



Message From the Editor

For some of us, to take journeys inwardly or outwardly is as essential to life as is breathing. Traveling the world becomes a soul-pursuit; a regional road trip points the way to freeing the spirit for a while; to giving oneself over to spontaneity, and to the wonder of synchronous moments and the unexpected. In this Spring/Summer 2008 edition pdf the Terra Lucida Journal we focus on travel, courageous and open hearts and the adventurous spirit and I share here a magical moment in Mexico. *Ismana Carney, Ph.D.*

A Journal Fragment: June 24, 1999, Zihuatenejo, Mexico

It's mid-afternoon, on a marina beach, owned by a sleepy *Mexicano* fishing village, befriended by tropical climes, and I've fallen in love with this gorgeous, small bay filled with sea foods fit enough for the most ancient of gods:

Toltec
Maya
Aztec
Tarrascan
Huichol
Tara Humara
all put together
are poetry in motion
if time is motion
and the past
no matter how ancient
still lives

Here on the beach, I watch the morning business enliven the local marina. Old and new motorized *panga* boats cross each other over the narrow strip of water leading out to the wider bay. But my heart-felt pleasure in this exotic and colorful picture-postcard scene is deeply conflicted as the early morning marina waters, so calm and clear at dawn, become

by mid-morning a churning brown sludge, laced with a thick layer of goop as an armada of *pangas*, fishing boats, and jet skis spew gasoline dregs by the gallons into the same water where children fish and play.

Stretched out on a white wooden chaise under the shade of a beautifully thatched *palapa*, I gaze at my surroundings and am stunned by the thought of how golden these once-pristine sands must have been in days gone by. Now they are dull brown, multi-layered with generations of human clutter and wasted shattered glass, and aluminum cans torn into a thousand or more silver shards. But in a beautiful and mysterious irony, all of this culminates in a myriad glistening across the sand, becomes beautifully incorporated into a woven carpet of crushed abalone, oyster and mussel shells reflecting, in one vast chorus of light, the rays of a glorious yellow Mexican sun.

Equally present, and much more distressing, in gullies along roadsides, outside businesses and homes, is the plastic refuse. A testament to the dire consequences, both aesthetic and ecological, of the human addiction to the fast life, thus the necessity of convenience AT ALL COSTS!

But here and now, before me, where the waves meet the sand, plays a small brown boy. He is not beautiful in any ordinary sense of the word. His ribs show through his worn-out, tattered and very dirty t-shirt, as do his bony knees, through the tears in his trousers. He has a shock of long straight black hair, and his chocolate-colored skin is blemished and scarred.

But he IS beautiful! and I will remain marked by the presence of his memory forever. As he plays a powerful game of *solitaire* with the ocean, sand, tropical breezes, and his own imagination, I am enchanted. I watch him intently as he translates into the outer world via daydreaming a huge adventure that lives in his own interior world.

In one moment he is strewn, arms and legs splayed all over the sand, as a wave tumbles over him. The next moment he rises, his tiny face overshadowed by a pair of wide dark eyes filled with rage as he battles with an imaginary foe. He is vicious, and intent on the kill as he pounds his fist into the sand, ferociously pummeling his invisible enemy, until he finally slits his throat with rapid slashing movements.

Another wave slams into him and now, the boy decides to play the victim whose throat he has just cut. He writhes in the sand which streams out from under his fragile little body toward the ocean in a million tinkling sounds, and clutches his throat, gasping for air. Then, in a last desperate move, he frantically scoops up handfuls of sand and presses them tightly against the imaginary wound on his neck. But to no avail, and with a long gasp, he rolls his eyes and his body, over and over in the waves, letting them take his small, thin body deep into the undertow, and then, spitting him back out onto the shimmering sand.

He lies motionless for a minute or two, deathly still, and then the next wave comes crashing down on him. He's up and howling instantly! Now he is a human crab, walking sideways on all fours. He digs furiously in the sand, all four limbs working rapidly, and shovels fistfuls of sand into his mouth, then sputters it all out as the salt water from the next wave pours over him. Then he starts foraging again. Within a few minutes he is covered with sand, hoarding cupfuls in every crevice of his body, and still he rolls in it, around and around, as the waves roar over him.

Now a group of imaginary friends arrive on the scene, and he begins a furious, hilarious, and complicated set of conversations with them, individually and collectively. He stops and listens to one of them intently, nodding his head, shaking his head, now laughing, now serious. Suddenly, the conversation takes a sudden turn, an argument erupts and he has a lot to say, as do his friends, which I assume, by the long moments of active listening that he exhibits. But are they now friends or enemies?

At last, a huge battle ensues. The little warrior takes on his opponents from all sides. And all the while, he is being pulled out, helter-skelter into the ever-increasing undertow, then hauled back and spat out by now frighteningly large waves. Invisible weapons are unsheathed, knives, sticks, and guns and he is using them all! —a miniature Mexican Bruce Lee, a tiny red hot *ninja*, legs, fists, head, full body contact. And he's still all alone on a beach filled with groups of other little children playing, families spreading abundant picnics, lovers strolling arm-in-arm, and visitors from another world like myself, sipping a diluted, over-priced *tourista* pina colada, and falling head-over-heels in love with this beautiful boy, in love with his own imagination, and perfectly at ease, like myself, with his own solitude.

At long last he's done. He rinses himself off in a final wave, turns his back to the ocean and walks towards me with eyes once again *seeing* in this world. He flashes me a brilliant smile, his eyes like two obsidian orbs, lit from within by a mutually recognized magical kind of light, and then, he is gone.

It's evening now, the sun has shed its last golden rays across the restaurant patio where I'm seated waiting for appetizers, wine and my sweetheart to return from a late afternoon swim. As for myself, I am overcome with gratitude for being able to retrieve at will, from some ancient memory bank, this sort of unbounded imagination. I know it well and keep it hidden for safekeeping. It's about an unbridled way of seeing at a deeper level, freer than the rational mind—a mind that must acquiesce to this imperative if it is to serve the human soul with any measure of relevance.

Here, with this description of the marvelous, passionate little boy, surrendered totally to his own imaginal power, I have marked him forever in the deepest part of my psyche with the language and perceptions of an unbounded mind.

Because I permitted my own imaginal world to unite and empathize with his, I was able

to suspend reason which would have limited my “seeing” only to what was “actually” happening, instead I was able “see” as “real”, or “actual”, all the “presences” that the young boy was *inter-acting* with.

But most of us are taught from the very beginning, and in no uncertain terms, that that persona, emotions, information and perceptions which exist in our imaginal worlds are *figments*, non-existent because the world of the imagination is assumed unreal and therefore non-existent. Human imagination as an inherent talent or skill, an authentic source of knowledge and understanding, in other words, a uniquely human resource of immeasurable value, is at the very least suspect, and at the very most irrelevant in the face of the reasoning, thus measurable mind. This is where the tragedy lies for it is precisely in our imaginal selves that we are the most unrestrained, the most *intuitively* truthful, and the most courageous. And we were closest to this *state of mind* when we were children, prior to the imbedding of social conditioning. It is a small, closed and cowardly mind that brushes off intuitive wisdom, or the perceptions obtained in a dream, or through communication with a “sensed” “felt” presence, voices, feelings, instincts. For these are the authentic sources of the kind of profound inspirations without which philosophy, metaphysics, religion, art, love, self-sacrifice, heroism, history, invention, genius, and rock and roll would not exist.

We have all consciously or unconsciously agreed by a strange conspiracy of silence to permit the replacement of the human imagination with the rational mind's proclivity towards materialism, i.e. reductionism, or the machine. Yet, as most of us are aware, the machine is unable to tolerate for too long, the presence of soul and the outcome is often tragic.