, original limitless being, essence being, inner self, cosmic consciousness, pure mind, spiritual self, supreme self, pure awareness, the Light, Divine presence, Truth, vital self, Krishna, Shiva

Small self: separate self, autonomous self, ordinary self, alienated individual, impure self, small self, everyday self, egoic self, ego-self, ego, social self, social institutional self, psychological self, false identity, person, personality, false-identity, physical self

Spirituality: path to authentic wholeness, path to union of spirit and matter, path of homecoming, inner journey, journey inward, change of mindset, one's shift in consciousness, transformational change within, path to realization that universal consciousness is one, path to union with the higher consciousness, path of awakening to our shared soul, awakening to oneness consciousness, soul searching, path to realization what my work was about as an artist.

In addition to those, I organized how spirituality has been implied by figures I enjoyed reading. Some are interpreted by me based on what they discussed:

Spirituality according to **C.G. Jung:**

- nourishing of the soul and soil
- reclaiming instinct
- path to unified cosmos, in God's world, in an eternity where everything is already born and everything has already died
- conversing with soul

Spirituality according to **Jiddu Krishnamurti:**

- inner revolution
- path to total freedom from thoughts

- pathless land

Spirituality according to **Maurice Bucke**:

- “development of man’s mystic relation to the infinite”
- path to illumination

Spirituality according to **Ram Dass**:

- man’s journey into Consciousness
- becoming one with God returning
- the return to the roots
- giving up attachment
- becoming Nobody
- nobody training

Spirituality according to **Rudolf Steiner**:

- “the majestic unfolding of macrocosmic forces”
- “process of subtraction by evolving by degrees the consciousness of self”

- “process of diminution(decreasing) by which we slowly exchanged our present earth-bound sight and mind, geographically conditioned by existence in a physical body
- “process of evolution”
- forming opposites
- reaching the stage of compensation (Emerson)
- vigorous ‘finding of oneself’
- participation of soul

Spirituality according to **Sri Aurobindo**⁵²:

- path to establishing decent of the peace, light, knowledge, power, bliss from **above**, the awareness of the Self and the Divine and of a higher cosmic consciousness and the change of the whole consciousness to that.
- change that descends from above
- the realization of the Self which includes the liberation from ego
- transcendence out of the universal Ignorance
- finding out what is eternally true, not what is new in Time

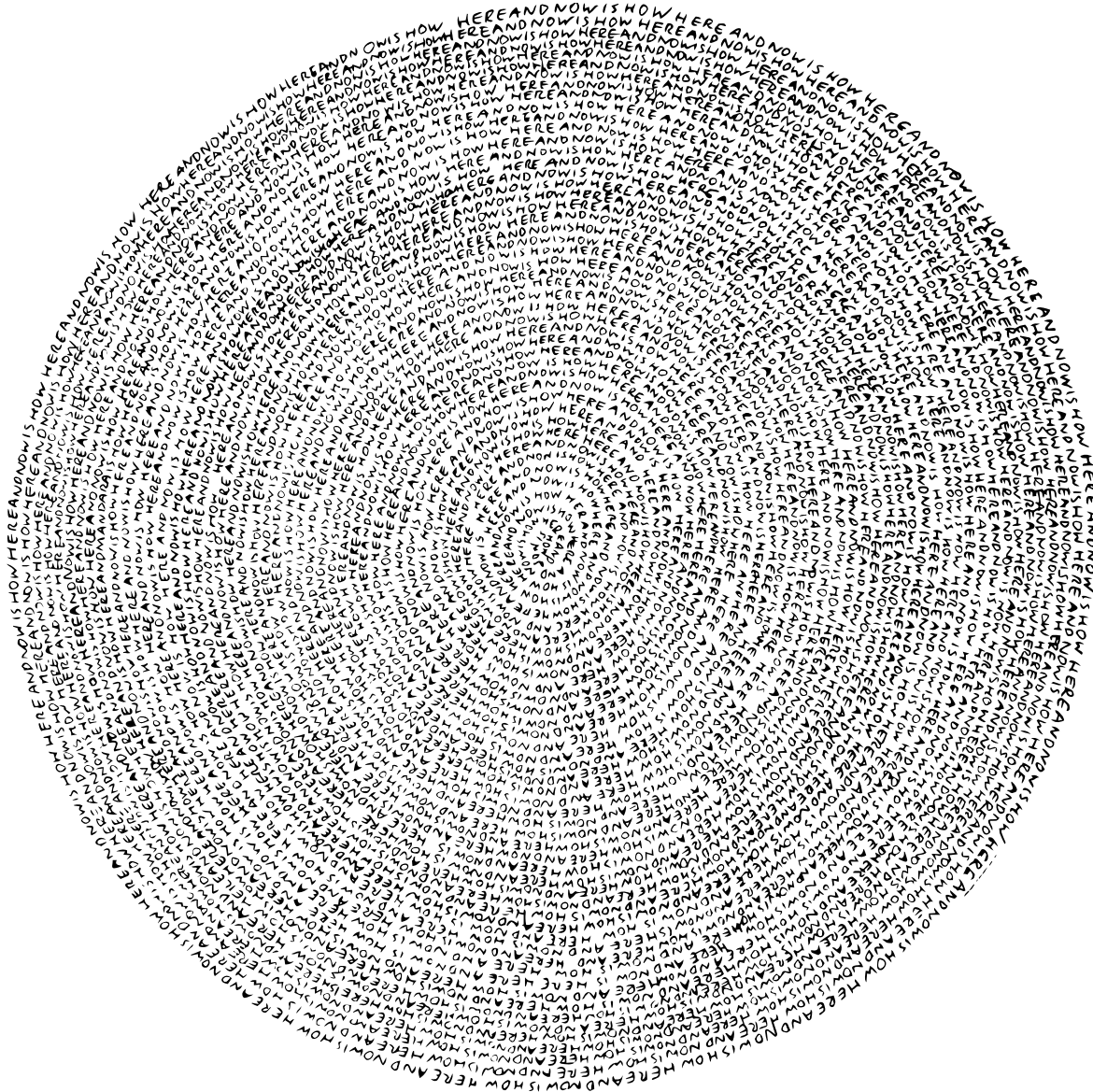
⁵² Indian philosopher (b. 1872)

- integrity of the Divine in this world and not only beyond it and at a supramental realization
- putting on of the spiritual consciousness, dynamic as well as static, in every part of the being down to the subconscious

Spirituality according to **Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee**:

- love affair with God
- working with source of life that is only present in the present moment
- being in contact with the essence of life
- path to realization that everything is love
- mysterious substance of life
- mystery

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