

MY LAST BOOK

by LINDA MARY MONTANO

**COMPILED 2022 FROM SOME OF THE STORIES FOUND ON MY BLOG. TO READ FURTHER,
GO TO LINDAMONTANO BLOGSPOT.**

THIS COMPILATION IS RAW, HAS NO CORRECTIONS, NO EDITS, NO CLAENUP. IT IS AS IS. LINDA

STATEMENT

Now that I am 80 years old and have already published a number of books, I feel satisfied that I have said all that I need to say ON PAPER! But there IS more to share and I have chosen a digital format to communicate and as a result, my final tome is a PDF file that is FREE for all and includes around 45 stories I have written over the years which were lying in wait on my blog. The FREE aspect excites me, ART POVERA artist that I am!

And now, it gives me pleasure and feelings of wise closure because this PDF both saves paper and allows me to feel connected to YOU in the digital world in a way congruent with the ethics of sustainable NOW.

Feel free to share what you read and see if you wish. And remember, the GIANT ICLOUD IN THE SKY waits willing and able to pass MY LAST BOOK

on to your friends at the touch of your pointer finger.

ART=LIFE=LOVE,

Linda

Lindamontano@hotmail.com

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1. DEGENERATION/REGENERATION: LINDA MONTANO SPEAKS WITH LINDA WEINTRAUB

AUGUST, 2004

Performance artist Linda Montano has not waited to die to be reborn. Her rejuvenation is inspired by her father's illness. Montano is his primary caregiver, monitoring his physical and metaphysical condition as it evolves moment by moment. Her art is a record of his physical decline and their synchronous spiritual awakenings. He is her teacher, but this is an ecological lesson for us all to learn. Linda Montano's father is 91

years old. He enjoys his meals and wheelchair trips to the village. Three years ago he began painting. Sometimes he creates works of stirring beauty. They are spare, Zen-like, mysterious. It is also true that Linda Montano's father has lost the ability to speak, walk, feed himself, and dress himself. Seven years ago Montano says she heard voices beseeching her to return home to care for her aging father and prepare them both for the inevitability of death. Five years ago she declared this experience a work of art. I requested an interview with Linda Montano to gather information about this art piece to accompany the section of my book, *Avant-Guardians: Ecology and Art at the Cultural Frontier*, which deals with degeneration and death. Instead, she revealed a joyful (she used the term 'ecstatic') revitalization of her own life and career. She may be his caregiver, but her father has been her teacher. The new wellspring of creativity and soulfulness that he exhibits, Montano believes, stems from his life-long spiritual practice within the Catholic Church, but also from the loss of his discursive faculties. His spirit seems ultimately liberated. The only end-point she discussed during our interview was the 'death' of the pioneering role she once played in the art world as one of the originators of performance art in the 1960s. But her art is being revitalized by the teachings she is receiving from her father. Once, Montano says, she felt like art's left-over, a waste product of a bygone era. Now she is being 'recycled'. She is transformed. Her work seems, once again, timely, innovative, and compelling.

LINDA WEINTRAUB

LINDA MONTANO'S EDITED COMMENTS FROM THE INTERVIEW

HOW I RECYCLE

Six years ago I began getting messages to return to the small village in New York where I grew up. I heard voices saying, "Go home and care for your dad." I obeyed in increments. At first I helped dad with shopping and doctor visits and paying his bills. By the third year when Dad had a stroke, I became a total, full-time care giver. At the time, Dad was 89. It took me two more years to name this situation 'art'. That is when I decided to save it and not delete it. I recycled it from the refuse bin of life where it had no value. Once I called it 'art', my dad and I started collaborating and being at home felt divinely designed. Before his stroke he allowed me to video tape his life. He instructed his friends and family about what they should do for the video. He would say, "You can smile, wave, sing, walk." He enjoyed the camera. I reflected his brilliance and creativity. It brought us incredibly close. It recycled our friendship, a process I think of as art/life ecology.

HOW PERFORMANCE IS BEING RECYCLED AND HOW THE COMPUTER RECYCLES REALITY

Performance art has been imitated by very high energy young artists who understand that they need to challenge the tradition. They have knowingly and unknowingly imitated many of the themes, styles, rituals, and techniques of performance art from history, including futurism and even referring to its cave origins. In doing so, they have deleted the pure and sacred understanding of brain waves, energy, and initiation. They have substituted the gross elements of exclusion, greed, competition, and shallowness as seen in *Survivor*, *Big Brother*, *Fear Factor*, *You're Fired* and other reality TV programs. All of these basic, non-compassionate virtues are present in unconscious motivations of early performance artists, but early performance artists ritualized these motives or denied them. Remember, we were the good saints, poetic, spiritual beings. Now, the younger performance artists added the hidden motivations. They brought the darkness of the human condition to light. This is a good thing. The computer also makes us look at reality differently. It offers the possibility of taking off the blindfolds and seeing everything, everywhere.

HOW ARTISTS CAN SURVIVE BEING DISCARDED:

The artists who were active in the 60s, 70s, and 80s cannot mirror today's Olympic-styled, risk-taking athletes and technological dare devils. We are no longer useful. We have been discarded. We are the cultural garbage of the art world. This, too, is good. It frees us of the need to stay within the old direction. As garbage, we can either seed a new flowering or we can bitterly pick at our archives and shop for our names on Google.

HOW MY FATHER HELPED ME RECYCLE MYSELF

The younger artists have created a brilliant diving board to the next wave. It's an incredible personal challenge to artists to find a way to recycle themselves. I had no idea I would find myself in my father's light. Since 1969 I have been attempting to process light as art, as performance, as sculpture, as installation. Now I feel that everything was a dress rehearsal for making 'DAD ART'. The rug has been pulled out of my art making process because, for the first time, I am not in control. I am fascinated by having to learn a new role as I've had to recycle my art statement from one of controlling time to one of relinquishing time. I have no idea when this performance will change. Time is gone from my art statement. I'm at the mercy of space because I'm committed to make 'DAD ART' as long as I receive the message. I am here in obedience to the voices, to this teaching.

Retired artists pray for opportunities to be taught new concepts. That is our ecological gift. I am experiencing the ecstasy of finally marrying art and life.

HOW I MAKE DAD ART

I'm saving all of Dad's charts about his diet, baths, sleeping patterns, the condition of his teeth, his bowels, his genitals. I add comments from the nurses and tips on transporting him. His miniscule actions are noted. We document the new ways that he is creative. He was never a painter before he had his stroke. Now we sit him at the table and give him a brush and he is happy. He creates Rothko-like paintings. He seems to be channeling. You can see his concentration. It sometimes takes him a half hour to make one beautiful line.

HOW I ONCE MADE CONCEPTUAL ART

Every artist has permission to create a definition of what is art. Some people say only my paintings, sculpture, poems are art. Early in my career, I needed to appropriate everything as art, and find creative ways of parenthesizing certain aspects of my life as art. I did this by saying, "I will wear red this year. I will be blindfolded for a week. I will expose my embarrassment for three hours. I will call my house art." It is a mind frame. You have to admit your intention and choice to the air, to yourself, your friends, the art community, the world. This game has satisfied me and kept me busy since 1965.

HOW DEATH MAKES ARTISTS OF EVERYONE

Death, after birth, is the greatest mystery. I have no idea what's going to happen when dad or I stop breathing, but I know I have to practice states of transformation while I'm still living. I use Catholicism to direct me. I know I have to feel and study the technology of the sacred (the title of a Jerome Rothenberg book) so that I become a good student. The reward of spending this much time with my Dad is that I'm having an opportunity to bask in his light which he emits because he has surrendered his discursive mind. My father is Italian and Catholic, yet strangely his quality is Zen-like. He is half way between life and death. The payoff for his surrender is pure beauty. Beauty is a vibrational frequency, a brain wave. It comes and goes. His meds are carefully selected and all lined-up to contribute to his peacefulness. There is no doubt that he is helped by chemistry, but his good character and endurance are also contributing to this end game. Thirty four years of studying with a Catholic spiritual leader taught him how to keep focused. Sunday afternoons he would sit in silence in the church and meditate. He knew where to get his spiritual food. Now he seems to be reaping the benefits of his practice. He has become a living ecstatic." It's like a little monastery here. That's what my art was always supposed to be like. Thanks Dad for being my co-pioneer in developing a new art/life – death.

What will remain after he dies?

Invitations to revisit Beauty.
Gratitude at having this time with him.
SILENCE.

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2. THE PERFORMANCE OF EVERYDAY LIFE

PERFORMANCE OF EVERYDAY LIFE

With respect for my living art lineage and those who inspired me, I refrain from mentioning the 3878947982 artists' names because this always indicates exclusion and bad feelings. But please know that I participate, as a practicing performance artist, in a still lively and co-collaborated trend, journey, history and google-able phenomena which allows us to offer our personal lives as material/memoir for our art. Why we made/ make an art of everyday life:

NUMBER 1: MONEY

Live artists often don't have to buy art materials because their post traumatic stresses, unrequited loves, daughters' first birthday parties, eating disorders, tango dancing and chronic illnesses are already there waiting, FREE; waiting for low budget transformation and voice.

Why we made/ make an art of everyday life:

NUMBER 2: TIME

Life/art artists love to mold time, endure in time, play with time, structure time, repeat time, eliminate time, silence time treating it as if it were steel, paint, wood, stone..... Why we made/ make an art of everyday life:

NUMBER 3: PERMISSION

Living art gives permission for anything , everyone, everything and everybody to be used as art. This permission of inclusion, headily practiced without boundaries or ethical concerns until the 90's, allowed for a 30-year play land of intelligent limitlessness and ecstatic trance. Why we made/ make an art of everyday life.

Number 4:Permission

We, life/artists, antennenned ourselves and through atmospheric, vibrational frequencies, picked up ideas (1950-1990) already conversantly fertile. Ideas from India, Japan, Asia, from feminism, from the civil rights movement, from the drug culture, from musicians and we rocked our way into a brave new world, alongside these co-rocking practitioners. Why we made/ make an art of everyday life.

NUMBER 5: MYSTICISM

We, living artists, really believed that we were altering our consciousness by altering our bodies, our faces, our identities, our names, our personas, our genders, our beliefs and our everyday lives. And this felt sacred, non-commodifi-able, and verging on the mystical. Like early believers, freely we shared photo images, ideas, food, gig information, studios, money, and kudos...without thought of litigiousness, verification of copyright, plagiarism issues or bitter intellectual property battling. Our grandfathers walked to school 14 miles shoeless in the snow, as the story goes. We wax poetic as well about our holy and happy early living art years. Why we made/ make an art of everyday life.

NUMBER 6:TEACHING

Many of us became so conversant with the genre, with the history, with the technology of dissemination (documentation via video , audio), that we accepted the charter and invitation to teach by example, by writing but also in academia where we learned how to muzzle our instincts for wildness so we could ethically direct other artists in progress(students). Guided by experience and tenure denials, some of us were able to carefully monitor our artist friends' enthusiasms and we directed them toward a more guarded/bouandaried living art expression. Why we made/ make an art of everyday life.

NUMBER 7:DEATH

Now, trained to be artists of all of life, some of us segue trembling toward our most dramatic performance, our death. Now, accustomed to recycling our every insult, every illness, every disappointment, every marriage, every divorce, every death of parents, every hot flash, every betrayal, every beauty, every truth. We have every credential needed to make artfully sacred our last, documented, youtubed eternal and soft final breath. LINDA MARY MONTANO

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3. QUESTIONS FROM LINDA MARY MONTANO TO GODDARD SKYPE WORKSHOP, 2008...

1. What is the result of "paying attention" to another in performance?
2. How does it "feel" to receive attention during performance?
3. What to do with the attention once accrued? How share it?
4. Is art a transformative medicine?
5. Is art the only permission we really have?
6. Are there examples of cultures who live as art and don't have to "make" art? How can we do that?
7. The brain and art....authenticity and art....Can Temple Grandin and IN MY LANGUAGE, work by 2 autistic women be seen as models of AUTHENTICITY and how can our work become so natural to us that it has this kind of authenticity....although their work is not "art" they can become mentors of authenticity.
8. Who are current performance artists using the medium aesthetically?
9. The computer is our new best friend and so we spend hours there with "her"(computer) and our human face is the new taboo, the new genital. Is the human body devalued and becoming unnecessary?
10. Is the invisibly computer community preparing us for robotic life and robotic intelligence?
11. What is the effect of the delete button on culture?
12. Time and duration are to performance art as paint is to a painter.
13. Have reality shows commodified early performance concepts stripping themes of the "sacred" from early work but adding new gifts? What are the current gifts? Lack of fear of competition and money, and what else??
14. Is performative persona a way to switch from persona drama and trauma and creative schizophrenia?
15. Performance endurance is a homeopathic medicine which prepares for the endurance of life itself which is like an endurance.
16. Why are all the voices on American Idol the same? What is authenticity? Is it necessary? Are we capable of it? Do we want it?
17. What is the power of Blessing and touch in our art or life? Is it more necessary because of the internet?
18. What can we teach ourselves to do? Where does this inspiration come from? Trauma? Dreams? Research? Need to help others?
19. Neuroscience might be the new art?
20. Are we culturally so "combined" that cultural imperialism is impossible?? How do you feel when you "borrow" and become a "fusion" artist? Is this generation or the next one more able to fuse cultural symbols so

that feeling like an "image thief" will no longer be an issue or option?

21 What is one world art?

22. What is "roots" art?

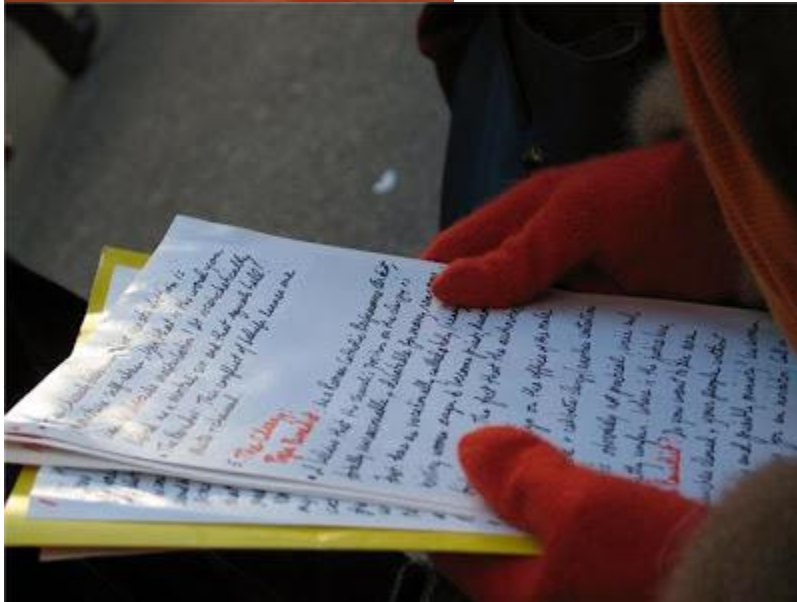
23. Non-violent communication(google) and truth telling nonviolently, might be an interesting paradigm for peace making. As well as becoming more generic so as not to offend others culturally?

24 WHAT IS TRUTH?

Linda Mary Montano, 2008

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4. ROMAN CATHOLIC PERFORMANCE ARTIST MANIFESTO: AN EMAIL SENT TO POPE BENEDICT



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ROMAN CATHOLIC PERFORMANCE ARTIST MANIFESTO:AN EMAIL SENT TO POPE BENEDICT

Dear Pope Benedict:

It is with a heart filled with contradictions and paradox that I address this letter to you. It is a letter of public admission of my position as a Catholic Performance Artist. The title is almost a contestable oxymoron. How can

they both co-exist....the vocation to be a performance artist and loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church?This is mystery.

I was raised strict/conservative Roman Catholic in a village in upstate NY in the 40's,50's and even entered a convent leaving as a novice after 2 years. It is important and imperative that I mention here that the order of nuns was Maryknoll;probably the most forward thinking, liberal , human/activist yet Christo-centered and ecumenical religious order ever founded. And as an aside, it is also interesting to note that Maryknoll priest-activist Father Roy Bourgeoise, is currently facing possible excommunication from you for having attended a ceremony of priesthood for a Catholic woman, who is called to that vocation and recieved the sacrament of Holy Orders outside the traditional Church.

After the convent I left the church and practiced eastern theologies; finding answers, comfort and spiritually usefull techniques in their mystical/contemplative practices. And at that time, as an artist, I was able to personally/aesthetically respond creatively to anything I considered unfair/unjust/unwise/inhuman, by making art that was religiously irreverant but comically convincing of my secular position.

Everything changed when I began a full-time university teaching job and my students cloned my thinking/permission; becoming as wild, free and spontaneous as I was. But I smelled trouble because there were instances when literally fire/blood/their traumas became the raw material for their art---material that I never feared for myself but when my art-children became conversant with possible danger,I ran for cover and accountability and teachings;back to the church. First the Newman center, then counseling with a Catholic therapist-priest, daily Mass and gradually I turned 360 degrees around, no longer the feminist, no longer laughing at the Church's stumblings and sins with irony and pain, no more spoofing its moral unaccountability, no longer undressing my body,mind or spirit in public and calling any of it ART.

Why am I here today? I come to the steps of your Church, Pope Benedict, with trembling. I have returned home full time : home to Holy Mass,and the Sacraments but I return as a new Catholic, not knowing how to compassionately address my concerns as a Roman Catholic Performance Artist. Here are a few things on my mind:

1. BIRTH CONTROL:

I personally believe that using birth control should be a free choice for all Catholics. Sexual intimacy is sacred and life-giving when practiced consensually and is an expression of love with or without birth-control. The Church believes in sexual abstinence before marriage and in birth control after marriage;deamanding that Catholics use only the rhythm method, a method impossible for those unable to learn the subtitles of when to have sex, taking temperatures to see when it is safe, etc. And what about those couples who have compromised health issues:(AIDS/HIV/STD'S).Are we asking them to not wear condoms and literally kill each other when they make love?

The paradox: I see my belief and your values as equally applaudable and correct but yours as impractical and unreasonable for "real" people .

2. PRE-MARITAL SEX:

Pope Benedict: I beleive that pre-marital sex and pre-marital habitation are natural and necessary pre-requisites for a future happy relationship and sensible way to become acquainted.

The Church teaches that abstinence before marriage is the law.

The paradox: I see both values as wonderfull. I am aware of the beauty of obedient and sexual waiting ;waiting and then allowing the Power of the Sacrament of Marriage to become the sacred cement to keep 2 people loyal and committed to each other. What an ideal!

But I also value my belief that having sexual relationships outside of marriage can be very sacred as well.

3.GAY/LESBIAN LOVE:

Pope Benedcit, love is love and when 2 men or 2 women love each other, and even want to express that love in

marriage, it is in my estimation natural and correct.

The Church believes that M/F marriage is the law and that law has been traditionally practiced so long and is biblically documented as theologically correct.

The Paradox: I see the beauty of my belief and I see the beauty of the Church's teaching.

4. MASTURBATION:

Pope Benedict, as a Roman Catholic Performance Artist, I believe that the Church's teaching on masturbation is equally disturbing. Healers, feminists, medical professionals and radical thinkers agree that using masturbation as prayer and self-care, both chemically adjusts the body for health and spiritually elevates the soul.

The Church believes that masturbation is immature self-abuse, yes that is the word you use to describe masturbation! It is catechetically listed as a mortal sin, and that equals hell!

The Paradox: This conflict of beliefs leaves me mute and chained.

5. THE CLERGY:

Pope Benedict, as a Roman Catholic Performance Artist, I believe that the Church's position on the clergy is totally unreasonable and debatable for many reasons. First, there are vocationally called holy/ready/willing women eager to become priests, deaconesses, bishops and Popes. The fact that the hierarchy holds tight reins on the office of the male priesthood and celibate clergy, another contentious issue, is obviously not practical, wise and is blatantly unfair. Where is the justice here, Pope Benedict? Do you want to continue to see more churches closed and your people without leadership and priestly ministry? We women are waiting for an invitation. Call us.

The Church believes that only non-gay males can hold the office of priesthood.

The Paradox: I remain silent and prayerful and only hopeful that rules from Rome change in my lifetime and as a Performance Artist, I vow never again to address this issue with cynicism as I have done in the past.

Now, bruised by age and doubt, I take the position of aesthetic/poetic, private admission of my own pain at MY inability to be more public about this outrageous injustice against women and men who can not enter the priesthood if admittedly gay and must remain celibate once there.

6. DYING:

The end of a Catholic's life, like the end of anyone's life, is a totally mysterious journey, unique to the traveller. I believe that it should be as natural and when appropriate, unassisted by medical interventions as possible. Otherwise, family and caregivers are fraught with even more sorrow, remorse, shame, and protracted grief if hydration/tube feeding is not clearly explained. Who can/should/would/will do this teaching?

The Church is so very strict and cryptic about care at the endgame that the family is often confused. Why even the most astute and practiced moral theologians would find it difficult to make correct judgments at the bedside of some of the dying Catholics I have observed attempting to leave their bodies.

Pope Benedict: Help us. Don't tell us we are sinning or killing our loved ones unnecessarily because we opted for no more interventions. I beg you to create conventions; conferences where translators of the Church's teachings on death and dying can talk with us; symposiums with eschatologists/ethicists/moral theologians who can not only re-think/translate the Catechism's interpretations of this issue but help all of us struggling to make holy, discerned decisions about tubes/plugs/water and then when the decisions are once made, help us forgive ourselves for what we have decided for we will be faced with the horror of loss and guilt at possibly having made a mistaken choice. Be with us, Church, don't judge us!

The Paradox: Dying Eskimo elders supposedly used to leave their community and walk onto a chunk of floating ice, to courageously choose death. How foreign and un-Roman Catholic that sounds and, OH, how right!

I end this manifesto with a prayer:

HOLY SPIRIT, guide my brain and thinking. Help me to respect the needs and values of this Church that I have re-joined. The Church that allows my soul to sing. The Church which feeds my hunger for spiritual ecstasy. The Catholic Church which sacramentally forgives my egregious mistakes, sins, omissions. But most important of all, the Church of the Real EUCHARISTIC PRESENCE!! These aspects of the Church are my life and hope. They help me overlook all of the issues I raised in the body of this letter.

HOLY SPIRIT: Help me! I see this Church and its hierarchy as a reluctant and isolated great, great great grandfather. Venerable yes, hearing? Not sure. Seeing the need for compromise and other Truths? I wonder.

HOLY SPIRIT, I ask for a spirit of rigorous yet prayerfull respect for my own individaul sacred conscience and my "fundamental option" to obey my halting ,yet seen as correct beliefs, based on what I think are my right and pure intentions .

HOLY SPIRIT, in a spirit of research and study and dialogue and obedience, I remain a student of Real Presence cloaked under the mantle of Mary's kindness.

AND NOW, BEOFRE I END THIS LETTER, I MUST TELL YOU POPE BENEDICT: I AM NOT DOING ANY OF THE ABOVE; I AM NOT "SINNING" IN THOSE WAYS. I AM NOT MASTURBATING,I AM NOT CO-HABITATING,I AM NOT PRACTICING LESBIANISM, I AM NOT BECOMING A WOMAN-PRIEST,I AM GOING TO GET THE CHURCH'S ADVICE WHEN I AM ON MY DEATH BED REGARDING HYDRATION,I AM NOT USING BIRTH CONTROL BECAUSE I AM NOT HAVING SEX/AM NOT MARRIED AND IT IS A MOOT POINT BECAUSE I WILL BE 68 IN JANUARY 2010, NO LONGER IN NEED OF BIRTH CONTROL. WHAT AM I SAYING IN THIS LETTER? I AM ONLY EXPRESSING MY THINKING. IT IS ONLY NATURAL THAT I WISH YOUR THINKING WERE LIKE MINE AND THAT THE CHURCH'S WAY WAS MY WAY.BUT IT IS NOT. POPE BENEDICT.I OBEY. I AM ONLY WANTING CHANGE. BUT BE ALERTED THAT I AM LOYAL TO THE CHURCH'S BELEIFS.WHY THIS LOYALTY? I DO IT AS A PENANCE AND AS A WAY OF REPERATION FOR ALL OF THE MISTAKES OF MY PAST.BUT AGAIN, BEFORE I LEAVE, KNOW THAT I AM A FOUND SHEEP, LOST AND RETURNED, PRACTICING MY CATHOLICISM YOUR WAY.I AM NOT LIBERAL, I AM NOT A FEMINIST, I AM A STRICT CONSERVATIVE. I FOLLOW THE LETTER OF THE LAW BECAUSE FOLLOWING MY LAW LED TO TROUBLE FOR ME AND OTHERS. IF YOU MAKE ANY CHANGES I WILL APPLAUD AND BE HAPPY BUT IN THE MEANTIME, I SAY FIAT TO THE WORD OF THE CHRUCH , AS IT IS.

If you would like to discuss any of this with me, my email is lindamontano@hotmail.com, or if you would like to view my work, www.lindamontano.com, or call me to Rome and we can meet, face-to-face.
In Art/Life/Laughter/Tabor-Light,

Linda Mary Montano, Roman Catholic Performance Artist

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(the following poem is optional reading)

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AN ARTIST TABORS HOME, by Linda Mary Montano, Roman Catholic Performance Artist

Now
my wounds, too egotistically putrid to share
are clutched close, neuroticized by time
dinasoured into fossil-eggs
sandblasted/etched/anorexiced
semi abstractly and so secretly
that they can only be admired in the gallery
of my own hungry mind.

Now
my wounds, loosened, colonic-ed
catapulted, ripped terminally
from DNA strands: poisoned, stiff-necked , sour

with the toxic waste of shame
placed on pedestals of pride
are self-viewed as one of a kind-mine

Now
my wounds , vomited, recycled,
birthed, breeched and torn
surgically from bloody scabs
are terroristically knifed into flesh
scarred with slime, a hostile brine

Now
my wounds are soft-coaxed
and angelically mid-wifed to infant dribble
nursing forth, arteried by transparent tubes
an operation of resuscitation, a visitation
performed at horizontal/vertical intersections
during autumn-like, golden light-nights
red to red
my wound to wed the ORIGINAL FIVE WOUNDS
until

Now
emptied, released,deprived of fight,
DIVINE FLIGHT
lovingly Tabors me home

Now

SHINE SHINE SHINE

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5. TEACHING

PERFORMANCE ART/THE BRAIN/YOUR LIFE

LINDA MARY MONTANO with guest: DOCTOR NETTLETON PAYNE, M.D.

IMPETUS FOR THIS FOCUS:

Exact science has allowed for a clearer knowledge of what was once considered serendipitous myth, especially when defining creativity. Previously, terms like: depression, anorexia, bipolar, PTS , schizophrenia, OCD, alcoholism, sexual addiction, and neuroses were seen as reasons for artistic genius. But now ,because of better measuring devices; an advanced and computerized understanding of the chemistry and functioning of the brain; greater funding for brain research(because of a war); an aging population that demands more services; and a quickening of curiosity due to the recession and ecologic impetuses, we are invited to consider biologic causes of creativity which reference the scientific and some of the terms used are: temporal lobe,parietal cortex, hypergraphia, the Geschwind syndrone, aphasia,transcranial magnetic stimulation and the amygdala.

Our new trust in science helps explain why we create and the brain is relegated to the status of co-muse. But

knowledge is not only power but sometimes surprise and upset. For example, will the new information that Blake's ecstasies might have been temporal lobe seizures, take away our breath and our fundamentalist faith or not! And how does this information effect our past beliefs and the future history of performance art? Some other questions we will consider:

a. If art was once seen to have originated from divine inspiration but science suggests that it is the "fault" of the hippocampus, then perchance the brain itself is divine. Why not?

b. Are artists willing to concede that their practice is brain driven? What will that do to art?

c. Is art ascending toward mind/super brain? Will art be free of human intervention in the future?

d. Are artists becoming more comfortable and actually needing to include medical/biologic reasons for their genius as well as the muse's inspiration?

e. Are artists de-throned and not seen as willfully creative but more the puppet of their chemistry?

f. Can performance artists be categorized "medically" by the nature of their work: i.e. hypergraphia causes the desire to write...
frontal -lobe epilepsy causes Blake-like ecstatic visions..so instead of being an artist, one could be a hypergraphiaist?

THE CLASS:

PART 1:

We will study 1st generation (1960-1980) performance artists and their legacy as performance art pioneers, asking how their work contributed to an understanding of the issues of their times and how their creative practices helped re-define the brain and it's functions. Marina Abramovic; Tom Marioni; Paul McCarthy; Spaulding Grey; The Waitresses; Act-up; Annie Sprinkle; Franko-B; Bonnie Sherk; etc. Each week will feature a different artist and their work will inspire in-class performances.

PART 2:

We will become acquainted with medical experts/authors/internet sites researching current breakthroughs in brain functions:
stroke, autism, musicophilia, rightbrain teaching, tourettes, meditation, brain injury and compensations, dementia etc.

A. Doctor Nettleton Payne, M.D. a neurosurgeon who taught at Emory University, will be invited to present a lecture on the brain and creativity. He will be available in person, skype or cell phone for Q&A half way through the semester. And he will attend the last class presentation of performances so he can witness the interface the class has made between creativity, the brain and their life.

PART 3:

Each class, the participants will demonstrate a positive/safe/intelligent/intuitive understanding of the value of re-contextualizing their everyday life as A WORK OF ART in a way that uses the brain as co-collaborator. This will be in some tangible form: performance, paper, DVD, CD.

PART 4: CLASSES:

CLASS 1: PRESENTATION OF THE CALENDAR FOR THE CLASSES

CLASS 2: PREPARATION; AUTISM; MARINA ABROMIVIC(artist); CLASS PERFORMANCES/PRESENTATIONS

CLASS 3: DR . NETTLETON PAYNE, MD, IN PERSON LECTURE: THE BRAIN AND CREATIVITY

CLASS 4: PREPARATION; TEMPLE GRANDIN(AUTISM); TOM MARIONI(artist);CLASS PRESENTATIONS

CLASS 5: PREPARATION; OLIVER SACKS(MUSICOPHILIA); SPAULDING GREY(artist); CLASS PRESENTATIONS

CLASS 6: PREPERATION; KRISNAMURTI ,THE BRAIN; LINDA MARY MONTANO(artist); CLASS PRESENTATIONS

CLASS 7:PREPERATION; EXTRAORDINARY PEOPLE(BRAIN);PAUL MCCARTHY(artist); CLASS PRESENTATION

CLASS 8: PREPERATION; PRESENTATIONS OF INTERVIEWS WITH ARTISTS OR BRAIN EXPERTS

CLASS 9: PREPERATION: DAVID LYNCH:CONSCIOUSNESS,CREATIVTY AND THE BRAIN; GORILLA GIRLS(artist);CLASS PRESENTATION

CLASS 10: PREPERATION: SUPER BRAIN 1-8;FRANKO-B(artist), CLASS PRESENTATIONS

CLASS 11: PREPERATION: MUSIC THERAPY AND APHASIA; SUZANNE LACY(artist); CLASS PRESENTATIONS

CLASS 12: PREPERATION: ANATOMY OF THE BRAIN; ANNIE SPRINKLE(artist); CLASS PRESENTATIONS

CLASS 13:PREPERATION: CLASS PRESENTATIONS

CLASS 14: CLASS PRESENTATIONS, FINALS.

(Where "artist" is indicated, the artist will be studied and will not be present in the class, except for Montano.)
(Preperation" indicates that different physical exercises, sound exercises and theatre exercises will be practiced each class so that an atmosphere of trust and intuitive safety can be experienced.)
("Class presentations " indicates all aspects of class presentations made by participants including papers, dvds ,etc.)

REFERENCES:

BLACK SMOKE Margarite De Wys

MUSICOPHILIA Oliver Sacks

THE MIDNIGHT DISEASE, Alice Flaherty

ANATOMY OF THE BRAIN: Internet

THE BRAIN THAT CHANGES ITSELF, Norman Doidge

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6. FACEBOOK AND THE RECESSION:

"Dear FB,

For about a year, at the invitation of pioneer and techno-composer-legacy-holder, Pauline Oliveros, I have been "feeling" the family of FB and this internet/virtual relationship has generated new thoughts about art/life. We are animal/human and need community. We attain and get that in many ways. It used to be neighborhoods but no more...kids cant play in the streets or their yards. We used to go to church , no more, we used to visit relatives , no more. Silently and slowly we are being forced into non-horseback riding time and catapulting into robotization and computer mind. We are being lured into sub-cutaneous implants and AI and no-think and machine speed. And the art world is led by the carrot of sameness into this silence by not offering any other options because:

Only the high rollers are getting the gigs and the teaching spots held tight by the past-timers.
Only the ones who will bring in the bucks are galleried.
Only the safe and sure are shown.(Names known by only the Guerilla Girls.)
Only the content that is wow and now is wanted.

Soooooooooooooooooooo

FB has become:

SCHOOL
GATHERING PLACE
HAPPY PARTY
JOB FINDER
MATE GATHERER
LOSS CONSOLER
RANT RECEIVER
PAST WORK DISPLAYER
DREAM MAKER
WHAT I ATE FOR LUNCH PHOTOGRAPHER
INSTANT AUDIENCE
TEACHER OF ART AS FREE COMMODITY
SHOW OFF CENTER
GROUP FORMER
JOB PLACEMENT SITE
FRIEND/FAN MAKER
PRODUCT/ART OBJECT ADVERTISER
RECESSION SNUBBER
GALLERY
SELF-IMPRESSION INFLATOR
RESURGER OF THE SPIRITUAL IN ART
DEPRESSION ADJUSTER
GREED DETHRONER
QUESTION ANSWERER
GRADUATE SEMINAR STUDY PLACE
NEW IDEA SHARER
PERSONAL BELL RINGER
WEBSITE ADVERTISER
FRIEND THIEF
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY FORGETTER

PET PHOTO/VIDEO SHOWER
WASTER OF TIME
ADDICTION CREATOR

The list is longer for the positives and less for the delete/hide/escape apps. And as a result, FB, I still like you, I share your wisdom and your messages and your great facilities. OK I am using you and asking periodically for help to sell my archive, to ask questions about where the gigs are these days, and other narcissistic dreams. So maybe i'm not so pure and that money and being SEEN is more important than your friendship, but until I completely find your game a pitiful excuse for having a life, I will continue to tell all of my "friends" my news, the world's news and my extraordinary wisdom! And in an early morning Starbucks burst of energy, I will continue to SHARE other wonderful and informative bites I find that all 28379874982749874 of you might like. I know some will "hide" me but I will never know because I still have access to my other 409872474987 "friends". FB, I know that galleries are few, that \$ is tight, I know that 328479874329 people are seeing my videos for free via you, but i'm not bitter oh FB, i'm just glad to be in your family. Art is finally about life and not art? How long this generosity and high lasts, who knows? Maybe not until the lawyers arrive.

Thanks FB for playing. One of your 238979857985798274983783009209947676 "FRIENDS",

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7. ENTER

Admittedly we are all sensing a pre-renaissance black-out, a "dark age" with recognizable and historically accurate symptoms witnessed by historians of the fall (and/or transformation) of other dynasties teetering on the brink of armageddon.(The Roman ,Ottoman, German, British Empires perchance?)

BREAK

Can't we all agree that in this 21st century, we are communally experiencing a bad taste and aftermaths from universally experienced phenomena such as:

CIRCLE 475 PHENOMENON

Financial fumbblings, cultural buffooneries, pervasive paranoia, modified mea culpas, bipartisan shenanigans, uncompassed morality, bipaped starvations, political circus acts, theological tsunamis, global tamperings, cyclical catastrophes, faux apologies, misleading marketing, conspicuous consuming, muddled multitasking, apocalyptic battering, padded documenting, salted wounding, power shifting, self loathing, hierarchical covering, pious grandstanding, spasmed tremoring, bankrupted dreaming, disintegrated remembering, virtual relating, techno crazing, outrageous compensating, congressional bullying and foreclosed trust!

CIRCLE 189 PHENOMENON

Diseased despondents, surrendered suicidals, unheld newborns, hooded jihadists, fundamental fanatics, antsy therapists, inattentive nannies, selfish narcissists, bonused buddies, media darlings, unconscienced thieves, suffocating egoists, discarded seniors, trafficked innocents, self inflicting terrorists, vulnerable victims, jolly junkies, over dutiful daughters, celebrity addicts, killer drones, spiritual materialists, scheming CEOs, interminable visitors, jealous sisters, stubborn students, lying boasters, ungrateful patients, cyber bullies, skeletoned anorexics, emotional mutes, nasty narcissists and miserable millionaires!

CIRCLE 362 PHENOMENON

Creepy oppressors, hypersexual prowlers, Holocaust deniers, death cheaters, begging borrowers, scud sharp shooters, carbon foot printers, attention mongers, greedy brokers, depressed designers, public apologizers, prepared preppers, subcutaneous cutters, sophomoric obsessors, inappropriate responders, furious professors, tormenting victimizers, parent starvers, neurotic neighbors, reputation slanderers, magnetic womanizers, surprise attackers, glad handers, halitosed dancers, grid locked commuters, grieving skaters, arrogant outsiders, soul sellers, gift refusers, aggressive reporters, sloppy visitors, pill stealers, animal abhorrrers, hate disseminators, stinky passengers, authority balkers, sloppy foodmakers, name callers, energy suckers, germ spreaders, information secretors, junk hoarders, sacchrine sympathizers, sweaty hand shakers, misguided worshippers, internet scammers, morphed murderers, obese outsiders, child abusers, frozen floormatters, dysfunctional reconfigurers, beauty kidnappers, unread biographers, gender assaulters, monumental mistakers, satanic afflictors, silent contemptors, counterindicated elders, hungry survivors, childhood stealers, guilty enjoyers, ponzi schemers, medical compromisers, careless caregivers, enraged partners, jailed minors, paralyzed players, unemployed loners, adulterous trespassers, vaccinated teenagers, double crossed informers, technological traumatizers, disabling humiliators, monetary misusers and nose pickers!

SHIFT

Oh, our poor bodies/minds are dodging the toxic arrows of it all! Dodging thoughts about pcb's and thoughts of no more potable water or no more fish or ice-sliding-glaciated polar bears! Thoughts about what to do about our arthritic thumbs twittered to spasm. Thoughts about ourselves and the suffering others! Not only thoughts but also memories of once looking in the mirror at our faces sweetly smiling back with innocent anticipation of a McDonalds. NO MORE. In preparation for a post-modern re-look at Revelationed-robotization, our current faces are facebooked/addicted into social shyness, not to be relieved by a 1970's Kumbayaah singing picnic on a green, chemical free lawn. That chapter is closed, my friend.

DELETE

Now, our poor bodies, steel-tight with earthquaked fear of the next day's news or trembling over the calories and sugar content of the morning's Starbucks or tripping out of buildings quickly when rumblings at yet another fault-line are recognized by sensitive dogs,....our battered bodies.... run on PTSD/empty seeking refuge in second-lifed, C-PAPED-accompanied nightmares.

HIDE

But wait, out of this harrowing scenario of a reality show gone bad, comes Hope?

SHIFT

PAUSE

LINDA MARY MONTANO, 2010 Saugerties, NY

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8. TALK AT UNITARIAN CHURCH JUNE 2010

INTRO TO TALK AT UNITARIAN CHURCH

Neuroanatomist, Jill Taylor chose to study the brain because her brother is a schizophrenic and she wanted to know why. But about 10 years ago, she had her own neurologic event when blood vessels exploded in her left brain, leaving her a case study of herself.

In her TED you tube now gone viral lecture she profoundly and completely explains what it is like to have a stroke and what it does to the brain by describing the two hemispheres of the brain:

THE RIGHT BRAIN: thinks in pictures, is about the present moment, learns kinesthetically, and is the brain of energy and connection.

THE LEFT BRAIN: thinks methodically, is about the past and future, judges, organizes projects for a later time, thinks in language, says, I AM and becomes separate from the universal flow of energy.

After her stroke which literally almost dissolved the thinking brain, everything in her body slowed down, she began focusing on internal rhythms, the molecules of her body merged with the molecules of the wall, the numbers on her phone became pixels and although she heard an inner voice say, "You need help," she had forgotten the number of her colleagues at work and it took her 45 minutes to find it in the first inch of a 3 inch stack of business cards. When she looked at the cards, the numbers pixeled and so she looked at the numbers on the phone and matched them with the numbers on the card, and in dialing the number, she forgot if she had dialed so she held her by then numb hand over the numbers she had dialed, giving herself visual cues.

Jill states: I was inside a silent mind, captivated by the energy around me, I was one with the energy of all that is. It was beautiful there because I was disconnected from the brain chatter. I had a sense of peacefulness because 37 years of emotional baggage was gone. My spirit surrendered as I lay on the gurney and I said goodbye to life.

For a comparative look at a similar flight to heaven by a philosopher and mystic, go to you tube and find BEDE GRIFFITH's account of his stroke where he also explains his medical experience as an explosion of love and a bath of bliss. And another story: in the late 80's, I also witnessed my own teacher Shri Brahmananda Saraswati, of Ananda Ashram, after his stroke. He continued teaching while living in this bliss bath and called his supposed illness, A STROKE OF GOOD LUCK. And to make these stories more personal, even though I had a TIA, silent stroke in 1991, nothing like this happened to me. Why? Maybe because my stroke didn't occur in the La-La part of my left brain, maybe because I wasn't spiritually prepared for heaven on earth and so when the stroke gave me an opportunity to feel bliss, I wasn't ready? Maybe for thousands of other medical reasons. But I want to make it clear that I am not suggesting that a stroke is a guaranteed ticket and the only or sure path to enlightenment.

Back to Jill who survived an operation that removed a golf-size mass from her left brain. It took 8 years of re-hab for her to come back to herself and she says: "Now that I have found nirvana and am still alive, I feel that anyone can find nirvana if they choose to step to the right of their left hemisphere." And her new purpose is to encourage folks to access that right brain and feel the heaven she experienced.

And to continue, she says: "We are the life force, the power of the universe. I can step into that

right hemisphere where we are ONE! Or I can step into the left and be solid and separate.

She challenged the TED audience with these words: "What do you choose?"

MY presentation today is offering a suggestion; a suggestion of a way that I use to go right, to the right brain, a way to temporary nirvana, a way to ONE and the more we go there, the better and easier it gets to live in beauty, peace and ecstatic compassion. We all have our way, our path, our methods, our starways. In this time of cosmic planetary worry and concern, it is opportune that we share the goods.

Now for the "way".....(paper 2)

THE JOY OF THE LORD: LINDA MARY MONTANO

After a series of upsets and traumas and the death of my dad and illness of my best friend, I decided I needed to learn how to laugh(stop and illustrate and include all). So in 2006, I took a course in Atlantic City with Steve Wilson, a student of Madan Kutaria MD of India, who founded the now internationally famous laughter phenomenon . Dr Kutaria realized that Laughter is a good complementary medicine to his AMA practice and he borrowed the exercises from ancient relaxation practices used in Tibet and India eons ago adding thousands of other exercises over time. They are used institutionally and personally and privately and therapeutically and medically and it seems that St Francis of Assisi may have been a practitioner given the depictions of him in films and literature. A joyful saint for sure. And TERESA OF AVILA would lead her nuns in dancing ,singing and said, quoted loosely, I don't want sour nuns but happy ones. So religious/spiritual/mystical traditions do encourage us to receive the joy of the LORD with conviction, that's for sure.

This talk today is based on 3 aspects of learning , a model of interdependence and flexible moving from one to another in case of necessity or when burdened by an off balance in daily life. The three models are: Learning by relaxing and laughing, learning by hearing and thinking, learning by imagining and feeling. All are necessary, all can help each other, all can intertwine. I call today a Triple Decker Sandwich event a weaving of the 3 methods into one big triple decker sandwich.

LEARNING BY LAUGHING: REPTILIAN BRAIN PERHAPS? To illustrate the way we use this wonderful temple of body mind and spirit via laughter we will do a series of laughter exercises for those who choose to do so and those able medically to do so. This brand of laughter is not about jokes but is about faking it, simulating to stimulate and we all know why...to induce serotonin and all of those medical chemicals that make us feel fabuloso. The sandwich aspect is that we will laugh, then think then laugh then imagine and then laugh.(example)

LEARNING BY HEARING: RIGHT BRAIN? To illustrate this model I will share a book I read by Kathy McGowan titled, THE SOURCE OF MIRACLES, which is based on the OUR FATHER .Mcgowan has interpreted the 6 petal rose situated at the center of Chartres Cathedrals labyrinth as a pathway to LOVE which sits in the center of the rose. She says that if we walk the six petals praying the OUR FATHER we will do the 6 practices that the OUR FATHER suggests and then land in the center circle LOVE! The bottom line is that we all, each and every one of us, want love. Here is not the time or place to analyze or see the complex paradoxes of that statement or to include treatises on evil, computer viruses, foreclosures, BP scams or jihad training camps. We are going to remain fuzzy/cozy and pray through laughter instead, hopefully refueling the atmosphere with our ions of Joy.(exercise)

LEARNING BY IMAGINING: LEFT BRAIN? To illustrate this method of prayer, we will choose to imagine journeying/traveling the 6 paths of the ROSE, and feel the gift of each petal, or see it or be in touch with our sensory learning devices so that the truth of it goes deep into the poetic and sensitive consciousness. Of course , this will be sandwiched with laughter-joy as well.

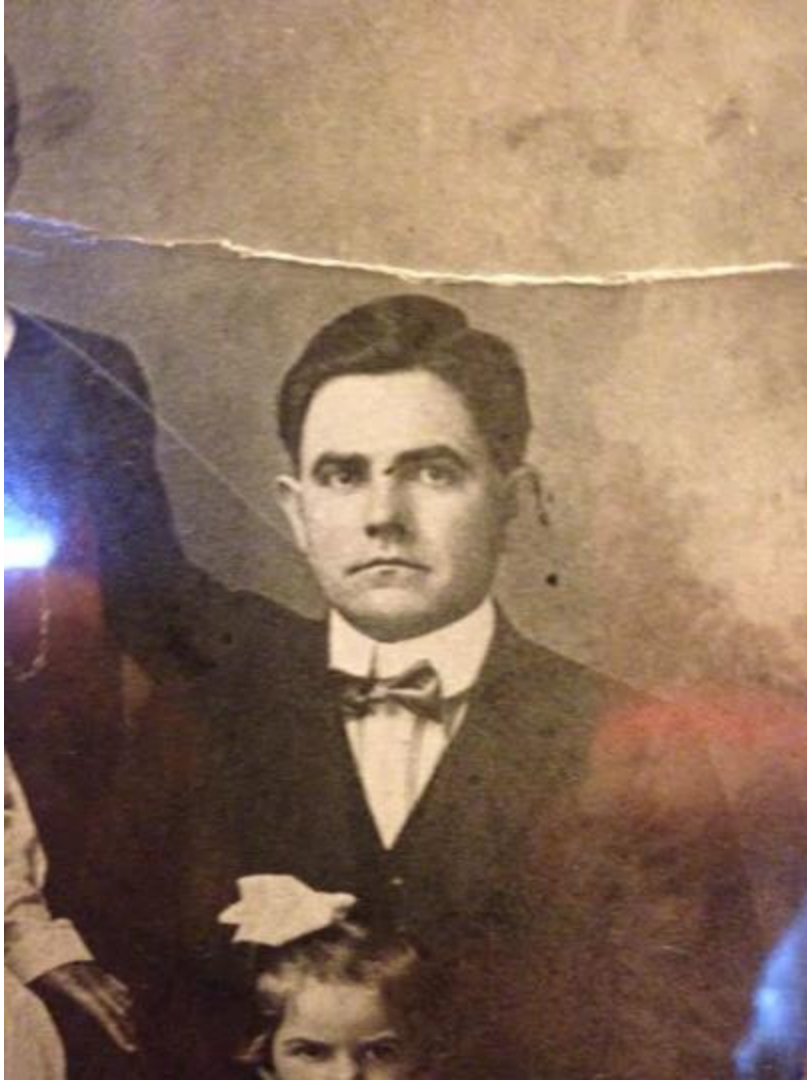
I thank you for participating in whatever way is appropriate for you and may the Joy of Divine Beauty be our inner food, a food we share with our own inner hunger and the hunger of ALL in this crying, weeping, spilling, hurting cosmos.

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9. THE PERFORMANCE OF MONTANO'S SHOE STORE

THE PERFORMANCE OF MONTANO'S SHOE STORE

THE PERFORMANCE OF MONTANO'S SHOE STORE



THE PERFORMANCE OF MONTANO'S SHOE STORE: LINDA MARY MONTANO 2000/2016

Years and years ago my Compobosso-Guardielfiera Italy-born grandfather immigrated to NY State via Ellis Island to repair and eventually sell shoes. I remember him well: a large, silent, gently commanding and charismatic presence who visited our home a block away from his in Saugerties NY. Every Sunday he came and I performed the ritual of getting his approval as he sat in the side room with me while I stumbled through that week's piano lesson. It ritualistically ended when I would turn around, face him and try to gauge how much he liked my "concert." Getting Grandpa Montano's blessing was a good thing and his response was never over effusive, patronizing or boundary breaking...just kind attention with the promise of a continuation of his weekly listening and caring presence. The 50 cents he always gave me and his mantra that he always said, " Could do better," something he said a lot about a lot, were incidental to his being there and his support but admittedly important components to

the whole experience which was a fine introduction to my learning the art of performing, a genre and vocation that I continue even now, 50 years later. Everything was there: good attention/focus/audience/continuity/challenge/support/culture/feelings and the irony of the same response repeated every time. And MONEY! put them all together and you've got excellent training for a performance art career. Thanks Grandpa.

But back to the shoe store. Grandpa was nine when his mother died and he and his father lived with his aunt. He was the only surviving child of five siblings, had three years schooling and started shoemaking when he was 9, a practice that he continued for 10 years in Guardielfiera-Compobosso. School was in the morning and work in the afternoon. The pay was food.

When he came to America at 19 (the Italians came after the Irish, just something sociological to think about) he lived with distant relatives in Hudson NY and worked there to repay his fare which they had shipped to him so that he could come here. He stayed in Hudson three years repairing and selling shoes, paid off his debt, then tried to find a place in Coxsackie and couldn't so he moved to Saugerties NY (it says Friendly/Historic Saugerties on the sign as you enter the village) which is on the west side of the Hudson River. There he opened Montano's Shoe Store, made enough money for Maria Chioco's fare and sent for his wife to be who also came via Ellis Island and was as spiritual, silently dignified, stalwart and devoted as her husband to be. Grandma and Grandpa raised their family here, not in Glasco, the village 15 minutes south where all of the other Italians lived, but here, in Saugerties, where the "business" is/was. Another sociological fine point.

Montano's Shoe Store continues, some 94 years later, changing only locations(moving one store north) but never the "look" or intention to serve or the outstanding quality of their products. Oh, yes, there is one change: absent from the store is the wood-paneled five foot high machine which we visited daily as kids when we went to see my Dad. We would stick our feet inside the two slots so that we could see our foot bones, never realizing the foolishness of frequent x-rays (nobody did in the 50's). It disappeared from the store in the 60's. Question: what are we inadvertently doing today that will be verboten tomorrow?

My dad and uncle ran Montano's with their father along with my other uncle who worked in the bank and would come and help out at emergency full-force times. These days had designated code names , for example: back to school; Christmas; rush; no tax week; new spring line. We all knew this secret language and were alert to what it meant: Montanos rushed through lunch or didn't eat at all; Montanos focused fiercely and their eyes went from feet to

shoe box exclusively; and everyone was on call, children included, especially my mother who actually seemed happy to be summoned from housewifery to another kind of interaction, one more adultly public. Even though Mom was an accomplished painter and volunteered for several committees in town, she was absolutely loyal to Montano's Shoe Store. Her dyed shoes for weddings were legendary and demanded accuracy and an artists sensibility, one she had in overabundance.

My fascination has never waivered for the actions which the Shoe Store people perform. It's the place where everyone who enters is bowed to, in a way. Customers sit and their feet are touched, felt...toes are gauged as to their position in the shoe about to be sold (the very famous Montano trademark) and the art of shoe fitting is a reliable and professional rite of passage performed on everyone who comes through the door. Since visiting India and witnessing the foot touching rituals of respect performed there, I am again left with comparisons that I would like to peruse, but this is not the place for this anthropological dialogue.

The shoe store is the place where a whole lot of kneeling and a whole lot of healing happens. For isn't the foot one of the most important places in the body? If the foot isn't comfortable and well-soled, the body cant maneuver through life smoothly. We need support to defy the pull of gravity and walk well in this mysterious and ever-moving-turning planet earth with its daily challenges and calls for discriminating sure-footed compassion.

Montanos Shoe Store is in a village which is gentrifying as we speak and filling to the brim with antique stores, a biscotti bakery, a many "starred" NY Times best restaurant and a few Soho-like gourmet coffee/lunch spots. It's here in Saugerties, a somewhat best kept secret village, where Grandpa Montanos Shoe Store sells womens, childrens and mens: boots, sneakers, clogs, slippers, shoes, shoelaces, shoepolish and laces. Just like it did in 1906. Orthodics is new and a 90's addition as Grandpa's initial vision continues.

For 94 years, all of the Montanos who have worked there and do work there(too many to list) and an incredibly supportive staff have been kneeling down at their customer's feet and fitting/healing:

the lame
the pronated
the drop footed

the metatarsalgiaed
the foot splayed/slew footed/out toed
the dystoniaed
the bunioned
the arthritically reconfigured
the hammertoed
the ingrown toenailed
the mallet toed
the warted
the post stroked
the tibial torsioned
the new hip/new kneed
the blistered
the flatfooted
the gouted
the swollen footed
the high arched
the heel spured
the claw toed
the fat pad diminished
the corned
the calloused
the plantar fasiatused
the parkinsoniaed
the ligament bruised
the one leg length compromised
the polioed
the club footed
the metatarsal-compromised
the toeless
the diabetic foot infected
the Raynauds-cold footed
the one foot bigger discrepanded
the broken toed

....as well as the tri-athletes, the dancers, the walkers, the first graders, the carpenters needing steel toe shoes, and as Joan Reinmuth reminded me..... "the sandals, shoes and boots for the children....and the nurses shoes, hunters shoes, firemens shoes, electricians shoes and party

goers shoes." And I most happily add: the cowgirl/cowboy boots! Now you see why people walk out of the store after a shoe treatment from a Montano, dancing and crying with gratitude and no-pain joy!

In conclusion:

For 94 years Montano's Shoe Store has seasonally and tastefully decorated their front windows to reflect the seasons and the new styles in stock.

For 94 years three generations of Montanos, their families and staff have been supported financially; food, clothing, schooling, cars, from Montanos Shoe Store.

For 94 years sons and daughters and sons of sons have worked there. Now third and fourth generation sons are owners.

For 94 years the reputation for providing a good fit, good service, and the respect of a family atmosphere continues the tradition.

Recently three of the staff were not at the store and with only three others there during "back to school" rush, they needed someone to answer the ever ringing phone. I "performed" that duty, watched from the back room and observed an incredible, living performance:

Their performance of focusing on the task at hand with daily, supreme patience-9-5

Their performance of service to all people all day long, 9-5

Their performance of ordering/shelving/stocking/sending/adjusting/building up/putting supports in shoes, 9-5

Their performance of accommodating squirming children, trembling elders, undecided/picky boomers, returnees, 9-5

Their performance of seeing every kind of unmentionable foot, sock, foot condition imaginable, 9-5

Their performance of maintaining a traditional look so long that its back in style again and has become retro, 9-5

Their performance of family business being well done with dignity and caring service, 9-5

Their performance of healing disguised as business, 9-5

The performance artist in me is in awe! The ENDURANCE ARTIST in me applauds!

Thanks Grandpa and Grandma Montano. Grandpa, I know you would say, "Could do better," but I am looking at the picture of you in the front window and hearing you say, "I BLESS YOU ALL."

Linda Mary Montano, 2000

www.montanosshoestore.com

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10. MONTANO: MONEY IS GREEN TOO MANIFESTO

MONEY IS GREEN TOO MANIFESTO:

- 1. ALMOST ALL MONEY IS PAPER. THINK TWICE BEFORE CREATING A WAY TO SPEND MORE&MORE MONEY BECAUSE THEN YOU COMPROMISE A TREE.**
- 2. SOME MONEY IS IN THE FORM OF PLASTIC CARDS. THINK TWICE BEFORE CREATING A PERSONAL NEED TO HAVE MORE TOXIC PLASTIC IN YOUR LIFE.**
- 3. CREDIT CARDS ARE TO BE SEEN AS EQUIVALENCIES. THAT IS, IF WHAT IS VISUALIZED INSIDE THE CARD AS A REAL ASSET IS TRULY THERE, THEN USE THE CARD. IF WHAT IS VISUALIZED INSIDE THE CARD IS A PROBABILITY, THEN DON'T USE THE CARD.**
- 4. MONETARILY DO UNTO OTHERS AS WAS DONE BY OUR GRANDFATHERS. THAT IS, OUR FATHERS AND GRANDFATHERS SPENT ONLY WHAT THEY HAD. FOLLOW THEIR EXAMPLE. IF YOU DON'T HAVE IT, DON'T SPEND IT.**
- 5. DO UNTO OTHERS AS YOU WANT DONE UNTO YOU. BEFORE YOU MAX OUT A CARD, THINK OF THE TRIED AND TRUE AMERICAN WORKING THREE JOBS TO PAY OFF YOUR MONETARY EXCESSES. SPEND THREE MINUTES A DAY BEING SOMEBODY ELSE. THAT IS, BE THIS PERSON WITH 3 JOBS IN YOUR IMAGINATION AND THEN DECIDE WHAT TO DO.**
- 6. THE GOVERNMENT IS HYPNOTIZING US TO BE FINANCIALLY CARELESS, EXCESSIVE AND IRRESPONSIBLE. IT IS A PLOY AND WAY FOR THEM TO THEN DO A POLITICAL INTERVENTION AND PUNISHMENT THAT HAS CONSEQUENCES THAT ARE TO BE FEARED.**
- 7. "I WILL MAX OUT MY CARD BECAUSE I'M TERMINALLY ILL" IS A MONEY SIN AKIN TO ANYTHING YOU MIGHT CONSIDER A SIN IN YOUR INDIVIDUAL CONSCIENCE. WHY? BECAUSE SOMEBODY'S HARD WORKING BROTHER WILL HAVE TO EVENTUALLY PAY FOR YOUR DEBTS.**
- 7. BANKRUPTCY IS THE INQUISITION OF THE MIDDLE CLASS: THE "WORKER" TAKES UP THE SLACK OF THE "WANTER".**
- 8. DO ONLY WHAT YOU CAN AFFORD.**
- 9. WANT ONLY WHAT YOU CAN AFFORD. IF YOU HAVE ENOUGH MONEY AND HAVE BECOME AN ADDICTED WANTER, THEN ASK, WHY WANT?**

10. TRANSLATED, THAT SAYS: ASK, WHY DO I WANT WHAT I HAVE BEEN HYPNOTIZED TO WANT?

11. STOP IMAGINING YOU HAVE MONEY WHEN YOU DON'T. IF YOU DON'T HAVE MONEY, GET A JOB AND LIVE IN A WAY THAT SUPPORTS YOU, NOT A WAY THAT SUPPORTS A HABIT THAT IS AN ELITIST AFFRONT TO YOUR SOUL.

12. MONEY IS ONE OF LIFE'S TABOOS LIKE SEX, DEATH. MONEY IS IN THE PROCESS OF BEING DE-TABOOED, BUT IS NOW AT THE LAUGHINGSTOCK/FOOL STAGE OF DE-CONSTRUCTION. BY TAKING MONEY SERIOUSLY, IT WILL BE RE-INSTATED TO ITS PREVIOUS POSITION OF RESPECT/ KIND-CARE AND WILL HAVE SURVIVED THE TEST OF TABOO.

13. ASK: ARE LOVE AND MONEY OXYMORONIC OR CONGRUENT? WHAT ABOUT COMMODIFIED/SATISFIED? SUSTAINABLE/WASTEFUL? BARTER/BUY? GENEROUS/HOARDING?

14. THERE ARE 867,000 WAYS OF INTERPRETING POVERTY/LIVING WITHIN YOUR MEANS. RESEARCH THE TOPIC.

15. THANK YOUR HIGHER POWER FOR THE INVISIBLE RICHES IN LIFE, NOT THE ONES THAT CAN BE BOUGHT.

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11. DEAR ESTEEMED ARTISTS AND LIFEISTS

DEAR ESTEEMED COLLEAGUES/ARTISTS AND LIFEISTS:

I WISH TO TALK WITH YOU ABOUT THE BRAIN BECAUSE I SEE MY OWN ART AS MEDICINE AND MY DRUGS OF CHOICE ARE PERFORMANCE/VIDEO/BOOKS/ENDURANCE/PERSONAS/SCULPTURE AND ACCENTS...WITH ALL DUE RESPECT TO MY ITALIAN GRANDPARENTS WHO TALKED WITH AN ACCENT...THESE DRUGS MOVE ME OUT OF LEFT BRAIN FEARS,GUILTS,JUDGMENTS AND ATTACHMENT TO SUFFERING AND ALLOW ME RIGHT BRAIN, ART PLAYTIME.

MY INTEREST IN THE BRAIN IS MEDICALLY PERSONAL AND I HAVE ALSO RESEARCHED ON YOU TUBE, JILL TAYLOR, BRAHMANANDA SARASWATI AND BEDE GRIFFITH...ALL OF WHOM HAD LEFT BRAIN STROKES AND ALL THREE EXPERIENCED A RESULTING ARTIST-LIKE EUPHORIA. ADMITTEDLY WE LIFEISTS/ARTISTS DONT HAVE TO HAVE A STROKE TO BECOME MORE CREATIVE OR BETTER LOVERS OF BEAUTY. WE MAKE ART WHICH IS A BRAIN GAME AND THAT'S ENOUGH. BUT WE DO NEUROBIOLOGICALLY SHARE OUR JOURNEY WITH OUR MEDICALLY COMPROMISED FRIENDS LISTED ABOVE.

TO ILLUSTRATE; I WILL FURTHER DISCUSS ART AND ANXIETY/ART AND THE BRAIN/ART AND RITUAL/ART AND THE GLANDS.

I'M SURE THAT THERE ARE A FEW UNIVERSALLY APPLICABLE PATTERNS STRUCTURING AND FOUNDATIONING THE ART MAKING PROCESS WHICH WE ALL SHARE.

PATTERN 1: ART AND ANXIETY

WHAT BETTER TIME TO BE AN ARTIST/LIFEIST? ADMITTEDLY WE ARE VOCATIONALLY CALLED TO WONDER ABOUT, BE HAUNTED BY AND SENSITIZED TO VACATED NOTHINGNESS AND CURRENTLY OUR JOB IS EXACERBATED BY HAIR RAISING STORMS, WINDS, WATERS, LIGHTENING, FIRES, EARTHQUAKES, FAMINES AND TOTAL PLANETARY AND POLITICAL COLLAPSE. AUTHOR THOMAS BERRY STATES THAT ANXIETIES ABOUND AND MANIFEST THIS COLLAPSE IN THREE WAYS : COLLAPSE OF THE BODY/COLLAPSE OF THE MIND/COLLAPSE OF THE SOUL

1. WE ARTISTS ARE SENSITIZED TO AND FEAR PHYSICAL COLLAPSE, DEATH AND THE PARALYZING NIGHTMARE THAT WE WILL CEASE TO BE, CEASE TO HAVE A BODY, SHELTER, SUSTENANCE. COLLAPSE OF THE BODY.

2. COLLAPSE OF THE MIND: WE ARE SENSITIZED TO MORAL COLLAPSE AND BECAUSE WE ARE OVERWHELMED WITH DECISION FATIGUE GIVEN THE PLETHORA OF FREE FLOATING WEB INFORMATION, WE FEAR WE WILL NEVER KNOW REAL TRUTH.

3. COLLAPSE OF THE SOUL: WE ARE SENSITIZED TO AND HAUNTED BY THE ANXIETY OF SPIRITUAL COLLAPSE AND FEAR THAT LIFE IS KARDASHIANLY MEANINGLESS, HOPELESS, HELPLESS, FOOLISH AND WITHOUT CONSEQUENCE.

THESE 3 ANXIETIES OF BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT ARE OUR ART MATERIAL, WORDS FOR OUR PRAYER, OUR CLAY, OUR PAINT.....

PATTERN 2: ART AND RITUAL

WITH THESE ART MATERIALS, WE PHOENIX OURSELVES RITUALISTICALLY AND COURAGEOUSLY THROUGH THE FIRES OF DAILY DISASTERS, POLITICAL DISASTERS, SOCIAL DISASTERS TO RETURN WITH NOT ONLY OUR OWN PSYCHES INTACT, TRANSFORMED & BURNT CLEAN BUT WITH FODDER AND BEAUTY FOR OUR CO-PILGRIMS.

I LEARNED EARLY TO BE AN ARTIST VIA THE ROMAN CATHOLIC RITUALS OF MASS, EUCHARIST, CONFESSION, INCENSE, STATUES AND COUNTLESS OTHER LITURGICAL WAYS THAT I WAS CATAPULTED INTO VATICANED MYSTERIOUS AND SYMBOLIC WORLDS. I WANTED TO BE ON THE ALTAR, TO BE A PRIEST, AND COULDN'T, SO I IMITATED IN PERFORMANCE WHAT I SAW IN CHURCH BUT MORE EXACTLY WHAT I FELT, WHICH IS TRANSCENDENCE, ECSTASY AND TIMELESS SILENCE. BECAUSE I AM A WOMAN, I CANNOT MAKE CHRIST PRESENT ON THE ALTAR BY CONSECRATING THE EUCHARIST BUT I CAN POINT TO THE NEED FOR CHRISTIAN MERCY AND COMPASSION IN MY OWN LIFE SO THAT I CAN ADDRESS MY OWN NEANDERTHALIZED FLIGHT-FIGHT LEFT BRAIN HORRORS. GENERALLY SPEAKING, WE ARTISTS ARE VOCATIONALLY CALLED TO RITUALLY CREATE ORDER FROM MATTER SO THAT WE CAN RISE UP, FLOAT AND FLY. WHY DO WE DO THIS? BECAUSE WE LIKE AND KNOW HOW TO CREATE CEREMONIES AND RITUAL.

PATTERN 2A: LET'S ADMIT IT, WE ARE

REPETITION REPEATERS
SYSTEM CREATORS
ANXIETY REFRAMERS
O-CDERS
COMMUNITY BONDERS
LIFECRISIS FIXERS
TRUTH KEEPERS
MIGHTY FOCUSERS
SYMBOL SEEKERS
MYSTICAL SCHMOOZERS

SCAM SMELLERS
WORSHIP LOVERS
CHARMING HYPNOTIZERS
TRAUMA RE-ORGANIZERS
PURIFICATION ENACTERS
HOLY HAZERS
CONSCIOUS PERFORMERS
ECSTASY TRANCERS
SPIRITUAL MINISTERS
RIGHT BRAIN ADDICTORS
SECURITY STRUCTURERS
BODY MORPHERS
ENERGY NEUTRALIZERS
DEPRESSION PREVENTERS
ZEALOUS PASTORS
ROBOTIC REPEATERS
SOCIAL BONDERS
COMPULSIVE ENACTERS
MORAL RESTRAINERS
DEMON EVICTORS
DEATH DE-CONFIGURERS

PATTERN 3: ART AND THE BRAIN

ARTISTS BRAINS ARE DIFFERENT. TO PROVE OR DISPROVE MY CLAIM, WE TOOK THIS SCAM, BOGUS, TOTALLY UNSCIENTIFIC AND SIMPLISTICALLY INACCURATE TEST TO DETERMINE OUR BRAINS ORIENTATION. WE CAN AGREE WE HAVE 70 TRILLION CELLS, 230 BONES, 650 MUSCLES AND YET WHEN NEUROBIOLOGIST JILL BOLTE TAYLOR DESCRIBES HER LEFT BRAIN STROKE AND SAYS THAT THE RIGHT BRAIN THINKS IN PICTURES, IS PRESENT MOMENT ORIENTED AND LEARNS KINESTHETICALLY WHILE THE LEFT BRAIN THINKS LINERALLY, METHODICALLY, IS PAST AND FUTURE ORIENTED, HAS A SENSE OF I AND EGO AND FEELS SEPERATE FROM EVERYONE , I BELIEVE HER. DO YOU? I KNOW YOU NEUROSURGEONS, NEUROLOGISTS AND MEDICAL PEOPLE OUT THERE ARE SQUIRMING, PUTTING YOUR FINGERS IN YOUR EARS AND SINGING LA,LA,LA. BUT MY MEDICALLY NON-DOCUMENTED THESIS IS THAT WE ARTISTS ARE VOCATIONALLY CALLED TO MAKE SENSE OF LEFT BRAIN STUFF BY TAKING ALL OF IT...OUR BAGGAGE, WORRIES, GARBAGE AND TRUCK IT OVER TO THE RIGHT BRAIN WHERE COMPASSION, BEAUTY AND AGENDALESS REGARD IS ABLE TO TURN PAIN INTO PAINTINGS, PAIN INTO PAINTINGS, PAIN INTO PAINTINGS.

PATTERN 4: FROM CHAKRAS TO GLANDS

IN MY 50'S, MY HOUSE OF CARDS BEGAN TO SLOWLY COLLAPSE.

1. I HAD FINISHED 14 YEARS OF LIVING ART AND STUDY OF THE CHAKRAS
2. I HAD A LEFT BRAIN SILENT STROKE
3. I WAS REFUSED TENURE
4. I WAS CAREGIVER FOR MY DAD FOR 7 YEARS

5. MY TEACHER , DR ARUNA MEHTA ALSO DIED

6. I BECAME SICK WITH DYSTONIA, A PARKINSONIAN-LIKE MOVEMENT DISORDER

I HAD REACHED THE SICKNESS, OLD AGE AND DEATH CHAPTERS OF MY LIFE AND FELT STRIPPED OF CHAKRAS, STRIPPED OF BRAIN NEURONS, STRIPPED OF EASY ANSWERS, STRIPPED OF DREAMS, NOT STRIPPED OF CELLULITE OR OTHER BODY BETRAYS, STRIPPED OF ART, STRIPPED OF CERTAINTY, STRIPPED OF CREATIVITY AND THROWN INTO HELL. GOING THERE HAS BEEN AN AMUSEMENT PARK RIDE OF TERROR INTO SECRETS STORED IN MY LEFT BRAIN ONCE CEMENTED SHUT AND NOW REDUCING ME TO AN ON MY KNEES POSITION OF SURRENDER. MY YOU TUBE VIDEO, STARVED SURVIVORS IS THE RESULT OF THESE YEARS OF RESEARCH INTO THE DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL. WHILE IN THAT DARKNESS ONE DAY, SPASMING AND TWISTED WITH DYSTONIA, I HEARD AN INNER VOICE THAT SAID, "LINDA, YOU LOOK JUST LIKE MOTHER TERESA." AND AFTER YEARS IN LOCKED DOWN JAIL, I FEEL AS IF I CAN NOW TAKE THIS BODY WITH GLANDS, CLIMB UP OUT OF A DANTE-LIKE PUTRID SLIME, WASH CLEAN MY OILED WINGS AND FLY HOME. MOTHER TERESA THANK YOU FOR LOANING YOUR WINGS. THANK YOU FOR LOANING YOUR WINGS, THANK YOU FOR LOANING YOUR WINGS.

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12. MILDRED'S DEATH

MILDRED'S DEATH

In 1988 my mother died. It was a five week hospital death. I was with her much of that time. These are some of the things that I learned.

1. Ask the dying person questions and wait for verbal/nonverbal responses, i.e. " Should we stop this medicine? What do you need? " (I didn't always ask my mother's opinion and now wish that I had.)
2. LISTEN. LISTEN. LISTEN.
3. See if they have unfinished business that they want to work with, i.e. unexpressed thoughts, feelings wishes, etc. (My mother said, "I wish I had written a book,' knowing that U would hear her and do it for her. I have.)
4. If they prefer, let them leave consciously, alertly, with awareness. (Because one medicine was stopped, she became comatose. I didn't know that would happen and missed saying goodbye because of that.)
5. If they agree, play nature tapes in the hospital room. It creates a no panic atmosphere. (I played one and the nurses used to come in the room because it felt, "good in here.")
6. Help the way they need to be helped, not the way you need. (ONce I was chanting, praying, laying my hands on her abdomen teaching her to breathe and my mother, always the comedienne, opened her dying eyes, looked at me with an Imogene Coco look and said, " Linda, PLEASE!")
7. Confess by their bedside. (Clear your heart but do it telepathically. Tell everything you need to tell. Do unfinished business without their hearing. Sotto voce.)

8. If the person is on heavy pain meds, they might change their behavior toward you, positively or negatively. Be ready! (My mother became a hippie on morphine. She pulled me close to her, tried to show me my aura, touched the peach fuzz on my cheeks. We re-bonded.)
9. Get counseling yourself from either friends, 24 hour telephone hotlines, Hospice volunteers, etc. I talked with a Hospice volunteer for 4 years on the phone while my mother was dying. (Hurray for Hospice!)
10. Know what patients rights means and use the information appropriately. (I asked on nurse " If this were your mother would you allow a nurse to take blood and do "vitals" while your mother was comatose and had only a little time left? The nurse said, " No." I said, "Then please do not take blood and stop all orders at the desk.")
11. Be prepared for each family member and close friend of the dying person to take a completely different response to everything. Emotions are close to the surface; everyone's death anxiety button is being pushed.
12. Use TV, VCR's, Cd's, DVD's as teaching tools. (When my mother wanted TV on I turned to cartoons. The flying image from MY LITTLE PONY did wonders for her attitude and actually distracted her from her pain.
13. Inconspicuously breathe together. (Match your breathing pattern to theirs.) Gently sound the exhalation. (Steven levine teaches this technique. It's Tibetan and comforting for both the patient and caregiver.
14. Whisper messages near an ear. Keep messages positive and in words they need to hear. (When I said, " Relax Ma, Mitchell and Karl will take good care of you," she responded positively because these were friends who were dead and whose company she loved.
15. Go as far as you can with the process in the end. (Those last 15 hours she was comatose, I felt a need to meditate, give her space, not touch her as much. Check out your own situation, it will be different.
16. After the death, participate in the process as much as you can given place, circumstances etc. Help wash the body, close the eyes, etc. (I didn't see the spirit or soul leave. Some people do.)
17. Never , ever judge how you or anyone else mourns or deals with death. (I demolished and rebuilt an abandoned building for two years after she died. I told Ma, "I don't know how to cry but I know how to sweat."
18. Be watchful for messages, dreams, symbolic visits. (She comes as a butterfly or sometimes as a wave of feeling. I continue a dialogue with her.)
19. Daily, prepare for your death in your own way.
20. Your comments:

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13. BLINDFOLD WINDOW PIECE

BLINDFOLED/WINDOW PEACE

I saw that Susan Kleckner had organized a window performance in Soho, for one year, and that

women activists would use a storefront window as a place to protest. I immediately liked the form...endurance, availability, limitation. Aaah! All the things I like, and so I decided to do a week in there blindfolded, having practiced that a few times in the early 70's, and remembered what a sweet experience that had been.

The time I allowed my husband Mitchell (Payne) to guide me, take care of me, so I could practice receiving, was a way to give myself attention and yet be more allowing as half of a couple.

And then resurrecting the 3 day blindfold for a 1975 women's conference this time living in a gallery where Pauline (Oliveros) became my guide and I became a laughing, non-judgmental, accepting nymph.

Oh how happy when habituation leaves even for awhile and I had a chance to FEEL how to respond, not SEE what to do as dictated by society or my eyes or everyday worries and patterns. I knew that if I allowed myself to be publically blindfolded for a week I would have a chance to be SOFT-HEARTED.

WHAT HAPPENED:

In the beginning I had fear of the porta-potty and using one in public, right in the front window, which is unusual for me to feel shy because I am usually very natural about bodily functions. I knew that people were seeing through the curtain that *maybe* I pulled shut, maybe I didn't because I was not seeing or being visually exacting, but after a day using a porta-potty in a NYC store window behind a shut curtain was a breeze!

RESULT:

What I discovered is that memory and imagination are picture making entities and cause as many images to surface as sight itself. Of course I knew this from years of meditation retreats but this time I had a week of no-sight to really see it and privately research in my own body the neurobiology of thinking/seeing..

I found that each word that I *thought*, produced a picture, an image so I never missed not-seeing because I WAS seeing my thoughts, my fears, my imaginings, my memories. I saw images of words and realized that exhaustion comes from working so hard at this whole process of seeing-thinking since there seemed to be three levels of sight and thought.

1. The actual seeing of the thing or person.

2. Discarding or accepting the sight.

3. Spending more time on analyzing or reacting to the thoughts that come from the seeing.

Exhaustion comes from having the burden of all three levels and when it is possible to by-pass level one, or sight, the mind is vacationed and what is cut out of the mix is one more need to control seen reality and after a few days I thought I WAS SEEING but in a new way, a neuro-biological marvel!

My kinesthetic memory was strong and I moved without faltering and slowly (the window was about 4' by 8' so there really was no place to move to). And because of the slowness and carefullness I could **feel** when someone was there and HOW I FELT ABOUT THEM. I was captive and prisoner by choice, as art and because I could not run away, I RECEIVED everything and everyone; the argumentative, the gentle and it seemed an occasion to balance realities of war and peace, good and bad, right and wrong, evil and kind.

NIGHT: I didn't see night but knew it was there and did a lot of inner work on scared LITTLE LINDA; counseling and advising her, not waiting for mother and father or a prince in shining armor to come and unlock the door and get me out of there. (I was locked into the store.)

VICTORIES:

Thoughts (not sights) of fire, thieves, predators of all kinds came and I guess it was good charnel ground meditation and I did dial out by counting the numbers on the face of the phone and called a few friends for support in the nights, a victory.

I learned to cook a complicated soup, another victory (have no idea now what kind of stove it was.)

I learned how to prepare for senior citizenship and possible macular blindness, another victory.

I learned how to feel the love of friends who reached out with soup and visits, a victory.

I allowed myself to be a vehicle for the voyeurism of viewers, peeking at me from outside the window, 2 inches away from me, another victory.

I like practicing new skills but essentially as an artist, reaching outside of the 200 year old traditions that are male invested.

I like to use art as a forum and place to practice receptivity by feigning a handicap (I was also doing this because I had been working as a caregiver and my cancer-ridden terminal client said to me one day, "This cancer isn't going to kill me, the service is!"), and I thought, I'd better practice receiving NOW before it's too late.

AFTER A WEEK:

Equilibrium is off after 2 days, and after seven I have sea legs. Taking away the blindfold is like giving my brain a laser dose of light. I have wobbly legs, stumble, can't walk, nausea, feel like an escaped prisoner. Vow to come out of these things more gently and more professionally next time, like maybe with a doctor's guidance because this crazy way of throwing my body into trauma via performance isn't working for me anymore. I WILL DO ANYTHING TO EXPERIENCE THE SELF, but as I age I wonder if this vow will hold true?

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14. PAPER GIVEN AT THE ART THERAPIST CONFERENCE IN OHIO

PAPER GIVEN AT THE ART THERAPY GATHERING IN OHIO

It is a pleasure to be here with you and as you know I am a performance artist but I will address the concept of forgiveness and then show you videos of my work demonstrating the ways I use my own life issues as fodder and material for my art transformations. Thank you.

It is never too late. We are all walking wounded. Life wounds us, people wound us our family dynamic wounds us. These wounds are sent into the subconscious and with therapy, prayer and 908343281439-8 other techniques, they are brought to the surface and analyzed and eventually healed. Each person has their own technique. When there is a trauma, we are triggered and the old wounds appear.

With our parents, unless there is a conscious and heart-felt program of looking at and healing the wounds as a family at home while growing up, the surgical scars begin to be remembered and there is great reaction like anger, pain and rage, when the pot gets stirred by traumas. Divorce and death ARE change and unsettle the equilibrium and these old "triggers" emerge. There is often a PAYBACK because things that were never settled or ways of relating that were painful get to become cards in the playing deck....He did this, he said this, she, we never, he never, we always, this happened in 19.... etc. And when there is a chance to retaliate, we do it...that is natural....butttttttttt, it is also a chance to unearth the past and to deal with it in a new way.

The hurt of a current and present situation dredges up the whole mess and deep and unforgiven or UNCOMMUNICATED OR UNHEALED old patterns are remembered.

We are ALLLLLLLLLLLL walking timberboxes for sure, waiting for a match. Divorce is a match, death is a match, and unless the match is extinguished, the suffering of the present thing gets complicated with old hurts. Our memories of 30 years ago come to the surface and we hurt 3209874023894 times more now because of these complications. We wanted THE OTHER PEOPLE TO CHANGE THEN..... AND NOW we want them to change. THEY WONT! Only we individually can and HOW is the question for each of us to find This is where it is never too late comes in...If we are reared to suffer, we can change that pattern and choose more positive ways of living the rest of our lives; if we are raised to complain or to be dictated to or a myriad of other patterns that are not healthy, there is always a chance for healing.

Each person chooses their own path of healing. But we have to remember that WE ARE ADDICTED TO THE PATTERN WE LEARNED AS CHILDREN and the person we want things from is also ADDICTED TO THEIR PATTERN that they think is just FINE!

BREAKING ADDICTION to the past pattern is a tedious, thankless job but a necessary one. And we can't expect anyone else to break theirs..... Win-win communication/everything is my wish for all of US here at this conference...yes US.

Our own parents did the best they could but we can't lag behind and not upgrade our ways of communicating and loving when traumatic things happen because that is a waste of time and talent. If money was the families drug of choice then WHAT IS OUR NEW METHADONE? How do we find people, places and group therapies to help us out of our own hell-holes? How do we

accountability and acts of crediting the source of those works and ideas of yours that are "re-inspirations", or mirrors of someone else's art.

Why am I so insistent? First of all because you are studying in China and most likely will reference other artists from there; artists from the past and present, because that is how we learn and how we begin coming to our own internal art language and personal practice. The name of the game is: copying. Copy until you are YOU.

But what you have to remember about China is that they not only acknowledge and honor their families and ancestors but they credit their art lineage, gurus and expect all artists to know how to do that, when to do that, why to do that and where to do that. Simply put, your teachers, and those other artists who have influenced your work, need to be respected and "bowed to" if not physically (a joke) but internally and absolutely always mentioned when your work is talked about by you or the media.

Don't forget this. Because I learned the hard way and never gave credit and didn't know that I should have done that, I was artistically snubbed; uninvited to group shows; refused retrospectives; and seemed to be avoided at openings. I ranted, raved and wondered why I was being persecuted, but then again, aren't all artists persecuted? Thinking that, I let it go and isolated myself, but a friend let me in on the honor thy mentors secret and then things changed for me and my process. It seems that my hubris had addicted me to the "I am a genius artist" paradigm and I foolishly thought that anything I did, said, made, sold, traded or wrote about was GOLD from the heavenly realms of MY OWN SUPERCONSCIOUS!

Sure my work was divinely inspired as is all creation, but I snubbed past human sources and didn't want to admit that I had seen, literally copied and lifted my goodies from the history of art and I must confess, ideationally ripped off my past and fellow travelers on this fabulous path of ecstasy and inflated ego mongering.

S, maybe you will have a chance to get this right, early, and to make it even more speedy I will list the mean-spirited labels I accrued way back when I was without a clue that respect is essential to success! So plug your ears, close your eyes and here we go!

I was called a: performance pirate source avoider intellectual art property thief devoid of devotion doppelganger intuitive monster identity doubler i'm the best, bully genius grafter cloned clown suck-up sickophant self aggrandizer ego maniac chest inflater grand stander sloppy footnoter pretty plagerizer Yes. I was pretty then and thought that it was enough to make good art but maybe it was even better to be a great body. I thought my dazzling teeth and distressed clothes, soft-voiced sufferings and endurance-like dedication to my art was my ticket home, but my head was sadly in the sand. I was pretty but ripping off my mentors!

How does my story relate to you? You, a daughter of the 21st century? You are living at a time when the internet, and apps and you tube and media give you everything for free and you can take/appropriate/re-cycle/copy/control/delete/enter and shift any and every thought, word and deed whenever you want or need. No charge, no accountability!

So, of course, you would never, ever even think of thanking the past or present "influence". You are too quick for that, not trained to do that, and this current age of ONE INFORMATION has 100th monkeyed you into ONE.

In this mind/world, no credit is even considered or due! So in some sense you are sinless and free and everything is maybe un-rippoffable? I would appreciate your thoughts on this. But remember, you are in China and you have to follow their traditions and probably there are a few

elder-artists here in America, who would appreciate being creditedso respect, renown and reward artists whose heads you are aesthetically sitting on, standing on and dancing on!!!!

Why? Because we are now in our 70's, 80's, 90's, 100's and although we are still and will always "work", it is seldom seen, so we trace our gratitude back to INVISIBLE sources. That is our job and we have time, diminished body-energy and the impending invite of the Final Performance to spur us on to bowing before THE ONLY GENIUS WHO EVER IS, WAS AND WILL BE!!!!

S, sorry for waxing escatological with you but just wanted to pass on some of my crone stuff. Always footnote the masters! And make sure you bring me back tons of Chinese incense!!!!

**Hugs and applauding your fabulousness,
Aunt O**

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16. FROM A THERAPIST'S FILE: LINDA MARY MONTANO

FROM A THERAPIST'S FILE, LINDA MARY MONTANO 2000

VISIT 72: Subject of Therapy: client continues to explore disappointment over loss of job.

Notes:

Was it downsizing or the administrators' violation of his first amendmnet rights that cost him his creative writing job? Or was it the fate of all ex-hippie, liberal professors teaching on tenure tracts? Weren't all of them accused of presenting content too sincerely, too expressively, too emotionally, too transgressively, too non-politically correct? Whatever it was, it just never worked and S. is really suffering.

Summary of Session 72: I encouraged S to focus on his inherent creativity so he could build up his confidence which is lacking right now. Told him to re-join the gym. He's clinically depressed and the job loss is exacerbating it. Am considering giving him Paxil. Built him up with suggestions that he's too talented for that old job anyway. And tell him the atmosphere there is toxic to his freedom. I also try distracting him by discussing my issues but it's on his time and his money. We talk about my insurance policies and my fees. Maybe this will dislodge him from his topic and incite some anger which might unseat his self-inflicted hostility. We'll see next week.

VISIT 73: Subject of Therapy: Anger has moved his focus from I'm wrong to they're wrong.

Notes:

Most parents, especially from the part of the country where he's teaching don't want their kids using their 5 cents a minute phone cards to call them Sunday nights with reports of their intellectual excursions into the taboo. And administrators don't want the donors and alumni to call them Sunday afternoons using their MCI free long distance service, to read irate letters from disaffected parents of students who had reported the "transgressive" course material to said parents.

The name of the academic game was and still is: teach, but keep the students, colleagues, parents, administrators, alumni and donors very, very happy.

Summary of Session 73:

People pleasing has become a pattern but the artist in S made another choice: to please himself and that sometimes included a few others. We begin talking about his family structure, his need to be the maverick artist, need also to be the peacemaker. He's incredibly open to looking at it analytically this week. Anger at me has given him some space to see differently.

Visit 74: Subject of Therapy: Exploration of the shadow.

Notes: Although he scored well with some students and some colleagues, he flunked the other tests and upset the academic applecart wherever he went. He was a big star, a bad boy, a scrapper, an upsetter. In retrospect he realized that he should have known better, should have known that they didn't want the bad boy to be a perennial bad boy; that bad boys are great for one lecture, for one workshop, for a one day visit, not for a seven year or permanent relationship with the university family.

Summary of Session 74:

I suggest that he start taking responsibility for that bad boy artist persona, the shadow, the dark side. His

narcissism is infuriating. Never having had to compromise or be anything but an intuitive, he's impossible to work with sometimes. Self absorption is essential to his vocation but he must know when to stop! His genius really tires me. Didn't he know that Big Daddy University would demand obedience? Glad today is over. His body language is offensive!

Visit 75: Subject of Therapy: Content in the academy/content and the academy.

Notes: His marriage to the university was soon to end. Divorce was imminent. The last assignment was too close to comfort and would be the reason for his termination. That's what surprised him. The other creative writing research projects he gave his students were on equally reality-based topics: gender, food, death, origins, Tantra...and these assignments stirred neither the ire of the parents or administrators. In fact, a bound collection of their essays that they donated to the library were deemed valuable explanations of popular culture, theory and personal memory. Taboo was OK if it sounded smart or was disguised in academize.

Summary of Session 75:

We discussed how lucky he was to be able to address the verboten without censure. His intimacy issues are decidedly more informed and radical than the hypocritical university system which defines taboo when it is seen as research. We talk about paradox, and pharaseism. We talk about paradox and hypocrisy. I enjoyed today's session. It felt like a seminar and I mention that to him. He encourages me to continue talking this way because it helps him with his communication blocks. Here he can think aloud, talk, express himself in a safe space without the usual shyness around the opposite sex. I'm beginning to counter-transfer. Have to talk to my boss about this.

VISIT 76: Subject of Therapy: Client explores childhood and cultural influences.

Notes: Having passed the test of taboo and the academy, he moved onto other assignments: food and memory, trauma and memory, ecofeminism and memory and other important topics.... successfully handled. All of them got A's. And then he touched his nemesis, DEATH! It was only natural that he would choose death as a topic, having grown up in two countries, India and America, a child of a mixed marriage. All of his summers were spent in north India, just outside Benares where he visited his father's country palace and lived most of the time at his teacher's ashrama practicing meditation, silence, chanting, Vedanta and Ayurvedic medicine. His guru would take all of the boys to Benares once a week so that they could meditate at the ghats all night. Death and liberation were close friends, not strangers and his teacher insisted that he watch cremations, 100 or so a day, enough to see, enough to learn from. The same number the next day and this had been going on for centuries. Included in his sadhana or spiritual practice was a boat ride down the Ganges river, past the ghats which were many, not one...a ride which included maneuvering between floating bodies, body parts, bloated limbs. So at an early age he saw things reserved only for search and rescue salvage drivers excavating planes downed in the Pacific Ocean. Despite making him hard and bitter, all of his early training and meditation made him comfortable and conversant with death so when he returned to America to work, these experiences definitely informed his philosophy, his syllabus and his university assignments. He was beyond the fear of it all and wanted to share that attitude with his students.

Summary of Session 76:

Today I should have paid HIM! I learned so much. That's one of the perks of being a therapist. Often it's more instructive and healing for the therapist than for the client. Maybe not! Does anybody else know this secret? All I know is that I learned about Benares today.

VISIT 77: Summary of Therapy: Creativity/healing/enlightenment.

Notes:

He talks about being an American also and in this country we are comfortable, conversant and open with sexuality, but not with death. Sex is everywhere and available to anyone with chat room access, or with \$3.00 for a 900 number one minute call. It is as easy to see and gobble up as candy. As a child of mixed cultures he eventually saw that neither death or sex were taboo rather they are tantalizing curiosities and mental meals that need to be digested, cooked, tasted and eliminated. That's how non-attachment was born. Do it all, see it all, get addicted, then get bored by it all so eventually you are left with emptiness and real space for Tantric intimacy. For those not wanting to have a hands-on experience, that is for the less experiential and phenomenologically inclined, creative writing could serve as another path and lessons would then be learned from the imagination. He taught that the taboo didn't have to be really experienced but if written about everything could be cleared and energy was then shifted. No muss, no fuss, no addiction, and when free of lust and desire, he said that he could feel an empty spaciousness, similar to what he felt when he meditated.

Summary of Session 77:

It's become too chatty; is it because we are talking about such private subjects? He must be lonely because he's not wanting to leave the office and he's working to impress me with his theories, his genius but I feel deep down that he is just touching the surface. I smell some core issues and painful traumas that he won't touch with a ten foot pole. So glad the seminar phase of this therapy with him is over and we are beginning to work hard and deep again. I'm drained but touched by his metamorphosis.

VISIT 78: Subject of Therapy: Motive behind his death assignment.

Notes:

That's the gift that he wanted to pass onto his students, meditative mind. And to reach it he discussed interior paths and the art of writing as one of the many valuable ways to achieve pure mind. On Jan 18 he gave the assignment, "Write a 12 page essay on the topic, DEATH AND MEMORY. The students looked stunned even though they had studied the topic extensively in his class because he had arranged for:

- .a class trip to the local morgue
- .a lecture by a pathologist
- .viewing of morgue bodies
- .Elizabeth Kubler Ross movies plus a workshop with her
- .visits to a near-by Hospice
- .viewing of Schindler's list
- .tour of a funeral parlor
- .4 days volunteering in a nursing home
- .video of cremations in Benares India
- .a visit from a person with AIDS
- .attendee at a wake and a funeral.....

After this research, it was time for his students to write, theorize, remember and make art of it all. And he visibly shook when he told me this part of the story because when they put their papers on the class web page and after the public readings at the Cyber Cafe, he was asked to see, in this order,

the assistant chair

the chair

the dean

the lawyer to the president

and the president himself..

And to each of them he explained his syllabus, his teaching philosophy, his reasoning for the assignment and his understanding of consequences. The bottom line was, (when he told me this he was really crying), he was told that he was not to be trusted with the minds of university students. That's how he ended up in this regression.

Summary of Session 78:

As his therapist, I insisted that he see his interest in death as undiagnosed slippage! That is, as a child, he was not able to feel or express rage, anger, disappointment or hostility. Children naturally want to be conversant with those big feelings and need guidance with their expression. He's just learning that and has translated the natural urge to be good and bad into aesthetic infantilizations. Our sessions are maturing him emotionally and I am able to explain to him that he needs to get to the core feelings to avoid the pitfalls of unconscious victimhood and outsider status. This way he can choose his course and his urges won't so readily get displaced into a career that has "death" as an agenda (surgeon, wrestler, acupuncturist, therapist, grief counsellor) without knowing why he is pulled in that direction. I congratulated him for having controlled his urge to "die" by displacing the urge into his art. But I didn't let him off the hook too easily and for the last 10 minutes of the session, we did some powerful discharging of early memories and hurts and rages. Of course it re-stimulated all of my stuff and I went home and cried in the bathtub.

VISIT 79: Subject of the Session: Can you go home again?

Notes: So here he is, he went home to his mom. Tenureless, jobless, clueless. His dad had died in India and his body was cremated on the banks of the Ganges ten years ago. So now it was 90 year old mom and S. He slithered back into his old home town, hoping nobody would notice him... clueless, downsized, humiliated and exiled.

His new job description was beyond manageable:

- .grocery shopping
- .chauffeur

.errand boy
.house cleaner
.medication dispenser
.chef
.returner of unwanted objects that mom bought on a whim
.funeral attender since all of moms friends were passing on so fast that every other day they attended a wake and funeral at the place up the street from her home.

Summary of Session 79:

I've overstepped my bounds. Told him you can't go home again. Bad therapy. Irresponsible of me. What happened today? I said goodbye. The occupational hazard of this job is falling in love. I'VE DONE IT!!!!!!
Therapy ends.

Note:

I received a card from him six months later. He says that the metamorphosis from being a professor to becoming a hidden life-artist got easier and easier. Differences were blurring and although he still went to India every summer to his guru's ashrama, and stayed with his father's relatives, he began seeing a larger plan. What he saw was that he didn't need the corporate world to define his life anymore, he didn't need the money, the prestige, the power. After the twentieth funeral that he attended with his mom, after the 50th returned pocketbook to KMART, after the 100th bag of microwave popcorn eaten during Wheel of Fortune TV time with her at night, life began blurring into one indistinguishable mass of mystery and inner smile.

He told me that when he delivered his mom's tax papers to her CPA yesterday, he got the message that he would have to deal with money next.

Maybe he will call me, come for therapy and we can talk!!!!!!! I hope so.

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17. LIST OF WHAT WE ARE AS ARTISTS

LET'S ADMIT IT SOME OF US ARE ARTISTS OF ART AND OTHER ARE LIFEISTS OR ARTISTS OF LIFE BUT WE ALL ARE SOME OF THESE:

REPETITION REPEATERS

SYSTEM CREATORS

ANXIETY REFRAMERS

O-CDERS

COMMUNITY BONDERS

LIFECRISIS FIXERS

TRUTH KEEPERS

MIGHTY FOCUSERS

SYMBOL SEEKERS

MYSTICAL SCHMOOZERS

SCAM SMELLERS

WORSHIP LOVERS

CHARMING HYPNOTIZERS

TRAUMA RE-ORGANIZERS

PURIFICATION ENACTERS

HOLY HAZERS

CONSCIOUS PERFORMERS

ECSTASY TRANCERS

SPIRITUAL MINISTERS

RIGHT BRAIN ADDICTORS

SECURITY STRUCTURERS

BODY MORPHERS

ENERGY NEUTRALIZERS

DEPRESSION PREVENTERS

ZEALOUS PASTORS

ROBOTIC REPEATERS

**SOCIAL BONDERS
COMPULSIVE ENACTERS
MORAL RESTRAINERS
DEMON EVICTORS
DEATH DE-CONFIGURERS**

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18. YOU KNOW YOU ARE A PERFORMANCE ARTIST IF.....

YOU KNOW YOU'RE A PERFORMANCE ARTIST IF.....

- 1. You dress like an angel, astronaut, nurse etc and sing/dance to Jackie Gleason music at your local mall for no apparent reason.**
- 2. You take your front dental plate out at your 30th class reunion and sing My Funny Valentine with the person you liked in the first grade.**
- 3. You gather 1008 identical toasters, spas, outdoor barbeques of metal garages and place them on your front lawn for a week and then distribute them to the first 1008 practitioners of Tantra.**
- 4. You take a plane to a city you've never visited, choose a departure gate, wave and cry uncontrollably as passengers leave for their plane. Crying continues until you exit the building.**
- 5. You bring chocolate syrup, honey or yogurt to your bathroom and pour it over yourself while trying to straighten out an HMO claim on the phone.**
- 6. You dress your pets, your children and partner in identical clothing every Wednesday.**
- 7. You sleep in a coffin that you have made in order to face your fear of dying.**
- 8. You feign loss of control of limbs, words or bodily functions while watching TV (choose any program) alone on a Saturday night.**
- 9. You webcast daily 15 minutes every detail of your finances and after a month of disclosures you take an email poll to determine if you should tithe/adopt/support a church, child, senior citizen, third world country, Hospice, unemployed family, artist, teenager or yourself.**
- 10. You voluntarily retire, give yourself the gift of time and take a vow of inner silence.**

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19. THE PERFORMANCE OF EVERYDAY LIFE

PERFORMANCE OF EVERYDAY LIFE

With respect for my living art lineage and those who inspired me, I refrain from mentioning the 3878947982 artists' names because this always indicates exclusion and bad feelings. But please know that I participate, as a practicing performance artist, in a still lively and co-collaborated trend, journey, history and google-able phenomena which allows us to offer our personal lives as material/memoir for our art. Why we made/ make an art of everyday life:

NUMBER 1: MONEY

Live artists often don't have to buy art materials because their post traumatic stresses, unrequited loves, daughters' first birthday parties, eating disorders, tango dancing and chronic illnesses are already there waiting, FREE; waiting for low budget transformation and voice.

Why we made/ make an art of everyday life:

NUMBER 2: TIME

Life/art artists love to mold time, endure in time, play with time, structure time, repeat time, eliminate time, silence time treating it as if it were steel, paint, wood, stone..... Why we made/ make an art of everyday life:

NUMBER 3: PERMISSION

Living art gives permission for anything, everyone, everything and everybody to be used as art. This permission of inclusion, headily practiced without boundaries or ethical concerns until the 90's, allowed for a 30-year play land of intelligent limitlessness and ecstatic trance. Why we made/ make an art of everyday life.

Number 4: Permission

We, life/artists, antennenned ourselves and through atmospheric, vibrational frequencies,

picked up ideas (1950-1990) already conversantly fertile. Ideas from India, Japan, Asia, from feminism, from the civil rights movement, from the drug culture, from musicians and we rocked our way into a brave new world, alongside these co-rocking practitioners. Why we made/ make an art of everyday life.

NUMBER 5: MYSTICISM

We, living artists, really believed that we were altering our consciousness by altering our bodies, our faces, our identities, our names, our personas, our genders, our beliefs and our everyday lives. And this felt sacred, non-commodifi-able, and verging on the mystical. Like early believers, freely we shared photo images, ideas, food, gig information, studios, money, and kudos...without thought of litigiousness, verification of copyright, plagiarism issues or bitter intellectual property battling. Our grandfathers walked to school 14 miles shoeless in the snow, as the story goes. We wax poetic as well about our holy and happy early living art years. Why we made/ make an art of everyday life.

NUMBER 6:TEACHING

Many of us became so conversant with the genre, with the history, with the technology of dissemination (documentation via video , audio), that we accepted the charter and invitation to teach by example, by writing but also in academia where we learned how to muzzle our instincts for wildness so we could ethically direct other artists in progress(students).Guided by experience and tenure denials, some of us were able to carefully monitor our artist friends' enthusiasms and we directed them toward a more guarded/bounded living art expression.

Why we made/ make an art of everyday life.

NUMBER 7:DEATH

Now, trained to be artists of all of life, some of us segue trembling toward our most dramatic performance, our death. Now, accustomed to recycling our every insult, every illness, every disappointment, every marriage, every divorce, every death of parents, every hot flash, every betrayal, every beauty, every truth. We have every credential needed to make artfully sacred our last, documented, youtubed eternal and soft final breath. LINDA MARY MONTANO

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20. LINDA MARY MONTANO AND THE HISTORY OF HER WORK WITH PERSONA

LINDA MARY MONTANO & THE HISTORY OF HER WORK WITH PERSONA

Probably my interest in being another started at age 6 when I acted out as THE VIRGIN MARY, giving out Necco wafers as substitutes for Holy Communion to neighbor friends. I insisted they kneel, and as the chief officiant, I most likely really wanted to be a male-priest but alas was born a woman so I took the next best option and became Jesus's Mother!

But artistically and formally, I began a formal persona practice in 1976 when I sat in front of a video camera (VHS) and talked to it as 7 different fictional people, wanting to be someone other than myself having just survived a painful divorce and a move to a differnt city in California. I called this work CREATIVE SCHIZOPHRENIA because it allowed me to get out of me and into another, albeit all of the personas were successful and charming and smart and totally fabulous. I wans't feeling fabulous or any of those things. I called the video LEARNING TO TALK, since conversing was never my strong suite and schmoozing a verboten and disdained/harshly judged absurdity! So I tlaked, let other voices make me a new me and I healed via my art!

Although I do not embrace past lives as a personal option, I was once interviewed by a critic and I answered the questions in the voice of one of my personas, THE FRENCH POET. The

experience was quite shattering because I had flashbacks, as her, and remembered living in France during a war, so maybe I was really being the old/past/reincarnated me when I took on the voices of the other 6 "people" in my tape: the nun, country western singer, karate black belt, doctor, jazz singer, hula dancer?

Over the years I performed as these fictional "people" many times and then 30 years later I began performing as LIVE PEOPLE; specifically Bob Dylan, Paul McMahan, Hillary Clinton, Jill Johnston and Mother Teresa. On analysis I thought it strange that I needed a new alive or once living mentor and model to base my projected personality onto so that i could learn new lessons but it was obvious that I was getting closer to the real me because all of this practice was really about a deep spiritual journey to the answer of the spiritual question, WHO AM I? as articulated by my teacher and Guru, Shri Brahmananda Saraswati, founder of Ananda Ashram.

Psychologists deliver the message that we are the product of home, religion, culture, traumas, joys and proclivities. Neurologists posit that too much left brain action cements us into the world of matter and Jill Bolte Taylor who is a neurobiologist and suffered a left brained stroke, was catapulted into a right brained love ecstasy, reminding us that we are the product of our neurobiology and whatever brain quadrant we are accessing.

Conversely, theologians of both the East and West remind us that we are not the body and mind, and Christians say, "It is not I that lives, but Christ who lives in me." Hindu meditators get to this rapture of Christ Consciousness via focused attentional meditation.

My art has always been a map for my life and I know that I have to listen to what I am doing to find out what I am thinking. And I must say that I must be thinking that , "It is not I that lives but Christ who lives in me," because that is the logical next step in my progress of being first: Linda, then Linda as fictional others, then Linda as living/once alive others, to Linda as ONE LOVE.

I can't wait!!!

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21. THE STORY OF ARE YOU WELL

THE STORY OF "ARE YOU WELL?" Linda Mary Montano, Saugerties NY, 2015

I preach art is life and life is art and a few years ago I actually practiced it. Here is how my attempt to eliminate the boundaries between the two imploded on me, exposing and exploring

my theory . Notice how I didn't really pass the art/life test of seamless, pleasant, transparent union of the two. Here is the story: One afternoon I was standing on the front of the line at the Port of Authority, NYC, waiting to board the NY to Kingston Adirondack Trailways bus. Usually people are still in city mode and keep to themselves unless they have to go to the bathroom and then they might break silence and ask the person in front or back of them to watch their stuff. So when I heard a voice from way in back call out in a friendly and cute way, "Hello Linda, are you well?" I bolted, blanched, bleated and barfed a spontaneous spoken word intervention and answer from deep in my bowels and in not so good performance artist in action fashion, literally sounded, shouted and not so happily addressed the question with the following rude answer to the said female actress I hardly knew. It went like this: "Am I well? Am I well. What do you mean am I well. I have alzheimers (a fear); dementia (a fear); leaky gut (a fear); urinary incontinence (a fear)." And maybe I said more. I don't remember. And then I said, "Shelly, are you well?" I am forgetting what happened next because it was all so traumatic, the appearance of my performance artist persona off the stage, that is. And what is notable is that it was dementia-like of me to respond that way which totally complicates the entire scenario. Fabulous art/not so fabulous life.

Stuffing the event deep into my unanalyzed and therapeutically untreated back brain, it recently got triggered again. You see, Shelly was a few years ahead of herself using the are you well greeting because NOW, everybody is saying it or emailing their endings, "Be well. Or, hope you are well." I'm obviously not over the big, pulsing need to correct them when they say the "well" stuff but the worst part is that the performance artist is over it, but Linda the non performance artist is addressing the situation in a way that is completely embarrassing and out of order. The wreckage is much more personally damaging than my Port of authority slippage because NOW, I'm correcting friends, acquaintances and non-friends when the words are heard in my presence or written in emails. And it is not pretty. I don't know Linda the corrector as well as I do, Linda the performer and as an uncertified stop-wellness officer, I am becoming scary to myself and a persona non grata to those who might want to say Hi to me but are afraid that I might bark a correction.

And by the way Shelly, if I ever see you again, I will say, " Remember that day at the Port of Authority? I'm SO sorry. I was wrong, wrong, wrong!"

This is not good and it is taking me soon, I promise, to a therapist who I hope will help me trace the trigger to the source. Ooopps, trigger is a bad word too!! But meanwhile, (notice the word mean), I went to my Facebook community and email community and posed the question.

I am collecting 1-2 sentence responses that you FB me to my question, "Why r people saying "ARE U WELL when they greet each other?" And why do they end emails, "Be well. Hope you are well!!" Will include your responses in an essay. Thanks, Linda

Here are their answers:

SUZANNE HELLMUTH: Well,well,well I had to find the etymology. The word comes from Latin vele to wish, & earlier proto-Indo-European that evolved to Germanic, old English, Welsh having double meanings of good/fair/kind/health & related meanings to that group AND drawing/springing forth as water from a spring... tears from the eyes.

Would a spring or well of water be good as in a fulfillment of wish --thus a water source or a well --& that water-wish word came to also mean for good/fair/kind/healthy...? Or, having water...is well, is source of well-being-- ? Etc.

English have towns with Wells in their name for example, Turndote Wells, where there are natural springs. Wellington, etc.

But, really, what is wellness now?

[Margarat Nee](#) I blame Garrison Keillor for "be well" because he closes his poetry segments on the radio with it. I've never been greeted with "are you well" but it seems like a very clunky substitute for the usual "how's it goin'" "how ya doin'" etc.

(My complaint is that people shouldn't open with that unless they really want to know, otherwise dopes like me forget sometimes and answer the question)

[Mary Disney](#) good ? I wonder if people are trying to shorten their correspondence and at the same time heighten their meaning with the CAPS. I think people are saying in the emails when they sign off is that they hope their friend is doing all they can to be well. I often end my emails with "Bee well" because I am a beekeeper.

[Abina Manning](#) When I moved to the U.S. and people would ask me "Are you well?" I would answer them. Until I saw their eyes glaze over. smile emoticon.

[Margarat Nee](#) When I was in Ireland it took me awhile to understand that when when folks behind a shop/cafe counter asked "are you ok?" they meant did I want to buy/order something from them.

CAROL SACHAL I learned a long time ago, 50 years or more, NEVER to ask my Ukrainian Grandmother, Nanny, "How are you?" when I went to visit her each week, 3 times a week as required in my family. The reason: she would tell me: "This hoits, that hoits, oh my, the pain!" (hoits=hurts) If I didn't ask her, she wouldn't tell me and it was a much more uplifting visit, so I learned to not ask that question.

[Linda Mary Montano](#) im learning alot keep them coming.

[Eileen Kane](#) Here in Tucson, where lots of my neighbors are elderly, we don't ever ask that question!

[Victoria Singh](#) In New Zealand people tend to say "howzit goin?" no equivalent to "be well" springs to mind

[Mary Puddycat Collins](#) My friends and I started closing our letters with the Latin "Vale" - be well - that we learned in high school.

Tobe Carey Well...or when I ask my "older" friend how he is, he always answers, "Rotting away, thanks."

[Paul W McMahan](#) Humans need water to survive, even more than food but not air. so if you are well, you are also well and water of life flow thru you. if you are not a well you may be getting swampy so dig deeper in order to be well again! it's meta 4 4 minstrel psychical. i never met a 4 i didn't like.

Gene Loeb (Shinananda) I think when they ask " Are you well, " they are asking u to say to yourself, "Why, do I look like shit?"

[Lizbeth Rymland](#) (I cant find her response but I remember she said something like, forget it when it happens or maybe she was saying , it isn't worth the energy, getting upset about someone saying, "ARE YOU WELL?"

RICH BRANDES: Research reveals that travelers in Merry Olde England visiting pubs and taverns in unfamiliar villages might ask an establishment if they served a favorite dish known as Beef Wellington. The question "Are you serving any Beef **Wellington**?" was shortened to "Are You Beef **Wellington**?" and later to simply "Are You **Well ington**?"

As meat eating has become less popular the phrase "Are you well" has fallen out of favor.

CONCLUSION: Thanks to all of the participants, I'm cooled down. I promise I will never correct WELL again when it is said or written because I have found the source of my trigger in Eileen Kane's response: "**Here in Tucson, where lots of my neighbors are elderly, we don't ever ask that question!**"

And by the way Shelly, if I ever see you again, I will say, " Remember that day at the Port of Authority? I'm SO sorry. I was wrong, wrong, wrong!"

BYE,

Linda

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22. NOTES FROM ST FRANCIS HOUSE OF HOSPITALITY

NOTES FROM ST FRANCIS HOUSE NEW LONDON CONN: NOVEMBER 2015 LINDA MARY MONTANO

MY SPIRITUAL LIFE:

I AM IN MY 70'S AND HAVE BEEN SPIRITUALLY INFLUENCED BY MY TWO YEARS AS A MARYKNOLL NOVICE IN A CONVENT; MY 19 YEARS OF ADOPTION BY 2 AYURVEDIC JAIN DOCTORS, A HUSBAND AND WIFE FROM INDIA, THE MEHTAS; MY 40 YEARS STUDY OF YOGA; MY 2 YEARS LIVING IN INTENSE MEDITATION IN A ZEN MONASTERY; MY 7 YEARS STUDYING TIBETAN BUDDHISM; AND SINCE 1991 A RETURN TO A FLEDGING PRACTICE OF CATHOLICISM.

WHY THE RETURN? AFTER HAVING TAKEN A 7 YEAR JOB AS A COLLEGE PROFESSOR AND NOT KNOWING HOW TO BE A MODEL OF JUSTICE TO THEM, I STARTED RE-RESEARCHING THE CATHOLIC CHURCH... NOT THE RULES AND REGULATIONS BUT WAYS TO MODEL GOODNESS.

ANOTHER REASON FOR MY RETURN TO THE RELIGION OF MY BIRTH, IS BECAUSE I WAS TAKING CARE OF MY CONTEMPLATIVE FATHER FOR 7 YEARS AND AFTER THAT I REALLY CAME BACK WITH A NEW MIND, A NEW CURIOSITY, A NEW PERMISSION TO BE THE PRIEST THAT I ALWAYS WANTED TO BE.

AND YES , I MUST ADD, THAT AFTER ONE DAY AT THE "SCHOOL" OF ST FRANCIS HOUSE IN NEW LONDON, I LEAVE WITH THE MISSING SPIRITUAL PIECE OF THE PUZZLE.....TO FEED THE HUNGRY, INCLUDING MY (ANOREXIC) SELF.

MY ART LIFE:

MY ART HAS BEEN A METICULOUS MEDICINE AND CURE FOR MY ISSUES, CONCERNS, FEARS AND BROKEN-NESS. MY ART HAS HEALED ME BY PROVIDING ME AN AESTHETIC COMMUNITY CALLED, AUDIENCE. I DONT LIVE WITH THIS COMMUNITY BUT I GATHER THEM WHEN I NEED SUPPORT AND LOVE. THEY BECOME MY DOCTORS, THERAPISTS AND LOVERS: WITNESSES OF MY JOURNEY. MY JOB AS AN ARTIST IS TO CREATE A PERFORMANCE, A VIDEO, A BOOK, A CLASS WHICH INSPIRES THE VIEWER TO GIVE ME ATTENTION AND IN THE EXCHANGE, I GIVE THE AUDIENCE MY ART AND THEN THEY LOVE ME; AND THEN I LEARN TO LOVE ME; AND THEN I CAN LIVE WITHOUT THE AUDIENCE BECAUSE THE DOOR TO THE HEART CHAPEL OF LOVE HAS BEEN OPENED; AND THEN AND NOW, I CAN BEGIN TO STUDY LOVE ITSELF.

SO THE WORK HAD GROWN OVER 50 YEARS FROM:

1. MY PAIN
2. AUDIENCE VIEWING MY PAIN
3. MY BEING SUPPORTED BY THE AUDIENCE'S SUPPORT AND WITNESSING
4. MY GROWTH INTO FINDING WAYS TO PRACTICE COMPASSION AND SHARE THAT WITH OTHERS.
5. GRADUATING FROM ART AND LIFE ITSELF AND INSTEAD OF ASKING PEOPLE TO WITNESS ME BEING CREATIVE OR FUNNY OR INSPIRING, I HAVE EVOLVED TO MY CURRENT PERFORMANCE TITLED: *MEET A BLACK MADONNA* WHICH HAPPENS IN MY HOME, *THE TRANSFIGURATION HOSPITAL AND CHAPEL*. IT LOOKS SOMETHING LIKE THIS:
PEOPLE COME AND LAY ON THE FLOOR WITH ME IN FRONT OF MARY AND WE LOVE HER AND IN THAT PRACTICE, WE HEAL TOGETHER. IT HAS STOPPED BEING ABOUT ME.

EVENTUALLY AND WITH PRAYER, I HOPE TO INCORPORATE SHARING A MEAL WITH MY VISITING GUESTS VIA ST FRANCIS HOUSE'S MENTORSHIP AND EXAMPLE.

MY CHRIST CONSCIOUSNESS

IN THE 90'S, I MET THE FOUNDER OF CENTERING PRAYER, FATHER THOMAS KEATING, AT ONE OF HIS LECTURES. HE GRANTED INTERVIEWS TO US AND IN OUR MEETING, I TOLD HIM THAT I HAD WRITTEN A BOOK TITLED , *ART IN EVERYDAY LIFE*. HIS RESPONSE WAS SLOW, SONOROUS, NON-JUDGMENTAL AND IN A LIMINAL/ LISTENING VOICE HE SAID SOMETHING LIKE THIS: " WHY NOT TITLE IT *GOD IN EVERYDAY LIFE*?"

I WENT SILENT AND BLANK AT THAT TIME. AND YET I FIND MYSELF SLIDING SLOWLY AND SWEETLY TOWARD HIS SUGGESTION.....LETTING ART DETHRONE ITSELF AND TRADING IT IN FOR THE DIVINE COMEDY, NOT MINE.

MAYBE A SNACK WILL BE INCLUDED!!

ST FRANCIS HOUSE, 2015

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23. OPENING REMARKS WISCONSIN 2015

STATEMENT :MONTANO'S THEORY OF ART/LIFE

"When I began, a performance artist was someone who had permission to explore dreams, fantasies, nightmares, traumas, illness, food, nothing from the culture or everything from the culture. (We) felt extremely comfortable not knowing anything and not being able to do anything, but to go into the liminal world of dream, imagination, and luminosity. I work extremely autobiographically. If I have something wrong with me, I make a video or a performance. If I have something right... with me, I make a video or a performance or write a book. Need completely drives me. I read about the neuro-plasticity of the brain and the research being done on creativity and meditation and the ability for a creative mind to fix things. I am fascinated with the miraculous powers of the brain and art to heal, to mend the broken. My art also celebrates the ecstatic. My process is to work. Art is my job, and it's also how I make a living."

OPENING REMARKS: UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN MADISON 2015

It is with honest joy and excitement that I return to the University of Wisconsin, Madison, the 1966-1969 scene of my chicken art-life.

Almost 5 decades ago, I came here fresh from an MA sculpture program held in a Medici Villa in Florence Italy where I acted as if I were a "sacred" artist, shipping home my medievalist inspired copper and wood crucifixes, inspired by my having been a nun for two years in the early 60's and continuing this tradition of anonymity and sincere, traditional representation of my then beliefs.

GRAD SCHOOL IN MADISON

Madison changed all of that need to be holy to an attitude of academic inquiry, curiosity and intrigue about non-representational minimal art which the art world was practicing at the time. The magnificent, megastructures which were built, conceived and brandished proudly by the swarthy and large knuckled men grads of the sculpture department whetted my desire to learn and explore my past Roman Catholic beliefs in a new way, but only after I visited the chickens at the agricultural school here on campus. These visits had nothing to do with art, everything to do with life and my sanity, security and inspiration in this almost male only department which adhered to the then maxim that form alone was art. Not just form but big,

huge, humongous form. In fact, you had to have extra testosterone to face these male sculpture grads. So I went to the chickens to find some. The chickens and their sounds, their color, their uniformity, their unique self-referential spirit of courageous independence mentored in me a courage to be, a courage to not need, a courage to be content with not having been domesticated. Chickens who symbolically serve as a messenger of the Underworld, screeching out warnings in danger, and calling out for the souls of the fallen in battle, never need hugs or baths or massages or booties in winter or cute play toys or extra treats or days at a spa or obedience training, or chicken beds. These Madison chickens were teaching me art and survival skills that I found fascinating and useful. Were they so great because they were once dinosaurs? Wikipedia told me that Palaeontologists have long accepted that the Tyrannosaurus Rex, evolved into the modern-day chicken and this rumor has been given scientific backing with the discovery of some pre-historic collagen which they found in a 68 million year old T-Rex's thighbone. This collagen-protein is responsible for giving skin its elasticity and bony Chicken wings their structure. These Madison once dinosaurs, these miniature T-REXES, called to me and prepared me for the ride of my art-life.

THE SCENE AT UW MADISON : 1966-69

Back then in 1966, I was lucky enough to have 3 cowmen not cowboy type professors(Ernie Moll, Richard Artswagger and) who actually did wear cowboy boots and swaggered in choreographed unison into my off campus studio one spring day and I think it was Ernie who said, "Montano, what are you going to do for your MFA show?" Now I know that it was a channeled divine intervanted word of wisdom coming from my 25 year old lips because I said, "Chickens, I'm showing chickens for my MFA show." This answer came from a deeply intuitive well spring lodged in my unconscious or maybe I was imitating my dad and his story about the time his mother wouldn't let him go to the movies and he put chickens in her kitchen as a response. Of course! All artists want to please Mom and Dad and he had been Chicken Man, I was being Chicken Woman, an insight that came to me some 20 years later.

THE 1969 CHICKEN SHOW

So instead of making large welded metal non representational objects, instead of vacuum forming plastic half domes, instead of polyester resining life size mannequins of myself, Chickens it was for my final show. Lots of variations on chickens, chicken sounds broadcasting from a loud speaker on my car; chickens answering on my phone answering machine; large hand-tinted portraits of chickens from the ag building on the walls across from the cages; and on the roof of the then new art building, I placed 3- 4x8 minimal art looking "sculptures " of wood and chicken wire which became the homes of 9 chickens during the duration of the MFA show. Each night I changed the housing situation and some times there were 3 in each cage, sometimes 6 in cage 2 and 3 in cage 3; or 4 in cage 1, 2 in cage 2 and 3 in cage 3. It was perfect. The cages satisfied the then male component and need for structure, repetition and maga-size; and the live chickens satisfied my right brain need for honoring life.

TRANSFORMATION

What was my reward? Not only an MFA but a belief in my personal process and the ability for art to become whatever it needed to be as long as it was presented in a way that alchemized and transformed time, space and matter ecstatically. Plus, there was a bigger prize because the night of the opening I went to the then ART BAR and sided up to the side of those 3 sculpture professor giant cowboys and heard one or maybe all three of them say, "Hey Montano, want a beer?" a statement I treasure as much as the degree. I had feathered my nest and clucked my way home.

CHICKENS AND ARTISTS

Chickens are like artists :

1. They have a high level of specialized knowledge because they:

Humbly eat corn with focus. We artists make art with focus, consistency and creativity everyday.

- 2. They are one -pointedly task oriented. And we artists will stay up all hours of day and night to complete an art project, working the muscle of our talent, just the way Chickens work the muscle of their persistent need to satisfy their hunger..**
- 3. Chickens are authentically natural, normal and happy to be themselves. So are we artists. We express our moods, passions and beliefs with standards of excellence.**
- 4. Chickens are never embittered having been reduced from dinosaur status to jungle fowl status. We artists don't care if we don't get a gallery or receive the correct applause for our work. We still continue because our work is our medicine, our healing, our vocation, our calling, our joy.**
- 5. Chicken are humble yet proud, cocky yet not obnoxiously competitive. Just like us artists.**

AND NOW

And NOW More than ever, we need these gifts of Chicken strength and courage to address current affairs for as healers, we are called to respond to the catastrophes of now in a way that heals us and others. We are called to service, called to action, called to be focused, self assured, diligent and proactively hungry to love.

HOW I LOVE

I would like to share a section of a video I made which is about this impotence of NOW and how I made art about this complicated and scary life. Thank you very much. May we dinosaur our way with courage.

BAWK.

Linda Mary Montano , Saugerties NY, September 2015

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24.

THE PERFORMANCE OF SCHMOOZING: LINDA MARY MONTANO 2015

OUR FACES HAVE BEEN STOLEN BY OUR MACHINES. THE ONLY LIGHT WE SEE IS THAT GIVEN OFF BY OUR HAND HELD DEVICES, OUR COMPUTER SCREENS , OUR TELEVISIONS AND THE BULBS INSIDE OUR REFRIGERATORS.

WE SPEND HOURS EVERY DAY PRACTICING HOW TO DELETE, DISLIKE, HIDE, SHIFT, END, CONTROL. THIS IS DONE WITH OUR THUMBS AND FINGERS. AS A RESULT, OUR PUBLIC EYES , HANDS, MOUTHS AND LIPS ARE SEALED IN A NEW SHYNESS, NEVER MEETING OR TOUCHING OTHER HUMANS. AND WHEN WE DO MEET, OUR THUMBS AND FINGERS INVISIBLY MOVE TO SHIFT, CONTROL, ALT OR DELETE SO WE CAN HIDE OUR DISCOMFORT AND ROBOTTED INVISIBILITY. HELP!

STOP, DONT WORRY. THERE IS A CURE. IT IS CALLED THE PERFORMANCE OF SCHMOOZING. HOW TO DO IT?

LET'S MEET WITH OTHER HUMANS AND FOR AS LONG AS WE CAN STAND IT, GIVE FACE TIME, GIVE EYE TIME, GIVE CHAT IT UP TIME, GIVE LIP TIME, GIVE WARM HUG TIME, GIVE MAKE BELIEVE "I TOTALLY LOVE YOU TIME", GIVE YOU LOOK FABULOUS TIME, GIVE I HAVE A JOB AND RETROSPECTIVE AND BOOK DEAL FOR YOU TIME AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS. THIS IS ART AND NOT A 3-D PRINTED LIE. IT IS NOT A SIN. DONT WORRY. SMILE ALOT, GLAD - HAND ALOT. WHY? PERFORMING AS IF RESTORES THE WARM HAPPY HEART.

WE NEED EACH OTHER, AND THIS HEART, NOW MORE THAN EVER BEFORE.
LET'S SCHMOOZE.

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25. THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF LINDA MARY MONTANO: 2015

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF LINDA MARY MONTANO

PHASE 1: EARLY SPIRITUAL LIFE

When one is born into a traditional, established, well traveled religious tradition, it is a given that the children will follow their parents' practice. Usually without question. My father, a Zen-like Italian Catholic, reeked with devotional/mystical leanings and my mother, a converted to Catholicism former Episcopalian, was the "questioner", the ironic one, the combater, the one who internally "winked" at me when Catholic rules and regulations upset her wise common sense. I have them both inside me.

At 7, as a Catholic school student, I really drank the Kool Aid and stuffed all of my questions and the school/out of school abuses, into my subconscious, believing their teachings even though they were medieval in their ignorance, medieval in their sin-theories, medieval in their impulse to spread fear and guilt on/in our little minds, bodies and hearts. Suffering was the banner we held high and in fact, I made a pact while kneeling in front of the crucified Jesus hanging in our church one day and said, "Jesus, you are suffering so much. I want to be like you and the only way I know how to do that is to suffer. But I will suffer even more than you and be great, just like you. Jesus, help me to suffer." Real bright, no? The Resurrection and light and love did not go with the package and was never referred to, back in the 1940's. My contract with stupidity began at this early age and later on became the foundational cornerstone of both my art and life, instructing me incorrectly to embrace penitential endurance, self-inflicted isolation rituals and actions that taxed my body and mind. I learned a lot from that Crucifix and it has taken me 5 decades to unwind and unknot my farcical fascination with pain even though at night I was, at 9, experiencing "big, huge, gigantic" out of body sensations and time travel, neither of which could persuade me to trade guilt and fear for mystical pleasure. Suffering won out.

PHASE 2: THE CONVENT

At 19, unfixable PTSD and untreated trauma catapulted me into a Catholic convent of missionaries, a dream-land where we chanted, prayed talked only one hour a day, ate all meals in silence and lived like movie-star nuns. That is, we dressed like nuns and acted like holy nuns you would see in movies back then. Memories of my being a rodent in one of our Christmas plays stays with me and when I left with unexplored and unexpressed emotional illness, 80 pounds at best, my novice mistress said to me, "Sister Rose, leave and go be an actress!" But how did she get to stay since she walked, talked and looked exactly like Katherine Hepburn and had that throaty, sexy gravel voice, more like an international Marlena-beauty.

It was hard leaving, life was easy, simple, meals were on time and three times a day, duties determined by others, no insurance to pay or light bulbs to change, no furnaces to upgrade or dishwashers to empty, no men to flirt with or weekend dates to plan, no cars to drive or vehicle oil changes to keep track of, no children to feed or toilets to clean. But we did have a schedule:

- *sleep in the same dorm room
- *no walls, just curtains surrounding the beds
- *silence 23 hours a day
- *silent meals with 8 at a table

*all dishes washed with soapy water and rinsed AT TABLE
*lives of the saints read at all meals
*once a week penance service for breaking "rules" (talking, looking at another nun's face, walking too fast etc)
*Mass at 5am, then prayer, breakfast, school, work (could be toilets or kitchen)
*lunch, rest, work, class, supper, one hour "recreation" (sitting and sewing/medning our habits, another name for clothes we wore)
*wearing 4 layers of "clothes" including girdle, mens boxer shorts, heavy-heavy stockings, a dress that was a slip, another "dress", a tunic and veil plus a bra!
*all letters were read by our superiors: the ones we wrote and the ones we received
*mail once a moth if I remember correctly
But funny thing is, I LOVED IT! The rhythm and prayer and ease and am looking for a way to approximate that life now as I enter my 7th decade.
What I took away from that experience was a love of simple order and an understanding of simple human justice and a concern for compassion vs greed and a frugality that helped me understand the poor and the incarcerated and the misunderstood. The convent gave me eyes to see not just my pain but that of others.
Take me God, take me back to the nunnery?

PHASE 3: ART AS RELIGION

I left the covent bonkers. Instituionable. But in small town Saugerties, there was nobody to point me in the direction of help except for the family doctor who said to my mother, "Mill if she want's to go back to college, let her go." How wise he was! Dr McCaigh, thank you. And I will never know if Dad bribed them to take me back. I sensed that he did.
So back to the College of New Rochelle I went, having had one year there before the convent. But this time I found a new life via a nun-ally who opened the door to the sculpture room and gave me a key to wellness----
ART! Art became my medicine, my religion, my best friend, my veicle to finding ecstasy outside the House of Suffering inside my heart.

I will always thank Mother Mary Jane Robertshaw for generously sharing her love of creating beauty and truth. In fact, we both attended the plaque celebration together a few years ago at CNR; the \$250 plaque in front of the new wellness center said: THANK YOU MOTHER MARY JANE ROBERSHAW: ARTIST-TEACHER-FRIEND. It was from me.

PHASE 4: YOGA

After 28 years of dumbing down my psyche with Catholic guilt, the introduction to spiritual pleasure happened via my studies of Yoga and Hindu theology. Their chakra and inner light miracles have fueled and informed my spiritual life to this day. That is, eventhough I had embraced the religion of art after the convent, I was still confused and hurting. Doctor Ramamurti Mishra's Ashram was a haven and retreat center and place where I learned about/practiced the Chakras and like the convent, a place to pray but in Yogic and Hindu ecstasy and celebration, with arms wide open and clothing perfumed with Rose oil! Meditating with him and his students and watching him dissolve his body into light, right in front of my eyes, and being under his guidance and open-armed acceptance of my personality and gifts and weaknesses, was a gift that I will thank him for, forever. Like all students of great teachers, I thought that he saw only me but he "saw" everyone equally and with such DIVINE love, that our obscurations were burned in the furnace of his magnaminous heart. I publically and eternally applaud your mission on this earth and in the earthless blue sky, my teacher. Never forget me, Gurujii. And as one of your Sunyasin (Hindu priest), I remain Padmavati & Chinmayananda. May I finally grow INTO the names you gave me. May I make you proud.

PHASE 5: ZEN

Although Gurujii was my main teacher, I lived two years in a Zen community in upstate NY, following strict and sitting up straight and no nonsense Buddhist traditions. Living on the top of a hill-mountain in an A frame without water or heat or toilet, in the coldest winter yet, 1980, 1981, 1982 was a perfect scenario for my pain-pleasure psyche. It was Catholic enough (the cold) and ecstatic enough (8 hours of meditation a day.) Daido

Loori and Maezumi Roshi of LA were my teachers during this chapter of my spiritual explorations and I was ready to stay, become a Roshi-ette but got way-laid when I saw a photo of a Taiwan artist, Tehching Hsieh on a poster in NYC. He was looking for someone to be tied to for a year. I was looking for art to be as intense and strong and "enlightening" as sitting 8 hours a day, in silence. I wince to look back and discern this decision...did I do the right thing? If I didn't then I can't even let myself imagine walking around the Zen Mountain Monastery meditation room, right now, today, in robes and giving dharma talks. It won't happen, but instead, now I do go into galleries and bless people as Mother Theresa, so I guess everything's ok? I did right, right? Thankfully, Karate lessons with Lester Ingber and Hisashi Omichi have given me the gifts of solid ground and strength to be HERE and I know that my high Green Belt, keeps me strong in this walk, no matter what direction it takes, thanks to these two kind/wise warriors.

PHASE 6: KALU RIMPOCHE

Meeting Kalu Rimpoche intensified the journey. I was a shopper, a spiritual materialist, a spiritual mall-goer. So when a great Lama or teacher came to town, I was there! Front row, center. But I was pulled to this particular teacher because I had literally drawn Kalu Rimpoche when I was a teen-ager. I drew him on paper with a pencil. That is, my mother, an artist, had a book titled HOW TO DRAW HEADS and I chose, at 13, to draw, "CHINESE MAN." When I first saw Kalu Rimpoche at the Tibetan Monastery, I knew that I knew him, had "drawn" him into my life. Or he drew me? This pre-cognition is nothing new in Tibetan culture and I had read enough literature about pre-knowledge and past lives to understand that I was probably correct, that we did know each other. As a result, I was cemented to him, saw his "double" many times on the streets of NY, a double who looked at me and smiled. Taking refuge from him, I was "baptized" into Tibetan Buddhism and went to all of his teachings. One magical and wonderful day I met him for a personal/private interview in a small room at KTD. Of course he was not alone but surrounded by body guards and holy handlers who paced back and forth behind him, acting as indicators of his high spiritual status. Their seriousness didn't keep me from blubbery-crying, that ugly, snotty crying which included falling over from a sitting position in a wet mess and at the same time feeling a fierce and burning fire consuming my bodya fire he won for himself and shared with others, a fire that happened because of his penances performed for 13 years during his retreat in a light-tight cave in Tibet! He allowed maybe 3 minutes of what seemed to be a healing of my obscurations and neuroses via fire and tears and then to stop it, he held up in his skinny, bony, hand a crystal-like object that I fixated on and got distracted by because it was bigger than my tears. That was his blessing to me, a blessing later interpreted years later by a Lama who said that he gave me a special light-infusion. I'll take that! After his death, his re-incarnated teenaged self, magically decapitated or re-arranged his head while swinging in a park-swing in Wappingers Falls. I was there, right in front of the swing and I watched him accidentally fall backwards while still sitting on the swing and so help me God, I saw his head do something very strange. Thank God I was in the business of seeing this as a "teaching" FOR ME in front of my disbelieving and shocked eyes. This story is too complicated to sort out here but I can demo it for you, the reader, over tea.

While we are in the Tibetan phase of my spiritual life, I will tell you the 16th Karmapa story which is also very interesting. Lama Barry Bryant brought the Karmapa to meet with my father to look at property my father owned on the Hudson. As he left, the Karmapa who was 4 inches from my face, said to my father, "Your daughter is a Tibetan Buddhist!" Is that true? Am I really a Buddhist, a Catholic a Zen practitioner, a Sunyasin? Or did he want a deal on the waterfront property, thinking my father would love this proclamation of my inner spiritual prowess? And if it **IS** true that I am a Tibetan Buddhist and not just a collector of spiritual highs, then why am I sitting in an upstate NY library writing this and not attending teachings on CHUD at our local Tibetan Monastery? Hmmmmm.

PHASE 7: DOCTOR A.L.MEHTA AND DOCTOR ARUNA MEHTA

At Dr. Mishra's ashram in Monroe NY, Ananda Ashram, I met these two teachers of Karma & Bhakti Yoga, the Mehtas. They had both practiced Ayurvedic medicine in India and were paragons of seva, selfless service, and endless/tolerant love. Again, a recognition happened and we co-adopted each other, so for 19 years they demonstrated with and for me the art of their practices by making them visible, tangible and real. My trip to

India with Mrs. Mehta which made it possible for me to document the burning ghats & nursing homes in Benares, happened during this time and I always have gratitude to her sweet/dignified GRACE.

Both of them emanated Hindu/Guru/authentic warmth and shared that with me and all they met via food, teachings, mantra reciting and inclusion in their Jain ceremonies. It was everyday love. I acted as if I belonged to them and never left their side. I couldn't. This gift of being with them was about day-to-day love and **experiencing** right brain joy not just as a concept or while sitting in meditation but practicing love in the here and now, when it was easy and not easy. It was about LOYAL LOVE. It is not over, our love, even though they have left their physical bodies. They taught me to do Seva (free service to all). They were masters at it. One example of the largess of their generosity happened in the 1940's when they sold all of Mrs. Mehta's jewelry to feed, clothe and shelter fleeing Hindus from Pakistan during the Partition. They were always feeding everyone both here and in India and Mrs. Mehta delivered 2000 babies via bullock-cart roads in villages of India, often without pay. The list goes on. I have big shoes to fill and bigger love to imitate..

PHASE 8: CATHOLICISM

Two major life events resulted in my returning full circle to the religion of my youth, Roman Catholicism. The first: I was teaching full-time in a university and my students were wild and woolly, just like me! Needing the grounding of morals, ethics and propriety, plus needing to learn how to obey rules and regulations so that I could inform my teaching and direct them, I began attending the Catholic Newman Center at the university and noticed that, "This brand of Catholic isn't so bad!" And then, around the same time there was a second life event: I became the caregiver for my dying father. His Catholicness/holiness permeated the house where we took care of him. So it is not surprising that his version of how to be sacred colored my deep feelings around his impending death. Plus I kept his favorite Catholic EWTN Catholic TV channel on 24-7 and that was seeping into my questioning and arid brain. All of the above catapulted me backwards in time to his religion, so back to the church I went, kicking and screaming, dragging my uninformed and guilty inner child along with me. Admittedly the church was changing a bit but oh, what work it is to undo the old time religion in my heart and become a thinking, asking, intelligent, transparent, informed, questioning, curious, mystical Roman Catholic! Making films about exorcism and one about me being the first or second woman Pope and one about Theresa of Avila and performing as Mother Theresa has helped but still, I literally have to force my inner child to morning mass with me everyday.

Signs are always magical and wonderful and welcomed and I received two inner voices, called locutions in church language, during this process; one from Mary at Medjegore who said, "I will be your Mother when Mrs. Mehta dies," and one from Jesus who said to me at the Montreal Cathedral when I touched his wood-statue feet, " I am now your GURU!!!! I'm waiting to hear if I should/could/must become a WOMANPRIEST and do this as a "call" and not a greedy wanting for more titles and unnecessary jobs.

PHASE 9: NATURE

" Our first teacher is our own heart. " Cheyenne Indian Proverb

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26. HEYOKAS AND PERFORMANCE ARTISTS BY LINDA MARY MONTANO: A WIKIPEDIA AND LINDA DIALOGUE

WIKIPEDIA SAYS:

The heyoka (heyókǎ, also spelled "haokah," "heyokha") is a kind of [sacred clown](#) in the culture of the [Lakota people](#) of the [Great Plains](#) of North America. The heyoka is a contrarian, [jester](#), and [satirist](#), who speaks, moves and reacts in an opposite fashion to the people around them. Only those having visions of the thunder beings of the west, the [Wakínyan](#), and who are recognized as such by the community, can take on the ceremonial role of the heyoka.

The Lakota medicine man, [Black Elk](#), described himself as a heyoka, saying he had been visited as a child by the thunder beings.^[1] ([Thunderbirds](#)).

MONTANO SAYS:

What a relief finding an anthropological home for my proclivities, my calling, my bizarre/radical/dangerous/sloppy/antisocial actions which I have pursued all of my life and have called "art."

Knowledge is power and Wikipedia is often the good news deliverer. For my argument, I have re-posted everything this secular bible Wikipedia, said about the word Heyoka, because that word is relevant to my need for affirmation and inclusion. We all need that! To be tribed and part of the hive mind and my hive mind of choice is the American Indian Heyoka. Truly I want to be known as that and also a performance artist. No longer embarrassed by my need to be/do/think opposite, I have found inclusion in the ancients whose vocations are to bless by being wrong, bless by having been visited by the destructive powers of thunder and lightening, blessed by being willing to be the perennial outsider.

I'm just like them.

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WIKIPEDIA SAYS:

The *Heyókǎ* is thought of as being backwards-forwards, upside-down, or contrary in nature. This manifests by their doing things backwards or unconventionally — riding a horse backwards, wearing clothes inside-out, or speaking in a backwards language. For example, if food is scarce, a *heyókǎ* may sit around and complain about how full he is; during a baking hot heat wave, a *heyókǎ* might shiver with cold and put on gloves and cover himself with a thick blanket. Similarly, when it is freezing he might wander around naked, complaining that it is too hot. A unique example is the famous *heyókǎ* sacred clown called "the Straighten-Outer":

He was always running around with a hammer trying to flatten round and curvy things (soup bowls, eggs, wagon wheels, etc.), thus making them straight.

[John Fire Lame Deer](#)^[2]

MONTANO SAYS:

Not until 2015 when my car with me in it was struck by lightening, was I

a **bonafide** Heyoka and member of this esteemed SACRED CLOWN CLUB which I became interested in back in the late 70's when I lived in California and attended American Indian ceremonies in New Mexico with Pauline Oliveros and the Rothenbergs. That began my fascination and always re-fascination with the culture that loves the earth; my fascination with the people who step softly on the earth; my fascination with their methodology of respect for all of the earth's animals and their fascination with their commitment to feeling breathtaking beauty.

These indigenous people and we performance artists as well, have a way of playing with brain waves, with vibrational frequencies, with energies, with the sacred, that separates us from everyday/ordinary mind-goers. We tricksters climb the ladder going up and down from Delta Waves (babies, deep relaxation, sleep) 0HTZ-4HTZ to Theta Waves 4-8 HTZ(hallucinations, meditation) to Alpha Waves 8HTZ-12HTZ(day dream) to Beta 12-40 HTZ to Gamma 40 HTZ.. These journeys are erratic and unpredictable and allow both the performance artist and the audience-viewer to play mentally with our own hidden stuff, with our own subconscious , with our issues in a way that a clearing and spaciousness can be practiced as art and later applied to daily life; articulated as loving awareness. For you see, the Sacred Clown/Performance Artist has an important duty. That of mind cleaner!

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WIKIPEDIA SAYS:

The *heyókħa* symbolizes and portrays many aspects of the sacred beings, the [Wakħán](#). His satire presents important questions by fooling around. They ask difficult questions, and say things others are too afraid to say. Their behavior poses questions as do [Zen koans](#). By reading between the lines, the audience is able to think about things not usually thought about, or to look at things in a different way.

Principally, the *heyókħa* functions both as a mirror and a teacher, using extreme behaviors to mirror others, and forcing them to examine their own doubts, fears, hatreds, and weaknesses. *Heyókħa* have the power to heal emotional pain; such power comes from the experience of shame — they sing of shameful events in their lives, beg for food, and live as clowns. They provoke laughter in distressing situations of despair, and provoke fear and chaos when people feel complacent and overly secure, to keep them from taking themselves too seriously or believing they are more powerful than they are.^[3]

In addition, sacred clowns serve an important role in shaping tribal codes. Unbound by societal constraints, *heyókħa* are able to violate cultural taboos freely and thus critique established customs.^[4] Paradoxically, however, by violating these norms and taboos, they help to define the accepted boundaries, rules, and societal guidelines for ethical and moral behavior. They are the only ones who can ask "Why?" about sensitive topics; they use satire

to question the specialists and carriers of sacred knowledge or those in positions of power and authority.

For people who are as poor as us, who have lost everything, who had to endure so much death and sadness, laughter is a precious gift. When we were dying like flies from white man's disease, when we were driven into reservations, when the government rations did not arrive and we were starving, watching the pranks and capers of Heyókħa were [*sic*] a blessing.
[John Fire Lane Deer^{\[2\]}](#)

MONTANO SAYS:

LIKE THE HTZ-FREQUENCY OF THE EARTH, PERFORMANCE ARTISTS HAVE THEIR EARS TO THE BREATH OF THE GROUND AND MARCH TO THE BEAT OF A DIFFERENT DRUMMER, ONE THAT IS NOT ONLY HEARD BY ANIMALS AND TREES BUT ALSO BY INFANTS BEFORE THEY REACH DISCURSIVE/ENCULTURATED/HIGHLY NEGATIVELY ADDICTIVE MIND CONTROLLED THOUGHT.

I REALIZED ALL MY LIFE THAT I WAS REALLY DIFFERENT, ALTHOUGH MY MOTHER HAD TOLD ME THAT AS WELL AS SHE TRIED TO MAKE SENSE OF HER CHILD REARING SKILLS AND MY INTERPRETATION OF HER BEST EFFORTS. BUT IT SEEMED I HAD ACCESS TO AN INTUITION THAT I DIDN'T OWN BUT OWNED ME AND ALLOWED ME TO KNOW THE CODE THAT OPENED THE DOOR TO SIDDHIS WHICH HINDUS SAY ARE FANTASTICAL INNER/OUTER PHENOMENON. IT WAS ABSOLUTELY APPARENT IN 1966-69 WHEN MY 3 SCULPTURE PROFESSORS CAME INTO MY STUDIO AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN MADISON AND ASKED, "MONTANO, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO FOR YOUR MFA SHOW?"

1. MY RESPONSE WAS , "CHICKENS." HAD I KNOWN THEN THAT THE ROLE OF OPPOSITION AND JESTER WAS MY SACRED CALLING, I WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN AS SURPRISED AS I WAS BY MY ANSWER BECAUSE ALTHOUGH I HAD A FEW REASONS TO SAY THE WORD CHICKENS, HAVING VISITED THEM AT THE UNIVERSITY'S AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL WHILE AN MFA CANDIDATE SO AS TO ESCAPE THE ART OF THE MALE /FELLOW GRADS, IT WAS STILL AN UPSIDE DOWN ANSWER AND ONE THAT TOTALLY SURPRISED ME. IT WAS A HEYOKAS ANSWER PERCHANCE GIVEN I WAS IN AN ELITE GRADUATE ART PROGRAM AT A PRESTIGIOUS UNIVERSITY?

2. OR MAYBE THIS IS WHY I SAID, CHICKENS? MY FATHER HAD PUT THE FAMILY'S CHICKENS IN THEIR KITCHEN AS A PRANK WHEN HIS MOTHER WOULD NOT ALLOW HIM TO GO TO A SATURDAY AFTERNOON MOVIE AND REALIZING THE PUNK GESTURE OF MY FATHER AND HIS BRAVADO, I IMITATED HIS COURAGE SOME 40 YEARS LATER BY PUTTING CHICKENS I AN ART GALLERY

3. Or was this the reason? My mother's chicken collection graced every table, shelf and bookcase in our middle class home.

4. SUBCONSCIOUSLY THIS MIGHT REALLY BE THE REASON? I WAS FEELING "CHICKEN", THE BAD ASPECT OF CHICKEN; THAT IS FEARFUL, OVERPOWERED, MISOGINISTICALLY OVERLOOKED, PATRIARCHICALLY POWERED-OVER AND OUT OF MY LEAGUE AT THIS OVER ABUNDANTLY MALE AND LARGE SCULPTURE MAKING DEPARTMENT COMPRISED OF 404,947 TESTESTERONED ONES AND 3 OF US BRAVE WARRIOR WOMEN ALSO IN THE SCULPTURE DEPARTMENT. HAVING JUST GRADUATED WITH AN MA FROM AN ALL WOMENS UNIVERSITY AT AN ITALIAN MEDICI-MADE CASTLE IN FLORENCE, I WAS NOT READY FOR THIS BOYS CLUB. AND REMEMBER, IT WAS 1976 WHEN WOMEN WERE SEEN AND NOT HEARD, PRESENT BUT NOT PRESIDING. HIDING BEHIND LIVE CHICKENS WAS A WISE PLOY.

5. BY 2016, CHICKENS HAD BECOME MY TRUE FRIENDS. SEE BELOW.

[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/CK8Y6Z135GM](https://youtu.be/ck8y6z135gm)



[CHICKENARAMA](#)

YOUTU.BE

CHICKENARAMRA BY LINDA MARY MONTANO.
CHICKENS WERE ONCE DINOSAURS. NOW THEY
MENTOR "HOW TO FOCUS."

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WIKIPEDIA SAYS:

Only those who have had visions of the thunder beings of the west can act as heyokas. They have sacred power and they share some of this with all the people, but they do it through funny actions. When a vision comes from the thunder beings of the West, it comes with terror like a thunder storm; but when the storm of vision has passed, the world is greener and happier; for wherever the truth of vision comes upon the world, it is like a rain. The world, you see, is happier after the terror of the storm.

[Black Elk^{\[5\]}](#)

MONTANO SAYS: *Had I had indigenous training in otherness, had I danced Chicken dances with soft moccasins as a child, had I been sent to a menstrual hut at 13 for a week to live with other mensrating women and girls, had I been encouraged to ask for a vision in my private hilltop quest, had I ridden bareback and had my hair braided by elders, then my choice for using live chickens as material/theme/subject for my art would have seemed more natural and less disconcerting to both myself, my audience, the faculty and administration of the art school which removed my three, four by eight foot chicken wire cages with three chickens in each cage nine total. That's what I had to do when wealthy patron-donors toured the new art department building and I was told, "They just won't understand showing chickens as art, Linda. Please take*

them away. " I had by then gotten my MFA so I gave the chickens to the janitor. Boo Hoo, had I known that I was a Heyoka, I would have gotten in the cage myself with them and refused to move!

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WIKIPEDIA SAYS:

In [Lakota mythology](#), Heyókħa is also a spirit of [thunder](#) and [lightning](#). He is said to use the wind as sticks to beat the drum of thunder. His emotions are portrayed opposite the norm; he laughs when he is sad and cries when he is happy, cold makes him sweat and heat makes him shiver. In art, he is depicted as having two horns, which marks him as a hunting spirit. ^[6]

MONTANO SAYS:


In conclusion:

1. Supposedly, in Mexico City there are artists who have been struck by lightning and lived to tell it. They meet together and I would like to join them some day.

2. My mother always told me, "Linda, you are five years ahead of the times."

And also, "Linda, you're different, you're just different!" I include my video MOM ART as proof of her certification of my Heyokahood. "Thanks Mom for seeing me so clearly and guess what? You were pretty different yourself! Heyokas-r-us."

<https://youtu.be/Af7eaU7Yt6c>

	<p>MOM ART youtu.be An interview between Mildred Montano and Linda Mary</p>
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27. THE STORY OF MARY APPARITION SWEDEN

THE STORY OF MARY APPARITION SWEDEN

THE STORY THE VIRGIN MARY APPARITION: SWEDEN



It had a been a struggle for months:

1. **Translating** the plane ticket language from European time/info to NY time and info.
 2. **Quieting** thoughts of flying and then returning to NY on Sept 11, the memorial day of the Twin Towers Fall.
 3. **Wondering** what it would be like to perform not only outside for 5 days but also from a moving train for two of those days.
 4. **Hoping** I had enough left-over chops to reach/communicate to a mixed audience of non English speaking children and elders in their outside plaza.
 5. **Wishing** my costume were flashier so that I could successfully make myself performatively visible and still be a dignified 74 year old elder!
- Those were just a few of my concerns.

But one of my more pre-journey pressing 3 AM worry-concerns, the one about getting from the airport to the hotel using THEIR MONEY/exchange, always an issue for me in foreign lands, must have been communicated subliminally to the gracious European Curator-host, because at the last minute he sent me a text saying, "I'll meet you at the airport." And another boon-statement, ..."and we are going to give you a private room at the hotel." This news was almost equivalent to my winning an appearance on the Jimmy Fallon show, accompanied by Bob Dylan. And of course I would be doppleganging Bob...that is, with me, disguised as Bob since we do look alike! That's how happy I felt for a few hours!

It is curious that sharing a bathroom and bedroom had never been an issue previously, but now, a new awareness of age-related impermanence with the resulting body odors absconded with my once always there courage which, when I was a mere youth, allowed me to defecate on demand, burp with a smile, pass gas with confidence and act as a deserving Natural Homo-Erectus-evolved animal at all times. But now my 7 score cells were showing/smelling of slowly decaying wear and tare; something that a Dollar Store room deodorant spray could hardly handle or hide. But not to worry, I was told that I would live alone. Natural and solo. Yyyyyy.

Besides the worry, the real reason for my visit was to participate in an International Performance Art festival with 20-somethings/millennials who I "thought" didn't speak my art-language which is: the language of Arte Povera; the language of LESS IS MORE; the language that says that the body is the ONLY material for art and action; the language that declares that every action is sacred and healing. I'm not saying that their performances did not include my prejudices, I'm just saying, these are my game changing opinions about what performance art IS & ISNT. But despite my first judgment that we even had aesthetic differences I discovered that we were communally united by the fact that we were housed in a more than 5 star feng shui hotel which included a see-through swimming pool, cantilevering over the street, 8 floors in the air. We were the rowdy, sloppy, loud, disheveled, rebellious artists, often dripping with post-performance detritus ...but for a week, we rested and lived in the lap of beauty and luxury. This respectful treatment softened my mental hijacking and helped me defer my pre-performance focus from what about me, me, me and my always incessant internal blah, blah, blah which precedes my performing in public and allowed me to seal the "intention" to one of doing art, not for applause, but for healing and service to all, the intention I religiously cull most of the time. And as a friend said, before I left the US, "Have a good pilgrimage," a kind, send-off wish that became etched in my memory bank of words to live by, affirmations to remember, things to always do. That is, enjoy the pilgrimage (divineness) of these very brief days in this beautiful country you are visiting on this rotating/ever moving earth-ball, no matter what! Performing or doing dishes on a blustery cold morning in the Northeast are both pilgrimage worthy activities I would imagine, no? His words shifted everything, even before I left the US because I decided to go there to be blessed, not to wow them with my 74 year old brilliance that age had afforded me. Not to impress anyone with the wisdom I had accrued from my 40 year performance career/chicken shenanigans, as if I could!!!

After a luxurious bath in the healing, non lead-laced waters in this eco-friendly, non-Monsantoed, unfracked fairytale safe zone, I devoted my mind and time to hearing and reading spiritual teachings thanks to a gratis WIFI connection on my new repurposed/gifted from my brother's iPhone. For hours I studied at the school of Google:

1. **How** to be really still.
2. **Why** be silent?
3. **What** is suffering and why do we suffer?
4. **What** is my method to cessate my own suffering?
5. **What** do I need to do before I die, now that I have stopped making videos?
6. **What** is my soul's work?

Because of these jet-lagged hours of retreat and study, I birthed a new courage and surprised even myself when I "performed" saying a Catholic Rosary publically while fingering the beads/moving my lips in prayer on the train, during our public "train performance", which afforded us a chance to improvise, interrupt, radically alter our own minds and the minds of the sleepy/sedate/non-confrontive early AM passengers who were nudged out of morning sleepiness to include our wonderfulness, our creative antics/actions, our strangeness, our trespassing into their "What is this nonsense?" minds. And I thank the wee young one's for inspiring me to break my pattern of , "I only do 948 hour performances, inside, on stage, for audiences of 390 thousand. **Not** on moving trains!!!!"

Obviously eating well at the 40 itemed breakfast smorgasboard, taking approximately 45 baths a day, learning from 10 other committed and passionate performance artists, listening to profound internet teachings and being included in this lively art-tribe lovingly cared for by curators from the best possible scenario of respect, mystically massaged into me an atmosphere of focused retreat, readying me for miracles the most dramatic being an almost blinding tree apparition of the Virgin Mary outside of the Catholic church, one mile from the festival. I saw her, really I did, because the day before I left, I was pulled by I don't know what? Was it the smell of the Canadian artist's expressed Mother's Milk which I dreamt I drank or really did drink after her public 4 month old infant inspired performance which actually included said liquid? Did that make me find Mother Mary in the tree? A mother-to-mother happening? I wasn't going back to the church expecting anything like this, but to visit the wooden statue of Mary with the gargantuan hands, the Mary with the big blond hair (a Nordic meme?), the Mary statue inside the church, the Mary holding an oversized light haired, big footed Infant Jesus in her muscular, carved wood arms.

But at the entrance to the church I was stopped by Her. Outside, in the freedom of air and trees, she was ecologically/ naturally present and her light stopped me cold because there, right there next to the front door to the church, she called and said, " You don't have to go inside, I'm right here, beaming light, wearing

a blue cloak, white dress and I'm flashing you with a Transfiguredesque light show! Stop, look, listen. AND I'm NOT A PERFORMANCE, I'm REALLY me! "

Luckily I had been using my brother's gifted iPhone for a month and as a result was able to take a photo, preserve the miracle and like all folks who snap, snap, snap and refuse to see, I fell into the trap of documenting and refusing to experience. As a result, I captured the prayer instead of praying but because I did have proof of the miracle, that did allow me to get a holy imprimatur and ok from Orthodox-minded, pious Catholics and non Catholics back home who had had similar Visitations. And they all said, "Yes, that looks like Mary!" By then, **everything** seemed non-ordinary and liminally supported by Delta Brain waves stirred by my new artist-friends' luminous performances and our mutual excursions into creative hive-mind.

A day later I flew out of fairy land, knowing the dream had just begun.

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28. OLD AGE, SICKNESS AND DEATH IN THE VIDEOS OF LINDA MARY MONTANO

INTRODUCTION:

Suffering has always been my drug of choice. It began at and even before my birth but I will spare the reader the long list of PTSD making events that comprise my monstrously emotional/personal narrative and move onto the way I found to address the traumas.

As an art-mystic in the making:

I by-passed becoming a shaman and curing my trauma that way;

I by-passed becoming a stigmatist and curing my trauma that way;

I by-passed becoming a Catholic who "offered up my suffering" and curing my trauma that way;

I by-passed becoming a "victim soul" and curing my trauma that way;

I by-passed becoming a graduate of long term therapy and curing my trauma that way;

Instead I made the art of transforming the trauma and alchemicalizing it and crushing it with symbol and beauty.

By addressing old age, sickness (of myself and the planet) and death, as art, I have been able to not only feel my own pain but make my story a teaching tool for others.

May we all fly free before we die.

Linda Mary Montano, Saugerties NY.

A COMPILATION OF FILMS by LINDA MARY MONTANO: SICKNESS, OLD AGE AND DEATH

TITLE: ANOREXIA NERVOSA by LINDA MARY MONTANO : ILLNESS

<http://youtu.be/Yaxcwo2M7d8>

DESCRIPTION: When I was 20 I was in a convent and after two years, I realized that I was not emotionally mature enough to be a nun. It's not that I didn't love everything about the life, it's just that I had some unfinished business that needed cleaning up and I was not able to ask for help there so that I could heal and stay. The way I expressed my confusion was to take control of food intake. It seems this is not possible to do while in a convent, sitting at a table along with eight different nuns-in-training, silently watching every move that everyone made. Forks hitting against plates and a voice reading about the lives of the saints and martyrs were the only other totally frightening meal-time sounds. To fix it all, my inventive mind decided to control my food intake and I went from a hefty 135 lbs to 80 lbs. Anorexia became a side job which kept me quite busy... learning how to hide from my mates the fact that I was eating nothing and then doing my chores with great vigor because of the adrenaline high from starving. About 15 years after leaving, I sought out other women with the same issue and made ANOREXIA NERVOSA, seeking explanation and comradeship in a community of like-mindedness which has the power to heal. This not an art film, but a raw, uncut, unedited look at life.

There is also a you tube edited version of just myself talking about my anorexia.

<https://youtu.be/WVeDuwc4yw>

TITLE: ANOREXIA NERVOSA by LINDA MARY MONTANO : ILLNESS

DESCRIPTION: See above.

YEAR: 1977

TIME: 1:01:18

CREDITS: Christine Barnum, Diane Bass, Vicky Sutherland, Kelly Doyle.

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TITLE: DYSTONIA by LINDA MARY MONTANO : ILLNESS

<http://youtu.be/lj9OlegCsBc>

Description: Another title for this film could have been SICK ART or ART/LIFE because it is my attempt to lighten up, make sense of, expose, explore, and be horrified by a chronic,

neurologic condition which I developed in 2006. Not many people have heard of Dystonia which results in spasms, contortions, head turnings and many other strange body-art gesticulations. My contracting/getting/having Dystonia is the reason I did a lot of things: it's the reason I became/acted as if I were Mother Theresa because I was bent over, not by having served 400 million people but by spasms from Dystonia. Dystonia also was the reason I made the exorcism film because my neck started acting extremely weird in church and I thought I was possessed. "Linda, you are not possessed," said Father Lebar, Catholic priest and exorcist. But I do spasm, I do have to hold my head up with sometimes both hands, I am in almost-constant pain. Calling out the forces of transformation, calling out the army of art as healing, I relinquished the pity party, the drama, the trauma, the telling my friends that I had a chronic illness, and instead, I wrote my Dystonia story as a fun, cute, feel good, Hallmark Card Fairy Tale, which Jonathan Penz, a home-schooled pre-teened genius reads in all of his innocence. To counteract the kid artness of the film, I include/superimposed on the images, frightening side-effects of the Botox injections which I am receiving. And to counteract the horrors of these side-effects, the words PEACE, HOPE, & LOVE fly through the film as lovely angel-words. My neurologist, Dr. Fabio Danisi is such a sport, allowing his injection procedure to be filmed by his assistant Cindy Miller. As a team of 3, I feel we have shed beautiful light on a terrible plight. Every three months, many Dystonia patients around the world receive Botox injections. I get mine today. Have to go out in this Northeastern snowstorm and buy him a cannoli before I go!

YEAR: 2012


TIME: 5:25

CREDITS: Camera: Cindy Miller, Doctor: Dr. Fabio Danisi, Patient: Linda Mary Montano, Story: Linda Mary Montano, Narrator: Jonathon Penz, Video Editor: Tobe Carey.

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TITLE: SEVEN STAGES OF INTOXICATION by LINDA MARY MONTANO : ILLNESS/MENOPAUSE

<http://youtu.be/4-PMuAJ1miY>

	<p><u>The Seven Stages of Intoxication</u></p>
	<p>youtu.be Post menopausal hormone changes catapulted me out of control and I felt symbolically "intoxicated". This tape also references the "art" of teaching via faux-...</p>

Description: I structure ALL of my work as if it had chapters, building blocks, architectural

orderings, titled sequences and designated pauses so that my books, performances and films have structure and sculptural strength. Maybe that is because I am semi-Jesuit trained and sculpturally certified having graduated from the UWM with an MFA in Sculpture? The foundational principle of this particular film goes like this; PART ONE: Instructing in a faux-way the purpose of the tape; I do all of this faceless, with just make-believe hand gestures, faux-signing what I'm saying because I absolutely believe that viewers must be entertained visually, sonically, kinesthetically, and with good humor. At that time I was a university professor and the STINK of academia is evident in this film because I talk about performance history, my teaching history, the theme of self-portrait, the persona that I portray, and the psychological issues around menopause. Doing this comically and non-sensibly lightens the burden of university-speech. Apologizing for what the viewer is about to see, I excuse my Seven Drunk Personas, by explaining that aging and the surrender that one must admit to as time, illness and gravity rob the body of its former brilliance: aging is similar to being inebriated. When drunk, there is a surrender, and a letting go, and a succumbing to the dark negative which is hormonally similar to what happens in menopause. This is one of my favorite films. I am completely out of control, breaking all taboos of nice-ness and decorum. I'm sure that having to be on-guard in my high paying job and in university good behavior brought out and encouraged this opposition character/persona who lets down my Texas niceness and lets off steam. To illustrate how funky I get in this film, I even perform on the steps of one of the major university buildings and don't even flinch as one of the nuns, who I met regularly at daily Mass, walks by and looks like she recognizes the drunken homeless woman acting out in public! PART TWO: Seven alcoholic women acting as if drunk. PART THREE: An assignment. ART trumps LIFE - ART heals LIFE. Will I ever be this brave again?

YEAR: 1997

TIME: 33:35

CREDITS: Camera: Steven Kolpan, Yuki Julie Kao, Joe Zambarino, Cecil Martin. Actors: Geoffrey Thomas, Bethel Collins, Chris Graham, Lance Myers, Debra Hewitt, Danny Flores, Joe Zambarino. Production: Beta: Edward Garana Teleprint Express. Sound: Chris Erlon, Digital Domain. Editing: ANdy Cockrum, Metropost. Special thanks: Andy Cockrum, Kate Horsfeld, Alexandria Carrion, Flavia Gondolfo, Minnette Lehmann, Steven Kolpan, R.S. Mishra,

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TITLE: *NURSE NURSE by LINDA MARY MONTANO : ILLNESS & AGING*

http://youtu.be/EctbZtb79_k

DESCRIPTION: After I left the University of Texas Austin, where I was teaching Performance Art, I returned to Upstate New York having actually been called home by my "good" inner voices, who counseled me to, "Go, be with your father." The backstory is that I was denied tenure, but actually, UT gave me the freedom to get to know my father for the last seven years of

his life by firing me!! **NURSE NURSE** comedically references care giving a compromised elder, played by me, and this film allows me to practice and rehearse for what might happen medically to me in my future. That is, aren't we all dreadfully afraid of Alzheimers? And if I practice having it now, maybe I will scare it away or at least be comfortable having it when I do get it? An important prop in this film is my dad's lazy boy chair. It triggers such pain because he had his stroke in that chair, and I needed to resurrect the chair from memory - hell. Admittedly, this film is not funny, not easy, but in my estimation, totally necessary.

YEAR: 2013

TIME: 18:23

CREDITS: Edited by Tobe Carey Willow Mixed Media. Camera - Josepha Gutelius. Nurse Actor - Laura Kopczak. Patient Actor - Linda Mary Montano. Nurse song/voice - Linda Mary Montano. Additional Audio Recording - Jim Barbaro Natural Recording Studio. Nurse Voice Over - Meg Carey. Special thanks to Meg Carey, Tobe Carey, Josepha Gutelius, Minnette Lehmann, and Laura Kopczak.

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TITLE: **STARVED SURVIVORS by LINDA MARY MONTANO : PLANETARY ILLNESS**

<http://youtu.be/NZcZWN2YFkI>

Description: My very destructive and bad habit of listening to British BBC dramatic news reports especially from 7 pm, when I go to bed, to 6 am when I wake up, resulted in an imploded brain overload, a poetic frenzy that spilled aesthetically from my unknowing but indoctrinated and addled brain. I honestly channeled the text for this film and the SPILLAGE was putrid in its memory of every single atrocity committed on every single continent of the world having heard about them in my non-rem sleep all night. So what to do with the mental detritus? I made art. Fairy tales are my weapon of choice and I open the film with a sweet little girl (me) talking about her need for a grandmother and guardian and teacher. This grandmother (me, of course), in one of my favorite old lady masks, tells the little girl that life sucks, and be careful. The reasons why life sucks are sing-song-litanied for almost a half an hour over and over and the list of sins committed globally are words that my asleep brain remembers from BBC radio. Not trusting that my own voice could do the poem justice, I asked Paul McMahan, poet and musician, to read the atrocities and craziness melodically, thereby diffusing what's happening in the seedy and dirty corners of this world with his poetic soothe. Mouths, teeth, saliva, gums are visuals I focus on obsessively and compulsively and have a field day doing so in this film. The cast of characters includes talking infants, mimicking doppelgängers, fear mongers, prophetic predictors of global warming, storm warners and other bad news sad sacks. Of course it ends on a happy note, when the Hag/Grandmother re-appears and tells Little Linda, DO NOT BE AFRAID.

YEAR: 2011

TIME: 19:25

CREDITS: Video and Animation editing by Tobe Carey. Photos by Tobe Carey, Paul McMahon, Annie Sprinkle. Water and Storm Video by Tobe Carey. Thunder Audio by EZWA Public Domain Sounds. Voices: Man - Paul McMahon, Baby - Tobe Carey, Child - Linda Montano. Special Thanks: Tobe Carey, Paul McMahon, Meg Carey. Inspired by Dante's Divine Comedy.

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TITLE: BENARES by LINDA MARY MONTANO : DEATH in INDIA

<http://youtu.be/2vG10Mgtcwk>

Description: In the late 1990's, I was a professor of performance art, at the University of Texas, Austin. Luckily, one of the perks of professorship is a travel grant which I used to visit India with my mentor and friend Dr. Aruna Mehta. Also, luckily, the University had a medical clinic that had superior travel information. So I did all of that, made sure I knew how to keep myself physically safe, and set out for one of the most transforming experiences of my life. Although I had not completely made arrangements for places to stay in Benares, they magically came together, and a very learned Brahman scholar in India, made sure that I was able to participate in Varanasi's theological culture. Please watch this film because I cannot begin to describe the floating dead bodies in the Ganges. I cannot begin to describe the 24/7 burning ghats. I cannot begin to describe the senior citizens waiting to die in the most holy city in the world ; the place where their Moksha/liberation from rebirth is guaranteed. I cannot begin to describe (in words), the evolution from my own Western fear, voyeurism, culture appropriation, to an Eastern understanding of the divine both in Life and Death. This sophomoric attempt to move myself from tourist to one-who-belongs marks the beginning of a journey that is not so much now about death but about Love.

YEAR: 1998 & 2008

TIME: 25:35

CREDITS: For my friends Dr. Aruna Mehta, Dr. A.L. Mehta. Consultant in Benares: Ratnesesh Pathak. Videographer in Benares: Daffodils Videotec. Sound Design: Chris Erlon, Digital Domain, Austin, Texas. Video Design: Andy Cockrum, 501 Group Austin, Texas. Re-Edited 2007, Tobe Carey, Willow Mixed Media Glenford, CT. Special Thanks to University of Texas, Austin, Department of Art.

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TITLE: DAD ART by LINDA MARY MONTANO : OLD AGE/SICKNESS/DEATH

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RaOV2tvHuzg>

Description: When I arrived back to New York State from Texas, having been denied tenure, I was given the opportunity of a lifetime. That is, I was able to be with my father and get to

re-know him for the last seven years of his life. He allowed me to collaborate with him on video, and we filmed while watching Wheel of Fortune together; we filmed eating linguini and clams together; we filmed him meeting his beautiful woman friend as she picked him up to take him out to dinner. I'm editing out his unspeakable head accident at physical therapy, his fall at home and rush to the hospital with a stroke. But I'm not denying that I hid behind the camera using it as a shield as I became manager of his care at home 24/7 for three years. 400,000 care-givers came through the front door, day and night, and I filmed it all. Not sneakily, not as a thief, but as a frightened bird behind a branch disguised- as -tripod. DAD ART was the result of my father's

original generosity of sharing LIFE/ART with me and the result of my continuing that process as I watched a kind of transcendence overcome him. No, it wasn't pretty or wonderful but during his illness he exuded the same beauty that he exhibited when he sat in church in meditation. Friends would come into the house at 9 John Street and cry because of the atmosphere that he created: a high- level intensity and vibrational frequency. One of the care-givers was smart enough to remind me to encourage him to paint and he became an abstract expressionist painter who for 1-2 hours a day, sat transfixed as red or orange or black or yellow appeared on the paper in front of him via his Zenned-paintbrush which moved so slowly that I would almost faint with

the beauty of his focus. Some of these paintings are incorporated into the film DAD ART

which premiered once or twice publicly and once with close friends as a funeral memorial service. During the performance of DAD ART, I sing the seven songs he and my mother would play in

their band during the 30's and 40's. Also on stage during the memorial -performance there are many different activities and "stations" of symbolic actions: one of artists as counselors, talking to people about death which invites participants to enter the performance space to become co- performers in a collaborative group process. At another station, a collaborator pours glasses of water and hands them out, since water became such an important vehicle of life/not life for my father as he stopped eating and drinking. At the third station, audience members are invited to come to the "stage" and dictate a letter to death who is a collaborator, wearing a death mask. A vibrant, breath of fresh air, exuberant MC keeps everything moving, invites people to the stage, and blows a whistle when it's my time to sing one of my seven songs. DAD ART

Performance/Film is an invitation to anyone who would like me to come and mourn with you publicly as art. I promise, this will not be easy.

YEAR: 2007

TIME: 2 HOURS

CREDITS: TOBE CAREY, BRENDHA HUTCHINSON

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TITLE: LIVING ART / DYING ART by LINDA MARY MONTANO : DEATH

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ff79M4NB26s>

DESCRIPTION: In the late 90's, on several occasions, I presented a slide lecture which demonstrated the way that my art references impermanence and dying. In 2014, video artist and editor Tobe Carey scanned the slides from the lecture and we collaged together the spoken narrative, images both of my own work and also of death rituals from many different cultures, creating an Endgame-like collage. There are images from my study in Benares at the burning ghats, images from my film, *MITCHELL'S DEATH*, images of Parsi funerary rites, images of my performances and descriptions of ways that my work and death seem to be close cousins! In this multi-faceted film: I feel, I mourn, I heal, I say goodbye, I teach, I prepare for my final retirement, and maybe my most important DVD, DEATH.

YEAR: 2014

TIME: 42:44

CREDITS: Produced and directed by Montano. Edited by Tobe Carey. Sound voice Jim Barbaro, Paul McMahon. Voices: Montano, Hominy and Ginger McMahon. Actor Rich Granville. Special thanks: Tobe and Meg Carey.

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TITLE: MITCHELL'S DEATH by LINDA MARY MONTANO: DEATH

Description: In 1977, my ex-husband was murdered. I could stop here and say no more because that sentence alone, explains and describes this film. But writing is how I communicate best so I will outline my process. The murderer called me and told me about Mitchell's death, not saying that he murdered him but that he "accidentally" shot him in the head. Not having any skills at dealing with trauma, with talking things out, with asking for comfort, with seeking support by expressing my pain, I began writing the story from the moment that I heard the news to the time that I went into the morgue and saw his body . Still today, I hardly breathe when I remember this. Back then, I was able to use my ability to make art of my life and I shared his death with friends and colleagues at The Center For Music Experiment, UCSD, where I was a fellow in residence. And then, I shared the film itself, not as a performance but as a video-document and it went viral,

so to speak. Was it because I chanted the story in good Gregorian-Zen fashion? Was it because the editor, David Wagner, used delay to deepen my voice and the story became a trance-like dirge that was almost beautiful? Was it because the story was so raw and grief laden that it resonated with everyone who has ever experienced loss? All I know is that the film, *MITCHELL'S DEATH*, has touched everyone who has ever sat shiva with it. And Mitchell, an artist who had trained to be a Protestant Minister, continues to inspire.

Accessible via VIDEO DATA BANK

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TITLE: *ON DEATH AND DYING by LINDA MARY MONTANO :SICKNESS*

http://youtu.be/wQU_3gfQL8I

Description: This film is thirty three years old, made in the mid 80's and it is now 2015. I am totally enthralled by it's timelessness. It is crazy in it's symbolism but in retrospect I think I can now read into it with some clarity. For example, why are three women in their 30's playing cards, dressed like nuns, sitting at a beautifully adorned card table with an hourglass in the middle, tracking time, while listening/or not listening to a nurse talk about death and dying? I am interviewing that nurse, Mescal Hornbeck, but did it as if I were a French poetess, using a sweet, innocent and polite faux French accent. WHY? Elizabeth Cross, Vicki Stern and I were dear and close friends at that time and both Vicki and I were living at the Zen Mountain Monastery in Mt Tremper NY as students of meditation, while Elizabeth lived in the village of Woodstock and made her living as a hairdresser/artist. We were women who always created our unique ways of responding to our life issues; we were women who conversed about our status as women; we were women who lived in a monastery (Vicki and I) and I know that this film is a response to the fact that we were taught by men in a male-run institution. At that time, this was a joy and also an irritant and like good feminists, we responded as art and made this "teaching tape" which is totally, strangely beautiful in it's woman-ness; beautiful in it's ability to enthrall the senses with candles dancing via camera movements; beautiful in the absurdity of nuns putting on paper sailor hats over their nun veils; beautiful in the way that we are playing cards and winning because we are alive; beautiful because Mescal is giving/freely offering 50 years of deep experience with the subject which we all need to study and learn about: **death**. This film is not wanting to trick: there are no difficult language tricks; no need to impress with theological posturing; no fancy camera work or snazzy editing; no need to cower and run into the Zen-interview room and try to impress a man with an understood koan! My art is always about my life and obviously, I wanted to be a Guru, just like my male Zen teacher was at that time. By making this very important, informative and comedically complex film, Elizabeth, Vicki and I got what we wanted, respect for our WOMAN-WAY . The strangely channeled CHICKEN BAWK at the end, concurs.

YEAR: 1982

TIME: 21:44

CREDITS: Participants are: Elizabeth Monroe Cross, Vicki Stern, Linda Mary Montano, and narrator Mescal Hornbeck

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TITLE: *MY MOTHER; ARTIST AND TEACHER by LINDA MARY MONTANO: DEATH*

DESCRIPTION: My mother's life and death were both extraordinarily epic. A painter who art therapied herself out of a called for and deserved depression, Mom's resiliency could have rewarded her with a Badge of Courage because she took devastating trauma making life issues and alchemized then into art, activism and humor. Modeling these gifts for me, I look at our lives which could have been charted and copied page for page, letter by letter and I recognize that I have imitated her style, not missing a beat.

We both practice art as therapy and humor and as deflection from the unspeakable. We both jump into everything with 150% effort and an attitude which covers over the fact that neither of us know exactly how to respond to the life issues at hand but both of us give everything our best shot. For example, I watched Mom cut neighbors', family and friends' hair in our kitchen even though she had zilch training . And guess who was the president of Saugerties Nursing Committee? Mom, of course, who was not a nurse. And guess who taught English as a second language up until a few months before she died? You guessed it, Mom. My own life shares similar stories of my doing/becoming and acting **as if** while knowing nothing about the subject at hand.

I eulogized Mom with a book, *THE 5 JOHNS OF 5 JOHN STREET* and a video titled , *MOM ART*. I've honored her by living my life as art and it is only right that I share helpful suggestions that I gleaned from watching by her bedside as she died. I know that she would tell me, "act as if" if I felt shy about sharing these words with you. She would say, "Make believe that you ARE a professional grief counselor." Or she might say, "Linda, help as many people as possible with your wisdom. But make sure that you do it with humor!" Thanks Mom. You're a CHAMP and so am I.

<https://youtu.be/dp-Ti fhLk>



[My Mother Artist and Teacher](#)

youtu.be

My Mother - Artist and Teacher All paintings by Mildred Kelly Montano. Thank you Mom for Teaching me how to Heal.

YEAR:2016

TIME: 13:17

CREDITS: TOBE CAREY, JIM BARBERO, HENRY MONTANO, MEG CAREY

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TITLE: DAD ART PAINTING by LINDA MARY MONTANO: OLD AGE/SICKNESS

DESCRIPTION: My father had a serious accident caused by a physical therapist. It compromised his health and he developed a hemorrhagic stroke. He had 24-7 care at home and I videotaped him for that entire time, having begun a video-collaboration with him when he was well. I didn't put the camera down and when a caregiver brought him paints, I was able to record and document this amazing Zen-like event: my dad painting everyday for an hour as if he was a reincarnation of a monk in a monastery in Kyoto. This painting section is edited and excerpted from the 2 hour **DAD ART**_performance film which includes bathing, lifting, saying good bye and my father's last breath. Just seeing the beauty is often a relief and enough.

<https://youtu.be/r9hExtdYLLs>

YEAR: 2015

TIME: 19:39

CREDITS: TOBE CAREY editing, BRENDA HUTCHINSON, sound.

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TITLE: I'M DYING, MY LAST PERFORMANCE by LINDA MARY MONTANO

DESCRIPTION: Once I read a story about Tibetan Buddhist Master, Chogyam Trungpa Rimpoche in a book by death-teacher, Steven Levine. It goes like this. Trungpa went into his son's room and said to him, " I'm DYING." And then he said to his son, "You are dying too." This story made a deep impression on me because death is the last taboo, the hidden boogey-man, the unspeakable, What a beautiful lesson in impermanence this father gave his son. As I age, not so gracefully, I keep thinking and saying inside, "Linda, you are getting close to dying." But this is not done for spiritual teachings for myself but as a prompt to terror and fear. So, of course, I decided to make art about this sentence and will say to myself, **AS ART**, "I'm DYING " whenever I feel the urge to frighten myself. Art heals, you know, even this rinky-dink video of myself, mouthing the words. But someday I will say I 'm dying and it will be really true

and if I have done this performance correctly, I will go towards the light with gusto.

<https://youtu.be/ZgmRLoGbZjs>

DATE:2015

TIME: 0:28

CREDITS: TOBE CAREY editing.

29. THANKS LINDA AND CLAUDIA FOR INVITING THE SADHU MAN

THANKS LINDA AND CLAUDIA FOR INVITING THE SADHU MAN; Linda Mary Montano

"We believe in puppet theater as a wholesome and powerful language that can touch men and women and children alike, and we hope that our plays are true and are saying what has to be said, and that they add to your enjoyment and enlightenment."

–Peter Schumann

I love Sadhus. Even as a child I found National Geographic photos of indigenous and holy people my favorite part of the magazine and later continued the passion by living for years in Ashrams, Zen Centers and also frequented Tibetan Buddhist Ceremonies, hoping to see the nuns and monks, hoping to be near them, hoping to learn from them, hoping to rub up against their robes so that some of their spiritual aroma would transfer to my strict Roman Catholic soul.

Why are Sadhus so wonderful? Is it because they seem connected differently, more naturally, more assuredly, more innocently to the Beyond? Are they from some planetary place that I have never visited? All I know is that I wanted out of Western Culture and catapulted myself into the Eastern world of authentic Oneness as often as possible, even surviving a trip to Benares, India and the burning ghats to film their version of old age, sickness and death. And yes, to watch Sadhus in non-magazine action. And another yes, they do things differently in India.

Even to this day I am on the lookout for Sadhus of Kumbha Mela intensity and May 13, 2016, I found one at TIME SPACE LIMITED, an art space founded/directed by Linda Mussmam, in NYC, 1973. Claudia Bruce joined Linda as co-director, 1976 and now, in their space in Hudson NY, they share their generous/prophetic vision of art/life via movies, live broadcasts, youth

programs, art exhibitions, original theatre and special events.

The special event I attended brought Sadhu Peter Schumann of THE BREAD AND PUPPETT THEATRE to TSL and my internal/external drama began in their parking lot where my dream self kicked in with the mission, " You must find him and see him." I wanted him, I needed him , I was in search of him and when I entered the building, (I was the first audience member there), it was suggested that I visit the gallery and tour his beyond poetic prints, tour his beyond simple and intense woodcuts, tour his non-pretentious banners and books but I knew that I wanted to tour HIM! I really did want to honor the wishes of the beautiful and kind ticket taking man but I barged into the theatre itself and was standing two feet from Sadhu Peter who was sitting in row one, first seat, right at the door. Inner gasping, our faces met and there I was with the always smiling Buddha Art Man; the Sadhu whose mouth opened in repeated fish breathing gasps of eros every few minutes so that it could emit light-man; the disheveled white haired man-bun-man; the clear, dark complexioned unable to tell what planet he's from-man; the artist as Sadhu-Man. I wanted to measure his age to my age, both of us decidedly elders. I wanted to feel the aire around the genius of someone dedicated to a life of superb, seemingly simple but totally complex and satisfying SOUL ART. I wanted to be him.

He looked up, I looked down and he said, in greeting, "Good Morning!" Things couldn't get any better than that because it was 7PM and maybe he was committing a past life faux pas and saw me as a former /present lover who frequented his bed on a cold Vermont farm morning? Or maybe we had travelled to Indonesian temples together and met on a tour one morning in 1765 and he remembered that? I milked his , "Good Morning" for symbols and synchronicities , finding none. But wait, maybe it was because my white haired braids and my age, 74, were a statement of radical inclusion and feminist rebellion against looking tidy and well kempt. Is that why he said, "Good Morning" at 7PM? That's it, maybe he likes me and seeing me he lost Time!

Sitting three seats in back of him during his rest from rehearsal, I realized that I had a job: To "never take my eyes off of Peter Schumann tonight." Following him like a detective-journalist I internally journaled how he glided and didn't walk; I journaled that he looked like someone who had relinquished his ego; I journaled his no-need for outer applause/honors; I journaled his ability to dress down in reaction to consumerist grandiosity; I internally journaled his child-like presentation of political sins astutely accomplished by his painting brilliantly in German Expressionistic manner, on refrigerator-size cardboard, a cast of four dozen good and bad larger than life personas/characters held together by masking tape, which was exposed on the back for all to see. Nothing hidden, nothing technological, nothing complicated but totally intense, deep and symbolically archetypical.

All was disguised museum quality but used in a "hidden" way to teach truths with not a nod to galleries or Artforum. Peter has been re-configuring medieval morality plays for over 50 years, holding a stance that is timeless and pure. His co-performers, about 10 of them, are talented, limber, equally luminous and able to make the difficult appear easy/effortless in their desire to expose current powers-gone-wrong. They sang and danced the grief of now very well.

I'm pretty sure that Peter always offers art communion after his "experiences." I imagined big hunks of Italian Bread when they announced , please come and receive a piece of bread after the show, but no, it was a very small piece of dark, probably 87 grain, non gluten free sourdough eucharist, slathered with intense aioli....a sacred reminder that ART IS GOOD CHURCH.

I left too high to find him, too frightened that I might say the wrong thing and break my mood, too ecstatic to get close to Peter. I had smelled the Sadhu and he smelled good.

Linda Mary Montano 2016

"Our glorious civilization glorifies itself with what it calls high art. Puppeteers have no soul-searching trouble in that respect. What we produce has no ambition to be high art. Low art is what we make and what we want. Not the Fine Arts—the Coarse Arts are what we use." -Peter Schumann, lecture to art students at SUNY Purchase, 1987

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30. WHY I ENDURE: BELFAST IRELAND

WHY I ENDURE

WHY I ENDURE

1. I ENDURE TO LEARN HOW TO SPEAK.

2. I ENDURE TO MENTALLY CHANGE MY CHEMISTRY AND HEAL.

3. I ENDURE TO FERTILIZE THE PAST.

4. I ENDURE TO EMBRACE TRAMAS.

5. I ENDURE TO PRODUCE DOPAMINE, ENDORPHINS, THETA WAVES AND DELTA WAVES IN MY BRAIN.

6. I ENDURE TO PERMISSION MY CHICKEN SELF TO FLY IN SPACE.

7. I ENDURE TO LEARN HOW TO LOVE.

LINDA MARY MONTANO, 2016, BELFAST IRELAND

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31. THE SAGA OF MY NOSE

THE SAGA OF MY NOSE AS OF 2016 LINDA MARY MONTANO

1. CHILDHOOD The theme and focus of my childhood dreams was always MY NOSE! Nightly the nightmare was that a long, gooey, squidish and unending disgusting mass would unroll from and be able to be slow motion pulled from both nostrils. I was amazed, intrigued and the vision/dream continued for a long time. The only reference I was able to make was to the cultural history of Egyptian funerary rites which indicated that the mortuary people drained the brains from the nose of the dead before mummifying them. Did I dream this? Is it true? I must google the answer some fine day. Eventually the dream stopped.

2. YOUNG ADULT During high school I was the outsider, having come from a small, Catholic grade school to a not that large high school in our village. Neurotic that I already was, it took this disrupt to activate my anxiety button and I expressed my upset by imagining and insisting that " I SMELLED!" The collection of and more than once daily use of cancer producing aluminum-infused underarm deodorants never allayed the supposed dispiriting attacks on my happiness so I conscripted a posse of friends to walk close to me and "smell" me and I would ask, " Do I stink?" They would always say, " You don't stink, Linda." Not appeased for long, I would ask again as we walked down the hall to our next class. That ended and I forget how my fear shifted to my next phobia. I don't remember asking people that question when I went to college but there was a smell issue in the convent when I "found" some wet/smelly papers in the "nun-clothes" locker in my cell. Oooopss. Too much info.

3. ARTIST LIFE My teacher from India, Dr. Ramamurti Mishra, also later known as Shri Brahmananda Saraswati, was a phenomenal genius, radical doctor, McGill trained neurosurgeon, teacher, mystic and friend to all. His knowledge of Ayurveda was included in his tool bag of Cures That Shift Consciousness, and he brought this particular nose technique out as needed. It was called, NASAL NETI. Did he demonstrate the insertion of a snake-like male catheter into his own nasal cavities so that it could clear the passages and eventually slither out of his mouth? I don't think so. Maybe he had one of us demo it, I don't remember. But I do know that I loved it, having spent my childhood focused inside my nose already in dreams and as was my wont, I began including Nasal Neti in my performances as a device that invited audiences to join me in viewing the ART OF SHOCK, a practice I always prefer, which allows the artist and viewer to move from everyday daily worry-hurry mind to the mind of NOW. Case in point, who can think about the insult the neighbor just hurled your way when there is a slimy male catheter coming out of your nose or the nose of a performance artist trained to offend-as-art? So for years, I used Nasal Neti live, in performance, and in videos even as we speak, thanks to the 20 year collaboration with Tobe Carey video artist/editor who has helped me edit Nasal Neti into my current video: *Endurance Then and Now*.

4. CURRENT LIFE/IST NOSE EVENTS As a child, my parents had left a medievalish, Nicola Tesla-looking "tanning" sunlamp someplace in the house. Of course I found it and burned myself/face to blisters many, many times and in fact, had almost permanently fused plastic buttons to my closed eyes because I had used button as "goggles," placing them over my closed eyes so the lamp's BIG C causing light would not burn my eyelids. (Eyes are the subject of another body modification post most probably forthcoming. A post just as problematic in detail.) Back to my nose. My nose: i've always loved it..... it's aquiliness; it's long, straight, haughtiness; it's almost Italian-ness. It is a nice friend of my face but as I age, it rears it's head, just as it did in childhood when my brains spilled out of it in dream-sleep. A year ago, I presented a bump-scab-raised on my nose something to the over 90 year old skin doctor who treated Nagasaki-Hiroshima WW11 survivors of after-bomb skin injuries and she put a liquid on my nose. For weeks, I walked around as if my nose literally survived Nagasaki because it festered, blew up, spit out gangerous green from both now bulbous external sides. I was a walking leper for awhile and went everywhere like that... a class fool, a pariah, a freak. This time, I wasn't USING my nose for Art, but my nose was life-performing without my permission and without my wanting to videotape the mess, a practice I always do; for to self-document is to cure, is my creed. This time I was not interested in sending my situation to you tube as a way that I cleverly fix my life via art via Tobe's collaboration. So it cured, it burned out the toxicities, it ate up the BIG C, the Esteemed and Saintly Dr-Healer said. And then more nose events began.

A. Somewhere I heard that it is good to put Gas Treatment in your gas tank occasionally. Silly me, I never checked this out with my smart, smart siblings who know everything about everything, so I bought a container of it in Dollar General and left it in the car until I was ready to put it in my **now-I like-you** car and you can guess the rest. It opened in the car, just a little, BUT the fumes were over the top, fusing themselves into my long, aquiline 74 year old nose. I felt them immediately and now that I am compromised with a neurological chronic affliction called Dystonia, my nervous system said, " OYE WHATTTTTTT DID YOU JUST DO TO ME? IM GOING TO TWIST YOUR NECK AND YOUR BRAIN AND YOUR HEAD IN RETRIBUTION." So the new medical chess game began...I slapped a Lidocane patch on my neck, called Poison Control whose female voice of reason said, "Don't worry, there is no poison in Gas Treatment," and not believing her, I went to my Irish PA who looked up my nose and said to use a gel to coat inside my nasal passage. I sniffed Coconut Oil into it instead. And although I was doing SO WELL with controlling neck spasms before this event, they re-appeared with a vengeance and as a result I have to drive my throbbing neck over across the river to get it injected with Botox so that I can fathom sitting on an overnight flight to Ireland in a month. There goes my let's get off the rat poison Botox injections and let's use alternative meds plan! I'm afraid to tell my siblings this story.

B. I wake throughout the night and Ayurveda says that remembering what time you wake, is an easy way to see if one of the organs of the body is asking for attention. That is , 3 am is the liver "calling." Whatever!!! Two mornings ago, at an hour that I will have to see if I can remember which organ was calling me, I smelled SKUNK. It wafted up the side of the house and into my bedroom window. When I told David and Jeanne this story, she said that skunks are kind and don't just squirt but warn first and I do recall a kind of scratching sound outside which I interpreted as someone trying to break into the house but no, it was not that, it was the skunk warning the dog next door to pull back, retreat and get out to the way. But no such luck because this beautiful, humongous, furry, gorgeous, smoky black, loving and perfectly behaved canine with 14 inch long fur got squirted. But so did the neighborhood or at least the inside of this house where I am sitting and smelling skunk smell as we speak. I'm a wreck. My nose is on overdrive. I've saged and squirted Holy Water in every room. And when I told a really close and dear and totally funny friend about this drama, he said, " Maybe you stink , Linda," and that's the closest that this issue will come to a deeper analysis of the dramas which are inviting me to want to find out why I am up my nose so much? Too embarrassed to re-call the Poison Control because I might get the same woman, I went to The Church of Google, typed in skunk words, totem animal words, what does skunk smell indicate words and this is what I got:

"Who hasn't run up against a lesson from this amazing creature-teacher at one time or another? The smell of Skunk Medicine is something that one doesn't soon forget. Skunk Medicine brings the lessons of Reputation , Respect, Sensitivity, and Confidence.

Skunk says, "If your ego is not your amigo, you know it stinks!" When one learns to assert, without ego, what and who you are. Respect follows. Your self-respectful attitude will repel those who are not of like mind, and yet will attract those who choose the same pathway. As the odor of Skunk attracts others of its kind, it repels those who will not respect its space."

5. CONCLUSION Deep breath in, deep breath out. It is all medicine.

LINDA MARY MONTANO , SAUGERTIES NY 2016.

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32. POST-PERFORMANCE SUGGESTIONS;
POST-PERFORMANCE SUGGESTIONS;

1. Some people like to talk a lot about their performance AFTER it is over. Some people are totally silent, feeling the result.
2. Some people get the judge stirred up from the cellar of the mind, some don't.
3. Some people celebrate for days, some cant.
4. Some people feel like going inside and hiding, others plan another event immediately.
5. Some people think "OHHHH I did this or that and wish I had not done that and I looked strange when I...." Some don't.
6. Some people don't want to talk to their best friends after a performance, some call everyone and talk and talk and talk.
7. But what is true for all: We need a lot of water. Drink it, soak in it, bathe in it, borrow a bathtub and sit in it, swim in it.
8. Linda Mary Montano, after Glandettes/Gland Angels at The New Museum.

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33. GYM: THE NEW CHURCH

GYM: THE NEW CHURCH : Linda Mary Montano 2017

WIKIPEDIA SAYS: ON LOVE

"Love, safety, belongingness and respect from other people are almost panaceas for the situational disturbances and even for some of the mild character disturbances. " Abraham Maslow.

It's a given that community is a need, necessity and path to health. Early peoples gathered around fires to stay safe and warm, knowing they needed each other to survive, to get fed, to live another day. Conversely we think we need nothing, we need no one because we buy our GMO food, buy our disgruntled friends, we retreat to our caves with our iPhone-family but although we think we have it all, deep down there is a biological need to Actually congregate, check in with each other and perform choreographed rituals of inclusion.

WIKIPEDIA SAYS: ON RITUAL

*A **ritual** "is a sequence of activities involving gestures, words, and objects, performed in a sequestered place, and performed according to set sequence".^[1] Rituals may be prescribed by the [traditions](#) of a [community](#), including a [religious community](#). Rituals are characterized but not defined by formalism, traditionalism, invariance, rule-governance, sacral symbolism, and performance.*

Rituals are a feature of all known human societies. They include not only the [worship](#) rites and [sacraments](#) of organized religions and cults, but also [rites of passage](#), atonement and [purification rites](#), [oaths of allegiance](#), dedication ceremonies, [coronations](#) and presidential inaugurations, marriages and funerals, school "[rush](#)" traditions and graduations, club meetings, sporting events, [Halloween](#) parties, veterans parades, [Christmas](#) shopping and more. Many activities that are ostensibly performed for concrete purposes, such as [jury trials](#), [execution](#) of criminals, and scientific [symposia](#),^{[[citation needed](#)]} are loaded with purely symbolic actions prescribed by regulations or tradition, and thus partly ritualistic in nature. Even common actions like [hand-shaking](#) and saying [hello](#) may be termed rituals.

We might ask, "Where can we get this need for belongingness met?" In the July 6, 2017 issue of Catholic New York, it was noted that 17 Catholic Churches were "relegated" as no longer sacred sites but could be used for profane but not sordid activities. That is, they could be leased, sold or assumed by another Christian denomination. This is not the time, place or venue to ponder why so many Catholic churches are no longer in use, no longer needed. You know the answers, I'm not saying. So maybe we could divert our gaze from that conversation to the GYM: The New Church of the Millennials.

WIKIPEDIA SAYS: ON GYMS

*A **gym**, also referred as **gymnasium**, is an open air or covered location for [gymnastics](#), [athletics](#), and gymnastic services. The word is derived from the ancient Greek [gymnasium](#). They are commonly found in athletic and fitness centers, and as activity and [learning spaces](#) in educational institutions. "Gym" is also slang for "fitness center", which is often an indoor facility.*

*Gymnasia apparatus such as barbells, parallel bars, jumping board, running path, tennis-balls, cricket field, fencing area, and so forth are used as exercises. In safe weather, outdoor locations are the most conducive to health. Gyms were popular in ancient Greece. Their curricula included *Gymnastica militaria* or self-defense, *gymnastica medica*, or physical therapy to help the sick and injured, and *gymnastica athletica* for physical fitness and sports, from boxing to dancing.*

These gymnasia also had teachers of wisdom and philosophy. Community gymnastic events were done as part of the celebrations during various village festivals. In ancient Greece there was a phrase of contempt, "He can neither swim nor write." After a while, however, Olympic athletes began training in buildings just for them. Community sports never became as popular among ancient Romans as it had among the ancient Greeks. Gyms were used more as a preparation for military service or spectator sports. During the Roman Empire, the gymnastic art was forgotten. In the Dark Ages there were sword fighting tournaments and of chivalry; and after gunpowder was invented sword fighting began to be replaced by the sport of fencing. There were schools of dagger fighting and wrestling and boxing.

Is it all Louise Hay's fault? Did her voluminous self-help tomes make pastors/priests/deacons/saints of us all? Did she give us keys to a new way of touching the Source/The Higher Power by showing us how to reach into our own Divine Soul via looking into a mirror and worshipping the self? And what better place to do this than a GYM! That's where these newly installed goddesses/gods maintain their inexhaustible energy/courage/gusto/chi/ki/strength/divine fabulousness. Ta dahhhh, at THE CHURCH OF THE GYM! This building of sweat-aholics provides some 15 hours a day access to bikes/weights/rowing machines/classes/and all this for a pittance when compared to what you might be expected to tithe at real churches. In comparison, the gym-church is a bargain.

WIKIPEDIA SAYS: ON TITHING

A **tithe** (/ˈtaɪð/; from [Old English](#): teogopa "tenth") is a one-tenth part of something, paid as a contribution to a religious organization or compulsory [tax](#) to government. Today, tithes are normally voluntary and paid in [cash](#), [cheques](#), or [stocks](#), whereas historically tithes were required and paid in kind, such as agricultural products. Several European countries operate a formal process linked to the tax system allowing some churches to assess tithes.

Traditional [Jewish law](#) and practice has included various forms of tithing since ancient times. [Orthodox Jews](#) commonly practice ma'aser kesafim (tithing 10% of their income to [charity](#)). In modern Israel, Jews continue to follow the laws of agricultural tithing, e.g., [ma'aser rishon](#), [terumat ma'aser](#), and [ma'aser sheni](#). In Christianity, some [interpretations of Biblical teachings](#) conclude that although tithing was practiced extensively in the [Old Testament](#), it was never practiced or taught within the [first-century Church](#). Instead, the [New Testament](#) scriptures are seen as teaching the concept of "freewill offerings" as a means of supporting the church.

CAST OF POSSIBLE CHARACTERS/INSTRUCTORS AT THE CHURCH OF THE GYM

1.The passive-aggressive instructor who unnecessarily turns on cold air AC to blow on already raynauded/agitated and stumbling seniors in the class. How to **cure**? Send Tonglen to the instructor and all of the shivering/suffering elders.

WIKIPEDIA SAYS: ON TONGLLEN

Tonglen ([Tibetan](#): གཏོང་ལེན; [Wylie](#): gtong len, or **tonglen**) is Tibetan for 'giving and taking' (or sending and receiving), and refers to a [meditation](#) practice found in [Tibetan Buddhism](#).

In the practice, one visualizes taking in the suffering of oneself and of others on the in-breath, and on the out-breath giving recognition, compassion, and succor to all [sentient beings](#). As such

it is a training in [altruism](#).

The function of the practice is to:

- reduce selfish [attachment](#)
- increase a sense of [renunciation](#)
- purify [karma](#) by giving and helping
- develop and expand [loving-kindness](#) and [bodhicitta](#)

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2. The hardly can walk-with- overdeveloped/ testosterone/ muscled instructor who calls the 5 elderly/kephosised/ grey haired elders in his class; GRANNIES!

How to **cure**? Send Loving Kindness to him and the women-elders.

WIKIPEDIA SAYS: ON METTA

Mettā meditation, or often loving-kindness meditation, is the practice concerned with the cultivation of Mettā, i.e. benevolence, kindness and amity. The practice generally consists of silent repetitions of phrases like “may you be happy” or “may you be free from suffering”, for example directed at a person who, depending on tradition, may or may not be internally visualized.

3. The highly developed/bosomed woman instructor who narcissistically enjoys her mammary endowments via the mirrored wall in front of her. We are not there for her. Her body is. How to **cure** me for even caring?

WIKIPEDIA SAYS: ON THE JESUS PRAYER

*The **Jesus Prayer** ([Greek](#): Η Προσευχή του Ιησού, i prosefchí tou iisou; [Syriac](#): ܩܪܘܢܐ ܕܝܫܘܥ, [Amharic](#), [Geez](#) and [Tigrinya](#): እግዚአብሔር ነኝ ክርስቶስ, Slotho d-Yeshu' ,) or "The Prayer" ([Greek](#): Η Ευχή, i efchí – literally "The Wish") is a short formulaic prayer esteemed and advocated especially within the [Eastern churches](#):*

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

The prayer has been widely taught and discussed throughout the history of the [Orthodox Church](#). The ancient and original form did not include the words, "a sinner," which were added later. It is often repeated continually as a part of personal [ascetic](#) practice, its use being an integral part of the [eremitic](#) tradition of [prayer](#) known as [Hesychasm](#) ([Ancient Greek](#): ἡσυχάζω, *isycházo*, "to keep stillness"). The prayer is particularly esteemed by the spiritual fathers of this tradition (see [Philokalia](#)) as a method of opening up the heart (*kardia*) and bringing about the **Prayer of the Heart** (*Καρδιακή Προσευχή*). The Prayer of The Heart is considered to be the Unceasing Prayer that the apostle [Paul](#) advocates in the New Testament. St. [Theophan the Recluse](#) regarded the Jesus' Prayer stronger than all other prayers by virtue of the power of the [Holy Name of Jesus](#).

4. The Venus of Willendorf/statuesque/busting out of her Yoga pants instructor who elicits gasps of unexhaled ecstasy from both male/female/transgendered students who push/shove and sink to the level of rude in order to get their Yoga matt near her "spot" in the front of the class. Making a purposefull mistake will bring her to you for a correction, I noticed. The **cure?**

WIKIPEDIA SAYS: ON NON-ATTACHMENT

The **three poisons** (*Sanskrit*: *triviṣa*; *Tibetan*: *dug gsum*) or the **three unwholesome roots** (*Sanskrit*: *akuśala-mūla*; *Pāli*: *akusala-mūla*), in [Buddhism](#), refer to the three root [kleshas](#) of [Moha](#) (delusion, confusion), [Raga](#) (greed, sensual attachment), and [Dvesha](#) (aversion, ill will).^{[1][2]} These three poisons are considered to be three afflictions or character flaws innate in a being, the root of [Tanhā](#) (craving), and thus in part the cause of [Dukkha](#) (suffering, pain, unsatisfactoriness) and rebirths.

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15. The fictional/non-fictional list goes on:

- The Zumba teacher who can't keep/step in time.
 - The one who once worked at an autistic institute and now loudly barks at us, "smile!"
 - The shouting, militaristic/fascistic instructor.
 - The one who keeps the music a decibel above causing permanent inner ear damage.
 - The ex-high school teacher who shouts, incessantly entertains and doesn't like to teach.
 - The one who can't help making lewdish innuendoes.
 - The instructor who sweats green under his arms onto his shirt.
- The **cure?**

WIKIPEDIA SAYS: ON HOME GYMS

Athletic and exercise venues of all sorts - schools, colleges, [YMCAs](#), private gyms (such as the [Vic Tanny chain](#)), and professional sports teams - acquired Universal Gym machines to supplement or replace free weights.

Zinkin wrote later, "If I'm proud of anything, it's that machine and the fact that there probably isn't one professional athlete in the world who hasn't worked out on a Universal at least once."

Universal also offered single-exercise machines, and smaller units for home use. With its strong brand recognition, Universal also made and sold other fitness equipment, including free weights, weight lifting benches, and machines for [cardiovascular exercise](#).

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We cant all have home gyms and so The local Church of The Gym and training ground for true happiness is for some, the only option. But like all options, all operas, all dramas, all day to day interactions, it is not only the instructors, the patriarchs in charge, that need a microscopic cleaning, it is us as well . For we, the participants are as tainted, as wrong, as irksome, as bothersome, as lost as our instructor-guides at The Church of the Gym. We (not I, of course) are a bunch of:

profuse sweaters
in crowdors
mean gossipers
off balanced elders
buffed teenagers
energy magnetizers
pushy OCD-ers
water wasting showerers
bad breathers
stinky underarmers
non-recyclers
maddening mumblers
rude pushers
iPhone abusers
loud mouthers
show offers
mental sabotogers
Yoga class farters

enemy avoiders
equipment ruiners
germ spreaders
bathroom stinkers
silent unforgivers
anorexic dieters
nursing home avoiders
clumsy seniors
lewd starers
social gabbers
annoying coughers
sloppy dressers
sweaty chair stainers
nipple starers
fierce overachievers
hysterical competitors
childcare overusers
muscle injurers
cancer survivors
self hurters
tight pants wearers
falling inattentioners
loud gabbers
exhibitionistic winners
non talkers
earbudded listeners
TV watchers
camel toers
medical info traders
nursing home avoiders
millennial flirts
women/men trolls
assisted living preppers
sciaticaed limpers
ailment complainers
teacher butter-uppers
nose blowers
butt leerers
serial socializers
endurance pushers
sex yearners

over extenders
attention demanders
entry cheaters
performance comparers
greedy space takers
bum sweating chair stainers
reckless weight lifters
judgmental non-forgivers
dangerous weight-bar droppers
sweat dribblers
and
equipment bogarters

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5. It is inevitable that you might walk into a Gym and witness one of the above displays of **WRONG** or **be** one of the above on any given day. But remember at The Church of the Gym, there is always a **cure**. Don't bogart!!!!

WIKIPEDIA SAYS: ON BOGART:

A variant of the [fedora \(hat\)](#)

"Bogart", a song by [Nik Kershaw](#)

"[Boggart SE](#)" is a [video editing software](#) for the Casablanca video editing systems and computers with the [Microsoft Windows](#) operating system, made by the German manufacturer [MacroMotion GmbH](#)

[to bogart](#), slang for keeping a marijuana cigarette for an unfairly long time while others are waiting (can also be applied to keeping anything for an unfairly long time)

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6. I often ask myself on my way to the gym how I can practice one of the above get out of jail prayers that I cited earlier? I know that I will see _____ and she will drive me cray-cray today so I have to say, "Remember to do tonglen, or do metta, or send angels, or at least smile!!! Be nice, talk nice Linda. " But then I see one of the rules being broken (see list above) or I see _____ and I remember, since the age of 7, having to tell my sins every Saturday in that smelly confessional box and these people have to know that I am a sin-detective and I see theirs, that's for sure. Note the list above perchance to see how much I really do see!! Why is that? I wish I could go there, do the sweating, enjoy the scene and leave in gratitude. But having been taught to pay attention to negative patterns at that early

age of 7, I am over trained and certainly ready, willing and able, to correct them, not me, for anything they do in and out of the Gym-Church. How I cure my propensity for power.

WIKIPEDIA SAYS: ON CONFESSION

The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation (commonly called Penance, Reconciliation, or Confession) is one of the seven [sacraments](#) of the Catholic Church (called [sacred mysteries](#) in the [Eastern Catholic Churches](#)), in which the faithful obtain [absolution](#) for the [sins](#) committed against [God](#) and neighbour and are reconciled with the community of the Church.^[a] By this sacrament Christians are freed from sins committed after [Baptism](#).^[1] The sacrament of Penance is considered the normal way to be absolved from [mortal sin](#), by which one would otherwise condemn oneself to [Hell](#).

As [Scriptural](#) basis for this sacrament, the [Catechism of the Catholic Church](#) says: "The words bind and loose mean: whomever you exclude from your communion, will be excluded from communion with God; whomever you receive anew into your communion, God will welcome back" (1445; [John 20:23](#)).

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7. TO CONCLUDE. I leave the Church of the Gym with new eyes having seen and confessed all of the sins enacted there. I did it so they don't have to confess or even have to know that they are disruptive and that they are bothering ME! The coast is clear, air is decontaminated, all is well and I now:

- a. KINDLY : **SMILE** when I smell the underarms of sweaty, teenage young men.
- b. KINDLY : **SMILE** when I see proud mothers guiding 3 year olds, in tutus, into the daycare room.
- c. KINDLY : **SMILE** when I hear unbearably loud music-sounds coming from the bicycle room.
- d. KINDLY : **SMILE** when I see Bob giving George a hug, congratulating him on the success of his brain surgery.

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CONCLUSION:

"All shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well." Saint Julian of Norwich

Linda Mary Montano 2017.....May we all be well.

34. THE REAL OPENING: AUGUST 2017

THE REAL OPENING; LINDA MARY MONTANO, AUGUST 2017

WIKIPEDIA SAYS:

"**ART:** Art is a diverse range of [human activities](#) in creating visual, auditory or performing artifacts ([artworks](#)), expressing the author's [imaginative](#) or technical skill, intended to be appreciated for their beauty or emotional power. In their most general form these activities include the production of works of art, the criticism of art, the study of the history of art, and the aesthetic dissemination of art.

The oldest documented forms of art are [visual arts](#), which include creation of images or objects in fields including today painting, sculpture, [printmaking](#), photography, and other visual media."

Schmoozing/drinking/eye avoiding/art acquiring/twin frocking/knowledge brandishing/social guffawing/eye meeting/body showing of plumage as well as cleavage are some of the activities that happen at art openings which occur at places housing sometimes great, sometimes good, sometimes mediocre, sometimes vacuous "art" for a day, week, month or sometimes forever.

At these gatherings, depending on the carriage of the presenting artist in question, hoards of culture aficionados and critics and rich millennials and those wanting to taste the appetizers crowd rooms teeming with objects d'art but what always transpires is not just art but a magical transfer of attention from the artist's work to the people looking at the artist's work.

It is totally embarrassing because it becomes a game of who's here, who's not here and there are always overheard, sniped, back handed comments like: "Oh Kevin, (nudge nudge) there's Karen. I thought that she and Ana broke up!" These not uncommon, mean spirited parlances and free floating quips about the artist, or quips about the other fan based guests there, or quips about the era that the art reminds them of, or quips about the methodology employed by the artist are often overheard as people cue to see the "ART." But wait, forget the artist's sculpture, forget the artist's tapestry because those non breathing objects are not really being seen but are recorded on iPhones for further perusal and then thrown up on Facebook as proof of one-up-man-shipped, envy producing attendance at this historic event. Almost with overarching pride the post might say: "Guess where I went Saturday night! To _____'s opening!!!! It was fabulous." (Inner voice: " Ha, ha.")

In the meantime, at the opening in question, performances of people crowding into intolerably hot, summer-of-no-AC rooms playing tribes-r-us, smelling each other's stale breath and very sweaty August weathered underarms wet with excitement and pheromones is what is really happening. And after all of that cajoling, that brushing against each other and after a pretty good champagne buzz comes the internal-secret mantra: "Hmmmmmmm maybe I wont go

home alone tonight." Art openings are about sex.

WIKIPEDIA SAYS:

"Belongingness is the human [emotional need](#) to be an accepted member of a [group](#). Whether it is family, friends, co-workers, a religion, or something else, people tend to have an 'inherent' desire to belong and be an important part of something greater than themselves. This implies a relationship that is greater than simple acquaintance or familiarity. The need to belong is the need to give, and receive attention to, and from, others.

Belonging is a strong and inevitable feeling that exists in [human nature](#). To belong or not to belong can occur due to choices of one's self, or the choices of others. Not everyone has the same life and interests, hence not everyone belongs to the same thing or person. Without belonging, one cannot identify themselves as clearly, thus having difficulties communicating with and relating to their surroundings."

Was that why I was there that hot August night? Was I in need of a hit of Belongingness? Not sure. All I do know is that I had morphed into teen angst and excitement because I might see "HER," that is the artist "showing" at the museum that night. A big cult favorite. In fact, I actually dressed a little better because I wanted to 1. meet "HER" for the first time and 2. co-celebrate our mutual friend who came to us both via a college internship. Those January and February months, a bright star young woman named R, brilliantly worked herself into our mutual art/lives. Yes that's why I was there, not to find someone to go home with but to see HER. And I would have said, because I rehearsed saying this: "How could someone so young (R) be so shining, be so smart, be so talented and so willing to joyfully help us both with our work?" I assumed and was assured by (R) that artist 1, (HER/SHE) was happy to get up in the morning and play art=life with R. I definitely was. So I was on the lookout, smelling the air. Where is SHE? I'm sure she will like me because I know R, right?

WIKIPEDIA SAYS:

"An **internship** is a job training for [white collar](#) and professional careers.

Internships for professional careers are similar in some ways but not as rigorous as [apprenticeships](#) for professions, trade and vocational jobs, but the lack of standardisation and oversight leaves the term open to broad interpretation. Interns may be college or university students, high school students, or post-graduate adults. These positions may be paid or unpaid and are usually temporary.

Generally, an internship consists of an exchange of services for experience between the student and an organization. Students can also use an internship to determine if they have an interest in a particular career, to create a network of contacts, to acquire a [recommendation letter](#) to add to their [curriculum vitae](#), or to gain school credit. Some interns find permanent, paid

employment with the organizations for which they worked upon completion of the internship. This can be a significant benefit to the employer as experienced interns often need little or no training when they begin regular employment. It also helps an employer in gauging a student's [aptitude](#), since [grade inflation](#) has undermined the reliability of academic grades. Unlike a [trainee](#) program, employment at the completion of an internship is not guaranteed."

Usually I run in and out of openings so as to avoid the schmoozing and slobbering pecks on cheeks but this one, not so. I was a girl on a mission. I wanted to tell HER about R, remember? Typically, in the past, never wanting to impinge on the privacy of the [artiste](#), I became an adept at giving and taking space, coming and going to openings in ninja fashion, always passing up the opportunity to net work for a show, chat up a colleague for a book contract or pass around a home-made business card to a dealer. There are reasons. Once, when I was in my twenties, I had overdone it with a "Famous" artist and embarrassed myself and so vowed never to do that again. How could I overdo it I wondered since that was so long ago and encounter styles, customs and methods of social interactions had changed? Now my exuberance was probably cool? Back then I smiled too broadly, talked about their work without knowing shit, I even alerted them to my new project in an unpronounceable back water village. By the way, the list of opportunities to bully another with one's equally great greatness is endless.

But I surprised myself that night by being glad to see a few friends, actually hugging three of them but was incessantly looking, scouting, keeping my eyes peeled for HER. Didn't she know that I had something important to tell her?

Because I don't chat people up, a term someone I know says she does and I notice that she does it ad nauseam, I finished all that I could do/see in the museum and then winds shifted as if I were enveloped in a cult classic movie scenario. I could FEEL IT. A storm was in the air and the psychic weather changed although it didn't create rain or hail or blow over precariously rooted trees. What I felt was a massive focus on ME! That is, people began looking at me in doppelganger fashion. WTF i'm not her!!! Was it my orange Kurta that stood out like neon in that all black world of art opening goes? Didn't they know that I never wanted to upstage the artist being honored that night? And then I got it, it wasn't my Kurta but my almost white HAIR!!!!!! They were hungry for HER white hair but I was so unconvincingly "convincing" as HER that the group began scapegoating me, suffocating me, wanting me, photographing me and one group of Asians even asked me to stand with their Doll daughter for a photo op because, "We LOVE Your work." (They were talking to HER in me.) I stupidly said, "I'm not HER," although i'm a doppelganger-Warholian adept and could have sucked up the mistaken identity and enjoyed the conceptual twist of transference. That is, their hunger for HER had morphed me into her double. It was all about the HUNGER FOR THE ART GENIUS. And when the friend I was standing with said, "Why are all these people photographing us?" I frantically ran for my car, frightening those folks still pouring in the gates, thinking the star of the show was leaving even before they got there. Confused by my fear-display, they clutched each other's hands tightly while walking up the hill in their search for HER, no doubt.

Once in my car, hyperventilating from the escape, I assured myself that honest to God, I didn't do it on purpose, I didn't wash my hair or style it to look like HER HAIR but that's what happens when you keep your fans waiting; they seize the moment and that night, I was a seized moment.

Another persona has been added to my growing list.

WIKIPEDIA SAYS:

"A **big-box store** (also **supercenter**, **superstore**, or **megastore**) is a physically large retail establishment, usually part of a [chain](#). The term sometimes also refers, by extension, to the company that operates the store. The store may sell general [dry goods](#), in which case it is a [department store](#), or may be limited to a particular specialty (such establishments are often called "[category killers](#)") or may also sell groceries, in which case some countries (mostly in [Europe](#)) use the term [hypermarket](#).

Typical architectural characteristics include the following:

- Large, free-standing, cuboid, generally single-floor structure built on a concrete slab. The flat roof and ceiling trusses are generally made of steel, and the walls are concrete block clad in [metal](#) or [masonry](#) siding.
- The structure typically sits in the middle of a large, paved parking lot, sometimes referred to as a "sea of asphalt." It is meant to be accessed by vehicle, rather than by pedestrians.^[1]
- [Floor space](#) several times greater than traditional retailers in the sector, providing for a large amount of merchandise; in [North America](#), generally more than 50,000 square feet (4650 m²), sometimes approaching 200,000 square feet (18,600 m²), though varying by sector and market. In countries where space is at a premium, such as the [United Kingdom](#), the relevant numbers are smaller and stores are more likely to have two or more floors.

Commercially, big-box stores can be broken down into two categories: general merchandise (examples include [Walmart](#) and [Target](#)), and specialty stores (such as [Menards](#), [Barnes & Noble](#), or [Best Buy](#)) which specialize in goods within a specific range, such as [hardware](#), [books](#), or [consumer electronics](#) respectively. In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, many traditional retailers—such as [Tesco](#) and [Praktiker](#) opened stores in the big-box-store format in an effort to compete with big-box chains, which are expanding internationally as their home markets reach maturity."

My car-tomb-studio became a cooling station of retreat and I thought while driving: is it because I was born in a small village, to a family verging on working class, having never gone on vacation with them as a child, or even to a restaurant, that I was 456% more comfortable

stopping at the big box Price Chopper to buy groceries and chat-up the woman shelving the green beans? That visit to her produced in me a much happier mental state than the one I felt going to that swanky opening for the arty entitled rich? She cried when she told me that she didn't get to say good-bye to her father in law who died suddenly at the VA hospital Friday night. He had COPD and had choked on a piece of chicken the week before.

WIKIPEDIA SAYS:

*In philosophy, **happiness** translates the Greek concept of [eudaimonia](#), and refers to [the good life](#), or flourishing, rather than simply an emotion.*

In psychology, happiness is a mental or emotional state of [well-being](#) which can be defined by, among others, positive or [pleasant](#) emotions ranging from [contentment](#) to intense [joy](#). Happy mental states may reflect judgements by a person about their overall well-being.

Since the 1960s, happiness research has been conducted in a wide variety of scientific disciplines, including [gerontology](#), social psychology, clinical and medical research and [happiness economics](#).

The [United Nations](#) declared 20 March the [International Day of Happiness](#) to recognise the relevance of happiness and well-being as universal goals."

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35. 12 STEPS OF PERFORMANCE ARTISTS ANONYMOUS

12 STEPS OF PERFORMANCE ARTISTS ANONYMOUS circa 2010: Linda Mary Montano

(All steps to be read in a whisper or slurred voice.)

1. We admitted that we are powerless over Performance Art and that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. We came to believe that an art greater than ours could restore us to sanity.
3. We made a decision to turn our will and loves over to the care of the Higher Artist as we understood that artist.
4. We made a searching and fearless inventory of our past performances.
5. We admitted to the Higher Artist, ourselves and another person the exact nature of our past performances.
6. We were ready to have the Higher Artist remove all of the defects of our art/life.
7. We humbly asked the Higher Artist to remove our shortcomings.
8. We made a list of audiences we had offended and critics we had outraged and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. We made amends and apologies except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. We continued to take personal inventory and when we had foolish performance

ideas/concepts, we promptly admitted it and didn't do that performance.

11. We sought through silence to improve our contact with the Higher Artist as we understood this Artist and asked to know this Artist's will. We also asked for the opportunity to do their Concept, not ours.

12. We tried to tell other performance artists about these principles and practiced them in every aspect of our art/life.

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36.

THE STORY OF THE GEL WRIST BRACELET

THE STORY OF THE GEL WRIST BRACELET, Linda Mary Montano 2017

WIKIPEDIA SAYS:

Gel bracelets, or jelly bracelets are an inexpensive type of [wristband](#) often made from Silicone. They come in a variety of colors, and several can be worn on each arm. They have been popular in waves throughout the [Western world](#) and elsewhere since the P1980s. One style of these wristbands, known as "awareness bracelets", carry debossed messages demonstrating the wearer's support of a [cause](#) or [charitable organization](#).

Maybe I went to see my neighbor. Maybe an elderly neighbor. Maybe my classmate from grade school. Whatever. Obviously I don't really want to reveal the reason but no maybe's about it, visiting the local nursing home is never anything but an occasion to participate in Buddhist/Hindu practices of Impermanence-R-Us. And revealing that my friend, my age is there with dementia is not an easy reveal. Not Maybe!! She is.

But always the spiritual seeker, I factored in and thought: isn't it true that Gurus/Rishis/Rimpoches/Lamas and aware spiritual teachers would send their chelas to graveyards to accelerate the student's focus/concentration/practice and dissuade clinging, desire and attachment to this mortal coiled body? Some charnel grounds were more Hollywoodesque than others, that is, in Tibet, nuns and monks would sit with the dead's severed body parts cut into smaller bites so the vultures would have an easier feeding frenzy. This nursing home was none of that, not a charnel ground but it was not the site of a girl scout sing along. It was a nursing home.

WIKIPEDIA SAYS:

The majority of [Tibetan people](#) and many [Mongols](#) adhere to Vajrayana Buddhism, which teaches the [transmigration of spirits](#). There is no need to preserve the body, as it is now an empty vessel. Birds may eat it or nature may cause it to decompose. The function of the sky burial is simply to dispose of the remains in as generous a way as possible (the source of the practice's Tibetan name). In much of Tibet and Qinghai, the ground is too hard and rocky to dig

a [grave](#), and, due to the scarcity of fuel and timber, sky burials were typically more practical than the traditional [Buddhist practice of cremation](#).

Although I pride myself on my ability to wear death on my left shoulder as Don Juan suggested in his Yaku Way, it is never really easy for me to witness, pass by, observe or try not to see toothless mouths open for air or a liquid meal; it is never easy to see anorexied elders cemented to wheel chairs or oversized lazy-boys; it is never easy to see elders silenced by off the chart medications or a big lunch; it is never easy to see the forgotten rehearsing death while maintained by harried, phone answering/poorly paid CNA's running down the hall to bring life back to one of their "residents" who might need to be toileted, fed, picked up from the floor, medicated, hoisted or turned.

Although I am always burning these scenes into my memory to be re-dreamed at night, prayed about at prayer, re-alyzed by video, re-told as written memoir or simply forgotten, I can never really disregard the images. One of my most burned into memory pictures is of the "tribe" of residents 3 feet from the circle-nursing-station, vying for added attention and never really watching the old movies projected from a neck-hurting high video screen...movies from the 30's and 40's when 40 women swam in swimming pool unison and men smoked Camels; movies that would bring the comfort of having ecstatically lived. At that scenario, always there would be an elder who wasn't drowsing, drooling or watching but calling Ma, Ma, Ma or Nurse, Nurse sonically and loudly, touretting it over and over before their voice of impotence was transformed into tearless, whimpering coughs in the pillow at night. For some that Final Silence would not come for dozens of years; years without hugs, cards, Domino's Pizza, beer or an ocean swim.

WIKIPEDIA SAYS:

Nursing facilities offer (by county planning process) the most extensive care a person can get outside a hospital, if one discounts regional medical centers, alternative programs in the community (sometimes now, medical homes, and 24 hour care programs), and the newer assisted living facilities. Nursing homes offer help with custodial care—like bathing, getting dressed, and eating—as well as skilled care given by a registered nurse and includes medical monitoring and treatments. Skilled care also includes services provided by specially trained professionals, such as physical, occupational, and respiratory therapists.

The services nursing homes offer vary from facility to facility. Services can include:

- [Room and board](#)
- *Monitoring of medication*
- *Personal care (including dressing, bathing, and toilet assistance)*
- *24-hour emergency care*
- *Social and recreational activities (posted schedules)*

Always swayed by seeing, I remember that I am mid 70's and am noticing people there younger than that! People who maybe did not ingest glycohytes or antibiotic milk as I do; people who bought Organic chicken and swam in private salt water pools as I don't; people there who watched the fecal count at local lakes and were well versed in the consequences of swallowing dirty water into their lungs. I do/don't. People there who knew about dry drowning. That is, people who once ate well, exercised, were professionally competent and now were the players in the dastardly days before the Endgame.

But I wasn't there to think about death but to see my classmate, now swept into delta waves way too early and silenced by her own mind-memories/drugs ordered by the medics in charge; silenced by her inactivity but most of all by an inner/secret desire to leave her unmendable nightmare?

I previously said I didn't want to see but I did see too much: the walk from the entrance door to my grade-school classmate's "pod" went past a 100 square foot dining room that encapsulate all of the best site specific qualities of a Bergman film, a scene richer in theological teachings than a \$550 a week Tibetan teaching on Phowa and Chud.

WIKIPEDIA SAYS:

Phowa has many different meanings; in Tibetan it means "transferring consciousness." The highest form is known as the phowa of the [dharmakaya](#) which is meditation on the great perfection. When you do Dzogchen meditation, there's no need to transfer anything, because there's nothing to transfer, no place to transfer it, nor anyone to do it. That's the highest, and greatest phowa practice.

When my inner and outer time stands still it's usually an indication that I am getting my money's worth. It indicates an Ahaa moment. And that day was a money's worth day because I got to look but not look because staring would be a sin and allowed only in zoos but not nursing homes. But I wasn't staring as I would in a zoo, I was caught in a zone of no return, a Satyajit Ray film approximation that included not only visuals but a sensorium of nursing home non-meat soft food aromas and equally scented faux gravy elixirs swimming next to blanched greyish once frozen/boiled to death green peas.

And there in that one room, all of them sat, eating. How many? I can't even estimate. I just know it was enough white hair to create a memory singed into my dream scape forever. They looked up in unison, tremoring spoons dancing in arthritic fingers; all of them dressed seemingly in the same dress/same sweater/wearing the same nursing home costume and coif. All of them eating in silence. All of them eating the same meal: meal number two. Probably their "Big Meal" with Wonder white Bread, ham and cheese coming later at 4:30 or 5pm. Meal three.

And there they sat, feeding mouths most likely sore from once meticulously secured but now poorly fitting dentures. There they ALL sat with mouths opening at odd angels. There they all

sat like good newborns approximating "aren't I a good baby" breast memories of their first milk. There they sat, content and either being fed by an aide or feeding themselves. There they sat not retired from eating but retired from law practices, retired from scientific research, retired from housewifery, retired from relationships, retired from accounting firms, retired from pastoral duties, retired from political activism, retired from life. Now they embraced, not by choice but because of advanced medical necessity, the only jobs left to them: eating, sleeping, going to the bathroom, eating, sitting, sleeping and eating.

I wasn't there to cry or judge. I wasn't there to shudder with the realization that this "might" be my fate one day. Simply put, I was there to visit a friend and by default and because of this view of the residents' syncopated and contented sameness, I was moved into a sincere sacredness, a silence, a concentration that was breathtaking. This was holy art at it's best and they were performing a slow-mo, high-level conscious awareness and syncopated magic that only Merce Cunningham dancers might approximate at a good gig. This was Holy Communion, the Eucharist secularized by generic time/space and everyday context.

WIKIPEDIA SAYS:

*The **Eucharist** (also called **Holy Communion** or the **Lord's Supper**, among other names) is a [Christian rite](#) that is considered a [sacrament](#) in most churches and an [ordinance](#) in others. According to the [New Testament](#), the rite was instituted by [Jesus Christ](#) during his [Last Supper](#); giving his disciples bread and wine during the [Passover meal](#). Jesus commanded his followers to "do this in memory of me" while referring to the bread as "my body" and the wine as "my blood". Through the Eucharistic celebration [Christians](#) remember [Christ's sacrifice](#) of himself on the cross.*

The elements of the Eucharist, [bread](#) (leavened or unleavened) and [wine](#) (or [grape juice](#)), are [consecrated](#) on an [altar](#) (or [table](#)) and consumed thereafter. Communicants (that is, those who consume the elements) may speak of "receiving the Eucharist", as well as "celebrating the Eucharist". Christians generally recognize a special presence of Christ in this rite, though they differ about exactly how, where, and when Christ is present.

And it was sacredly silent, like at Mass. None of the many, many synchronized eaters was squabbling; none were discussing the low price of chicken thighs at Sams Club; none were asking for a ride to a doctor appointment later that day; none of them wondered whose turn it was to do dishes. All of these issues were now moot points and the job at hand was to eat NOW and eat later at "supper" having eaten breakfast a few hours before. The job at hand was to sit with those exact same people at the exact same place and trance out while shoveling in soft meals meant for mastication-light.

Student that I am of paths to enlightenment, I noted that days at the nursing home are not much different from time that students of meditation devote to intense Sadhana (spiritual practice) in contemplative settings like monasteries, caves, contemplative convents and Tibetan/Hindu retreat rooms. Maybe, yes maybe I can scout out and try to locate that one or

maybe tenth person whose eyes betray their purpose, whose eyes gave light-out not took it in, whose eyes signaled me that, "Hey lady, guess what? This isn't such a bad deal. When your family sends you here we can hang out together? I sit/eat/shit/sleep/eat/sit but I also pray and use this safe and secret holy place to practice The Art/Life of Meditation." A hallucination? Believable message?

WIKIPEDIA SAYS:

The Hermit's Cave, situated on Scenic Hill on the northeastern outskirts of [Griffith, New South Wales, Australia](#), is in fact a complex of stone structures.

Misleadingly called 'The Hermit's Cave', the site in reality comprises a complex of shelters, terraced gardens, exotic plants, water-cisterns, dry-stone walling and linking bridges, stairways and paths that stretch intermittently across more than a kilometre of the escarpment. Made single-handedly by a reclusive Italian migrant, Valeri Ricetti, these structures involved the moving of hundreds of tons of stone and earth, together with the ingenious incorporation of natural features in the landscape.

As my friend Karen and I left the nursing home after visiting our once critical-care-nurse-classmate, I heard someone say as they ran to rescue me, "Mam, Mam, you can't leave here! let me see your wrist band!" Turning around I realized that she wanted to shepherd me back inside, thinking I was delusionally abandoning ship. She grabbed for my left wrist. But I, not quite ready to give up all of the creature comforts of my second hand clothes stuffed into three different closets; or give up my car that jettisoned me all over Ulster County; or give up the thrill of owning and paying for my iPhone and computer which had become surrogate plastic friends-in-a-box . I was not ready to join their secular "monastery" and surrender my ability to be able to walk to Church, the bank, the grocery store, the park; and I certainly was not ready to give up my magical back yard and those 5 glorious trees.... my nature family in disguise.

I assured her that I was not escaping, although a sucker for signs that I am, for a moment I thought her right.

My wristband says PRAY, HOPE, DON'T WORRY: PADRE PIO

Maybe theirs says, POD OF NO RETURN

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37. THE STORY OF CHICKEN LINDA 1969-PRESENT

THE STORY OF CHICKEN LINDA: 1969-PRESENT LINDA MARY MONTANO 2005

BACKSTORY

Is it possible that because my father's name is Henry (Hen) and that I remember the urban

non-legend that he filled his mother's kitchen with live chickens in retaliation for her not letting him go to the movies back in 1920, the reason that I became the Chicken Woman? Like father, like daughter?

Is it possible that my mother's glass chicken collection that grew exponentially since they were chatkas that she collected so influenced my psyche, that I wanted to be included in my mother's love-collection and became the Chicken Woman instead? Love me Mom!

ART STORY

From 1966-1969, I was an MFA candidate in sculpture at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, during the terribly strict and cold minimal art reign where there were only two other women grads catapulting off of the energy of sweaty big boys who were making highly ordered and large-scaled metal, plastic and quonset hut sized atrocities that were soulless and had nothing to do with anything but stuff and ideas and galleries! It was not girl time or feminist art time or Womans Building time. It was about the boys and of course there were no female professors so I was not surprised when I was assigned four cowboy-swashbuckler professors who smelled of even sweatier sweat and cowboy boots and beer and quiet no-language which totally suited my cowgirl heart. And to fill out the cowgirl-cowboy fantasy, I was enthralled when I discovered that UMW had an agricultural component to their campus, so I was able to freely and daily find solace in my visits to animals and there I found a refuge and escape from minimalist hubris!

So one Wisconsin day the four cowboy professors/committee members came clunking into my studio and asked, "Linda what are you going to do for your MFA show?" And out of my mouth, not out of my mind came the word, "Chickens!!" I was elated and freed from metal, plastic and size! I was free to be free and follow the voice that came from not me but from someplace else that was larger than me! Then the chicken story and saga began in full force and I made a series of hand tinted photos of chickens that I might still be able to find in my archive; I made sound tapes of chickens, rented a loudspeaker for the top of my car and rode around Madison playing chicken clucks; I put a telephone answering service on my phone with a chicken message; I vacuum formed once clayed chicken thigh replicas which were 2x4 feet, and hung them on the wall near the windows facing the chickens on the roof; I made three 20 feet by 10 feet chicken cages and placed them on the roof of the new art building with 9 chickens in chance operated formations of one day 3 in cage 1 and 6 in cage 3 thereby speaking to and addressing my alliance with the minimilist-boys and their sensibility of "large"....but most importantly, I relieved myself of the need to ever again do art about art! I was free and freed by CHICKENS AS SCULPTURE!

What I found out was that chickens were metaphoring me! Chickens were skittish, fearfull, not touchable, strange, focused, always working the program, not social, pecking fast with beaks, and seemd to be extremely ZENISH in their attitude to life! A perfect fit for my personal style. And I loved that they were supposedly once the dinosaur minituraized and cast down in size from the giant of the jungle to the strange bird but always with the thought inside their small brains that they were once mighty! Also chickens in Hindu mythology symbolize death and dawn....The beginning and the end. That works for me.

What happened to the chickens? Three chicken stories: after the show I gave them to the art department janitor and he started a farm and before that, during my show, I didnt fight the system or my cowboy-committee so when they wanted; "THOSE CHICKENS OFF THE ROOF!"

I allowed them to be moved from their cages when the UWM donors toured the new art building because the administration feared that the chickens might cause scandal and encourage the donors to de-fund the million dollar department, a fortune for 1969! The power of the chicken!

And in 1981 I printed my first book,ART INEVERYDAY LIFE, which included many chicken stories that "run" throughout the pages.

What happened to me? Besides learning how to be me after my MFA, I began studying meditation, met my husband to be and after showing dead chickens from a supermarket in a gallery installation in Rochester NY,1980, I got the message that it was time to STOP!

My husband and I began performing as white leghorns without beaks, with wings and instead of duplicating frantic chicken-like actions, we lay as "angels" and a few years later, I sat and danced and the whole entire San Francisco story of Chicken Woman came to LIFE. See www.lindamontano.com for more.

CHICKEN WOMAN IS ALIVE AND WELL

I have always continued to draw my totem with great joy and as a way to harbinger dawn.

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38. LECTURE ABOUT TIME: TIME IN GENERAL

LECTURE ABOUT TIME, 1990

LECTURE: ABOUT TIME

TIME IN GENERAL

This paper is divided into six sections:

1. Time in general.
2. My use of time in performance.
3. Reasons for using time.
4. Time and the university.
5. Timelessness in Eastern Thought as explained by Daepak Chopra and Dr. Ramamurti Mishra.

DEFINITION OF TIME:

In childhood there is not time, only the feeling of space, expansion and infinite possibility. Time is a concept that is taught. learned and defined in Webster's dictionary in a six inch column, using miniscule type. It reads, "Time is the measured or measurable period during which an action, process or condition exists or continues." Another says, "Time is a continuum which lacks spatial dimension and in which events succeed one another from past to present to the future."

Once I lost the feeling of space in childhood, I began romancing time because my life became a series of thoughts about events instead of mythological journeys, the mental food of a child. As a good Catholic girl I monitored my mental, physical and emotional responses to life so that I could avoid sinning by thought, word or deed. In the process I began to appropriate and play with time and controlled it with the same intensity that I controlled my actions. I counted, watched clocks, competed with time by giving myself temporal deadlines. I would clock off minutes and seconds and make rules. For example I would say that I would move or not move by the count of 2. In retrospect I realize that I was enjoying a control and power that allowed for a deep mental and poetic intimacy and spaciousness. Time became my playmate and my friend. It was a doll and obedient servant.

2. MY USE OF TIME IN MY ART:

In the 70's, I transformed time into matter. I molded it, sculpted it, painted with it, designed with it. It was how I always structured my art.

3. REASONS FOR USING TIME IN MY ART:

By durating as art for extended periods of time, I found that among other things, I was able to affect my physical chemistry. Basically my art was a cheap drug and time was the pill. Athletes use running, I use duration and it's been found that long term activity releases histamines and adrenaline into the bloodstream and that leads to a cessation of pain. Joseph Preville in the book, Human Physiology, theorizes that endorphins, enkephalins and dynorphins bind to opiate receptors in the brain and body, triggering a series of physiological events that induce narcotic effects like drowsiness, hallucinations and the inhibition of stress or distress. I used art to change my mood.

4. TIME AND THE UNIVERSITY:

Before I took a full-time tenure track university teaching position at The University of Texas, Austin three and a half years ago, my work was devoted full-time to large scale projects. I made my living by teaching part-time and working part-time at blue collar jobs.

When I came to the University I had already completed Tehching Hsieh's ART/LIFE: ONE YEAR PERFORMANCE. We were tied together for a year by an eight foot rope, never touching. And I had completed six years of a chakra experience titled, 7 YEARS OF LIVING ART.

I took this job knowing that I could do two things at once. That is I could continue to perform ANOTHER SEVEN YEARS OF LIVING ART and keep the three part commitment that the University asks of its professors:

A commitment to private research, performance and books.

A commitment to teaching, office hours and seeing students doing independent studies.

A commitment to 5 administrative committees.

The world is my studio and my life is art. So logistically, teaching is my art as was suggested by Joseph Beuys whose theory of Social Sculpture expanded the concept of art. His classes at the Dusseldorf Academy were

sculpturally forming artists for life on every level. He says, "Artists must be kneaded from top to bottom. We are malleable and might turn out to be an agriculturists, doctors, computer scientists, police officers, mothers but always the artist."

5. TIMELESSNESS

I will not stop dreaming. If the dream is too big for the University job, I will have to leave even though I love and am addicted to the security, the health insurance and the dental plan. And my students.

Never a team player, I might have to leave having been on my own since 1970 and never learning how or wanting to spend "time" with the other members of the team. I do life My Way.

The muse is timeless and more powerful than money and if I hear her call for me to recalibrate and follow The Path of Space and leave the University, I will do so and then design a new way to consciously prepare for my last performance: The Performance of The death of the Body and Mind.

Without Time, there is only Space.

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39. DO YOU WANT TO GO TO JAIL...LINDA MARY MONTANO

DO YOU WANT TO GO TO JAIL?

WRITTEN by Linda Mary Montano

TRANSCRIBED by Sophie Strand

"A senior monk I know spent 17-18 years in Chinese prison after 1959. In the 1980s he was released and was able to join me in India. Once, when we were chatting about his experiences he told me that there had been dangerous moments during his imprisonment. I thought he meant threats to his life, but he said, 'No, there were times when there was a danger of my losing compassion for my Chinese captors.'" The Dalai Lama

It was my father's inspiration! That's why I went to jail! Henry Joseph Montano was a strict but saintly Roman Catholic with a fierce devotion to the church and because I was his caregiver for 7 years when he was in his late 80's, I both observed/participated in his world. Getting to know him later in my own life was a joy because as a young Dad, he was busy feeding/clothing/housing us and I knew only that father. As his caregiver later on, I was honored to be mentored by his spiritual practices by taking him to daily Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, and Confession. I didn't just take him places, I followed in his footsteps. As a result, I re-remembered my two years as a nun, I re-remembered that I fainted after receiving Holy Communion when I was ten, I re-remembered Saturday afternoons when I would carry my child-sins to the priest who sat behind the wooden grill in the Confessional. I re-remembered

the smell of intoxicating incense. I re-remembered the male priests sashaying / processing down church aisles absconding with the power.

Dad would say to me at morning Mass when I was in my 60's, as if I were 12 again, actually he would more than say, he would nudge me when it was time to bring the "gifts" of unconsecrated water and wine to the altar. The nudge was his prompt for me to participate in the workings of the Church. So, there I was at 6:45 a.m. Mass having driven Dad there. There I was bringing the water and wine or communion wafers up to the male priest. There I was recalibrating my early devotional habits and addictions to actions that articulated and nourished my once young soul. There I was playing saint and holy girl. With my devoted to God, Dad!

Devotion to saints, with the [Virgin Mary](#) as the most prominent example, is a key characteristic of Roman Catholicism. Catholic devotions have various forms, ranging from formalized, multi-day prayers such as [novenas](#) to activities which do not involve any prayers, such as [Eucharistic adoration](#) outside Mass, the wearing of [scapulars](#), the veneration of the saints, the [Canonical coronations](#) of sacred Marian or Christological images and even horticultural practices such as maintaining a [Mary garden](#).

Common examples of Catholic devotions include the [Rosary](#), the [Stations of the Cross](#), the [Sacred Heart](#) of Jesus, the [Holy Face of Jesus](#), the various scapulars, the [Immaculate Heart of Mary](#), [Our Lady of Guadalupe](#), [Seven Sorrows of Mary](#), novenas to various saints, [pilgrimages](#) and devotions to the [Blessed Sacrament](#), and the veneration of [saintly images](#). Wikipedia.

His death at 92 was from a hemorrhagic stroke but while he was still alive and in decline, I was the manager of the 978,000 capable and loving caregivers who took care of him during his twenty-four-seven bedbound care at home for three years. After his death, I was paralyzed, bereft, left with consuming grief, guilt, rage, and a need to keep Dad alive. I missed my friend. Isn't that the usual post-death Elizabeth Kubler Ross scenario? So becoming a Eucharistic Minister of the Catholic Church seemed like a logical and healing segue and strategy to honor Dad's fervent loyalty to his mystically grounded Roman Catholicism. Good Catholic, just like Dad, I did become one and was carefully trained by a Vietnamese priest for a significant number of months. At the installation of our "Ministry", I was given an Eucharistic Minister pin, prayer book, and then got to decide how I would participate in my newfound service to the Church which now allowed me to play priest! And although I could not turn wine into Jesus' blood and bread into his body, a transubstantiation event allowed to ordained clergy, I could bring, carry, drive, or walk a Host to parishioners who couldn't leave their own homes, couldn't leave a hospital room, couldn't leave a nursing home, couldn't leave a rehab center to receive Communion. There was one other option: the Eucharistic Minister could give communion to parishioners by standing next to the priest at Mass and by doing so, become a baby, mini priest, a make believe priest, giving out Communion just like the big priest! And for women who felt called to this vocation of "being a Catholic priest," being a Eucharist Minister is doppelganger

heaven. So I became a faux one, and the Eucharist Minister coordinator who is originally from Holland, asked me if I knew where I wanted to “serve”. I knew it was not at church or at a hospital or nursing home or rehab or at Mass and told her so. She then, with a thick Dutch accent said to me, “Linda. Do you want to go jail?” What? Me go to jail? What for, I'm a fabulous person! That is I had no idea what she meant but I laughed so hard at her invitation to go to jail. And then I got it and thought, why not? I could go to jail and help people, expiate my own former guilts and make God happy, all at the same time. I said, “Yes! I want to go to jail.” Performance artist that I am, I was quick enough NOT to say, "I want to go to jail," but was thinking of saying want for sure. So there I was, all signed up to be a volunteer at the women's section of the local jail.

Eucharistic Minister, or more properly "Lay Eucharistic Minister LEM", is used to denote a lay person who assists the priest in administering the sacraments of holy communion, the consecrated bread and wine. They may also take the sacraments to those who are ill, or otherwise unable to attend Mass. Wikipedia

GOING TO JAIL

The coordinator gave me the contact number for the Deacon who was in charge of Jail Ministry so I called him and arrived one Saturday at the jail where I met the two female Saint-Volunteers who had been going there for eons. It was the most medieval, scary, primitive, and ghoulish building in the universe – the **old jail**; the kind of building that you see online on Facebook that is so incorrect that it shames animal abusers who run questionable puppy mills. For your information, I am hardly ever scared of anything having survived the burning Ghats of Benares; having survived hitchhiking in Spain with a female friend after the running of the bulls in Pamplona avoiding gang rape by visibly fingering my Virgin Mary medallion that hung around my neck; having survived, at 21, finding a place to live after travelling alone on a train from Paris to Florence, sleeping on my pocketbook; having survived anorexia and shrinking from 145 to 80 pounds, growing feral hair and completely messing up my period forever; having survived Dystonia and the 4 times a year needles filled with Botox(rat poison?) injected into my trembling neck.

I tell you these horror stories to prove to you that I'm no sissy. I've been there and done that, been around the block, and ridden in many questionable, dangerous “rodeos” so when I say the old jail was beyond the worst fetid spot in the Ganges where tortoises are known to eat half-cremated bodies, you know this jail was really bad and WRONG and housed holding cells that were dark with centuries of women's tears and menstrual blood, dark with DNA flying in the air, dark with smells of missed opportunities and lost dreams. Let me try to describe it to you. Not designed for privacy there was one big, barred and open room, housing about 12 women, with that many bunk beds and a small, open room to the side with a stinky toilet. I am so distressed remembering the room that I can't remember if the bathroom had a door or not.

Too freaked to be clear. I think it didn't. The women seemed to be in serial, horror movie mode; seemingly mad, disheveled, noisy, demonically angry and shouting/talking over each other. Was their hair matted? I think yes. Their punishment was fitting something – definitely not the crimes.

Across from that big room where the group of women were incarcerated all together were three “rooms” divided by bars just as fetid and horrible. Each was about 12 by 12 and had a metal bed and an open toilet. They were in a horizontal row so the women had to see each other, watch each other, hear each other in their private, barred cage all day and night. Lights 24-7. It was the world of no privacy from each other and no escape from the presence and gaze of a Robert Crumb look-alike woman guard wearing guard like clothes from the tenth century. She sat in bored stupefaction at a small school desk or maybe a table, watching these three women 24/7; watching them sleep, watching them eat, watching them shit, watching them fart, watching them piss. Sharon and Jan walked through this bedlam like Mother Teresa at her Calcutta house of the dying, blessing with compassion, nice words and smiles. I followed and watched, aghast.

I may be fabricating this third memory but I think that the last “room” was for women who had newborns. And also for suicide watch, a phenomena where the inmate is left alone in the cell with only a blanket and the stare of a guard outside the cell 24-7. It resembled the other cells in horribleness but had three block walls and bars in the front of the cell, which made it an upgrade and sacred space for Mother and Child? Or a woman on the verge of suicide? I know when I was there, there was talk of a woman who had just had a newborn in that more “private” room, a few feet from the loud jabbering, street talk and groans of the other women in the hood/vicinity. I can’t check these details out with anyone because our team of three is now dispersed. Sharon died suddenly of a heart attack at a Stewarts, one mile from the jail, and I am out of touch with Jan. My memories are solo and unchecked, so I have taken artistic license in at least one story. You will guess which one it is when you read it. It wasn't this one.

One reason why jails have a higher suicide rate (46 per 100,000 in 2013) than prisons (15 per 100,000¹) is that people who enter a jail often face a first-time “[shock of confinement](#)”; they are stripped of their job, housing, and basic sense of normalcy. Many commit suicide before they have been convicted at all. According to the BJS report, those rates are seven times higher than for convicted inmates. [Maurice Chammah](#) and [Tom Meagher](#)

So every Saturday, later on it was Sunday, we would ring a bell, get buzzed in, sign in, and pass through a hazing ritual of seeming laughs and guffaws and what the hell are you doing here looks from the having eaten donuts and lots of them attending guards. The donut eating words are not fair, but a cheap shot at these always sitting, just as jailed men who gain weight from

the stress of a job where their life is often compromised by sudden attack, violence and death itself. Trauma induces cortisol=weight. "We're the Eucharistic Ministers," Sharon, our Irish spokeswoman would shout. "We're the Eucharist Ministers." And if the guards were in the spirit of cooperation they would immediately and semi-happily go to the women's pod to those God awful cells and yell, "Catholic Service! Catholic Service for women!" Sometimes we talked to them, prayed with them in those back rooms of terror that I told you about but more often we would stand in the hallway and watch as ten to twelve unenthusiastic convicts would seemingly march in soporific and guilted by association single file with male supervision to the most God awful, ugly room I have ever been in. And there we would sit around an oversized table with chairs too short so our arms couldn't reach the table top and the three of us would offer our individual "strengths". Sharon, who had the Irish gift of storytelling, would often share recipes / dog and cat stories and very useful jail knowledge, having been trained as a social worker. Jan would talk about the Virgin Mary and her backyard statue and memories of her grandchild crowning Mary with flowers. Another perk was that she promised to pray to Mary for **all** of us when she went back home, assuring miracle results. Jan, the Montessori teacher, was love itself! I, on the other hand, always insisted in good nun fashion, that we concentrate ON-THE-PRAYERBOOK AND-DO-WHAT-WE-CAME-TO-DO, which translates, give them God, give them religion! My let's-get-this-show-on-the-road-and-do-what's-correct attitude helped nothing or no one. I was often not a happy camper because I didn't feel as if we did anything Churchy! The scene was way too human! My two kind mentors never corrected Linda the ex-nun.

Prayer is an invocation or act that seeks to activate a rapport with an object of worship through deliberate communication. Wikipedia

Old Jail Story

One Saturday, I was guilty of absolute inappropriate slippage that happened when I graduated from the stern enforcer of you-must-pray-because-we-are-the-Eucharist-Ministers-and-that's-why-we're-here-to-make-sure-you-get-religion. I was inspired that day to act out one of my personas because a shadow-self appeared without my permission. She/he was the Heyoka /Sacred Clown / Troublemaker / Performance Artist. The energy in the room must have been bipolarish or maybe the saint-Priest Father K. was not with us that day to say Mass. Maybe it was around the holidays and the women (guards called them the girls) were pepped up about something, but I do know there was a totally wild and wondrously incredibly out-of-order inmate in that small, smelly, stuffy meeting room filled with orange-clad sad girls. And one was ready to rumble! Remember these were inmates in jail for everything from prostitution to drugs to selling drugs to unspeakable othernesses. There were tormented, abused, psychotic women chained by life circumstances waiting to go before the courts for further sentencing to

half-way houses, prison, parole, community service, re-hab, probation or FREEDOM! So they had a lot on their bored and worried minds. A lot to consider, a lot to regret.

We don't know what that cuckoo/ninja woman was in jail for or where she might be sentenced to, or what her mind-state was, or if she was just freaked out from that unspeakable JAIL but there was definitely a felt energy in the room and I pulled rank, stopped being an Eucharist Minister, got caught in the whirlwind of her unleashed volcanicity and started teaching them karate punches and kicks thinking that it would be therapeutic. Duh! I unwisely intuited that homeopathically mirroring controlled, conscious movement that "looked like" so called violence, would be of value. Violence curing violence. But I was not correct because a tornado of something I couldn't handle exploded and escalated with each taught punch! The air electrified. Consciousness and common sense was thrown to the winds and, honest to God, I am not lying, I am not fabricating, I am not making this up, I am not elaborating, but this really happened: the wild woman jumped from the floor to the top of a full sized, metal filing cabinet in one fell swoop without stepping on an intermediary object and began acting out aggressively, wildly, manically, as if possessed while standing semi-erect on top of the filing cabinet!! You know how tall those metal filing cabinets are, right? Luckily that room had a call button to alert the guards to come at once and I'm not sure if Sharon or Jan pushed it but within a minute a male guard was in the room, patriarching madness into order and not asking her to get off the filing cabinet but demanding by his presence and calm authority that she jump down. She did. Time stopped. I was abashed, internally red-faced, embarrassed, and yet forgiven so sweetly by Sharon and Jan who more than once had told me, "Not many people who come to join us as an Eucharistic Minister last very long". I often wondered if that comment was a hint that it was OK for me to leave, turn in my Minister pin and retire from service. But no, I didn't. I'm an endurance artist!! I arrived that next Saturday, deferring to these senior sisters of mine who had been coming to the jail for fifty years between them. My hat was off and in my hands. My head was bowed.

[Mentally ill](#) people are overrepresented in [United States jail and prison populations](#) relative to the general population. There are three times more seriously mentally ill persons in [jails](#) and [prisons](#) than in [hospitals](#) in the United States. The exact cause of this overrepresentation is disputed by scholars; proposed causes include the deinstitutionalization of mentally ill individuals in the mid-twentieth century; inadequate community mental health treatment resources; and the criminalization of mental illness itself. The majority of prisons in the United States employ a [psychiatrist](#) and a [psychologist](#). While much research claims mentally ill offenders have comparable rates of [recidivism](#) to non-mentally ill offenders, other research claims that mentally ill offenders have higher rates of recidivism. Mentally ill people experience [solitary confinement](#) at disproportionate rates and are more vulnerable to its adverse psychological effects. Twenty-five states have laws addressing the emergency detention of the mentally ill within jails, and the [United States Supreme Court](#) has upheld the right of inmates to mental health treatment. Wikipedia

Things I Learned From The Old Jail

1. The punishment doesn't always fit the crime because some women were in this medieval torture chamber for having stolen a box of Tampons from Walmart. This jail was not made for that crime.
2. Put forty women in a hell hole and they will feel and act like they are in hell.
3. Take away bathroom privacy from forty jailed women and you encourage constipation and hemorrhoids.
4. Don't you think that forty women living 24/7 cramped into deplorable conditions, lights on, would be traumatized forever?
5. The first thing you see when you enter the women's pod as a volunteer/ lawyer/ medical person, are hungry, begging, starved, Auschwitz-like pleading eyes and dirty hair.
6. Even if it didn't smell like fear, menstrual blood, farts, dirty hair, and sweaty feet, the Old Jail's women's pod seemed to or could have smelled like all of the above. Suffering smells.
7. Maybe the Old Jail was a good thing? Who would ever want to break the law and return to that snake pit?

Performing at the Old Jail

How many years I went once a year to that torture chamber? I don't remember. But when the new jail was "rebuilt" from scratch in stockade fashion almost directly across the road using

multi-million/ trillion / billion /gazillion dollars of taxpayers' money, everything changed. It was a whole different story, a whole different ballgame. But before exiting and erasing the terrible, terrible old jail memories and moving onto the new jail, I must admit that I left it as both a Eucharist Minister and as a performance artist. That is, I came back to the now empty old jail as an artist and not just a holy volunteer. How did this happen?

Every year this small city showcases sculpture publically and, most often in outside spaces. The year Beth Wilson, an art historian, curated the sculpture show, she invited me to participate and since I claim sculpture as my first love and performance as my second choice I submitted myself as “living sculpture” inside the empty Old Jail; inside one of those dingy, dirty, nasty, smelly, disgusting cells. Those same light-less cells housed or trapped, barred women, who by God would be scared straight by their incarceration there and would never want to do anything bad ever again if it meant coming back to the Old Jail.

The performance I designed was titled “Lighten Up” and I sat there inside one of the cells, shackled by my commitment to performance art time and committed to my vow to heal myself and others via art. Was it three hours? Seven Hours? All I remember is that I sat there, in costume, assisting visitors to laugh with and at their personal, private issues that they verbally shared with me. Was our contrived screeching, laughter and sonic exorcism of plugged up terror held inside by the women who lived there over the years an effective strategy and pain remover? Did it ameliorate and scare away any leftover, sad demons still present in that slime dripping environment? Thank God, Kathe Izzo, the Love Artist, was outside the cell I was in, offering comfort to those who had experienced laughter as healing with me. I think she gave them a piece of bread when they came out.

https://youtu.be/wWDu9KHf_LY



[Lighten Up](#)

[youtu.be](https://youtu.be/wWDu9KHf_LY)

Lighten up Linda Mary Montano Performance Art
Humor Laughing Jail

The New Jail

The newness of the New Jail built on a supposed swamp was a 4000% step up visually from the Old Jail. In fact it was almost spa-like in comparison to the one across the road. The visuals / cleanliness alone covered up the stench of bodies co-menstruating, covered up the loneliness of inmates who now slept two to a private room-cell with a closed door; covered up desperation with its constant blaring T.V.; covered up isolation with its cold all-metal picnic meal tables where groups /gangs could sit and eat crappy jail food together. It also housed a not-too-shabby meeting room where the weekly Bruderhoff volunteers and Eucharistic Ministers met with those who "wanted to do something" to break the tension, to break the monotony, to break the girl fights, to break the T.V.! And I almost cry when I think back to another space; the empty "gym" room next to the meeting room, which had a horizontal crack of open space cut into the wall which allowed a slit of sunlight to enter at Mother Nature's whim. Not one stick of exercise equipment. Often we would come in on a Sunday morning, and see women lying on their backs with their heads strategically placed so that their faces could receive a quarter of an inch of sunlight. I don't cry much but I would cry inside when I saw this. This reminds me of the ONLY GOOD THING ABOUT THE OLD JAIL: there, the inmates were allowed to go to the fenced in, barbed wire yard and feel air. The only good.

Things were looking up at the new jail. The priests said Mass once a month, the same as they did at the old jail. A writing club met periodically. A How To Mother group, organized by Sharon, met then disbanded and then met again. All in all, this environment insisted that everyone was a model prisoner not because they were but because the jail looked 4,792 % better than the old jail which made everyone there a player in one of Dante's deep, dark circles of no good. Here, the inmates looked pretty good!

At the New Jail, everything was an entirely different deal. We went to, if I remember correctly, an all day or maybe an orientation of some hours. Of course I had been police and legally vetted and checked for any infractions when I began my volunteer work at the Old Jail. But because this was a spanking new building, things got tighter, more efficient, and much more autocratic. That is, the signing in was much more rigorous and then we passed through four, or was it five, alarmed and locked safety doors, pushing buttons while being watched by a computer command center someplace in the bowels or attic of this jail. How classic movie fare is that? Going up the elevator to the second floor women's pod was always a crap shoot because sometimes there were "shy" inmates pushing humungous lunch containers delivering jailhouse mystery meat and Wonder Bread to the men's pod or women's pod. Jailhouse meat was not meat. Sharon would smooth things over nicely, making small talk and Irish jokes about the hash and chicken, giving these bad boys a taste of civilian street talk. Note that women convicts

were not allowed in the kitchen nor were they given “jobs” proving that misogyny never ends. Just saying.

So we got off the elevator, walked left down the 50 foot hall, got buzzed through one thick, glass door, stood inside a 5 x 5 foot waiting area then got buzzed into the women’s pod which is an approximately 120 x 100 foot, double-story room with closed door rooms-cells against the side walls. That is, there are two floors, two decks. I hope that you can picture this. Let me say it more clearly because it is somewhat unbelievably lacking in common sense and safe design and for that reason I want you to feel how danger could ignite in this room. As soon as you enter, you see the back of a woman, most often a female guard, but sometimes a male guard which excited the women into flutters of estrogen. The guard was always sitting 12 feet from the door at a 40,000 dollar computer. This one instrument and this one female officer “controlled” the entire scene, touching a button on the computer and letting women in and out of their cells when they wanted to go to the bathroom. This one woman fielded questions, quieted skirmishes, demanded submission, kept her bionic eye on fidgety women, and the machine at the same time. And nobody was watching her literal back! Remember those 12 feet in back of her? Some guards/officers were able to double/ multi-task. Some not. Some were saints. Some yelled. Some scary because probably frightened for their lives for good reason.

Newly appointed Correction Officer Trainees will be required to participate in, and satisfactorily complete, all requirements of a 12-month training program before they can advance to Correction Officer. As part of the program, recruits will attend the Correctional Services Training Academy for a minimum of eight weeks of formal training. Paid training at the Academy will include academic courses in such areas as emergency response procedures, interpersonal communications, firearms, unarmed defensive tactics, legal rights and responsibilities, security procedures, and concepts and issues in corrections. Recruits will also receive rigorous physical training to develop fitness, strength and stamina. To physically qualify, it is necessary to perform seven sequential job related tasks in two minutes and fifteen seconds or less. Failure in any of the tasks will result in the recruit failing to meet the agency qualification standards and, accordingly, being dismissed from the Academy. The test is administered during the final week of the training program at the Academy. A thorough explanation and demonstration of the course, and an opportunity for a trial run, will precede the final test. ^{Wikipedia}

So the three of us, dressed like ex-nuns, that is not flashy although Jan always looked fabulous, would get buzzed in, walk 12 feet to the computer station which was 12 feet long and 3 feet wide. Inmates were able to walk in back of the guards to heat up their coffee at the only microwave in the room. How scary is that? Go figure. If she wasn’t busy scolding, breaking up a

potential rumble or buzzing someone into their semi-private thick doored cell for a supposed Tampon change, we would say hello, force her to look up by our non-orange clothed presence, and then she would call out two or three times, “Catholic Service! Catholic Service! Catholic Service”. Walking over to the locked room and keying us in from her stash of numerous entry devices hanging from her thick belt, we would enter a 12x24 foot space that housed 2 essential meeting room items: 1. four long tables pushed to the side and 2. stacked chairs. Depending on the amiability of the group and friendliness of the past week's interactions, we would be assisted by a few of the women to place the chairs in a circle. These were women eager to chat with us, tell secrets to us, or find solace from incarcerated chaos with us before the others arrived. They wanted a touch of outside life. They wanted to feel special.

Once our meeting began, the women were relieved from enforced don't touch phobia because Sharon and Jan were confessed huggers and said it like this: “We know that it is against the law for you to touch each other in here. But we are huggers.” And that they did: warmly, safely, closely, and generously. I followed suit and broke through my intimacy phobias under their supervision, enjoying a chance to contradict my “do-not-touch-me! I am not friendly! That’s my rule!” I instead was telecasting, “I'm here to teach you to pray not to party.” Actually, by my seventh year of SEVA (selfless service), I actually grew to look forward to the dopamine hug blast which supplemented my then once a month touch by pay massages.

Hugging has been proven to have health benefits. One study has shown that hugs increase levels of [oxytocin](#) and reduce [blood pressure](#). ^{Wikipedia}

The meeting was formatted something like this: hugs, then chit chat then Sharon and Jan questioned “How was your week?” I eyed the prayer book and even after seven years never learned the easy intro banter. The jailed women talked about their newborns at home, their court dates, their lawyers, their insomnia, the meals, how sick they were of orange jumpsuits and the male-run group laundry that dished out anonymous underwear when it was returned to them. It was said, “You get what you get and not what you own.” Uckkk. Is this memory true or a literary hallucination? I don’t know.

Some of the women were pregnant. Some on medication which was sometimes adjusted inadequately by the jail and not tailored for the disease. Some were baby girls protected and held psychically close by the repeaters/elders . Some were model prisoners, and although we didn’t know why they were there, I often smelled the crime, reading it on their faces. Once one was a supposed mother type who conned me into thinking she was the queen of the jail until I learned she had embezzled hundreds of thousands from a local business which was a big SIN in

my eyes because my parents worked hard for their money and owned a business. Imagining someone stealing from them sent chills up my spine. Some were scabby, some groomed, some with visible track marks on their arms, some bruised, some needing the next fix. Some were formidable, streetwise, big city types who were sent upstate to fill financial quotas. Some used jail to go inside their hearts and they were my favorites but again, you never really knew if that admission of conversion, prayer and meditation was true or a con. Some were still beat up from the streets. Some still high from having just been brought in the night before. Some/ many repeats. Some violent criminals. Lots of repeats, in fact. Some were downright mentally challenged. I remember a mother and daughter there at the same time. All were chained by having been caught.

Story One

One Sunday I was sitting next to a woman who kept love bombing me with her eyes and her vibrations so hard that I thought I was back in the sixties. It was otherworldly, consciousness changing in its intensity. I mentioned it to Sharon and Jan as we walked back the gauntlet through the six locked doors to get our coats which had been locked into the side wall of the main room where visitors queued under police watch after having left their driver's license with the officers sitting behind the safety of their glassed room. Having been checked out and contraband free, visitors waited patiently so that they could see/talk to but not smell or touch their sons, daughters, lovers, friends, husbands, wives, enemies, mother, fathers, aunts, uncles, children. There always were many, many adorably dressed babies brought to visit fathers, mothers, aunts, cousins, sisters, brothers, and friends on visiting day.

Back to the love bomb story. We returned the next Sunday, and learned more about the love bombing woman who freaked out when an officer strip searched her cell and everyone else's cell. It was done often. But during the "attack" on her cell, they tore from her cement wall block, something she had made under the loving care and supervision of the saintly Christian Bruderhof volunteers who gave time, talent, tips on how to make glitter birthday cards, and God-love to the women. So this woman who had love bombed me the week before freaked out big time, accosted the woman officer who desecrated the sacred and special B-day card. Said guard, now a hostage, was without her phone contacting system which was supposed to be on her belt, I guess, – not a good idea, always bring your phone – and, since this was a lock down strip search to see if contraband had been smuggled in, I assume there was nobody free to help the sole officer on duty because the love bomber grabbed the officer by her hair, pulled her down the metal stairs, or maybe was pulling her hair once she was down by the computer. Remember it is a 40,000 dollar computer, I think. So nobody was able to use **that** computer to buzz for help because the love bomber smashed it. So when the SERT (more intensely trained officers) Team tried to get into the room they couldn't because 1) the computer was down, broken and couldn't buzz them in and 2) the officer was down, broken and on the floor. So

someone from SERT went down the stairs to the main desk, had them buzz the officers upstairs into the women's pod and when they got there, inside the pod, the attending officer was pinned down by the very upset woman-Amazon who, by then, was banging the officer's head against the floor. Three big, heavy duty, I'm not going to say donut eating, SERT guys could not release the pinned officer. It was a scene from the exorcist for sure. Coincidentally, that's exactly what happened, an exorcism and intervention by a holy person, because, lo and behold, a female officer, accompanying the SERT Team and I hope a SERT herself, went over to the very upset woman who refused to submit and with two fingers lifted the mighty woman off of the pinned officer. When asked how she did the impossible feat of power which three strapping under 40 men couldn't pull off she said, "One time I asked God to give me strength when I might need it. I needed it." This is the only story that has questionable accuracy, except for the part about the female guard-exorcist. Am I accused of poetic license or sloppy journalism?

How can we even fathom the inner plight or traumas or history of this woman convict stripped of dignity, stripped of the birthday card for her nephew or son or husband, stripped of opportunity, stripped of love? It was an inner plight which afforded her an unimaginable physical power. Was the scenario being applauded or feared by the other inmates on lockdown, peering from the small windows in their cells, unable to help or join in?

Trauma is an emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, rape or natural disaster. Immediately after the event, shock and denial are typical. Longer term reactions include unpredictable emotions, flashbacks, strained relationships and even physical symptoms like headaches or nausea. American Psychological Association.

My Intention

I ask, what was my intention going to the women's pod at jail once a week for seven years, having lived in a convent for two years, on and off at an ashram for many, many years, and for three years in a strict, traditional zen monastery? Was it because I wanted jail to also be a monastery? I believed and hoped that some of my love of chosen incarcerations would rub off on these women, waiting for their sentencing to prison/rehab or "freedom". You see, jail is the first stop in the legal system. After a hearing in court, decisions are made as to the inmate's future. My initial belief was that this was a fabulous opportunity for them to use time well and to focus on nothing but breathing, eating, and sleeping because everything was provided for them just like in the convent: food, bed, laundry. There were meals on time, although horrible. Laundry done for them, a horror? And a built in community. horrible too? Was that room, crowded with meandering women in crisis, a comfort or a sentence to hell?

So my mistaken notion that I alone could make meditators of them all was dashed to pieces when I met the other two women who were interested in providing solace, company, chit chat, and compassion. Compassion along with generous, warm hugs were the real deal whereas I was in it for the Hail Marys and twenty minutes of silent meditation not hugs. Eventually I gave in, gave up, and came along for the new opportunity to examine my own self imposed inner jailing: an opportunity to observe the lockdown of my biographical traumas that ran my daily show, the opportunity to observe the jailing of emotions that disallowed me to reach out for others unless I was performing, teaching, giving workshops myself, and making sure I was the boss in charge of the “show”. Here I was not in charge, but I was learning: how to co-create and collaborate; I was learning what it was to be caught/wanted/profiled by the law; I was learning what it felt like it to be deprived of phone and visits; I was learning about the color of my privileged skin. I was learning what it felt like to earn and barter points for commissary. I was learning admiration for the young woman who “drew” portraits in exchange for ramen soup and shampoo. She was as inspiring as any wheeling and dealing that I encountered outside prison walls in the art world.

Having authored, birthed, and published many books and manuscripts I was always encouraging the women to write down and later publish their miraculous and incredible inventions which now I can't remember. I asked them, to write then they leave, "My jail story." Sharon said that at one time they had published a prison paper under her watch. I wanted them to do it again and record and share the ways they creatively and ingeniously made different foods in the microwave, the ways they made faux Christmas trees from our outdated prayer books, the ways they made eyeliner from coffee grounds, the ways they could start a small business from their ability to sort of copy children's portraits from photos. Jail was a graduate school education for me and the three of us always applauded their shark tank entrepreneurial-ish will to survive.

Another factor that contributed to the increase of incarcerations was the Reagan administration's "War On Drugs" in the 1980s. This War increased money spent on lowering the number of illegal drugs in the United States. As a result, drug arrests increased and prisons became increasingly more crowded. By 2010, the United States had more prisoners than any other country and a greater percentage of its population was in prison than in any other country in the world. Wikipedia.

Story Two

Occasionally the mood was celebratory and I would slip out of holy girl persona and share my ability to transform into Bob Dylan for them. Maybe, oh maybe, that's why I was there: to

perform and not to pray with them, although I held onto the pray-role very tightly. One day Sharon said, "Linda does a wonderful Bob Dylan. Maybe she will do it for you." I more than rise to the occasion to perform, so I pulled my long hair over my upper lip, slouched even more than I slouch, squinted my eyes, and with a gravel voice sort of sang a few words of the only song that came into my auditory vision at the time which was an inappropriate and sleazy version of "Lay, Lady Lay". Oy Vay, it was a women's jail (there is a male pod also in this jail) and "Lay, Lady Lay" was so butch, and I would appear so dikey! Catching myself midstream I stopped and did something equally silly to divert attention from something I realized was an inappropriate lesbian proposal. The air crackled and they laughed, happy to feel the suggestiveness of the moment, but the ethical and moral aspects of being so inappropriate and downright sinful drove me to the confessional box the next Saturday where I admitted to the 400 pound priest that, "I made sexual-lesbian innuendos at my job". My conscience runs me. Thankfully, I got absolved by him, but wasn't that the word in the air and isn't that why I karmically ended up in jail in the first place? To learn about absolution? YES! That's why I was hanging out with those convicts. I needed to understand forgiveness, to understand guilt and absolution/ incarceration/ being held hostage by shame. Those words lived in my broken toolbox since I was born. And here I was sharing in their scenario and soap opera for seven years, helping myself unravel, disconnect, and separate from my own bad girlness. The atmospheric frequency and vibrational symmetry of all 200 people living in one, big updated medieval torture house, ruminating on their own guilt 24/7 was my story but I was doing it in the supposed freedom of a home without bars. We were guilt friends by association. What a tribe. No, I take that back. Not all of the women were neurotically tied to their bad girl stories. In fact, some were feisty, radical, wild. Many were mini-lawyers who talked the talk with an astute knowledge of concepts like: rules/ infringement/ reprisals/ punishments / time served. In short, they knew legalese, discussed the letter of the law, were able to fix it, twist it, communicate it, fix it that is not only to their own advantage but they helped each other. Often commissary was exchanged for knowledge. I was not only learning but witnessed a booming barter economy! What smart survivors I met!

Performance art usually consists of four elements: time, space, the performer's body, and a relationship between audience and performer. Traditionally, the work is interdisciplinary, employing some other kind of visual art, video, sound, or props. MOMA definition.

Story Three

There are many more short stories but let me share this one about the time two women were admiring the extra hair ties that I had on my wrist. They Oohed and Aahed. They smiled and

cooed. They wanted one. Each of them. And I pulled two off and handed them each one. These women were happy for anything. Happy for everything. Excited by every little thing. No Dollar General was in sight. No Walmart. No Stewarts. But I paid the price. A heavy price.

As the three of us were signing out of the jail after our meeting that day, I panicked. My blood pressure spiked so high above my head that I thought guilty girl would faint. The word contraband, contraband, contraband flashed across my screen mind. Guilt. Guilt. Guilt. In red lights. Having been meticulously trained by the jail to recognize objects that could become shanks/ weapons to injure self or other inmates like guns/ pot/ drugs/ cellphones, my finely tuned Catholic confession girl mind forced me into remembering that these two rubber hair ties were the kind that were made with a piece of metal about 3/18th of an inch long, holding the rubber band together. This said piece of metal fortified the elastic and made it stronger. Metal. Metal. Metal. Linda, you gave them metal. Alarms went off in my inner ear and after I confessed to the two officers at the main desk that I had given two inmates the rubber hair ties THAT HAD METAL ON THEM, we left the dastardly deed to them to cure, returned the next Sunday, and heard that all the women were put on high alert lockdown and strip searched because of my inattention and ability to be easily scammed and taken for a ride! When we went into the meeting room, all was quiet, nothing was said by them and the mask that I wore at our meeting that day was one of a humbled penitent. I remember saying very little, next to nothing, having caused the women another terrifying, time wasting, tormenting day in Hades.

*There are many different kinds of **contraband**, including homemade weapons, gambling paraphernalia, excessively metered envelopes, weapons, drugs, food, and whatnot. As most corrections professionals know, almost anything that can be traded or modified can be **considered contraband**.*

***Dangerous contraband** is anything that can be used as a weapon or to aid in an escape. Examples include guns or gun parts, explosives, magnets, knives, wire, torches, tools, chemicals, razor blades, alcohol, matches, and lighters. State of Texas.*

VIRGINIA STATE GOVERNMENT: CONTRABAND:

prohibited item ('contraband') is anything introduced or found in a prison that is not permitted. It is a criminal offence to bring any form of contraband onto prison property. Prohibited items vary depending on whether the prison is maximum, medium or minimum security. The following items are prohibited in all prisons:

- *weapons*
- *drugs and drug-related items or paraphernalia*

- *explosive substances or devices*
- *flammable or corrosive liquids*
- *tobacco and tobacco smoking accessories such as pipes, lighters and matches (from 1 July 2015)*
- *alcohol*
- *tattooing equipment*
- *aerosol pressure spray cans*
- *equipment that may aid an escape*
- *film, computer games, and some publications*
- *cameras or other photographic devices*
- *mobile telephones*
- *portable digital media players*
- *USB storage devices*
- *any other substance or article which may threaten the safety or security of the prison*

Were my seven years at the women's jail of any benefit? Did I set world records for teaching mindfulness practice? Did I inspire the women to write/produce one act plays? Did I teach arts and crafts or assist them in legalese and ways to proactively address their situations? Did I buy anyone clothes because if they came to jail in the summer and left in the winter in short shorts and T-shirts they froze? Did I give any of them money for commissary? Did I bring stamps and envelopes for them to write letters home? Did I teach them how to sing? Did I do any of the above?

Beyond required community service, some religious groups emphasize serving one's community. These groups and churches reach out by holding Vacation Bible Schools for children, hosting [Red Cross](#) blood drives, having fall carnivals, or offering free meals. Through these services, churches are able to benefit neighborhoods and families. Some churches create non-profit organizations that can help the public. Crisis pregnancy centers are often run by religious groups to promote pro-life values in local families. To meet impoverished people's needs, some churches provide a food pantry or start a homeless shelter. Also, certain churches will run a day care so that busy parents can work, while their children are cared for by church staff. Wikipedia

The Final Story

Setting the scene. As I explained before, every Sunday we were let into the locked room where we set up chairs in a circle and like most places where groups of people gather consistently, everyone had their special, favorite and private seat as if gravitationally pulled to a sacred spot.

Mine was always with my back to the door and wall, both of which were half glass/ half solid. One Sunday, for no good reason, I sat facing the half glass door and half glass wall, allowing me to see the computer station and the lower and upper tier of cells directly across from me. Mistake! Why? Because halfway through the meeting I heard cries and screams coming from the big room, "No! No! No! Don't jump! Don't jump." And since I was sitting in the exact place where I could see what was happening, I was one of the first to look up and much to my regret, I saw a small, blonde girl-woman in an orange jumpsuit standing for a breathtaking moment on top of the skinny, metal rail of the second floor. She hesitated baby bird-like, lost balance but actually jumped two stories, to the first floor below. She was too young, too fragile, too sainted by suffering to really jump. No, she didn't jump, she flew as if metamorphoized into a swan, a feather, an angel, floating freely.

All was *Silence*.

That day, a very seasoned, mature, earth motherish, streetwise inmate insisted on holding my trembling hand. Remember we were not allowed to touch. Jail protocol.

That day, our *bowed heads/soft hearts* were our closing prayer.

What I Wanted To Happen When I Became An Eucharistic Minister At The Jail

1. I wanted to remind the women that they could transform their cells into a chapel. Did that happen?
2. I wanted to teach them to meditate. Did that happen?
3. I wanted them to taste the ecstasy of mindfulness. Did that happen?
4. I wanted to remind myself that I also have chained, regressed, frozen, stuck impacted life issues that invite me to live in my own private jail. Did that happen?
5. I wanted to experience community and feel the appreciation of women who are stripped of freedom, feeling happy to be with three volunteers who sometimes brought pre-approved see through ink pens and holy cards as gifts for them. Did that happen?
6. I wanted to do "seva" the Hindu word for selfless service as directed and suggested by my Jain "parents" who adopted me in 1990. Dr. A.L. and Dr. Aruna Mehta were stellar volunteers/servers/givers of food, money, love and medical services always and most especially

during the Partition of India and Pakistan. My mother and father, Mildred and Henry Montano also mentored this same giving spirit and never expected return, ever. I only hope I make them proud of my will to imitate them. Did that happen?

7. Finally, I wanted to become the missionary I always wanted to be , having trained at the convent of the Maryknoll Sisters, Ossining N.Y. Then my hope was to cure leprosy in the overseas missions. At the jail, my hope changed and shrunk in ambition. Did that happen?

I leave that journey asking, has my own healing has just begun?

The jury is still out.

Restorative justice repairs the harm caused by crime. When victims, offenders and community members meet to decide how to do that, the results can be transformational. It emphasizes accountability, making amends, and — if they are interested — facilitated meetings between victims, offenders, and other persons. Restorative Justice.org

Linda Mary Montano , Saugerties NY, 2017

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40. SELF PROCLAIMED FORGIVENESS

SELF PROCLAIMED FORGIVENESS, Linda Mary Montano, 2019

You may have been confused by my recent email about, "Im sorry" that I just sent to your students!! Yes, I expressed forcefully that I was "sorry" for any mistakes I made while Face Talking your incredibly brilliant class. Why did I do that? The reason is: for some time now, I have been "using" SAYING IM SORRY PUBLICALLY as an equalizer and technique and bribe so that I can normalize the miscalculated the supposed specialness of the "artist as singular Genius." Especially the elder ones!!!! It is terribly jealousy-making, competitive making, and not good theology to leave others with this bad taste in their mouth of GOOD/BETTER/BEST. Not good.

I feel much harm has been done by the long practicing artist's arrogance, self aggrandizement and need to be seen and treated as heroic. We are ALL GENIUSES because we just got u this morning and opened our Divine Eyes!!!

By my asking for forgiveness before/during/after a public class, lecture, performance, I hope to confess my humanness, my weaknesses, my frailities publically to all viewers but especially to 'students' who are on the trajectory and learning curve of not feeling personally empowered. Envy sucks.

May my faux-humility invite me and hopefully others to the joys of our ecstatic-nothingness.

In ART=LIFE=LOVE,

Linda

=+=

41. DISABILTY AND ART OF LINDA MARY MONTANO

DISABILTY AND ART OF LINDA MARY MONTANO

DISABILTY IN THE ART AND LIFE OF LINDA MARY MONTANO, 2019

WIKIPEDIA SAYS, DISABILITY:

According to many definitions, a disability is an impairment that may be cognitive, developmental, intellectual, mental, physical, sensory, or some combination of these. Other definitions describe disability as the societal disadvantage arising from such impairments. Disability substantially affects a person's life activities and may be present from birth or occur during a person's lifetime.

Recently I was working on editing a video with artist/video producer and editor Tobe Carey at his studio in Glenford NY and was beyond amazed/appalled/surprised/shocked to see images of myself taken during a performance in Albany NY 2019. Given I have had Cervical Dystonia aka Torticollis since 2005, I never have seen these extreme kinds of moving images, that is videos of myself in action or in this case in spasm and tremors. Admittedly I had made a video titled Dystonia, <https://youtu.be/lj9OlegCsBc> when I first felt torques and twisting of my body and neck but these video images I saw in 2019, some 10 years later, were a shock, a NEW wake up call! Was I really that disabled? Since my art=my life and I have made a commitment and vow to make art about my personal life, I felt instantly drawn to a deeper action and so this confessional essay is not the beginning but a continuation of my commitment to address my personal life in my art. So here we go; Dystonia Round Two: 10 Years Later.

The Dystonia video was made when I was a newcomer to the neurological twisting game that turned me eventually into a BOBBLEHEAD whenever I was stressed or dehydrated or excited or emotionally torqued into unexploded feelings. And Super Bobblehead is the way it has progressed according to the images seen on the recent video 2019.

WIKIPEDIA SAYS: BOBBLEHEAD

to search

Bobbleheads

"A bobblehead, also known as a nodder, wobbler or bobble head, is a type of collectible doll. Its head is often oversized compared to its body. Instead of a solid connection, its head is connected to the body by a spring or hook in such a way that a light tap will cause the head to bobble, hence the name."

Disabled I really am now but the opportunities to address my "condition" publicly are actually fundable(\$\$\$\$\$\$\$), that is I can make money to make my disabled art!!! Why is this? Social media has made likeable, made visible, made lookable, made public, made defensible millions of our quirks, idiosyncrasies, peculiarities, oddities, eccentricities, foibles, whimsies, vagaries, kinks, mannerisms, wounds, singularities and characteristics that were once hidden in closets and behind closed doors. The internet has

made it cool to be DIFFERENTLY ABLE.

And these are a few places to shop for support so folks like me can get moolah to make art and still be "different."

ACCESSIBILITY-NEA

LEEWAY GRANT

COMPASSION PROJECT SEED GRANT

PHILAN TOPIC PND

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AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS

GRANTWATCH

AWESOME FOUNDATION

WIKIPEDIA SAYS; FRANKLIN FURNACE:

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Franklin Furnace Archive, Inc. is an arts organization based in Fort Greene, Brooklyn, New York that serves to preserve and encourage the production of avant-garde art, particularly forms such as performance art that are under-represented by arts institutions due to their ephemeral nature or politically unpopular content.

Founded by Martha Wilson in 1976 as an archive for artist books and variable media, Franklin Furnace gathered the largest collection of artist books in the United States before 1993 when most of the collection, or 13,500 books, was acquired by the Museum of Modern Art.[2][3] It was first created at a storefront in Tribeca in Manhattan. It was established as an "alternate" space for artists to "find an audience outside of the mercantile, aesthetic, and temperamental hassles of the gallery-museum circuit."

Franklin Furnace in Brooklyn has ALWAYS been 10 years ahead of the curve as far as it's fabulous foundress Martha Wilson right from the beginning, included performance that was/is literally "beyond" nomenclature, "beyond" inclusion in the gallery game. She not only showed/shows the impossible but has archived books about it and funds it!!! So it was not surprising to recently (2019) find on Facebook the notice for an event at Franklin Furnace devoted to the title near and dear to me and my condition: DISABILITY.

It reads:

"The exhibition, titled [Label This] highlights five different artists who have created work which challenges audiences to evaluate their own preconceived notions of how ability, in its infinite configurations, can shape the ways in which we exist in the world.

The exhibition, contained in two museum cases, features documentation of work by artists Lisa Bufano, Gary Corbin, Dustin Grella, Frank Moore*, and Linda Sibio from their performances at Franklin Furnace and beyond, and is conceived as a complement to the Disability Rights Timeline which was installed this Spring by Pratt's Learning/Access center."

WIKIPEDIA SAYS: FRANK MOORE*

"Moore was born with cerebral palsy, could not walk or talk, and communicated using a laser-pointer and a board of letters, numbers, and commonly used words. Using his pointer, he wrote books, directed plays, directed, acted in and edited films, and regularly gave poetry readings. Moore played piano, sang in ensemble music jams, and led bands in hard core punk clubs all along the West Coast of the United States until his death. He also produced, and exhibited across the United States and Canada, a large collection of original oil and digital paintings.

Moore was known for his long (5-48 hours) ritualistic performances with audience participation, nudity, and eroticism. His writings on performance, [art, life, and cultural subversion, and his performance/video archive on Vimeo.com seen by over 32 million people, further influence Moore's legacy.

Moore coined the word "eroplay" to describe physical play between adults released from the linear goals of sex and orgasm. He explored this and similar concepts in performance and ritual as a way for people to connect on a deeper level beyond the social and cultural expectations and limitations."

So as you see Disability is now and was hot, funded, included in the money making runways of the art world, the pages of Facebook, high end jet-set magazines and TV shows. So why am I shocked, abashed and so embarrassed by my own public contortions during performances having collaborated once with Frank Moore and not judging his disability? Without a partner/manager/fluffer/hairdresser/close relative to tell me: "Linda you really shake when you are performing," I would not have known that I have WORK TO DO. It is the work that will take X amount of therapy, prayer and detachment from the thought that I am perfectly fabulous when

I appear publicly either on or off stage. It is the work of knowing/feeling/getting it that I am an elder and that I shake/contort/twist/turn and I have a medical reason for doing that. It is called Dystonia.

But the argument heats up when I think of and express love for Katherine Hepburn and say it is totally not triggering that she has Dysphonia and her voice fluctuations are fine with me, acceptable, her trademark later in life and certainly no reason to boo HER OFF THE STAGE. Yet as a newbie in accepting my own Disability, I boo myself off my stage.

WIKIPEDIA SAYS; KATHERINE HEPBURN:

The actress Katharine Hepburn (1907–2003) had an essential tremor, which she inherited from her grandfather, that caused her head—and sometimes her hands—to shake. According to Dickens (1990), the tremor was noticeable by the time of her performance in the 1979 film *The Corn is Green*, when critics mentioned the "palsy that kept her head trembling". Hepburn's tremor worsened in the 1980s, when she was in her 70s to 80s.

Not only Katherine but Stephen Hawking's crippled body was never an oye vey for me! And yet I oye vey my twisted body and oye vey me doubly because i'm supposed to be so aesthetically/spiritually advanced that Nothing should bother my wonderful, detached-self. WRONG! I admit, i'm bothered and not detached yet I have rehearsed aging but I guess I never really, fully, gently received permission to let my face fall into Wrinkle World. That is, even though I'm 77 and a beginner at OLD AGE, this face betrayal has not laid the ground work for my other, this time neurological slip into fragility.

PRAYER TO KATHERINE HEPBURN:

Dear Katherine, in the name of God how did you do it? How did you get onstage and keep talking with that shaky voice? Tremored body? Were you a wreck, embarrassed? Did Humphrey still kiss you even though when you said "I love you Humph," it came out shaky and you spasmed all over? Did he or your manager tell you to quit making films because your voice was the voice of a sick person? Just asking. Let me know in your good time. Basically I'm impressed that you played the show must go on card. Show me how to do that even though the world is a complete catastrophe and i should be an art activist and not a narcissistic performance artist!!!

FOR EXAMPLE, SOME WORLD ISSUES:

URBAN POVERTY

FOOD INSECURITY

DEFORESTATION

INTERNET, FOOD, DRUG ADDICTION

PROTECTION OF INTERNATIONALLY DISPLACED

GIVING REFUGEES RIGHT TO WORK

CLIMATE CHANGE DISPLACEMENT

CHRONIC UNDER FUNDING

GOVERNMENT TAMPERING WITH TICKS

GLYSPHOSATED FOOD

INFANTS CAGED AT BORDERS

RACISM AND UNLEASHED ANGER

DESTRUCTION OF ENVIRONMENT/FAMILY VALUES/RESPECT

FAILED EDUCATION SYSTEM

GUNS

CORRUPTION

SUICIDE

BULLYING

LOBBYING

SEXISM/AGEISM

MEDICAL INSURANCE DISCREPENCIES

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OH NO It's all too much!!!!!!! Now I have a headache. Help, I need a friend!!!

WIKIPEDIA SAYS; FRIENDSHIP:

"Although there are many forms of friendship, some of which may vary from place to place, certain characteristics are present in many types of such bonds. Such characteristics include affection; kindness, love, virtue, sympathy, empathy, honesty, altruism, loyalty, generosity, forgiveness, mutual understanding and compassion, enjoyment of each other's company, trust, and the ability to be oneself, express one's feelings to others, and make mistakes without fear of judgment from the friend. Friendship is an essential aspect of

relationship building skills."

Just because my video image showed me all distorted and I saw myself for the first time because of that video, I decided to ask my friends what they thought about my public performances that included me shaking via Dystonia. This is what a few said:

MONTANO'S QUESTIONS: TO LYNDA CARRE

HOW DO U FEEL SEEING SOMEONE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED PERFORMING?

I notice that I'm noticing. I make a decision to either include or to look through the physical disability so I can focus on the performance intended. I am aware that I become very inspired by the grit and bravery of individuals who perform while challenged with a disability.

HOW DID U "FEEL" SEEING ME TWISTING AND IN OBVIOUS TREMORS IN THE PERFORMANCE IN ALBANY?

I emphatically feel somewhat how I imagine that the physical effects are in my own body. I feel some anxiety about the body trembling and owning my will. The twisting and tremors make me curious about how exhausting it must be to be in constant motion, to not be at resting stillness. When I see you using the larger motion of walking about, that action seems to control and manage the tyranny of the smaller involuntary tremor movements. At some point I don't notice at all.

WOULD YOU BE "ONSTAGE " IF U HAD A DISABILITY

I would need to feel an overwhelming compulsion, a drive, a mandate that I had something really significant that HAD to be shared or performed and that I was guided by Spirit to do so

HOW DOES THE "AUDIENCE" FEEL WATCHING SOMEONE WITH A DISABILITY?

In general I imagine any "audience" is comprised by individuals with many different experiences, beliefs, and biases they project, and empathetic sensations they feel, when watching someone perform with a disability. Therefore, the intent, confidence, presence, and talent of the performer is extremely important to counter "freakishness", "pity", "disgust", or some other projections or judgments from an audience. On the other hand an audience may award a performer working with disabilities too much critical "slack", or kudos, BECAUSE of the disability, even when the quality of the performance simply doesn't warrant it.

ASK YOUR OWN QUESTION

I expect that a seasoned performer challenged by physical disabilities would be "at home" with their issues so they may not be constrained much at all. It may not even be a conscious "thing" when it is lived with 24/7. How is it for you: Is it manageable? Does it trigger anxiety? Do you feel like you actually conquer the disabilities by performing in spite of the challenges? Does it take additional motivation to move through, or integrate, the disabilities to perform what is being called for? Do you judge and compare yourself to a self before disabilities? Do you feel compelled to perform while you can, in case the physical disabilities worsen? Do you have acceptance and compassion for yourself? Do you ever consider how it could be so much worse? Do you experience gratitude that you are able to perform even with the physical disabilities? Do you ever consider that the physical disabilities add layers of texture, character, and personality to your artistic performing voice?

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QUESTIONS TO ADAM SILVER

HOW DO U FEEL SEEING SOMEONE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED PERFORMING?

I am in admiration of their courage and inner strength

HOW DID U "FEEL" SEEING ME TWISTING AND IN OBVIOUS TREMORS IN THE PERFORMANCE IN ALBANY?

Shakes make me think of sacred spirals spiraling motion, kundalini energy, earth energy . I love seeing the dance of the body.

WOULD YOU BE "ONSTAGE " IF U HAD A DISABILITY

I hope so

HOW DOES THE "AUDIENCE" FEEL WATCHING SOMEONE WITH A DISABILITY?

Depends on the audience, the individuals, and their own ability to be in touch with themselves. They must feel love energy towards others and themselves.

ASK YOUR OWN QUESTION

I give you a challenge : feel the tremors as sacred earth energy and the spiraling of healing motion.

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Dr. LAURIE MONTANO ALDERSON

Many people develop a benign head tremor with age. Look at Katherine Hepburn in On Golden Pond. It doesn't necessarily mean you have a disability or neurological problem. Many are familial. You could try a medication to see if it makes it stop if you were interested.

It doesn't bother me to see it, and as a doctor it just makes my mind wonder if it is due to age or if it's from a different diagnosis.

Keep doing what you love and ask your neurologist about meds if you're interested

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QUESTIONS TO LAURA KOPCZAK

HOW DO U FEEL SEEING SOMEONE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED PERFORMING?

At first I reject the person because I think it it is ugly. But after a couple of minutes I settle down and find the way the person is moving interesting. But it is still sometimes distracting. It depends on whether I settle down enough.

HOW DID U "FEEL" SEEING ME TWISTING AND IN OBVIOUS TREMORS IN THE PERFORMANCE IN ALBANY?

Lately I think of adults as children. We tolerate differences in children. After a while you were just a different shaped kid that moves differently. But I think watching tremors triggers my own nervous system. I get a headache.

WOULD YOU BE "ONSTAGE " IF U HAD A DISABILITY

I could be onstage if I stuttered. But if I developed a disability I would probably be embaessed and not go onstage.

HOW DOES THE "AUDIENCE" FEEL WATCHING SOMEONE WITH A DISABILITY?

I imagine they have to settle down. Or it could have this voyeuristic thing to it for some people - watching someone who we believe is suffering. Or sometimes there is even a special theatrical performance like a play in which all the performers have disabilities. I haven't seen one, but my sister has.

ASK YOUR OWN QUESTION

Were you in pain while you were performing?

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PAUL McMAHON

Go for it! Your courage is what i see.

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JOSEPHA GUTELIUS

The only disability I honor and feel badly seeing is shame, shyness, wishing to be invisible, self-hatred, self-criticism. Everyone has some disability to some degree. The ones who are bold and unashamed and willing to be Out There performing are very exciting to behold! Yes, no holding back for them! The more tics and tremors the better. They are us, unmasked. They are the outermost of our innards.

I don't want to see Linda Mary Montano gagged, trying to go straight. I love seeing her in any physical state she is in, in the moment. As the saying goes, our weaknesses are our greatest strengths.

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LYNN HERRING

I think it is courageous and real to perform exactly as you are. It gives others with disabilities the strength to do the same... to come out and be who they are. When you do it with humor, you are allowing people to laugh and be vulnerable with you and to help them open their hearts wide to themselves and to others.

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CONCLUSION:

I end with a quote I found on Wikipedia: Essential Tremor.

"Director-writer-producer-comedian Adam McKay was diagnosed with essential tremor. He's insistent on doing press for his work telling himself, "if I get shaky, I get shaky, who the f*ck cares."

Linda Mary Montano, Saugerties NY 2019

<https://youtu.be/aABwAl7EyVs>

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42. DEATH IN THE ART OF LINDA MARY MONTANO: THE DORSKY

DEATH IN THE ART OF LINDA MARY MONTANO: TALK FOR THE DORSKY

DEATH IN THE ART OF LINDA MARY MONTANO AT THE DORSKY:LINDA MARY MONTANO

2019: Presented at The Dorsky Museum

Let me begin with this: "Take all I say with a grain of salt." I am a beginner at this business called Death. Today I will take us on an interactive tour through *The Art/Life Hospital*, and describe how each piece, each project spoke to or about death.

STATION ONE: THE COFFIN/ SKELETON/DEATH MASK/DOLL/BABY CHICKEN PUPPETT:

BACKSTORY: Growing up Roman Catholic in Saugerties NY, I was theologically directed toward the Crucifix and Hell. Nuns and priests were good at that manifesto. It's what they learned. And the Crucifixion kept those of us who bought that one-sided bias perpetually scared and penitent and thinking we had to be crucified too if we wanted to be like our God-Jesus. At least I did. I had not learned the theology of the Resurrection. I became an early death-aholic.

THE ART & ANTIDOTE: By presenting the coffin as art and reminding others about death AS ART, I am taking my childhood preoccupation and terror, re-contextualizing it with humor(chicken puppet) and defusing fear by letting art be my medicine and life-healing. Also look closely, I wrote on the wall next to the coffin , very lightly, like a bad school child, "I'm dying." Laughing with death is a fine thing to do sometimes.

INTERACTION: 1.

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STATION 2: 14 DRAWINGS: RIGHT HAND/LEFT HAND

BACKSTORY: During *14 YEARS OF LIVING ART*, I promised myself I would only allow one drawing a year. A small death, because I love to draw. The first seven years of my performance, I drew

the teaching I received from the chakra that I was practicing . The drawing was done with my right hand. The second seven years, I copied the exact same drawing with my left hand.

THE ART & ANTIDOTE: Synchronicity? Why are these in the Art/Life Hospital show? About 7 years ago, I broke my right hand in two places. You guessed it , I can only draw with my left hand now. A small death, but yes a death and loss. But hey, the drawings aren't bad. They look like outsider art.

INTERACTION 2.

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STATION 3: THE DOLLS

BACKSTORY: My grandmother was an Outsider Artist and I sat next to her silent self as she made lots of outsider things. Including dolls. And another backstory fact is that I firmly believe that women who don't choose or cant have biological children need to womb-mourn that. That's a path to self forgiveness.

THE ART & ANTIDOTE: These 7 Gland Dolls are my substitutes, my fill ins for children I might have had. They are my mourning. What had to die? What needed mourning was the fact that I didn't have children with my husband and so my art gives me an opportunity to "FIX" my life. For over 50 years I have made dolls as fixes. And these are double fixes because they all have Mother Mary's face and so I get to make my own version of the Infant of Prague statue, my own version of the Black Madonna painting and statue, my own version of forgiving myself as art. Art is a wonderful therapist.

Plus the audience gets to practice compassion by praying at each doll bed and then rocking a chakra doll in the rocking chair.

INTERACTION 3:

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STATION 4: THE 7 BLACKBOARDS AND 7 LIGHTS

BACKSTORY: Who doesn't remember if you are over 70, writing on blackboards, erasing, making your own mark. Who doesn't want to be an artist while standing in beautiful colored light? Who doesn't want to turn their back on the world, dive into their own fantasy dream and draw a miracle on a blackboard?

THE ART & ANTIDOTE: The small death here is about my handing over the paint brush to the museum goer, handing over the title artist, handing over the inner hubris that often accompanies this vocation that sometimes titles people who paint/draw/sing/sculpt/write-----SPECIAL. Funny how social media has changed that burden of specialness assigned to ONLY ARTISTS and now everyone is equally fabulous . Back to death. How is this station about death? By allowing everyone to be a participant/artist by drawing on the blackboards while standing in their own private spa bath of chakra light, I am dying to my own specialness, my own artiste-

ness. But there is also a hidden agenda here: at 77 years old, I must be in preparation for asking for help, I must prepare for a time when I have to hand over the objects I've made. Hand over the chalk. I must hand over my once special talent and ask for help as my energy levels change. So this blackboard station is multi-level: it is about including the other as artist and also a rehearsal for my own personal practice called the art of aging and dying.

INTERACTION 4:

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STATION 5: THE VIDEOS:

BACKSTORY: When talking and speaking were not my childhood practices or skills, video later became a perfect language and way to communicate and pray. A 22 year collaboration with Tobe Carey allowed me to speak as I wanted, not how I was told by church/school/society/patriarchy. Art is a ticket to freedom.

THE ART & ANTIDOTE:

1. LEARNING TO TALK: I was in emotional anxiety in 1975 and dissociated, got out of my skin, left town so to speak, found a way to not think about my own pain by becoming 7 different personas. For a year, I sat in front of a video camera and interviewed myself. I learned to **theologically** die to having to be me.

2. MITCHELL'S DEATH: My ex-husband was murdered. Mourning him as art was a therapy, was a path, was a way to grieve.

3. ANOREXIA NERVOSA: Anorexia was my not so subtle way of performing self harm and literally becoming an 82 pound skeleton. In this video, I asked 12 other women to talk about their eating disorder so I could understand mine. Read *Holy Anorexia* for another take on the subject of anorexia.

4. ON DEATH AND DYING: By Bart Friedman. Vicki Stern, Elizabeth Cross and I, dressed as faux nuns, played cards and distracted the viewer from the possible heavy and scary death talk by Woodstock elder, Mescal Hornbeck, nurse and hospice worker.

5. CHAKRAPHONICS: This video explores the way I got to not be me for 14 years. Theologically dying to the encultured self.

6. BENARES: By visiting the burning ghats of Benares, I was able to see how Hindu culture accepted and incorporated death and cremations and dying elders into everyday life.

7. DYSTONIA: Edited by Tobe Carey: How to know that old age, sickness and death is a reality? Try a chronic illness that daily invites pain, spasm and tremors into the picture. Then make art of it. Good opioid.

8.LIVING ART/DYING ART: edited by Tobe Carey. A ride through death rituals from as many cultures as we could find via images/you tubes and my own personal experience of taking care of my father for 7 years and being with my mother as she died.

19. 'M DYING: Edited by Tobe Carey. A reminder to get my life together. Each year I will tell the camera "I'm Dying. " So I wont forget.

INTERACTION: 5

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STATION 6: THE PERFORMANCE

BACKSTORY: Because my mother could not breastfeed, I was not given mother's milk and became ill on cow's milk. Also I was sick with other things as an infant so I would suppose my parent's fear of my dying got imprinted. Death became an early thought.

THE ART & ANTIDOTE: PERFORMANCE: I lay in the coffin for 2 hours at the opening and closing. As I lay there fixing my past, a Gland Doctor and surrogate Mother, Amanda Heidel, feeds me from two baby bottles; one mother's milk and the other goats milk, a drink that I was fed at infancy. The negative gain mind-game can be- keep thinking of the back story stay miserable or fix it with art. That is, I get to feel what it is like to really drink mother's milk in this performance albeit a bit late, by 77 years. Fix it. I always choose the art-fix and I must admit therapy is helping a lot as well. While im getting fixed, the three Gland Doctors: Lynn Herring, Megumi Naganoma and Arielle Ponder circulate throughout the Hospital, taking synchronized pulses. Fixing others. Service to all. Being missionaries. And the video at the foot of the coffin, *ONE LOVE* a breast feeding performance by Christina Varga, edited by Tobe Carey, is begging that all who see it know that this is the RIGHT WAY. Life WINS.

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STATION 7: THE END

CONCLUSION: I'm dying. We all have to do it.

ART& ANTIDOTE: Let's dance to Love while we wait.

INTENTION: DANCE

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ANOTHER 42 DEATH IN MY ART.....MITCHELL'S DEATH, BENARES, DEATH IN THE ART/LIFE OF LINDA MARY MONTANO, DAD ART, NOW DEATH IN MY ART

DEATH IN MY ART/LIFE:LINDA MARY MONTANO, SAUGERTIES NY 2015

1. MITCHELL'S DEATH

Art is my medicine and antidote to my pain. Little did I know that my early LYING IN CHICKEN BED performances were really death practices and chances to feel as if dead although I rationalized the performance and said that I was practicing meditation and **not being on view to rescue the love and attention I needed in life but could only receive in faux death.**

The *DEAD CHICKEN/LIVE ANGEL (LYING IN CHICKEN BED)* performances lasted for years and although I thought that **I** was dead to life and love, the first real death that visited my art/life was the murder of my ex-husband Mitchell Payne. It was an unspeakable event and I wrote, refused/was unable to speak, chanted the writing at a memorial service at UCSD, sing-songing grief and imitating the Zen training I was receiving at the time. My slow, sonorous, Gregorianesque and Asian-like sonic recall of the trauma was relieved by a still video image of my close-up face stuck with acupuncture needles. The only way I could share my pain was to become pain.

2. BENARES

My study of Hindu theology and culture became the impetus for my second video on death, BENARES. I was teaching at UT, Austin and received a grant to go East to document Hindu nursing homes and the burning ghats. Death, so secret, so hidden, so plastic, so covered, so conservatively hidden in America, had made me curious about the ways that the truth is shared so openly, honestly, transparently and publically in India. India, the country of extremes, allowed and encouraged me to boat down the Ganges and pass the floating corpse of a woman with one breast missing, and a few minutes later, there.... a floating infant. Face up, beautiful in it's bloatedness. Hers? Or were they just passing in the sacred waters as if related?

India said, it's ok to look, to see, to stare, to observe, for we are all nothing and everything and there are so many of us and we are surviving/living and then dying. No taboos here like in your country. Come and watch the bodies being carried through the streets, covered by a clean, shining saffron cloth. Come and chant NAM RAM SATYA HAI with us. We won't stop you. Come and watch us burn dead bodies and more bodies and more bodies freed into MOKSHA, liberation, because they have died in our best city, BENARES, the city of final enlightenment. For to die here is to win the big prize..... never to return, never to reincarnate! No problem. No coming back.

My experience in Benares was like graduate school for the death phobic/curious. Graduate school for the infantilized Catholic nice girl, coddled into inauthenticity, graduate school for the neurotic wanting to die but couching it in an inordinate interest in death!

3. DEATH IN THE ART/LIFE OF LINDA MARY MONTANO

At around the same time, I wrote a "scholarly" anthropological paper that researched death customs in over a dozen different cultures, surprised that their rituals and mourning practices echoed some of my past performances. But then again, ritual minds think alike! Writing and adding photos to my lecture (almost pre-computer) became my still fear of death remedy of choice and I presented this "lecture" which helped me understand impermanence as I accompanied my mother who endured as life, not art, radiation burns, chemo and a Halloweenesque torture in an AMA hospital.

In 2014, video editor, Tobe Carey and I translated the written lecture into text-film and it is now titled: LIVING ART/DYING ART. I perform as an angel who blesses audience members while showing this film, so that it becomes a relationship, an interactive/communal understanding of life's greatest mystery, death. We need shoulders to lean on and shiva/others to sit with. Food and talking optional.

4. DAD ART

From 1998-2004, I took care of my father in upstate NY. We began making a video together before he was unjustly and carelessly injured in PT and sustained a hemorrhagic stroke. After that I was left holding the camera and I hid behind it for safety, for comfort, for relief, filming his eating, assisted walking, pill taking, his daily one hour abstract expressionistic drawings, his last breath. This film is life and personal and secret and not art and I only share it when I am present to perform/sing 7 of my parents favorite songs from the 30's & 40's. DAD ART is a video functioning as mourning and not an art commodity. Some things we just cant buy or give away.

5. NOW

I might not make art of my death. I might just die. I wonder if anyone-human will be there to film?

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43. I COULD DIE NOW: Linda Mary Montano, 2018

- You

I COULD DIE NOW: Linda Mary Montano, 2018

Dedicate to all those with cystic fibrosis.

WIKIPEDIA SAYS: DEATH

Death is the cessation of all [biological functions](#) that sustain a living [organism](#).^[a] [Phenomena which commonly bring about death](#) include [aging](#), [predation](#), [malnutrition](#), [disease](#), [suicide](#), [homicide](#), [starvation](#), [dehydration](#), and [accidents](#) or [major trauma](#) resulting in terminal [injury](#).^[a] In most cases, bodies of living organisms begin to [decompose](#) shortly after death.^[a]

Death – particularly the death of [humans](#) – has commonly been considered a [sad](#) or unpleasant occasion, due to the [affection](#) for the being that has died and the termination of social and familial [bonds](#) with the deceased. Other concerns include [fear of death](#), [necrophobia](#), [anxiety](#), [sorrow](#), [grief](#), [emotional pain](#), [depression](#), [sympathy](#), [compassion](#), [solitude](#), or [saudade](#). Many cultures and religions have the idea of an [afterlife](#), and also hold the idea of [reward](#) or [judgement](#) and [punishment for past sin](#).

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It all started at a **WOTR** prayer meeting a month ago when instead of being publicly proud of myself for all of the wonderful events, new books, a standing ovation at a major performance, a singing debut, and big show at a museum, I deferred/deflected/geneflected/ succumbed to victimhood and said, "I could die now." Die now!!!!!!
What the _____ was I saying?

What did I really need to say? I needed to gloat and gleam and shine and glitter with joy and receive endless applause from my group-friends. I needed to dance in the aisles, hug myself and everyone there. I needed to yodel and shout and whistle and sing. I needed to accept my brilliance, celebrate the kudoses, but no, the Catholic thing set in, the woman thing set in, the martyr thing set in, the pre Suffragette thing set in and I fell to my knees and didn't share my career goodies. And there were many. Not one leak of even one of the wonderful events gracing my art-life escaped from my unsmiling-self-sealed lips.

Ok, blame it on the church and humility gone amuck. Blame it on being raised strict first generation immigrant nose to the grindstone parents. Blame it on my family where our gifts were underplayed and never celebrated. For good reason: the Depression was still in the air and WW11 raging. Blame it on my twisted unease around

privilege and wanting to hide my gifts from other women? Cant make your sisters jealous, Linda....a mantra running/ ruining my vocal chords. Blame it on a deep seated selfish need to hide my shine, even from myself.

So I said , " I can die now" instead of, " Guess what . I have great and good and abundant news!" Basta. The end. After a half hour of prayers at WOTR, I kind of internally "got" , Oh what you really mean is, "Linda, something in you can die now." So to save myself, to show them that I was real cool and not a stuck in the mud self-depreciating misogynist, I reported and confessed and excused myself from the " I can die" martyr-talk and said to them, "Oh, I really meant, something in me can die now." And boy, did it!

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WIKIPEDIA SAYS: SELF FULFILLING PROPHECY

*A **self fulfilling prophecy** is a prediction that directly or indirectly causes itself to become true, by the very terms of the prophecy itself due to [positive feedback](#) between belief and behavior. Although examples of such [prophecies](#) can be found in literature as far back as [ancient Greece](#) and [ancient India](#), it is 20th-century [sociologist Robert K. Merton](#) who is credited with coining the expression "self-fulfilling prophecy" and formalizing its structure and consequences. In his 1948 article *Self-Fulfilling Prophecy*, Merton defines it in the following terms:*

The self-fulfilling prophecy is, in the beginning, a false definition of the situation evoking a new behavior which makes the original false conception come true. This specious validity of the self-fulfilling prophecy perpetuates a reign of error. For the prophet will cite the actual course of events as proof that he was right from the very beginning.

In other words, a positive or negative prophecy, strongly held belief, or [delusion](#)—declared as truth when it is actually false—may sufficiently influence people so that their reactions ultimately fulfill the once-false prophecy.

Self-fulfilling prophecy are effects in [behavioral confirmation](#) effect, in which behavior, influenced by expectations, causes those expectations to come true.^[2] It is complementary to the [self-defeating prophecy](#).

It started with sniffles after attending 4 public events where stalactites and stalagmites of green liquids were observed flowing from the noses of some in attendance. Being cavalier and a gym rat who has made that place my sangha, I felt immune to mucous, I knew I was certainly beyond healthy and the real truth is that I probably didn't wash hands/mouth/eyes or clothes properly after co-touching cookie platters/sharing holiday handshakes and smooching busses on cheeks when leaving party after party after party.

Scratchy throat the first day? No problema. A yoga class at said gym would fix that and a few miles walk on the tread mill machine situated next to the veteran coughers and nose blowers, would not bring ME DOWN! Not me!!!!

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WIKIPEDIA SAYS: THE COLD

The **common cold**, also known simply as a **cold**, is a [viral infectious disease](#) of the [upper respiratory tract](#) that primarily affects the [nose](#).-The [throat](#), [sinuses](#), and [larynx](#) may also be affected.Signs and symptoms may appear less than two days after exposure to the virus.These may include [coughing](#), [sore throat](#), [runny nose](#), [sneezing](#), [headache](#), and [fever](#).People usually recover in seven to ten days, but some symptoms may last up to three weeks. Occasionally those with other [health problems](#) may develop [pneumonia](#).

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But it did. It brought me way down. Downer than I have ever felt before. Down to the ground. Down to the earth. Down to the easy chair my dying dad sat in as we cared for him at home for 3 years after his stroke. Although it sits me up to my feet when I press the button, my DOWN could hardly do that.

I DIED! It was dark. Time stopped. I glided to the kitchen for water. Quit walking. Was unable to talk for 3 days(Tomb time.) The room had not sulfur fumes but was uncuttable grey. Not see-through-able. Coughs rattled my shrinking chest. Legs wobbled even when sitting in the kick back chair. Jesus looked at me from across the room and I saw NOTHING.

The fourth day, I cant call it walk but I tottered to the bank and post office, and the totters were embarrassing because I seemed obviously, to onlookers, on heavy drugs/drunk or about to faint on the spot. Having grown up in Saugerties, I internalized/heard/felt the supposed and hallucinated comments: "Isn't that the Montano girl. Wow she really got old. Is she drinking? She really cant walk now. Heard it was drugs or Parkinsons. She used to look somewhat pretty! Terrible. I have to ask Jane about her. She would know."

Back to the room that didn't move. Back to the room filled with a grey smoke, no light, no thought, no feeling. That describes those three days of dying: It was ecstatic and glorious BECAUSE I registered nothing/ I ate nothing/I missed nothing/I planned nothing/ I moved nothing/ I felt the BLISS OF NOTHING!!! I COULD DIE NOW was coming true....A self-fulfilled prophecy. I said it/I meant it/I got it. I liked it!!!!!!

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WIKIPEDIA SAYS: REBIRTH

Born again, or to experience the new birth, is a phrase, particularly in [evangelicalism](#), that refers to "spiritual rebirth", or a [regeneration](#) of the human spirit from the [Holy Spirit](#), contrasted with physical birth.

In contemporary Christian usage, the term is distinct from sometimes similar terms used in mainstream [Christianity](#) to refer to being or becoming Christian, which is linked to [baptism](#). Individuals who profess to be "born again" often state that they have a personal relationship with Jesus.

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Not to waste the "lesson of nothing" on nothing, I sat up and paid attention when this locuted message came: "Lots of people suffer and die." OK, got that one. And then another almost visible whisper said: , "Love." OK, got

that one. And within 2 days, when the dark green and blackish mucous-waters from eyes, nose, throat and lungs abated A BIT, I got to use my new lessons when I was email-informed that a major **betrayal** would not only ruin/upset/anger/adjust/make me work 5 times harder/take the wind out of my next four months, and that I would have to suck it up, I remembered what I just learned: that she, **the betrayer** might be "suffering ." Hmmmmmmmmmm. Ok don't waste anger on her. And remember when I sat in the *NOTHING ROOM OF NO SOUND/NO MOVEMENT/NO THOUGHT, JUST DEATH*, I heard the word: "love? " Well I now had a chance to eat eucharistic crow, surrender, die again. Love her, love her, love that betrayer. F _____!

WIKIPEDIA SAYS: BETRAYAL

*Betrayal is the breaking or [violation](#) of a presumptive [contract](#), [trust](#), or [confidence](#) that produces [moral](#) and psychological conflict within a relationship amongst individuals, between organizations or between individuals and organizations. Often betrayal is the act of supporting a rival group, or it is a complete break from previously decided upon or presumed [norms](#) by one party from the others. Someone who betrays others is commonly called a *traitor* or *betrayer*. Betrayal is also a commonly used literary element, also used in other fiction like films and TV series, and is often associated with or used as a [plot twist](#).*

NEW MESSAGE: I'm going to start thinking/saying, " I can *enjoy* now!!!!" Hear me roar.

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44. OVER 125 REASONS WHY I LOVE PERFORMANCE ART

OVER 125 REASONS WHY I LOVE PERFORMANCE ART

Linda Mary Montano

PERFORMANCE ART, YOU ARE A

VISION QUESTER

SECRETS TRANFIGUERATIONER

SOUL GIVER

SELF HATRED SOOTHER

ACHIEVEMENT DEFUSER

STORYTELLER SHARER

PLAY ENCOURAGER

TRUTH SEE-ER

INNER STORY STOPPER

EGO DECO-OPTER

COMPASSION DEVELOPER

QUEEER INCLUDER

INERTIA UPROOTER

TRAUMA DISASSEMBLER

MEDICINE INVENTOR

OBSTACLE REMOVER

MEDICINE MAKER

JUSTICE EMPOWERER

FREEDOM WANTER

PAIN LIBERATOR

VISION CLEARER

PATRIARCHY LEVELER

GUILT DISCLOSER

SUFFERING ERASER

NUMINOUS POINTER

EGO MAKER

EGO BREAKER

ROMAN CATHOLIC QUESTIONER

COURAGE GROWER

WOUND BANDAGER

TIME DISCONNECTOR

SOURCE FINDER

RITUAL IMITATOR

PERSONAL STORY SHAREER

CHILD-LIKE PLAYER

EGO ERASERR
EGO BUILDER
MONEY STEALER
CHAKRA CONTAINER
PRIDE MAKER
SIN PARADER
VICTIM CURER
SELF SERVER
EGO AGGRANDIZER
POWER CONTROLLER
IDENTITY IMPROVISER
FALSE-SELF DEMONSTRATOR
PERSONA ALLOWER
TRUE-SELF CELEBRATOR
PRIEST IMITAATOR
EGO PROMOTER
ENLIGHTENMENT GUIDER
LIMINAL PERMISSIONER
NARRARIVE DEFENDER
ENDURANCE CONTAINER
ATTITUDE TRANSFORMER
EMOTION HEALER
SACRED SPACEMAKER
AWAKENING IMITATOR
FEARLESS LUBRICATOR
FEELINGS FIXER
MISTAKE MENDER

MONEY MAKER

HUBRIS ENGORGER

GENDER RECALIBRATOR

HEART OPENER

SIN FORGIVER

VICTIM CUREERR

FALSE-SELF EXPOSER

NARRATIVE DEFENDER

ATTITUDE TRANSFORMER

SILENT TEACHER

MARTYR MASQUERADER

LISTENING GOADER

TANTRUM EXPOSER

THROAT OPENER

COMPETITION REVEALER

CONSCIOUSNESS INSTIGATOR

FEAR DESTROYER

PAIN BEARER

DANCE MARATHONER

PERMISSION GIVER

TRANCE INDUCER

BODY SHAKER

TRAUMA EATER

PRESENCE ALIGNER

CHURCH COPY-CATER

PAINBODY DEPROGRAMMER

TOXIN CLEANSER

SECRETS EXPOSER
PRIDE-FILLED DOMINATOR
SIN REMINDER
MISTAKE DETECTOR
HAPPINESS CHALLENGER
ILLUSION DIVERTER
LAUGHTER INEBRIATOR
JUDGMENT ERASOR
DARKNESS UPROOTER
PERSONA MORPHER
STATUD DETHRONER
COMPASSION MOTIVATOR
BODY INCLUDER
NERVE SOOTHER
POWER ABUSER
SPIRIT AWAKENER
ENDURANCE ENCOURAGER
MYSTERY CONNECTOR
GRIEF CONTAINER
DOGMA DEFLOWERER
LOVE ACCESSOR
FAITH BUILDER
MYTH REWRITER
HEART VIBRATOR
REALITY STRETCHERR
INNOCENCE RESCURER
SIN FORGIVER

IMPROVISATION ENCOURAGER

ANIMAL COLLABORATOR

MOOD ENHANCER

PRAYER EXCHANGER

SELF-HATRED CHIFTER

SHADOW CATCHER

POISON CONTROLLER

TRIBAL CONNECTOR

ECOLOGY EDUCATOR

HUMOR ENCOURAGER

OUTSIDER PROTECTOR

KOAN ANSWERER

DIFFERENTLY-ABLED INCLUDER

LIFE CHANGER

EMBARASSMENT COVERER

VITALITY INVITER

CONFESSION DECIPHERER

CONCEPTUAL INVESTIGATOR

DEPRESSION LIFTER

ECSTASY TRANSMITTER

QUICK FIXER

LIMITATION REMOVER

POWER DISPENSER

ANIMAL EVOKER

SOUL REVEALER

SHOCK ABSORBER

FEAR TRANSMUTER

LIFE SAVER

MY LIFE SAVER

MY LIFE SAVER

MY LIFE SAVER

AMEN

Linda Mary Montano 2020

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45. BEING BOB DYLAN AT HIS 76TH BIRTHDAY PARTY IN WOODSTOCK NY

BEING BOB DYLAN AT HIS 76TH BIRTHDAY PARTY IN WOODSTOCK NY

CREATIVE DISSOCIATION

Since 1976 I have been practicing what I call " Creative Dissociation," a medicinal performance/theatrical character creating device that allows me to get out of my own skin safely and without the added burden of being institutionalized for public displays of difference that might offend the common good. It all started seven score years ago and was so noteworthy/bothersome that my father named me Sarah Bernhardt, commenting no doubt on my ability to feel and dramatize the atmosphere of our home, a gift I used later on as my performance modus operandi.

SEVEN PERSONAS

The seven fairy-tale-like female personas that came OUT of me in the late 1970's were from different countries and were totally fabulous: a French poet, a British neurosurgeon, a Karate Black Belt, a Jazz singer, a nun . You can see them for free on You Tube: Learning To Talk. At that time, for over a year I sat in front of a video camera and talked as them, interviewed myself as them, became them and escaped from being me which is admittedly a great Theological device but at the time was an indication of an untreated DSM's listing of medical conditions with verifiable labels like: PTSD/Depression/Untreated Grief/Tragic Trauma/Dissociation/Suicidal Ideation. If I had been a seriously practicing and loyal Hindu Vedantist at that time I would have been content and silent, not touched a video camera and meditated on their salient, holy statement which warns: "I am not this body and mind," a mantra I could have murmured over and over,"I am not this body and mind, I am not this body and mind, I am not this body and mind." My Guru from India would have applauded and approved of my using his teachings to heal myself, but no, artist that I am, I resorted to video and MY WAY, creating a therapy that fits my rebellious nature.

CATHOLICISM

And having grown up strict Roman Catholic and even going as far as entering a convent for 2 years so I could become a saint-in-training, I could have gone quietly into the depressed night, not made videos of myself as these successful, fabulous and professionally alluring women and instead, could have practiced a Christian mystical/Biblical version of inner persona morphing and also could have prayed mantra-like day and night: "It is not I that lives but Christ who lives in me. It is not I that lives but Christ who lives in me. It is not I that lives but Christ who lives in me." Again, art won out, I didn't do that but continued taking care of my mental business via video/performance/writing books and teaching my art-life methods all over the world and created my own " Linda's church of art." In this church, I made the rules and I was the live-in priest.

BECOMING OTHERS

Some thirty years later, the recipe of being fantasy people so I could learn how to like being me changed from my wanting to be fairy-tale people and I began wanting to become and act like REAL people. For example; Hillary Clinton, Jill Johnston, Paul McMahon, Mother Teresa and Bob Dylan were the one's I doppelgangered in the hopes of getting close to me, not to them. See Masks, you tube. The thought is, I love being Mother Teresa and all of these sundry wonderful people, can I love being me as much as I love being them? Little did I know that being them and loving them was a lube/prompt to liking me and that I was next in line. Sometime soon I would become a maskless ME!

BEING BOB

Just last night, May 27, 2017, Woodstock NY celebrated Bob Dylan's 76th birthday at the Bearsville Theatre. The organizer, Luann Bielawa, offered me a comp ticket because I had already performed a 7 hour Bob Dylan lip-synch event on a lift for 7 hours a few years ago and she knew of this performance and my belief that I looked like him and wanted everyone else to believe that as well. See Tobe Carey's you tube, Linda As Bob. Actually my two brothers really do look like him and when I self-apply a thin moustache on my upper lip and wear the right hat, jacket, cowboyish pants and sunglasses, I pass for him a little. So last night I applied the moustache at home, drove to the theatre, drank my semi-cold Genesee beer in the car when I arrived there and then began my walk to the venue into invisibility because only twice that entire night did I "get" the reaction, get the applause, get the nod, get the "Oh look, it's really Bob," reaction that I expected. In fact, what I got was an interesting non-nod of "let's not notice this person because IT MIGHT BE BOB and we are Woodstockians and we are so cool and so used to illuminati and famous personages being in our town, in our midst, in our bars, in our restaurants, that it is actually RUDE to acknowledge them and spoil their need for privacy, anonymity and real time presence." So they didn't paparazzi me, didn't ask for an autograph, didn't smile, except for that one woman who flirted with/wanted me and the other woman friend who got that it was me/Bob but never came over to let me know that she knew.

THE REAL REASON

Thank God that a man scrambling to his seat in the theatre, rubbed past my legs and gave me at least an, "Excuse me sir," and that made my day but after two hours of listening to incredibly phenomenal Bob Dylan music played superbly by Woodstock musician artists, I was blown into such happiness and let-me-touch-your-feet appreciation of people who don't look like Bob but sound his words, his feelings, his poetry and his brilliance sans a faux moustache, Dylan hat or sunglasses that I realized, I'm closer to letting them honor Bob and letting me just be ME! DSM begone. My mask is almost off.

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46. WAYS THAT BEING RAISED ROMAN CATHOLIC INFLUENCED MY PERFORMANCE ART-LIFE

WAYS THAT BEING RAISED ROMAN CATHOLIC INFLUENCED MY PERFORMANCE ART-LIFE

1. THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE: Going to Confession as a child every Saturday and being taught in Catholic grade school that I was sinful and caused the death of Jesus, I consider my art as a duplication of this sacrament. For example, when I perform ART/LIFE COUNSELING, now I AM THE PRIEST, listening to people's issues, giving cures, helping and hopefully not scaring the collaborator. Confession was always frightening back in 1948, hopefully ART/LIFE COUNSELING is reassuring and fun in that I pick up a salt shaker, pour salt in their hands and say, "take what I say with a grain of salt." ART CURES FEAR.

2. THE HOLY SPIRIT: When I was taught about the HOLY SPIRIT, I asked myself, "Where are the women? There is only the Father, Son and Holy Spirit?" Back then, women were silent, muzzled and unspoken but luckily I sensed a need to respond to my feelings of exclusion. So I became friends in the 1940's with The Holy Spirit. And by the way, is this an internal and hidden reason why I began working really/conceptually and physically with live chickens in my art? They were the stars of my MFA dissertation at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. And later I became THE CHICKEN WOMAN, evolving from showing live chickens to being one. A Holy One perchance?

3. THE MYSTICAL BODY. At the age of 9 I had an experience of the Mystical Body, an experience of presence and oneness while visiting 2 elders who lived next door to us in a small village, upstate NY. My performances and especially my endurances are always about asking

for/creating and hoping that ONENESS and Unity Consciousness come forth and are born from time-space dissolvings.

4. THE CRUCIFIXION: When I was 9 years old, kneeling in Church, I told Jesus that if I was to be like him, I would suffer as much or competitively suffer even more! Im sure thats why I pushed acupuncture needles in my body, pushed rubber cathedras down my nose, got tied to a man for a year with a rope, handcuffed myself to another artist for three days, blindfolded myself many times living alone in galleries. These were my personal Crucifixions via Art!!

But I grew tired and aged and eventually accepted Metta loving kindness suggestions . Plus, I stumbled on the rest of the Jesus story, that is the Resurrection and Pentecost. My art changed because my one upmanship with Jesus changed. We now collaborate.

5.THE EUCHARIST: My first Eucharist at 7, I fainted at the wonder of it. The BODY AND BLOOD OF JESUS aspect of it. And it happened one more time when I was in my 60's. I fainted after Communion then also. Have I truly found that that level of swoon and ecstasy and alpha, beta, theta, delta brain wave transcending is possible to achieve via HOLY SPIRIT Infused endurances? Does my art reach that level of self-forgetfulness? For example, I experienced an EGO DEATH when I chanted the story of my ex-husband's murder during the video: MITCHELL'S DEATH. I know , that isnt like the Eucharist but it's a close second!!!!

6.RELIGIOUS STATUES: My whole art-life, I have been wanting to be an incorrupt Saint , a living statue in the Church of my art. Sometimes I succeed!! My art is so generous in it's ability to give me the Spiritual medicine that I need to heal my ego self. The Crucifixes and Mary Magdalene sculptures that I made for my MA in Sculpture at Villa Schifanoia, Fiesole, 1966, will hopefully find a home in a tiny Chapel to be made and placed outside at a museum or at an art collector's collection. BTW is this a request that you find a way to make this happen? If so, it includes a finder's fee!!!

7. HOLY ORDERS: It's obvious, given my art-life story, that I would perform as a priest, as a priest impersonating a nun, as an officiant at my rituals, as a person high in the ranks of my own art church. But this priest confers the grace of open hearted compassion and wisdom to others, hoping I am not a priest/Clergy person who does harm. If I am a good art priest, what a wonderful job I have created for myself! Art gives me what I need and want.

8. ANGELS: I impersonate them, i dress like them, collaborators dress like them, I invite them into my performance space so that they can do their angelic job with and for me. I am never alone performatively or personally.

9. **SAINTHOOD:** With apparent hubris, I have acted in art bravely and brazenly, giving myself titles and jobs only the real saints have earned. For example I perform as Mother Teresa because i look like her bent over aged self. This way of performing helps me to make peace with my aging art-life body. Over the years, i have become over 12 different people via what I call trauma induced art-dissociation. I play with gender/persona/and the question, WHO AM I really. It is a question that I will continue to ask until there is no more personal I, just a marrying of my Source to Source, my big art Marriage. BTW, all of you are SAINTS as well.

I end with the **VISITATION**, my favorite Rosary Mystery. Sculpting it over and over , as art in the 70's, helped cure my inner HEART. In these times of no touch, may we all hug ourselves and perform **THE VISITATION OF LIFE**.

Much ART=LIFE=LOVE to all of you, LINDA

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47. ANOREXIA NERVOSA AND MY ART

ANOREXIA NERVOSA AND MY ART

Do you think art in general can have a therapeutic effect?

Absolutely. My art is medicine. My art is good drugs. My art is a hospital visit to cure me. My art is pure healing. My art is unbounded self care.

When i had access to video, I interviewed about 12 women with eating disorders. This is available on You Tube and is called ANOREXIA NERVOSA. I also asked someone to interview me and it is also on You Tube. It is called the same.

Has your art had a therapeutic effect on yourself?

My art has given me tremendous occasions, for over 50 years, to invite others as audience to applaud me to see me, to give me good attention, to accept my messages, to approve of me, to re-parent me, TO LOVE ME!!!

Is your art meant to have a therapeutic effect on the viewer?

By osmosis and by appropriating me process, by nearness via appearing at my performances, by reading about them, i have made my recipe available and others therefore can use my Path, my Way and find their own healing. It is simple: If you hurt, make art. If you are confused, make art. If you are emotionally damaged, make art. If you need love, make art!!!

If you feel that your art can't have a therapeutic effect, can you explain why?

Art is a left and right brain activity. Ritually the artist also dips into the conscious, subconscious and SUPERCONSCIOUS to bring messages to THEMSELVES. Then we intuitively and REALLY via using stuff, by using any medium, to bring BIRTH to our dream/trauma/SELF.

Do you find suffering in your life a source of inspiration for your creations?

Absolutely. Suffering made me an artist!!! I had no source for revealing my pain, nobody there because I was an INSIDE PERSON. So clay/wood/video/endurance became my way to **speak me!!!**

Can you consider yourself an individual who has overcome an eating disorder or do you still struggle with this?

Strangely, the covid incarceration has actually become a LIFE HEALING! I can't go out, i can't hide from my need to FACE FOOD!!! I have had to admit my embarrassment that I am EATING HAPPILY-COOKING HAPPILY-EATING HAPPILY!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I see now that I was truly ATTACHED to my disorder. Covid unattached me and I now joke about it with my Foodie-Friend and when I call him I say, "Hello, Linda's Kitchen calling!!" S, so funny but I know that I still am attached to NOT EATING IN RESTAURANTS WITH PEOPLE. At least I imagine that I have not broken that fear. I tremble thinking about restaurants! By the way, I am 78 years old, almost 79, so there is always hope. If seniors can do it younger people with eating disorders can do it also. Right?

MAY ALL OF US WHO HAVE FOOD AS ONE OF OUR "LIFE-EXPERIENCES" FIND HEALING IN OUR OWN UNIQUE WAYS. AND MAY ART BE ONE OF OUR HEALING MODALITIES. LOVE, Linda.

Linda Mary Montano , answering Phaedra Vanneste's questions.

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48. PERFORMANCE ART FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

PERFORMANCE ART FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

robotic performance art

web cast performance art

surveillance performance art

internet performance art

homebound performance art

3-D fax performance art

monitored performance art

anti-terrorist performance art

healthy eating performance art

millionaire performance art

implant performance art

elder performance art

video-to-computer performance art

healing performance art

space shuttle performance art

cloned clones performance art
grafted tissue performance art
virtual reality performance art
bionic performance art
e-mail performance art
neo-neolithic performance art
chat-room performance art
interactive TV performance art
ebay performance art
corporate capital performance art
smart chip performance art
portable gym performance art
genetic engineering performance art
spiritual fusion performance art
global communities' performance art
chakra balancing performance art
robotic companion performance art
hormone enhancement performance art
equalization of capital performance art
antitheft transmitter performance art
laser sculpting performance art
multicultural fusion performance art
financial philanthropy performance art
personalized TV performance art
online healing performance art
voluntary poverty performance art
disable performance art
legal jurisdiction performance art
adoption performance art
gun legislation performance art
clean water performance art
vow of silence performance art
intellectual property performance art
religion of origin performance art
bionic senses performance art
bloodless surgery performance art
creative nursing homes performance art
online networking performance art
distance learning performance art
long distance telecom performance art
mood altering clothing performance art
self designed shoe performance art
mood altering furniture performance art
integrative medicine performance art
universally required karaoke performance art
revisionist performance art
forgiveness sacramentally performance art
computer wristwatch performance art
shape shifting performance art
pain free illness performance art
DNA and genetic clearing performance art
photon and graviton performance art
virtual human actions performance art
martial art training in a monastery performance art
sustainable development performance art

biodiversity performance art
non violent conflict resolution performance art
respect rather than greedy wealth getting performance art
ecofeminism performance art
intimacy safe relationships performance art
ethical treatment of the disenfranchised performance art
earth friendly performance art
wise and compassionate children performance art
disease resistant cellular theory performance art
safe food as medicine performance art
e-book performance art
online education performance art
online/at home travel performance art
free web university performance art
net museum performance art
cyberspace mysticism performance art
virtual body morphing performance art
implantable computer chip performance art
space shuttle vacation performance art
children's rights performance art
video camera for all performance art
past life regression performance art
lucid dreaming performance art
instant transfer of mystical teachings performance art
pill-less ecstasy performance art
maintenance free hair performance art
virtual-death rehearsal performance art
constant state of meditation performance art
everyday life is enough performance art
cyber cures for loneliness performance art
artists become effective politicians performance art
live internet collaborations performance art
generosity performance art
taking care of aging parents performance art

living-on-line performance art

laughing at everything performance art

vow of silence performance art

49.

DEMENTIA & ALZHEIMERS : FEARLESS APPROACH Linda Mary Montano 2022

DISCLAIMER: I DO NOT have Dementia. I occasionally forget words and names. Who doesn't at 80? This essay is an invitation to embrace/transform/let go of Dementia fear because maybe it's a good thing to have a Demented empty mind? Who wants to sit for centuries on a hard cushion in a meditation center to obtain coveted spaciousness when the mind itself can produce the Big Emptying all by itself? So fear begone! If Alzheimer's is to be my fate, I dance the fearless dance of BRING IT ON!!!

THOUGHTS ON DEMENTIA/ ALZHEIMERS. Linda Mary Montano May 2022. After over 100 performers sang, danced and magically performed art about life at my incredibly ecstatic 80th 21 HOUR BIRTHDAYARAM ZOOM party, organized by loving curator friends and now archived at Franklin Furnace, I realized that it was probably time for me to begin thinking about my personal ENDGAME and so for months at the 3 and 4am insomnia hours I heard myself ask myself, "Oh no, how will I die"!!! Convincing myself that this thinking was appropriate for my new age, I went down the shopping list of possibilities and wondered if it would be the big C? an accident? Heart? or Taa Daah the scariest for me: DEMENTIA/ALZHEIMERS? Always the art fixer, the aesthetic medicine applier, the self taught art therapist, the one who thrived on creatively addressing her shadow, the one who could video the pain away(thanks to Tobe Carey&Jim Barbaro), the one who could write a beginners Haiku and feel better once it was saved in her Haiku Book, the one who sang the monsters away, I wondered if I could address this possible new challenge of "Oh no, I'm losing my mind"!!! Every forgotten name, address, phone number egged me onto my new project which is to make dementia not such a bad thing. My task was fixing it using the only skill I have which is ART. Having begun my research after taking care of Dad for three years, I made myself livable with the idea of mind-losing by making a video thanks to Tobe, Jim, Laura Kopczak and Josepha Gutelius which was dedicated to CNA's and as a difficult forgetting person in the video, I posited that an Angelic Divineness could appear and rescue difficult, performer me from making the CNA's life Hell. See PRAY FOR MY CNA. YouTube.

That was then, this is now and i'm 80. And I'm thinking about not the overworked/underpaid nursing home CNA this time, instead i'm considering my fear and trembling at the embarrassment of possibly running nude down John Street in Saugerties, the possibility of my addled dementiaed-self driving to Woodstock and forgetting how to get back home, the possibility of sending in my Central Hudson bill and inserting a blank check in the return

envelope. And i'm thinking worse than these possibilities and in good self therapy fashion, warning myself that I'm actually planting some real interesting internal disaster, screenplay possibilities for the time when friends text each other and agree that, "Wow, Linda has really lost it. There's zilch life in her eyes and she is not only zig zag walking, but did you notice when she....." Fill in the blank. There are tons of options. You've got the picture, right? And we haven't even mentioned diapers yet.

So here is my current DEUS EX MACHINA, my HAPPY PLACE when I consider, think about, terrorize myself with ghoulish thoughts about my newest fear, early onset Alzheimers. It goes like this. I say to myself:

1. Linda, how many years have you been involved in the "spiritual" game, path, community, practice. I answer myself with, "Many."
2. Linda, you are devoted to the possibility of your changing/adjusting/expanding/understanding/forgiving/enlightening this mind via all of the 8654 practices you impose on it, right? I answer myself with, "I guess maybe you are right."
3. Linda, so let's suppose that if you do "catch" Alzheimers, you will be on the fast track to an EMPTY, CLEAR, UNIMPEDED MIND. Isn't that a good thing? That's what you have wanted all along: to become ONE with the Mystical Body of Christ, to finally be judgment free and expansive, to graduate to Nondual awareness, to be ENLIGHTENED! I answer this with, " I guess you are right."
- .4. Linda, plus think of the practical pluses of no-mind: no more having to call the heater company when the furnace goes off in the winter, no more wondering who is right Johnny or Amber, no more so so much. I answer this with, " You're probably right."
5. Linda, here is the clincher, I promise you if you de-fear Alzheimers, take the Monster out of it, if you courage up and face it/her/she whatever it is appropriate to call this mind taking condition, if you promise to laugh hard and loud with and at it, if you draw it, shout with it, DANCE with it then it will be just another luck of the draw. No matter what, you're LEAVING DODGE. Why not go out dancing with and by yourself and hopefully with anyone else in the NURSING HOME willing to join. I answer with, " Why do you think I practice daily Chicken Dances."

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50. Caregiver. Thoughts. What to ask them

= \$\$\$/ RATES by day hour week ????

=WHEN NEED HER. How many days a week? Nights?

= BYO FOOD PUT IN UPSTAIRS REFRIGERATOR or in my refrigerator. BUY YOUR FOOD AND BRING your food HERE

= WHEN IN SAME ROOM. READ? Talk?

- = My needs are at this time. Say what needs are. For now
- = As things MIGHT CHANGE my needs change but for now.....
- = You can have access to these rooms. Name them
- = Please check on me every. ———- minutes
- =When I take a bath you stay in my bedroomhelp me get out of the bathtub
- =When I go outside in garden I need.....YOUR ARM, A CANE A WHEELCHAIR.....
- = When I go for a walk outside to Main st I need.....
- =How paid? Check, cash? Does rate change if I give you cash?.
- =We stay in communication when you are here. We each carry our phones all day.
- =At night we both use baby monitors. As things change I MIGHT need to be turned every 2 hours to avoid bedsores.
- = You have years of experience taking care of people. What have I not asked you that we need to know?Now?
- =I prefer eating alone . Or. You can MAKE YOUR SEPARATE MEALS AND EAT WITH ME OR ALONE
- =MY TASTE IN MOVIES MAY NOT BE YOURS. FEEL FREE TO READ OR USE YOUR PHONE TO WATCH YOUR MOVIES.
- = Do you drive? Have a car? Can you drive me to appointments in your car? Is that an extra charge?
- = use NO ANTIBIOTICS OR MEDICAL DEVICES TO PROLONG MY LIFE. Let me go naturally.

=I am religious and spiritual. Feel free to follow your private path

= if I die on your watch, visualize my body in light, surrounded by angels.do not call anyone immediately, allow my soul to be peaceful for a long time.

With Gratitude,

Linda Mary Montano, 2022

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IN CONCLUSION

There are many more writings on my blog if you wish to read them. At 80 years old, I feel that I most likely will continue to write more stories but maybe I will find other ways to heal myself instead of writing???

May we all embrace our own unique ways that we creatively use to transform ourselves and may everyone have access to the Joy of Making an Art of Daily Life.

Linda Mary Montano, Thanks to Saugerties Public Library and Jenny August 2022

