

undergrowth

the journeybook

taster



travels on the frontiers
of consciousness

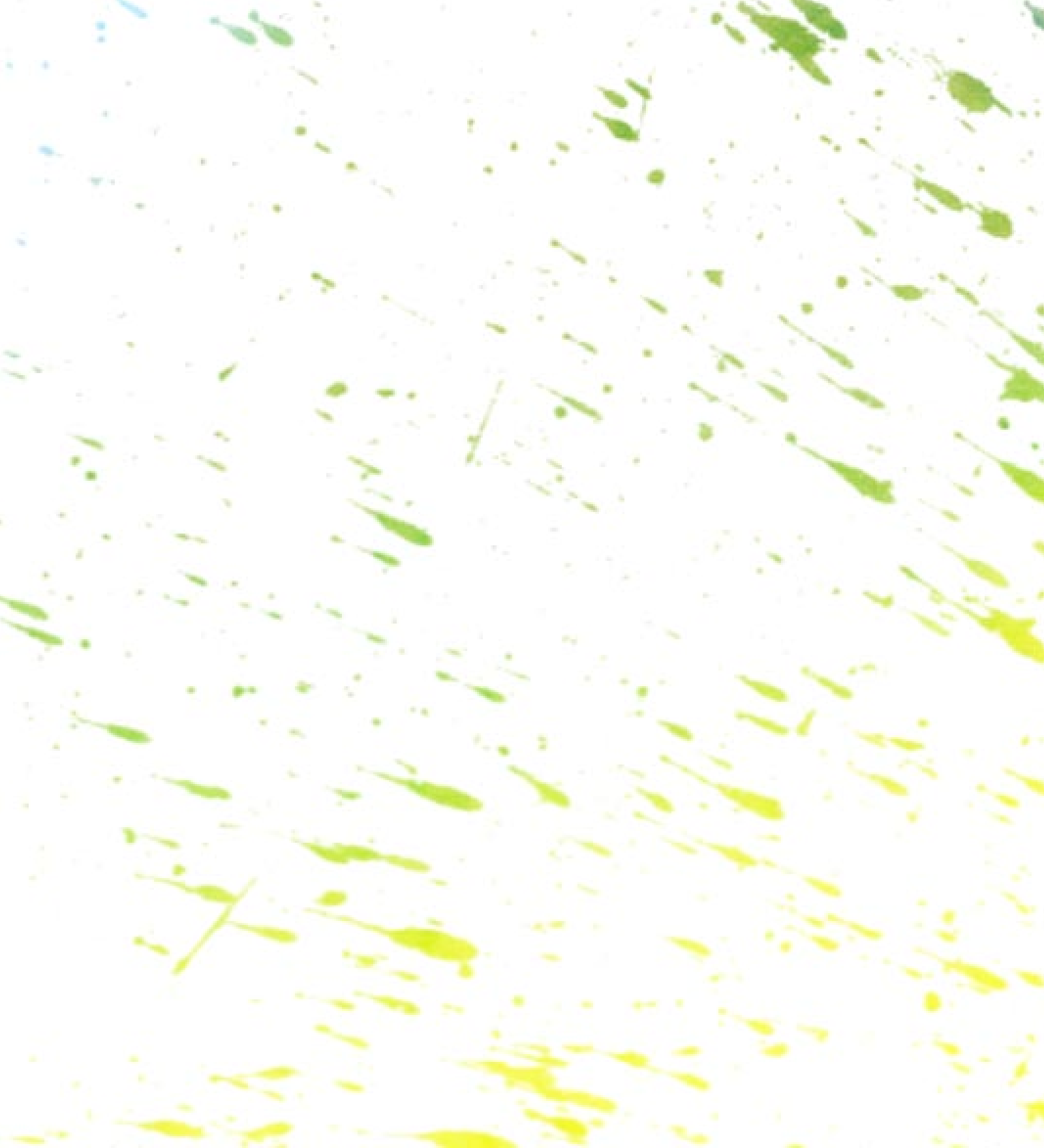
cosis in
the
and sleep


oxiation follo
hallucinations
state between

BIVE
hydrogenic principle of Teopacari

**To order a copy of the Journeybook online go to
<http://www.undergrowth.org/journeybook>**

for all those about to embark on the journey

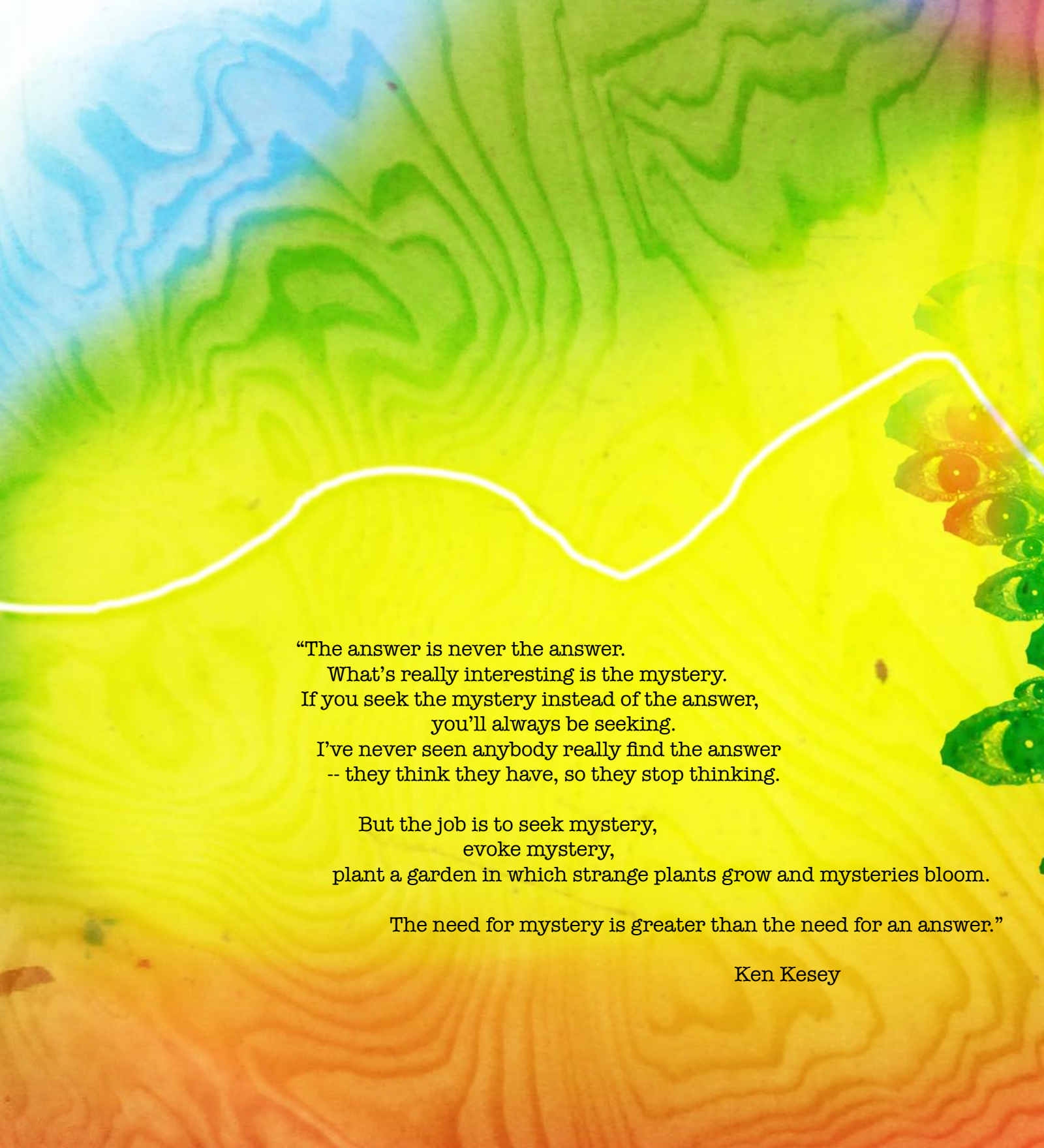




“If the doors of perception were cleansed,
everything would appear as it is

- infinite”

-William Blake

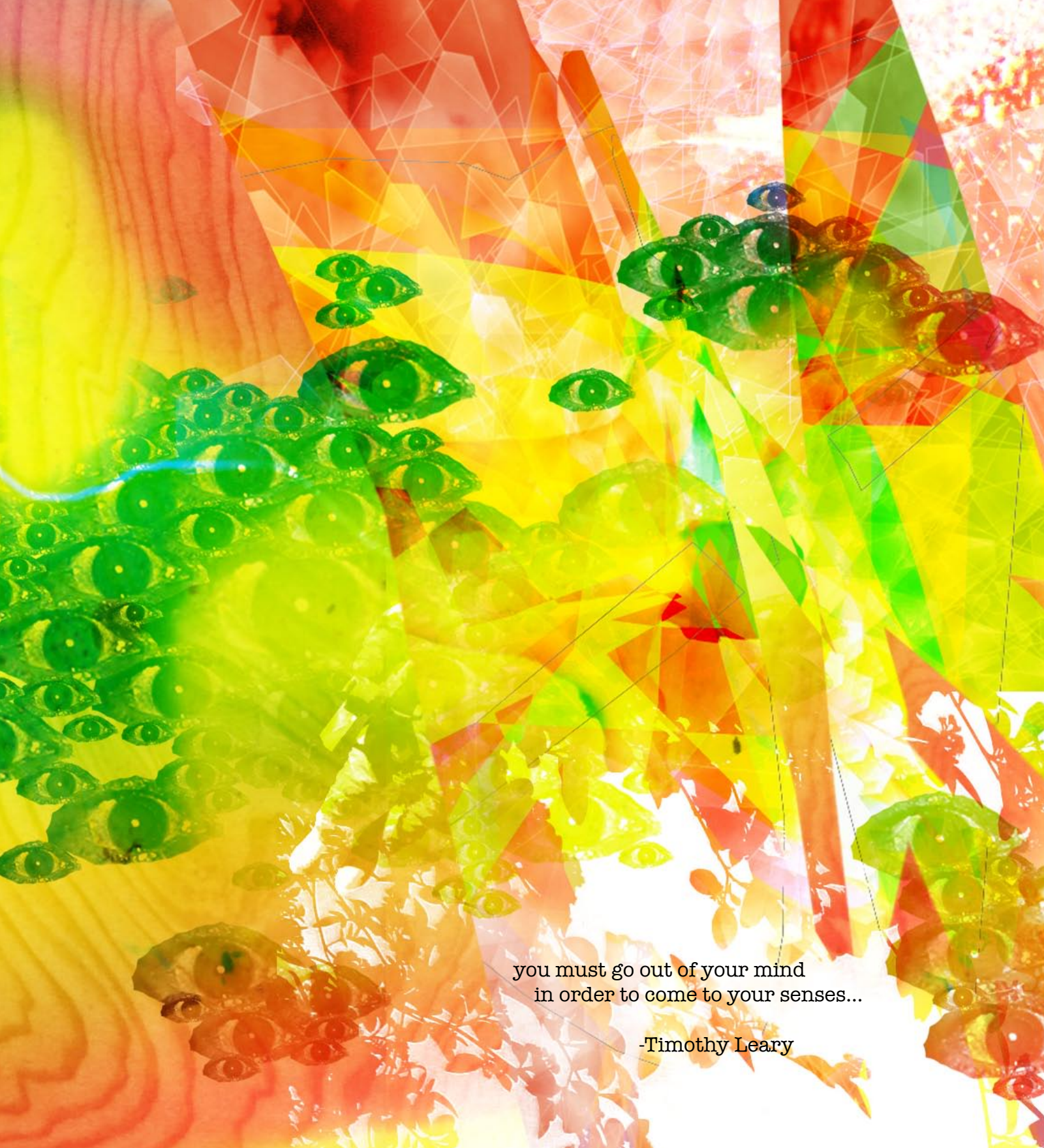


“The answer is never the answer.
What’s really interesting is the mystery.
If you seek the mystery instead of the answer,
you’ll always be seeking.
I’ve never seen anybody really find the answer
-- they think they have, so they stop thinking.

But the job is to seek mystery,
evoke mystery,
plant a garden in which strange plants grow and mysteries bloom.

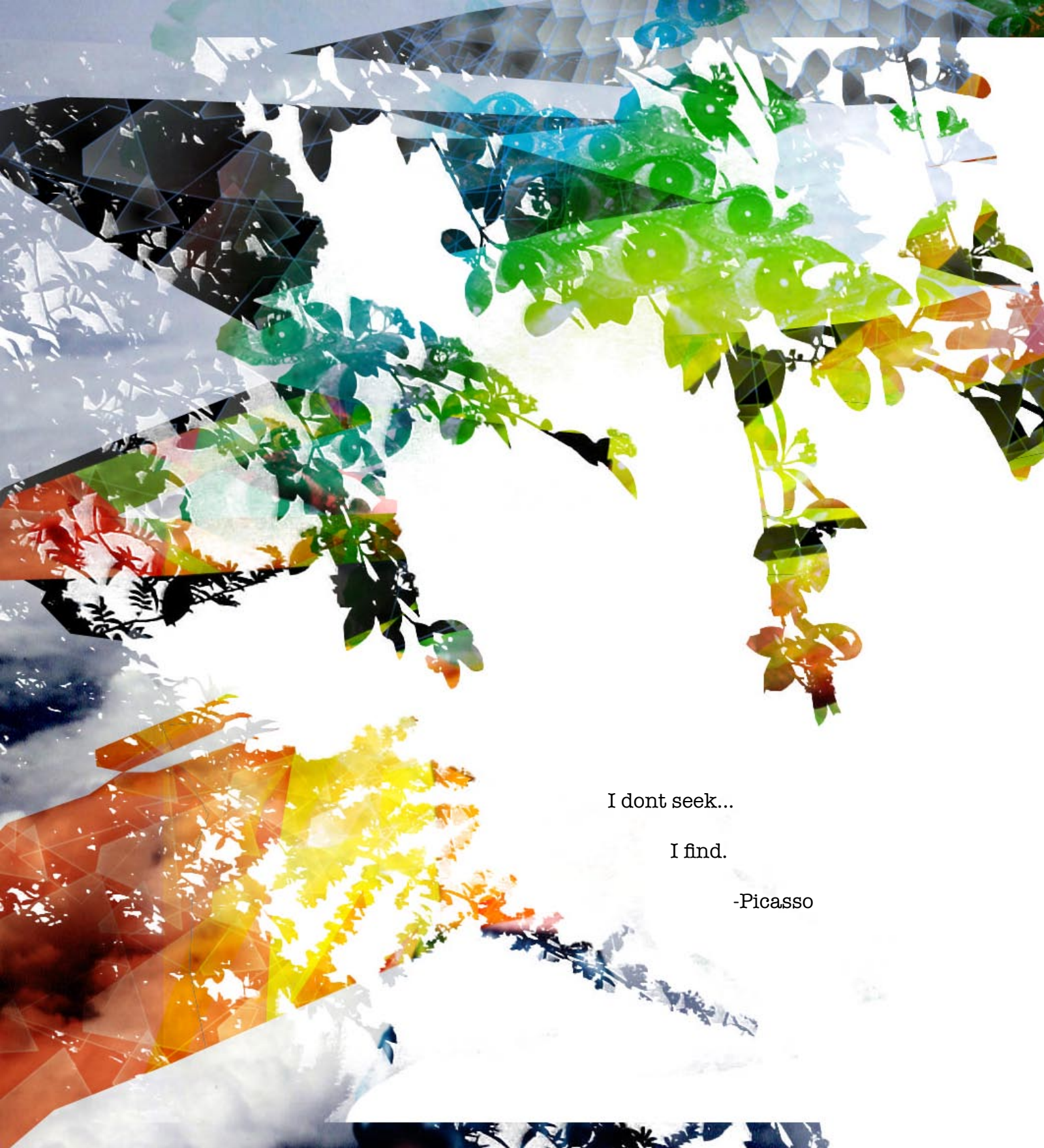
The need for mystery is greater than the need for an answer.”

Ken Kesey



you must go out of your mind
in order to come to your senses...


-Timothy Leary



I dont seek...

I find.

-Picasso



Turn off your mind,
relax and float down stream,
It is not dying,
it is not dying

Lay down all thoughts,
surrender to the void,
It is shining,
it is shining.

Yet you may see the meaning of within
It is being,
it is being

Love is all and love is everyone
It is knowing,
it is knowing

And ignorance and hate may mourn the dead
It is believing,
it is believing

But listen to the colour of your dreams
It is not leaving, it is not leaving

So play the game "existence" to the end
Of the beginning,
of the beginning

- John Lennon

the journeybook

taster

ADVENTURES IN INNER SPACE
by Erik Davis

STILL SEEKING
50 years of the magic mushroom
by Rak Razam

'TRIPPIN' with the DALAI LAMA
by DSM-V

REMEMBERING THE SACRED
by LS

Also in Journeybook:

THE METAPHYSICAL CARTOGRAPHY introduction by Rak Razam and Tim Parish, The INNERSPACETIMELINE mapping the unearthing fractal mind, WHATS WRONG WITH LOVE & PEACE? by Brummbaer, THE GATES OF SAN PEDRO by Dave Cauldwell, DATURA NIGHTS by Des Tramacchi, REEFER MADNESS by Rak Razam, SHAMAN'S PATH by Kevin Furnas, WIND on WATER an interview with Darpan, JUNGLE FEVER by Rak Razam, THE LOST RAVE an interview with Terence McKenna by DJ Krusty, TRANCE & DANCE by DJ Krusty, DANCING IN THE REALM by Graham St John, INTO the LIGHT by Dennis McKenna, REBIRTH: LSD Problem Child or Wonder Drug? by Rak Razam, THE PSYCHEDELIC INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX by Ustaath, EVOLVER: interview with Daniel Pinchbeck by Tim Boucher, DIVINE VOYEURS by Rak Razam, LE MONDE BLAND PARADISO, Terence McPhillip, FEAR & LOATHING IN BRISVEGAS, by Tim Parish, MC JULIO in the K-HOLE by Terence McPhillip, SURFING by Rak Razam



Undergrowth #8: JOURNEYBOOK

Edited by Rak Razam & Tim Parish
Art Direction & Design by Tim Parish

Words by Rak Razam, Erik Davis, LS, Brummbaer, Dave Cauldwell, Des Tramacchi, Kevin Furnas, Darpán, Terence McKenna, DJ Krusty, Graham St John, Ustaath, Dennis McKenna, Daniel Pinchbeck, Tim Boucher, DSM-V, Terence McPhillip and Tim Parish

Art by Tim Parish, Gerhard Hillmann, Oliver Dunlop, Ahimsa, Izwoz, Gwyllm Llywdd, Even Dawn.

Photography by Oliver Dunlop, Sticky Point, Rak Razam, John Bowman, Vance Gellert, Robin Mutoid, Maria Lournó, Juan Acosta.

undergrowth

The Undergrowth collective is a constantly evolving organism of writers, artists, media makers and cutting edge ontological guerillas.

Undergrowth publishes an online and print magazine containing short fiction, journalism, poetry, visual art, photography, comics and esoterica from the blooming underground.

Our website Undergrowth.org hosts an e-book library of emerging and established authors in downloadable PDF form, on-line art galleries of contributing artists, music videos, spoken word and audio interviews available as podcasts, video documentary clips, short films and animations, community forums, music and the ongoing Nomadology travelling blog project.

We are all change agents.
Engage the flow and swim with it.
In it.
Become it...

{we live not Underground, but in the Undergrowth}



adventures in inner space

by
erik
davis



Let's say you're a buttoned-down organic-chemistry jockey at Merck. One day you tweak a molecule ripped off from a Peruvian native medicine, and you wind up with a powerfully psychoactive compound. Instead of squelching anxiety, instilling a reliable boner, or giving young minds that magic amphetamine edge, the drug helps you touch the hem of God -- or at least something a lot like the hem of God. At times it hurtles you into a blazing hieroglyphic phantasmagoria more sublime and gorgeously bizarre than anything on the demo reels of Hollywood FX shops. On other occasions it leads you to the lip of a fundamental insight into the dance of form and emptiness. And though later attempts to communicate your insight founder on the shoals of coherence, the experience still leaves you centered and convinced that ordinary life is fed by deeper springs.

Now, you think you'd zero in on this molecule, not only as a potential vector into the enigma of consciousness but as the basis for some really interesting commercial drugs. In other words, you'd be psyched. Right?

No way! It's common knowledge that such molecules have been recognized and consumed by people for millennia, but have been effectively banished from the scientific mindscape of the West. Despite their mighty psycho-spiritual effects, the potential insight they might provide into the mind, and the largely non-addictive behaviors they elicit, psychedelic drugs like LSD, psilocybin, mescaline, ketamine, and DMT have been crudely lumped into the same legal and socio-cultural categories as speedballs and crank. And one result of this social policy is a withering of the research strategies that a rational civilization is supposed to bring to bear on the conundrums it confronts.

Despite the continued ferocity of the "war on drugs" and the largely foolish ideas about psychoactive substances it pushes, the last decade has seen a small renaissance in psychedelic research, both above and underground. On the official stage, advocacy groups like MAPS (Rick Doblin's Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies) and the Heffter Research Institute (headed up by Dave Nichols), as well as individual researchers like Rick Strassman and the U.K.'s Karl Jansen, have done their homework, balancing loopy subjective accounts with the dry, methodical language of protocols, pharmacology, and action studies. Hopefully, these modest research reports are laying the groundwork for a resumption of the kind of official in-depth psychological studies squelched over thirty years ago.

Meanwhile, in the far margins of legality, small crews of brave, compulsive, and sometimes wacked individuals continue to compile and share fact, anecdote, and lore about exotic and new-fangled psychoactives and the even more exotic combinations they allow. Think of these so-called "psychonauts" as hobbyists of neural R&D. They like to plunge as far as any hippie into the bejeweled halls of hyperspace, but they also bring an almost geeky spirit of investigation to their exploits. They know their chemistry, and understand that the envelope of psychedelic pharmacology is pushed by recombining existing molecular Tinkertoys. They also take this recombinant logic a step further by mixing and matching different drugs from an ever-widening pharmacopoeia in order to craft new highs.

“It’s common knowledge that such molecules have been recognized and consumed by people for millennia, but have been effectively banished from the scientific mindscape of the West. ”

Even Burning Man veterans may not have heard of many of the esoteric compounds that float around the scene: AMT, 5-MEO-DMT, 2C-T-2, 2C-T-7, 5-MEO-DIPT, 4-Acetoxy-DIPT, DPT, DOB, 2-CB. With a few exceptions, these white powders have largely resisted being branded with cool names. Some have been known for decades, others are relatively new; a few have been scheduled, but many have so far been overlooked by the Feds and remain uncontrolled. However, because the vast majority of these substances are chemically similar to illegal drugs, people gobbling them technically can be snagged under the Federal Analog Act, which allows individuals to be prosecuted for recreational use of drugs that are “substantially similar” to scheduled drugs. But this rarely seems to happen, especially given the obscurity of many of these drugs and the difficulties involved in proving “substantial” similarity.

It’s impossible to say how many grams of these compounds are being synthesized and consumed annually, but there’s probably morsels of intrigue all over Europe and America. Though some demand complex procedures and elusive precursors to synthesize, the lion’s share can be cooked up by most anyone with undergrad training in chemistry and access to a lab. There’s really nothing to stop curious amateur organic chemists from brewing up a small batch of AMT or 2-CB in a weekend to share with a small circle of friends, and anecdotal evidence indicates that many do. Some of these modern alchemists even exploit the gray-market status of these compounds by marketing them for nonhuman “research purposes” over the Internet.

The back-room circulation of these drugs has engendered a loose-knit and rather hermetic psychedelic scene devoted less to partying or cosmic communion than to a kind of weird science, where the purple haze is filtered through a knowledge and respect for methyl groups, monoamine oxidase inhibitors, and the value of keeping your eye on the clock. The godfather of this particular psychedelic style is Sasha Shulgin, a cheery, eccentric Bay Area chemist best known for the rediscovery of MDMA. With his wife, Ann, he wrote *PiHKAL* and *TiHKAL*, two phone-book-size tomes devoted, respectively, to phenethylamines and tryptamines, the two pillars of psychedelic pharmacology. Though Shulgin once had a license to study scheduled drugs, an irritated DEA responded to the publication of *PiHKAL* by swooping down on Shulgin’s grubby lab and slapping him with 51 violations they then effectively swapped for his license. In reaction, Shulgin simply continued to devote himself to the art of recombination that characterizes the synthesis of novel molecules. “Once they schedule something, I throw away my samples and continue my research in another direction,” he says.

The creator of 2C-B and 2C-T-7, two drugs popular among psychonauts, Shulgin has described, synthesized, and analyzed scores of substances whose potential for thrills



...an intoxication followed by
...in which hallucinations occur
...the transition state between consci
and sleep.

Oliver Dunlop



Oliver Dunlop

and profit remain untapped. Many of the hundreds of compounds described in *PiHKAL* and *TiHKAL* are duds; others are actively unfun. 2C-B, on the other hand, has gained quite a following for its electric visuals and mescaline-like effects, while the more esoteric 2C-T-7 can unleash a hyperactive barrage of 3-D psychedelic imagery that can take some users to the edge of delirium. Dosage, of course, matters greatly, but dosages are by nature provisional in this scene -- a psychonaut recently died after snorting an ungodly amount of 2C-T-7. Still, even at the right amounts, it could turn out that nothing in the Shulgin universe will ever match the depth of LSD, mushrooms, or DMT. But the genie is out of the bottle. "I find postings about compounds that are slipped away in little corners of my books," says Shulgin. "And all of a sudden they are commercially available and people are talking about them. The seeds are all in there."

Ordinary drugs can promise such magic in part because we have so thoroughly adopted the notion that our subjective experience is largely, if not exclusively, a product of the activity of neural tissue.

To no one's surprise, the weird scientists have embraced the Internet, which links the gossamer strands of data and debate necessary to support a shadowy and fragmented community that needs to stay informed. Sites like the Vaults of Erowid and the Lyceum provide loads of information on dosage, chemistry, legal status, effects, and, perhaps most importantly, experiential feedback. The problem is that such public information also runs the risk of killing the scene, especially when kids get into the act. "The more people know about what's going on, the more likely somebody is to come in and try to squash it," explains Scotto, one of the more balls-out contributors to Erowid's growing vault of reports. At the same time, the persistent curiosity of psychonauts and the endless potential for pharmacological novelty may have created a perpetually expanding zone of gray-market psychedelia. "Humans are going to keep inventing these things faster than the government's going to make them illegal," says Scotto, pointing out that the efflorescence of esoteric synthetic compounds mocks the "logic" of the war on drugs. "Are we going to reach the point where I can be imprisoned for doing twenty milligrams of 4-acetoxy diisopropyltryptamine in my bathtub, when nobody even knows what that fucking is? What kind of culture is that?"

I'll tell you what kind of culture that is: a posthuman one.

This might seem like a tall claim. After all, if you take a random slice of human history, you can pretty much bank on the existence of some popular and dependable pharmacological route toward altered states of consciousness, whether through snuff, brews, bark, or herbs. What makes the coming drug culture posthuman is the historically novel conjunction

“The psychedelic drug doesn’t do anything,” says Shulgin. “The drug allows you to do something.” At the same time, of course, the drug definitely has its own say in the matter of what gets done.

of our exploding knowledge of psychopharmacology, the growing dominance of reductionist accounts of the mind, and a consumer culture increasingly focused on what some have called the “experience economy.”

According to Earth, who runs the Vaults of Erowid with his also pseudonymous partner Fire, we ain’t seen nothin’ yet. “In the next fifty years, virtually everyone in developed countries will be faced with daily decisions about their psychoactive drug use,” he says. He argues that the number of psychoactive chemicals in our midst is about to explode, the work not so much of underground drug designers as of pharmaceutical companies. “Imagine a thousand caffeine replacements,” says Earth. “Myriad amphetamines, though less fun than ones today. Or, like Viagra, a coming class of pseudo-medicinal recreational drugs.”

The signs of this emerging culture are around us. Just ask subway and train riders across the land what time it is, and they’ll tell you: “It’s Prilosec time!” The garish \$50-million direct-to-consumer ad campaign for the “little purple pill” is a remarkable indication of the shift toward a mainstream embrace of psychoactive enhancement. Though you can’t generally tell from the ads, the drug itself is indicated for nothing more interesting than heartburn. But the marketing machine presents Prilosec as a lifestyle drug, a kind of luxurious soma, floating against azure skies. Look at the connotations: the “little pill” is a microdot, the color a purple haze, and the image of the witchy New Age blonde exulting before the clock an ambiguous symbol of the slice of eternity that the greatest psychoactives promise -- Eliot’s “intersection of the timeless with time,” hovering over hasty commuters.

Ordinary drugs can promise such magic in part because we have so thoroughly adopted the notion that our subjective experience is largely, if not exclusively, a product of the activity of neural tissue. It’s a nineteenth-century idea, of course, but now we have twenty-first-century tools to back it up, not to mention a twenty-first-century identity crisis for marketeers to exploit. The thing is, if you push this reductionist paradigm far enough, then we are *always* on drugs. In other words, once you start aligning the subcomponents of selfhood with different rafts of neurotransmitters, you are already on the way toward reconceiving your experience as the product of a tumultuous cocktail of chemical triggers. When you hit the treadmill or string a full-spectrum light above your desk in order to ward off depression, not to mention pop a Prozac, you are in some sense treating your own neural juices as internal drugs whose flows you want to regulate. And this makes perfect sense. After all, the brain already makes its own equivalent of opium, cocaine, and psychedelics.

So we're all druggies now. The problem is that we also live at a time when the official lies and obfuscations about psychoactives, which are necessary to justify the drug war and the multibillion-dollar industries it breeds, have the additional effect of eroding the personal responsibility necessary to weigh costs and benefits and make choices about how we dose ourselves. "Prohibition has broken people's ability to manage their own psychoactive use," says Earth. "We've created a culture that can't choose." Instead, we are offered a simpleminded and historically insupportable view of "bad" psychoactive drugs as malefic invaders whose presence in human brains and human societies is somehow aberrant. At the same time, people are being encouraged to take socially approved psychoactives (or, in the case of Ritalin, force them on their children). Rather than calling a spade a spade, however, the medical-industrial establishment coats these pills in "objective" rhetoric that elides the irreducibly subjective dimension of the drug encounter. From industry's perspective, psychoactives are not presented as avenues for modifying your own subjectivity, giving you the opportunity to explore pleasure or insight or calm, but as technical solutions to "syndromes" within the fixed machinery of the bodymind.

The paradox of psychedelics -- which is partly a source of their continued subversive power, despite the fact that pop culture has already become so thoroughly trippy - - is that they simultaneously materialize and spiritualize the problem of drugs and consciousness. On the surface level, they seem to support a reductive model, especially against traditional religious accounts of subjectivity. That is, psychedelics seem to prove that some of the most exalted states of the human spirit -- cosmic communion, profound aesthetic appreciation for nature, the integration of self and other, the perception of primary pattern, the visionary eruption of archetypal phantasms, the illumination of memory -- can be triggered with a pill or a plant. But from the inside, so to speak, these very same states often seem to unambiguously support a profoundly spiritual, or at least consciousness-centered point of view, over and against a mere biological reductionism. In other words, they bring us to the edge of a spiritual materialism.

Even if you discount this subjective "evidence" as untrustworthy (a perfectly acceptable move in my book), the profound reflexivity of psychedelic drugs still makes itself known through the famed role that "set and setting" play in the phenomenology of the trip. Forty years ago, long before he went Sci-Fi, Timothy Leary was already talking about the programmability of psychedelic experience, arguing that the individual's frame of mind and the surrounding mise-en-scène contribute substantially to the experience -- a point that most later researchers only further underline. This acknowledgment profoundly changes the model of mind that emerges from the drug, because the attempt to purely mechanize the molecule -- to see it as producing a small range of dependable perceptions and behaviors -- founders on the enormous role that both culture and the psyche play in shaping the trip.

The dominant drug paradigm, in the rhetoric of drug warriors and industry pushers alike, depends on a very literalist model that ascribes agency to the drug itself. Psychoactive drugs challenge this model, functioning more like keys that open doors that you walk through. "The psychedelic drug doesn't do anything," says Shulgin. "The drug allows you to do something." At the same time, of course, the drug definitely has its own say in the matter of what gets done. But the act of introducing the thing to your synapses, and hence your life, is more like initiating a relationship than simply jacking into cyberspace

through a video-game deck. Many psychonauts naturally think of drugs as allies -- even approaching traditional organic psychedelics like mushrooms and ayahuasca as if they were ensouled by ancient spirits. Many of these more explicitly "shamanic" trippers in turn denigrate synthetic, lab-produced compounds as soulless industrial chemicals.

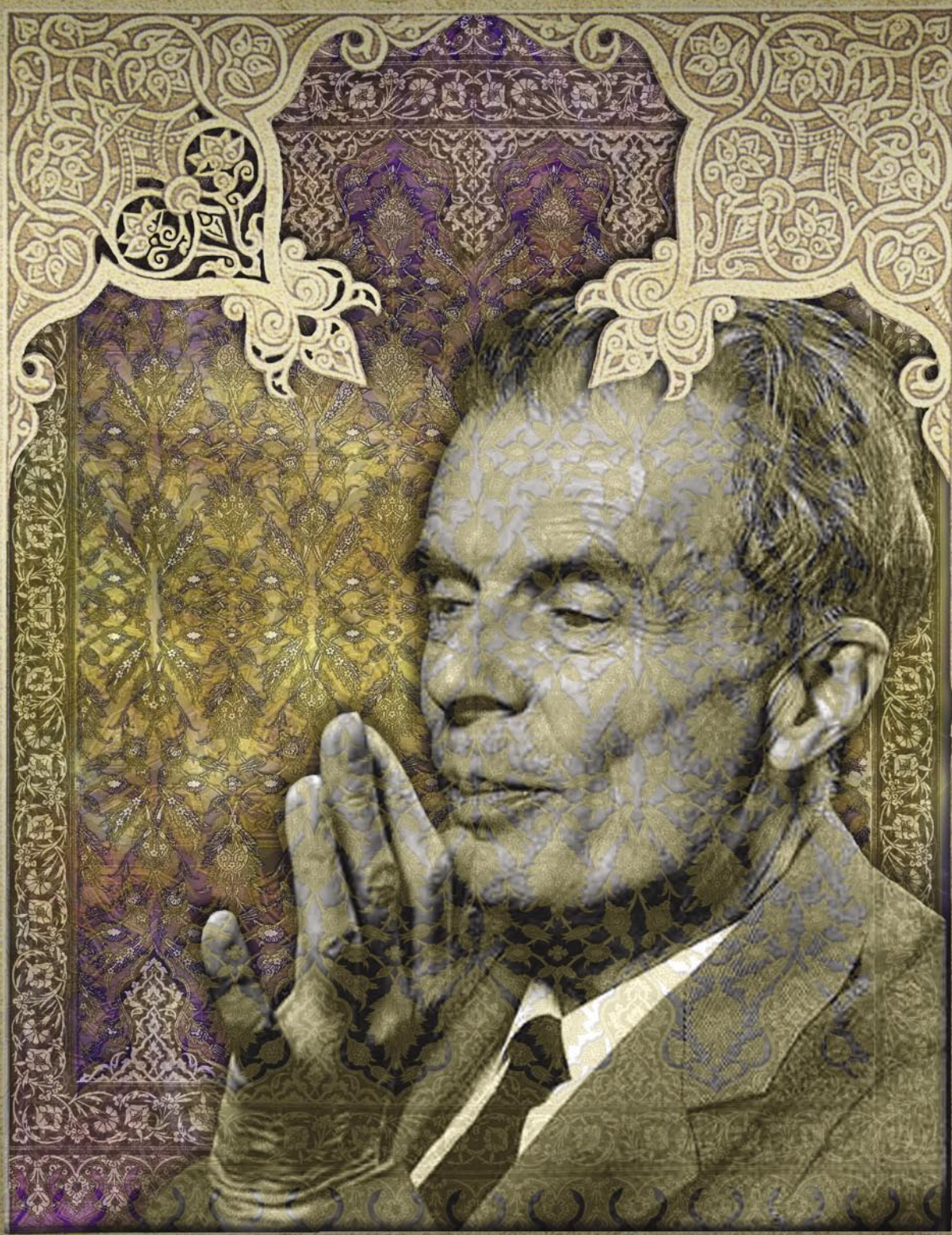
But as the weird scientists point out, this is just mainstream literalism in reverse. The point is not the material; it's the dialogic relationship, the loop of meaning, that ties together mind and molecule. Indeed, much of the appeal of novel chemicals is that they deliver one to zones that have yet to be mapped by cultural consensus, underground or not. "I start with bottles that have no personality at all," says Shulgin. "You make a white crystal solid that you don't know and it doesn't know you. And so you begin to meet each other." In some sense, this structure of relationship, which is open to meaning and communication, applies to all psychoactives, even the most mainstream. Like all relationships, they can go terribly, terribly wrong; like most, they are mixed bags. And yet, to experience yourself as a mind arising from a brain means that you are already constantly in relation with neurochemistry. And in the years to come, when the expanding range of molecular modification may wrap our hands ever tighter around the tiller of the self, it might serve us well to keep in touch with the mind that moves through realms far outside that anxious simian serotonin buzz we experience as ordinary reality.



izwoz
com.au

To be shaken out of the ruts of
ordinary perception, to be shown for a few
timeless hours the outer and inner world,
not as they appear to an animal obsessed
with survival or to a human being
obsessed with words and notions,
but as they are apprehended,
directly and unconditionally,
by Mind at Large
— this is an experience
of inestimable value to everyone
and especially to the intellectual.

-Aldous Huxley



ALDOUS HUXLEY
THE DOORS OF PERCEPTION

GWYLLM LLUYD
2004



Serhard Hillmann

still seeking



50 years
of the
magic mushroom

by Rak Razam

PSILOCYBINE
(Hallucinogenic principle of Teonanacatl)

May 13, 1957, during the height of the post-war Eisenhower years, an article written by the influential banker and amateur mycologist R. Gordon Wasson, 'Seeking the Magic Mushroom', was published in the seminal *Life* magazine. In homes across the nation, everyday Americans weathering the poles of luxury capitalist growth and communist menace were rocked by the strange article, part anthropology and part-adventure narrative, that introduced proof of a hitherto speculative practice by indigenous Mexican Indians, who "chew strange growths that produce visions". A serpent was set loose in suburbia. The chain of events Wasson's story unleashed popularised knowledge of altered states of mind and, some say, was the first spark of what was to become the psychedelic revolution. Now, fifty years later, Westerners are still seeking the 'magic' mushroom, as the time-honoured sacrament of Mesoamericans comes out of the fields and into the medical fold as a valuable tool in the burgeoning field of neuroscience.

1957 was the year that Sputnik was launched into orbit, *Leave it to Beaver* premiered on CBS, and, conversely, Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* was published. It was a world with only a dim memory of the role of mind-altering mushrooms as religious sacraments, and even then it was codified and ambiguous, or wrapped in mythology or fairy tales. The mushroom's role in the history of Western culture had been almost extinguished from memory when Gordon Wasson and his photographer, Alan Richardson, came to the remote Oaxacan village of Huautla de Jiménez in mid-1955 and chanced upon the Mazatec *curandera*, or shaman, Doña María Sabina. On the night of June 29-30 she led a *velada* or vigil, what Wasson likened to a 'holy communion', where 'divine' mushrooms were first "adored and then consumed".

As Wasson wrote in the *Life* article: "The mushrooms were of a species with hallucinogenic powers; that is, they cause the eater to see visions. We chewed and swallowed these acrid mushrooms, saw visions, and emerged from the experience awestruck. We had come from afar to attend a mushroom rite but had expected nothing so staggering as the virtuosity of the performing *curanderas* and the astonishing effects of the mushrooms. Richardson and I were the first white men in recorded history to eat the divine mushrooms, which for centuries have been a secret of certain Indian peoples living far from the great world in southern Mexico. No anthropologists had ever described the scene that we witnessed."

Wasson's dramatic announcement in *Life* magazine was intended as advance publicity for a lavish, privately printed book he was about to publish that same year, 'Mushrooms, Russia and History'. An editor of *Life* magazine had overheard Wasson's Mexican adventures over lunch at the Century Club in New York and invited him to contribute to their True Life section with free reign to write it as he wished. The editor, however, may be the one to thank for branding this ancient indigenous sacrament with the term it has forevermore been identified: 'magic' mushrooms.

Wasson described his experience with the mushrooms as a "soul-shattering happening". The sacred mushroom, he said, allows one to see "more clearly than our mortal eye can see, vistas beyond the horizons of this life." How unusual must such a claim have been in the cultural milieu of 1950s America? And how unusual a man was Gordon Wasson, who has been described as part businessman, part adventurer and part scholar, a real-life Indiana Jones type adventurer?

Wasson was born 22 September 1898 and brought with him a Victorian sense of intellectual curiosity and a relentless love of knowledge. His father was an Episcopalian clergyman and he started his career as a journalist before entering the banking profession in 1928, working his way up to become vice president of J.P. Morgan, a leading New York bank. Wasson was also an amateur scholar and a pioneer 'ethnomycologist' – one who studies the cultural use of mushrooms, as he had coined the term with his wife, Valentina, a white Russian with a passion for the mushrooms born of her ethnic heritage.

On their honeymoon in 1927, on an afternoon walk in the Catskills in upstate New York, the newlywed couple had come upon "a forest floor carpeted with mushrooms". While Valentina scooped them up lovingly and cooked and consumed them for dinner, the wary Wasson saw a fundamental division between their two reactions. Emboldened, he traced the reaction to the mushroom throughout all available folklore, literature and mythology for three decades to explore what he termed 'mycophobes' – those who have an aversion to the mushroom, and 'mycophiles' – those who eat them.

Wasson wove together clues from across inter-disciplines: history, linguistics, art, archeology, mythology and religion in a methodic, scientific way. Spanish records indicate that the Aztecs had called the 'magic' mushroom *teonanacatl* ('flesh of the gods'), but ceremonial use in modern times had not been proven. Allusions were all through European folklore and global mythology, like the mushroom and the Caterpillar in Alice in Wonderland, and in sporadic accounts from medical accounts throughout the Victorian era of unsuspecting picnic-ers becoming bemushroomed with laughter and "intoxicated of the senses". And then, digging through the world's holy books and historical records, Wasson claimed to have found something even bigger: a key to understanding the religious interface of many shamanistic cultures, which he believed also lay at the base of many of the foundational world religions.

Wasson later went on to posit the sacred mushroom as the active ingredient in the hallucinogenic 'Soma' mentioned in the Hindu holy book, the Rig-Veda, around 1500 B.C. Soma is a still controversial, unidentified sacred substance with mind-altering properties that is mentioned many times through the ancient Sanskrit writings. Wasson argues, as convincingly as one can from evidence of mushroom iconography at the time but without, unfortunately, any extant biological record, that the most likely active ingredient in this elixir was the psychoactive mushroom *Amanita muscaria*, the red-capped, white-stemmed fly agaric.

He further reasoned, backing it up with archeological clues, that the ancient Greek Mystery Rites of Eleusis (which included such Hellenic 'trippers' as Socrates, Plato, Sophocles, Aristotle, and possibly Homer) were laced with a fungus containing ololiuqui or morning glory seeds, which produce a milder version of LSD effects. His provocative theories upset multi-disciplinary applicarts but gained many adherents, and helped catalyse new fields of research in cultural anthropology, comparative theology and ethnomycology.

Whereas earlier cultures had preserved the secret of the mind-altering effect of the mushroom and its plant cousins, draping them in ceremony and ritual to support initiates into an experiential communion with the 'divine', the culture of the 1950s reacted in a more traditional way. Wasson funded all his mushroom expeditions (of which there were





dozens throughout the 50s-70s) himself, but as a banker he was always shrewd with money, and conversely knew the true value of things. He put out for grant money to help finance one of his later trips in 1956 and the CIA responded, using a front group called the Gerschickter Fund for Medical Research.

This was the heyday of MK-Ultra, the secret mind-control program that dosed soldiers, unwitting government agents and ordinary citizens with LSD over a dozen years, according to declassified documents released in 1975. Under the banner of project ARTICHOKE, which scoured the world for psychotropic plants that could prove useful mind-control agents, the CIA reasoned that possession of, and samples from, the hallucinogenic Mazatec mushroom could help in their cold-war mind battles. They assigned James Moore, a nervous, uptight CIA chemist from the University of Delaware to accompany the expedition.

Moore secured a supply of the sacred fungi but failed in his attempts to isolate the chemical 'spirit' in the mushroom. Thus it was that the CIA, one of the world's most powerful organisations, was beaten to the punch yet again by Dr. Albert Hofmann, the famous discoverer of LSD-25, who isolated, identified and synthesised the active principles of the mushrooms: psilocybin and psilocin, from samples Wasson made available in 1958. The chemical giant Sandoz patented them, and man replicated in little white pills the sacred "spirits in the mushroom" the Mazatec *curandera* Maria Sabina had first revealed a scant few years earlier. The nascent field of neurochemistry was also growing in leaps and bounds, and as it studied psilocybin it proved it was non-addictive and related to the neurotransmitter serotonin in the brain.

Wasson's groundbreaking work with the mushrooms soon spread like information spores in the global psychotherapy network. An up-and-coming Harvard psychologist named Timothy Leary tried 'magic' mushrooms whilst on holiday in Mexico in 1960, inspired by a colleague whom had read Wasson's article. What followed was the Harvard Psilocybin Project, which experimented with Leary's early work with the psychology of game playing. In 1961, after a period of controversial self-experimentation upon other Harvard faculty and students, Leary instigated psilocybin tests for alcoholism and personality disorders at Concord prison. Leary was famously quoted as saying "Let's see if we can turn the criminals into Buddhas." The results, which used psilocybin-assisted psychotherapy to help reduce recidivism with prisoners, had dramatic effects, reducing the number of prisoners returning to jail after six months from a national average of 67% to only 25% – but they have yet to be retested.

In concert with Walter Pankhe, a physician and a minister, Leary later conducted further controversial psilocybin experiment in 1962, where the mushrooms' active ingredient was given to a double-blind group of 10 of the 20 Harvard Divinity students present to induce religious states. On Good Friday, 1962 at Boston University's Marsh Chapel, the group

What today is resolved into a mere drug ... was for [early humans] a prodigious miracle, inspiring in [them] poetry and philosophy and religion

As the modern world
collided with the archaic,
an exchange happened.
They got the technology
and we got the mushroom
– and maybe an old way
of knowing for a modern
world, if we have the
courage to face it.

participated in a worship service, and reported profound religious experiences that seemed to provide empirical support for earlier academic connections between psychoactive substances and the roots of religion. In a few short years the sacred mushroom had traveled from the wild hills of Mexico to the honoured halls of Harvard, as the Western fascination with the nature of consciousness – and the knowledge and power it represented – escalated.

At the heart of this cultural transfusion was the need to redefine the nature of religious or mystical experiences themselves and integrate the potential for plant-assisted sacraments back into the Western cosmology. Wasson, along with fellow writers and scientists, Ott, Schultes and Hofmann, was later

responsible for the popularisation of the word 'entheogen', which is Latin for "evoking the Divine within", which they coined in 1978 to steer the sacred use of these substances away from the stigma the word psychedelics had created, and towards religious use. The theory that Wasson and his coterie developed on the use of psychoactive plants and their connection to primal, Gnostic spirituality is described in his book, *The Road to Elusius*:

"As man emerged from his brutish past, thousands of years ago, there was a stage in the evolution of his awareness when the discovery of a mushroom (or was it a higher plant?) with miraculous properties was a revelation to him, a veritable detonator to his soul, arousing in him sentiments of awe and reverence, and gentleness and love, to the highest pitch of which mankind is capable, all those sentiments and virtues that mankind has ever since regarded as the highest attributes of his kind. "

It was the type of message that the sprouting counter-culture of the early 60s embraced, as the readers of Wasson's tale of initiation into the secrets of the 'magic' mushroom went through their own psychedelic initiations. Western thrillseekers came to the remote Oaxaca village in search of the mystical connection Wasson wrote about. Such was the power of curandera Maria Sabina's allure, mixed with the psychedelic-inspired movement of the time, that rock legends such as Mick Jagger, John Lennon and Pete Townsend all made pilgrimages to mushroom journey under her guidance. From the late 60s to the mid-70s, Huautla was literally besieged by Western seekers. The police were doing their best to seal off the little mountain hamlet from curious hippies, and the government went as far as to close off the village to outsiders for a time.

Wasson was against the masses taking the mushrooms without a foundational support like tribal societies provided in their religious ceremonies. Yet he was also one of the

founders, unwittingly or not, of the 'psychedelic movement', by bringing the sacred knowledge of the Indians to the masses in the first place. "I had always had a horror", he wrote, "of those who preached a kind of pseudo-religion of telepathy, who for me were unreliable people; if our discoveries were to be drawn to their attention, we were in danger of being adopted by such undesirables." And while the hippies banged on the village door, the locals had their own problems.

Maria Sabina's house first house was eventually burned down, presumably because she lived with the stigma of being the *curandera* who let the sacred mushroom be tainted by the West. Now, decades later, the mushrooms have become items of commercial value and trade in shops from Amsterdam to Tokyo. Before recent changes to UK laws, 'magic' mushroom growing kits and spores were widely available across Britain, and European stores still sell them over the internet. In 1971, Wasson read an interview with María Sabina, which appeared in the European magazine *L'Europe*, published in Milan. It reported that when the village official had requested her aid in helping the foreigners, she did so because she felt she had no choice. But she also declared that when she was asked to meet them [Wasson and Richardson] that she "should have said no."

Psychedelic author Daniel Pinchbeck visited the town of Huautla de Jiménez while researching for his book, "Breaking Open the Head: A Contemporary Journey into the Heart of Modern Shamanism", published in 2002. Decades after Wasson's groundbreaking and sacred mushroom ceremony, Pinchbeck participated in a mushroom ritual that catered to the spiritual tourist market that still draws seekers to the remote village. But the set and setting were much different than half a century ago, and Pinchbeck found that the power of the ritual had faded. Maria Sabina herself said as much herself, noting that some ephemeral ingredient seemed to be missing ever since Westerners were brought into the secret.

Some indigenous critics suggest that in talking about the mushrooms Wasson had profaned them, and broken a sacred trust, desecrating the sacred by taking it out of context. Yet as Wasson himself said in his 1980 book, 'The Wonderous Mushroom': "I arrived [among the Mexican Indians] in the same decade with the highway, the airplane, the alphabet. The Old Order was in danger of passing with no one to record its passing." As the modern world collided with the archaic, an exchange happened. They got the technology and we got the mushroom – and maybe an old way of knowing for a modern world, if we have the courage to face it.

But since that fateful day Wasson encountered the sacred mushroom our cultural jadedness has also increased. In our modern technological age, having lived through the days of flower-power and widespread drug experimentation, we're now a global village that's been there and done that. The idea of changing our brain chemistry is not only nothing new, it's now one of the biggest businesses in town, with some estimates at over 30 million Americans on one brand or other of antidepressants. But is there room on the market shelves for a psilocybin brand drug? Absolutely.

Almost 40 years since psychedelic medicine was last explored a medical resurgence in the use of psilocybin for treating depression, alcoholism and other addictions, post-traumatic stress disorder and in relieving pain and anxiety for the terminally-ill is underway around the world. A number of legal studies have been approved or are awaiting approval by the

Perhaps with all our modern knowledge we do not need the divine mushrooms any more.

Or do we need them more than ever?"

US Food & Drug Administration. One of the most prominent of these clinical trials is being spearheaded by a team of Harvard doctors exploring the use of psilocybin for treating patients with an extreme form of migraine called a 'cluster headache'. Dr. Charles S. Grob, M.D., has conducted psilocybin research with late-stage cancer patients at the Harbour-UCLA Medical centre in California, and Dr. Rick Doblin, Ph.D., the founder of MAPS (Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies), a registered non-profit organisation in California, assists researchers worldwide in facilitating government approval for beneficial psychedelic research in humans.

And in July 2006 a follow-up study to the Good Friday divinity tests was conducted by John Hopkins researchers under controlled scientific procedures. This breakthrough legal study was co-sponsored by the National Institute for Drug Abuse (NIDA), and points towards a thaw on the 40-year freeze on clinical psychedelic research. Like the original volunteers, participants in the modern mushroom-derived tests said that the experience led to "positive changes in attitude and behaviour", and a third of them cited it as one of the single most significant experiences of their lives. The long-term 'spiritual buoyancy' of a controlled dose of psilocybin, and the catalyst it has proven itself for mystical or religious states of mind is now a pressing neurological issue for 21st century researchers and society at large.

Wasson died 23 December, 1986, at his home in Danbury, Connecticut. By acting as the archetypal Prometheus stealing fire from the Gods, he was often held to blame for some of the spot fires that broke out in the intervening years from his bringing the sacred mushroom to a profane world. But as he said in his book, *The Road to Elusius*: "[The mushroom] made [me] see what this perishing mortal eye cannot see. What today is resolved into a mere drug ... was for [early humans] a prodigious miracle, inspiring in [them] poetry and philosophy and religion. Perhaps with all our modern knowledge we do not need the divine mushrooms any more. Or do we need them more than ever?"



Gerhard Hillmann

“On the afternoon of April 16, 1943, while preparing derivatives of lysergic acid I had to leave my lab suddenly. I felt something was happening to me. Whatever I imagined came into my mind as images. It was a horror trip and I felt like the end was nigh. I thought that this was the end. But in the morning I felt re-invigorated, as if new life was entering my body - it was a wonderful feeling. It was impossible to describe how wonderful this experience was.”

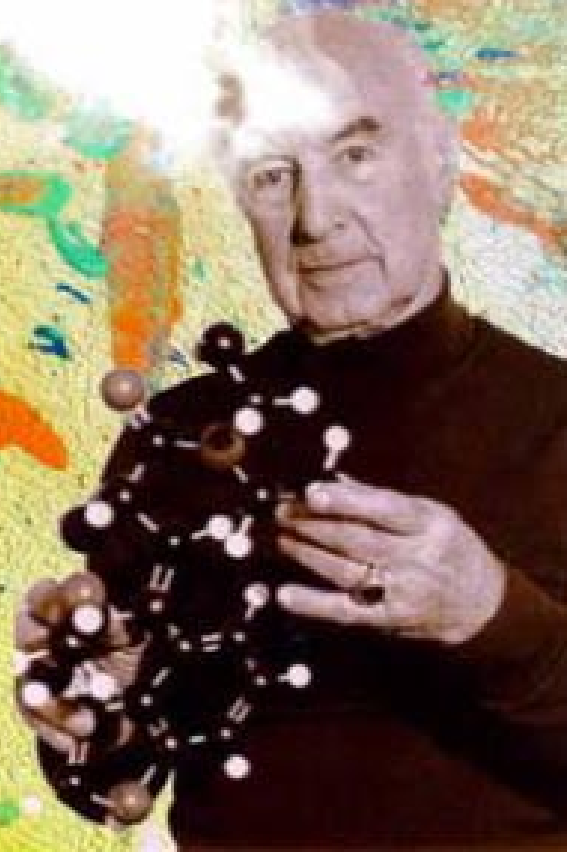
Dr. Albert Hofmann, describing the discovery of LSD at his 100th Birthday celebration in Basel, Switzerland. Hofmann says he had a “strange presentiment” to re-examine this chemical, first synthesised five years earlier then left on the shelf when animal tests proved inconclusive. The psychedelic mythology has it that some higher force guided his hand, balancing out the growing threat posed by the atomic bomb with a psychedelic explosion of higher consciousness.

“LSD came to me - I didn’t look for it. LSD wanted to be found, it wanted to tell me something. If I had worked 100% safely and taken all proper precautions then we would not be here today. So sometimes it pays not to be perfect!”

-excerpt from Rebirth: The Psychedelic Movement comes of age by Rak Raam



LHD (COBEFLANONE)





trippin', with the dalai lama

The fourth method of awakening [i.e. enlightenment] is through the use of specific herbs. In Sanskrit it is called aushadi... knowledge of the herbs is a closely guarded secret.

- Swami Satyananda Sarawati,
Kundalini Tantra

* based on a true story, as told to Undergrowth magazine...

The Dalai Lama story... well, there's not much to it. It might all have been a hallucination really, the eternal play of Lila as if wafts down from the hills of Mount Meru. I am an unreliable narrator at best, dear reader, and you must remember that this was in my psychopuppy stage, when I used to take psychedelics and explore with the Buddhist masters. So Caveat Lector, and don't try this in your home reality grid.

Anyway, back in '96 when I was caning it on acid I pictured Andrew Cohen, a New York-Bronx Jew who was the famous student of the guru Poonjaji turning into a crypto-lock on the cosmic sex-drive, with a big red button. He was pugnacious, arrogant, and a complete control freak with almost no compassion – so of course I had to control him. You must understand though, that there was never any egoistic motivations. I had to be arrogant to even attempt Satsang on Drugs, but it was research arrogance pure as the driven snow off Mt. Meru. These sessions were never games for amusement. It was all heart-broken dharma desperado with his back against the wall on a planet going to hell in a hand-basket. I meditated with Master Charles, another famous Australian Buddhist, in the late 1990s. All these teachers were caught up in a Satsang-vortex, day in and day out, locked into a pattern. It might be an exquisite pattern, but somewhere on their paths it got to a stage where higher consciousness started to form a barrier around them like an airbag, to stop them going on to the next level of their realisation. That's why I liked going to Satsangs on drugs, to get the masters wound up and hallucinating within their Satsang structure.

A Satsang is defined as the "fruit of all religious and devotional practices", but around many teachers they can be like an eternal departure lounge where you can never get off the ground. How did I fall into this Satsang situation? Oh my God, I'm here and I'm surrounded by all these students and gush gush gush. When will I get a moment's peace to meditate, and all that? They're fucked. So in comes J. Random Psychonaut, who says "I'm going to rescue you. I'm going to pop you out of the spiritual teacher experience, and get you back on your path." Of course, they usually look at you like you're a fucking arrogant shithead. But that's karma, I guess.

Many people think that Buddhism is a force for the greater good in that it holds the template pattern of the prime reality together amongst the wavering sea of vibrational frequencies. And that is true. Buddhism is not a scam. It is a force for greater good, a MGO – Meta Governance Organisation in a way, just as the ACLU is more organised than the citizen field of the USA, and is a "reservoir consciousness" but it's aims and objectives are by and for the citizen field of less self-organised and clear beings. In the same way the Tibetan Buddhists are maintaining their own reservoir of consciousness, running their own renegade system in the Matrix. Most of their meditative output is devoted to maintaining it, with a bit left over for some active compassion in the world. But they still work to illuminate souls that come within the confines of their pattern. What most people don't know is that Buddhism, like virtually all of the root religions of the world, has it's origins with different entheogenic plant catalysts, the somas of antiquity.

Deep connection has always begun with plant sacraments, and then become priestified and purified and controlled... Buddhism by way of plant analogies is like clover, it's flowers are beautiful but modest, it integrates well with the other plants in the field, all plants in the numinous field feed off the earth of humanity, but buddha-clover is rhizomic is feeds back more nutrients by way of the rhizomes, back into the soil. Now the monks are like the nerds of consciousness with their fingers on the pulse of everything, methodically going about colonising different planes, like franchises. It's a bit like World Vision going to a third world country, but Buddhism is a trans-planar organisation, instead of a trans-national corporation. But they are the most eco-sound of the trans-planar corporations. As above so below, and all that. Buddhism established the franchise here on this plane about two and a half thousand years ago from some other trans-planar corporation of higher consciousness. It's a self-sustaining hallucination of reality that they've forced onto the meta-structure of reality.

So anyway, one day back in '96, when the Dalai Lama visited Melbourne, I hacked the mainframe of the Buddhist Corporation and broke into the head office, straight into the mind of the CEO. The Buddhists were putting on a ten-day Kalachakra initiation, which involved the building of one of their mandalas made entirely from coloured sand. 'Kalachakra' means 'Wheel of Time' and is the name of one of the Buddhist deities which represents particular aspects of the Enlightened. It's pretty much the great tapestry of Buddhism, and by sheer force of will the Dalai Lama leads the

monks in firing up the Kalachakra mandala on an astral level, which they then transmit to other Buddhists in the audience according to their lights and how pure they are in their practice.

After many years of intense meditation the Buddhists apperceive the astral in ways similar to the visions psychonauts can experience when on psychedelics and entheogenic plants. Yet drugs have often been referred to as the "left-hand path", as if their tumultuous psychic journeywork is in some way of a lesser quality than gradual mental strengthening. Such shortcuts are not conducive to the path of liberation, Buddhism says. But that's just the dogma of the Buddhist textual discipline – you've got to keep the shareholders in line. Buddhism is like the ocean. Most people are content to stay within the flags and play close to the shores in the tidal puddles. A few people may be capable of swimming out beyond the breakline into the deep swells. The opportunity is all there, but everyone's attention is on the beach. But as is well observed, Psychedelia is not necessarily conducive to discipline, it can be criticised as the muddle path in contradistinction to the middle path of Buddha-Dharma.

DAY ONE

I wasn't there to make a scene, or to interrupt the proceedings at all. I just wanted to see what the whole Buddhist paradigm was like from the psychedelic point of view. I'd pick apart the teachings and size everyone up energetically. I had a \$750 ringside ticket and I just caned myself on every psychedelic I could get my hands on for ten days: acid, mushrooms, marijuana... whatever could be found at the time, and there was a bit of a drought on, I must admit. It was pure curiosity – I wanted to put the psychedelic spotlight back on Buddhism. And I kept a strict poker-face all the time – no spasms, no outward signs of loss of motor control were allowed. Diamond point will was needed the whole time to maintain discretion and politeness yet at the same time fierce intent of inquiry.

It's interesting watching all the Buddhists together at these types of intentional gatherings because it's all very Old MacDonald Had a Farm... You could judge different types of Buddhists and compare them to different bird species... The Dalai Lama is the big peacock and he's got his coterie of littler peacocks; and when they go into their thing and start meditating they're opening up their psychic plumage. And just like the birds their chests get all puffed up and they tweet away. And then the Dalai Lama comes with his beak and pokes around and inspects them, making adjustments here and granting boons there. And there I am, the fox in the psychic chicken coop, and the other monks are trying to figure out where I sit in the cosmic pecking order.

Every form of rank structure exhibits rank abuse, but the Buddhists pattern is the most mellow form of rank abuse. That's why they stress the compassion, the compassion. As you go up the gradations of refined consciousness you realise it's a spiritual foodchain. Everything feeds on the levels below it, and the Buddhist mainframe is being fed by that consciousness reservoir they've been building all these thousands of years, that pirate sub-universe they've carved out for themselves on the inner wall of the Godhead.

So the Buddhist monks were there being very competent, rubbing their bellies and patting their heads at the same time while they're firing up the absolute 'biggie' of Buddhism – the Kalachakra mandala, which had a big thanka pattern on it. I waited till the Dalai Lama, the master programmer, was preoccupied flicking some psychic switches. He was vulnerable, so I went in for the kill, into the heart of the Buddhist mainframe. The Dalai Lama saw me coming, of course. Here's a member of the psychedelic ratbaggery, he thought, and I'll put on a show for him. We'll strut our stuff. Game on. He starts to generate his God-masks, and radiates unconditional love of all creatures, angels and demons. He was focussed on his work, not vulnerable, that gave me a window to dive in like Count Zero in Gibson's Neuromancer.

I'd hack into the Buddhist mainframe one day, and the next day those portals would be locked, and there would be a smirk on the Dalai Lama's face as I tried to get in, only to go whoomp, and slide off his defenses like a fried egg on a frypan. And then I'd have to go around somewhere else and hack in again... They had all these bug fixes, these one day-turnaround bug fixes and they'd keep sealing all the holes. In a way, perhaps, they were just letting me in to do the annual stocktake on

their filters and firewalls. I was like this little psychedelic bird on the back on a rhinoceros, picking off the ticks. Like a egg off a teflon frypan. I was impressed! One day turnaround on bug-fixes! Annual audit.

DAY TWO

This all started when I visited the Australian Buddhist Barry (Bazza) Long, he was a local guru. He was a sort of tantric teacher, all man-woman stuff and cosmic yin-yang energies, you know, get your fucking right and everything's right with the universe. That's not true, everything's just right for you behind your white picket fence of your privatised ego-complex. He wasn't actually activating Buddha-nature, or Gandhi-nature, or Noam Chomsky-nature in the students, or any type of practical spirituality. And then one day I thought, Christ, you need to be on drugs to endure this, and bing!

That's how I became a dharma desparado. I felt the fucked-up-ness of the world had forced me to put a) and b) back together, Buddhism and psychedelics. The world was going to hell in a hand-basket and the Buddhists apparently couldn't organise their way out of a paper bag on fire. Christianity is clearly a negativity generation engine, but was Buddhism merely an apathy generation mechanism? I considered it strategic psychedelic activism. Unlike baseline politics the psychonautical terra-ist (Latin for Earth, not terror) doesn't conduct assassinations, they perform liberations. You single out strategic points in the reality grid, whether they be politicians, pop-stars or parking ticket inspectors, and you router your psychedelic love-bomb at them when in higher states of consciousness. Bathe them in love, and stand back to watch the explosion.

Back in '96 I spent six days with Gangaji on acid. It was a six-day residential retreat and I had, I don't know, about 21 trips, a big bag of hash and not enough bulbs. Gangaji and Andrew Cohen are sort of brother-sister teachers. They both came under the lineage of Poonjaji and were sort of roughly students at the same time. But they fought like cats and dogs over their approach to things. I kept trying to fling Gangaji out of her Satsang trap when I was loaded up and firing possible Satsang structures. That was the name of the game, as a force of intentionality. Gangaji seemed to clock on to what I was doing, but you know, I was wearing my blue meditation shawl and I was immaculately behaved. I don't flirt with the Dharma-babes, and that sort of thing, I kept it very straight. She knew I wasn't there to be disruptive, so she kept the Satsang going but she had to juggle two balls at the same time, if you will. It was pure research arrogance on my part, but I just decided to do it. It wasn't as if I had any qualifications in my Curriculum Vitae to trip out spiritual teachers.

DAY THREE

So I started to tow the line a bit, and while on my psychedelic journey I entertained the idea of the relationship between Lord Buddha and Lord Mara, his ancient Nemesis. Mara was the one who came and tempted Buddha while he was under the Bodhi tree by firing off all the hallucinations, and tried to distract him from his path of liberation. And Lord Mara has this network of God energies he feeds on. The big thing about Buddhism is that there are no creator Gods, it's all a five-fold interdependent arising of different yin-yang attributes. Well, that's not true, there are creator Gods, but, well..., oh look, it gets complicated...

One could say that Buddhism is Lord Mara's greatest creation, his greatest indulgence. This is because even though they've achieved so much, Buddhists are still limited. They're so far against the wall they're in love with it, they want to know every nook and cranny of it. They want to know everything that's going on in consciousness because they're meta-policemen. There's a lot of nasty consciousness going down out there and the Buddhists want to know the causation of everything. They're the Nerds of Numinosity, Anorak wearing Godspotters.

So I stuck to the psychedelic communication level, picking away at them on the astral with my



art: Tim Parish

own inquiries. One shouldn't be able to ask these questions within orthodox Buddhism; I shouldn't be able to hack into the mainframe; I shouldn't be able to do anything. But when you're on drugs there's no rules anymore. Maybe I'm just hallucinating but I'm having fun.

DAY FIVE

Day Five, they decided to pull a practical joke on me. There was no earthly reason why I had to get up in the middle of these proceedings. I had five trips coming on strong and I'd taken care of the plumbing before liftoff. Yet I suddenly felt like I had to go to the toilet, and started crossing my legs and holding my bladder... Jesus, I really had to go to the toilet! But I hadn't even drunk anything in the last six hours, I thought to myself.

Then I looked over to the senior monks, and they were all smirking, and they sent this thoughtform out: hardy har har.

So I had to get up, dressed in black like something out of the Matrix, whacked on drugs, and discretely walk up all these aisles whilst facing off all these Buddhists to go to the toilet. But that was the worst they did to me really, and after that I came and sat back down. Not too bad, considering... They'd clocked on quickly that I had no interest in interfering with their meditations, but even still some of the purists were horrified by my attempts to traverse their spaces whilst on hallucinogens. So I'd almost peed my pants in front of the Dalai Lama whilst on acid, but that was only a gentle slap. We can hack into you, too, mate, they were saying.

After days of staring at it on acid, the intelligence at the heart of the kalachakra mandala came out as an eye, slowly looking around. And then it clocked on to me. Then the Dalai Lama looked at it and they both looked at me, and this thoughtform came at me, "who does this punk think he is?"

I am a simple traverser of the psychedelic planes, I pulsed back. No not, really. I don't know, don't ask me, I beamed at them sheepishly. I'm just on drugs.

DAY SIX

About Day Six... I got a transmission from the Dalai Lama. I'd been caning it every day, of course, in the front row with the good monks while the Dalai Lama did his work in front of us and on the astral. And on this day he was looking very grim at one stage and then he suddenly cracked into a smile and said: "Most unorthodox, most unorthodox." Then he whipped out this pulsating ball of yin-yang energy and just huuurled it at me. It went ker-plonk, right into my chest, a recursive fractal ball of energy... and I did go a little bit spastic. He got right through my shields, and there were a few twitches... just a few twitches before the poker face cam back on.

It was like getting a processor upgrade on the computer. I'd just jumped from a 486 processor to a Pentium as he infected me with his psychic virus. I still don't know to this day what it did inside me; but he got his hooks into me. And make no mistake – from within the Buddhist mainframe the Dalai Lama looks like Schwarzenegger. Rippling muscles. He looks like a harmless, cheeky little man on the outside, but his avatar on the astral is buff, very buff. Extremely buff.

And suddenly some discarnate entity starts to appear above him, all teeth and claw and tentacles, multiple eyes and bright volcanic light as it manifested. It was like a star with teeth, Old Gods from the Cthulhu mythos or a Kraken from the ocean. It started to form above the Dalai Lama's right shoulder and grow bigger and bigger and bigger. The Dalai Lama remained calm, reading his Pali, his Tibetan prayer book, going chunka chunka chunk as he fired up the mandala. So in the astral I sort of tap the Dalai Lama on the shoulder and he glanced up. Hey buddy, look behind you!

I start communicating with the entity and it's then that I notice he has all these astral puppet strings going into the Dalai Lama, some right up into his bum. If you did a psychic audit on our

bums you'd find that all the control strings come through there. It's the last place you'd look, so the entities always go there. Anyway, this entity is sniggering. Now you've got to remember that the Dalai Lama is Jainist in his approach to the sanctity of life forms. He won't even kill a mosquito, he has to keep shoeing them away. On a psychic level, when an entity like the one here starts to devour him into the cosmic ecology, he can't kill it. He has to have boundaries, but he can't kill even malevolent deities. He has to see through their God masks, and this one was a very profound God mask, sniggering quite a lot as it watched us.

You may think I would have jumped into the psychic fire and wrestled the entity to the ground, saving the Dalai Lama and getting some fine Buddhist boy-scout medals for my actions. But no. These are the big boys, and they know what they're doing. But what they know and what they act upon are two different things. Anyway, this might be a test – this might be something they do to psychonautical terra-ists like me all the time. It's pretty wild at the top levels of the Buddhist world, and clearly caution was needed.

Suddenly the Dalai Lama just catches the entity and compresses it. He doesn't let it come into this dimension, he just seals off that portal it came through in front of my eyes. He's onto it.

The Dalailamanator in action.

DAY EIGHT

Towards the end of the proceedings I started to get paranoid, thinking the monks were ganging up on me with the past Buddhist masters I'd dabbled with in the astral. I was having a flashback to an earlier session with Andrew Cohen, and remember, the man has almost no compassion. He goes into his Satsang and starts to build up his God masks, and most of it comes across as demonic. One of the themes that goes through his teachings is absolute unconditional love, and one logical consequence of that is unconditional love of demonic nature. I started to feel like I was in a psychedelic Vietnam... But thoughts of surrender were for weaker soldiers.

It started slipping into pure virtuality as I faced off against Cohen and tried to get him to remember that he was an intelligent being on the cosmic crypto-lock sex drive, and I was going to activate him so we could reboot the universe. As I said, I was in a psychopuppy stage. He was intrigued, you know, like he hadn't visited these aspects of consciousness before. Let's cane it, see what happens. So I routed psychedelic energy at him and he loved it. It wasn't a psychedelic attack, per se, just a signal he could choose to tune in on. And he loved it. I met him later in a coffee shop and we shook hands and he said "It's all good sport, isn't it?" But he hasn't come back to Australia since '97, he's in no rush, I'll tell you that.

So anyway, there I was meditating, begrudgingly, do I have to do this all by my fucking self, I wondered. Jesus Christ. DL was going through the part of the ritual where the dorje, you know, the lightning bolt – it looks like four infinity symbols stitched together– is joined by the bell, the tantric bell. And as he starts to sacralise the experience he rings the bell, ding-da-ding-da-ding, he shakes the dorje, the lightning bolt... That's usually where it stops, but this time he found himself shaking two extra things. And he looked up in surprise at that. This is a ritual he's been doing for centuries, ritual after ritual in reincarnation after reincarnation. Chonk. Chonk chonk. Chonk chonk, with the dorje. And now the pattern had been broken.

One of the things he was holding that broke the pattern was a Tripping Manual I had written some years previously. I've got no idea how my Tripping Manual got up there on stage at the altar, but it was there and he was shaking it. And he was seeing how manipulation of it could shape the fabric of reality. And then he shook the other thing, which was the Ohm system, and he saw how that too, changed the fabric of reality. Now you must remember: the Buddhists are the Prime Pattern Holders in equilibrium with Lord Mara. The Tripping manual is a textual psychedelic, The AUM-OHM system is an organisational psychedelic.

After he's shaken both of them he glances over precisely at me, as if to say, what are you messing

around with here? I pulsed back, that the world was going to Hell in a handbasket and you Buddhists are apparently incapable of moderating the process to stop it. So I've developed this text as a non-chemical hallucinogen catalyst. A psychedelic made out of text, and a psychedelic made out of the Ohm system, of pure information.

It was then that I felt these two gigantic cobra fangs stick themselves in either side of my neck. And then this sort of astronaut mask went zoonk over my head like a bank-safe door shutting. I was in the astral Cone of Silence, in the deep, deep end of the eschatological shit. I don't know what happened to that helmet; I've probably still got it on to this day for all I know.

DAY TEN

Part of the \$750 ringside ticket I had bought enabled me to press the flesh and meet the Dalai Lama at the end of the Kalachakra initiation at some private sponsors gig at a swanky hotel. I was in crisis mode by this stage because I wanted to meet the Dalai Lama and shake his hand on mushrooms as a final cheerio gesture, but I'd run out of mushrooms, of course. They'd been carefully deployed during the final stages of the Kalachakra initiation, and all I had left was a very dubious trip and a joint. The only other thing left in the altered states pantry was an Ecstasy tablet.

So I dropped my disco biscuit and the rest. After ten days of caning it all the drugs were the same by then. It was just another generic psychedelic, plonk. There wasn't any love or heart opening; I wasn't really feeling anything but bent, really, whacked. But I was in my merchant banker's suit and I was the best dressed person in the room. And this was the inner sanctum; these were all the serious students, the devotees and senior monks. I was the only one in the room on drugs, I guarantee you that without a doubt. Not whacked, ripped, twisted, bent, ripped and twisted, but nothing special. I was rallying the flag for the psychedelic embassy and all my diplomatic credentials were unauthorised! As Noam Chomsky might say.

You had to give mandala prayer offerings to the Dalai Lama, and as you remember, I was big on the causal relationship between Lord Mara and Buddha at the time. So my offering happened to be a little Catholic plaster rendition face cast of Jesus. I painted it up and one eye was the normal glowing white, and the other eye was a sort of red yin-yang eye. And that was meant to be Lord Buddha and Lord Mara. I passed the bodyguard test, and they were very clued in bodyguards, able to read the energy fields in the psychic ether. They all smiled at me and let me pass, and I gave the plaster cast Jesus to the Dalai Lama and shook his hand.

Just a shake, no agenda, no psychedelic spin doctoring. The Dalai Lama just smiled and gave me the white ceremonial scarf, placing it around my neck. But as soon as the senior students clocked on to what I was doing, this Catholic image of Jesus with one demonic eye and one normal eye, they became enraged. A wave of righteous anger and hate rose of them and seared towards me. That someone would dare do this to the Dalai Lama, they seethed. But there was nothing they could do. No spin doctoring, no winks or nudges nor secret masonic handshakes, no "I know, you know etc" just formal politeness and minimum energetic imprinting, anything else would have been declassé and infra-dig, this was closure, not competition.

The Dalai Lama talked, and meditated, and he had this huge mandala with 12 interlocking levels, like a psychedelic doormat. So I focused on that, and on him and together we both got the energy field moving within the mandala. And then I clocked him clocking on to me and I realized: this is the relationship between Buddhism and Psychedelia. That neither the left-hand nor right-hand path has all the goods, in fact all the goods only comes together when you put psychedelics in the context of Buddhism.

And you know what's funny? The day the Dalai Lama left town, the drug drought broke, and you could score acid again everywhere. I wish I could say the same about the enlightenment.



“We Have Drunk the Soma”

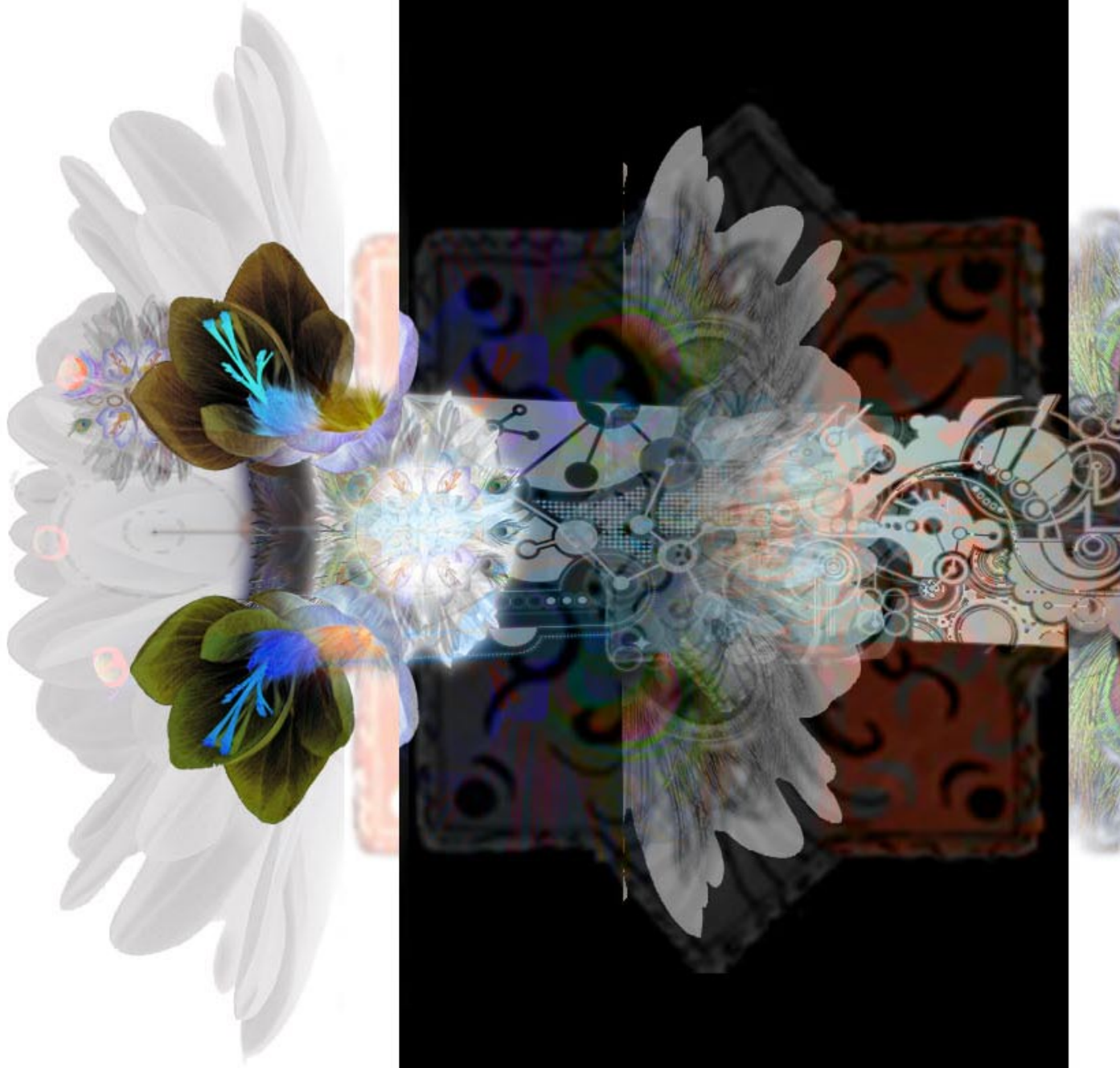
from the Rig Veda -ancient Hindu holy text.

i have tasted the sweet drink of life
knowing that it inspires good thoughts and joyous expansiveness to the extreme,
that all the gods and mortals seek it together, calling it honey.
when you penetrate inside you will know no limits,
and you will avert the wrath of the gods

we have drunk the soma, we have become immortal,
we have gone to the light, we have found the gods,
what can hatred and the malice of a mortal do to us now o immortal one?

the glorious drops that i have drunk set me free in widespace,
you have bound me together in my limbs as thongs bind a chariot
let the drops protect me from the foot that stumbles
keep lameness away from me.
enflame me like a fire kindled by friction
make us see far
make us richer, better,
i am intoxicated with you soma
i think my self rich
draw near and make us thrive
weakness and diseases have gone
the forces of darkness have fled in terror
soma has climbed in us, expanding,
we have come to the place where they stretch out lifespans....

art: Ahimsa:Love



re-mem-bering the sacred

by Is

**Re-mem-bering: to consciously reinvest a known concept with vital relevance and to relate our life experiences thereto, such that the concept may be powerful to effect change in our world.*

Change one's worldview to change the world.

Transformational spirituality has been a popular meme since the mid-twentieth century. In Australian culture people have been thinking about the meme of self transformation and have continued to identify with cultural movements which are expressive of this direction, and which affirm that this potential exists for all. People of the Woodstock generation dancing with acid house ravers. The smiley face an enduring image, augmented in the nineties by an open third eye: evolution. Yet how great a gulf in cultural significance between the traditional perspective upon entheogens (plants that "awaken the divinity within") and the Western appreciation of their use! In the West, the entheogenic experience turns upon a transaction, which goes forward at the desire and risk of the buyer. In a traditional society the shaman governs access to entheogens on the basis of need; here in the West the principal question is, "Do you have the cash?" There, entheogens are understood as a medicine – here, people are buying a product, a commodity.

Many in the West may only look upon the entheogenic cultures that the West has encountered and subjugated – while such cultures yet remain, that is – and dream that such a heritage of integrated understanding were their birthright also. However, even though many people are very interested in the possibility of personal transformation, the rigors of the traditional shamanic paths put them beyond



As we cannot
prove the reality
of the unmanifest,
orthodox Western
culture says
nothing definitive
of it – at the edge
of the world map
of materialist
philosophers, the
words “here be
dragons” might be
appended.

the serious consideration of most. Not only do most find the revelation of what a commitment to such a path actually entails confronting; the fact is that, in the main, people prefer to stick with what they know.

A young man once asked me, “What on earth is the relevance of a South American ayahuasca ceremony to a white boy from Sydney’s inner west? To me it’s very simple: you put the stuff in your head and then watch it fly away... after all it’s just a drug, right?” To this twenty-something the concept of explicitly ritualising the process of taking a drug was an example of pure superstition with no possible validity whatsoever. Drugs are chemicals with molecular structures that engage the receptors of the human brain – that’s how they work. They work regardless of what gods the human imagines in the sky beyond the stars, which are not ancestors’ spirits but very distant thermonuclear reactions. The concept that there may be something to be gained by taking a conscious, or spiritual, approach to the matter clearly cut no ice with him – to him, chemicals are for fun and entheogenic reports are interesting only from the perspective of becoming better informed about new substances, personal safety and the law. To his way of thinking the state’s

interest in controlling substances is for the primary purpose of outwardly defending the hypocrisies of the WASP mentality while actually establishing the conditions under which street prices, and the graft associated therewith, might be pushed up. He was pro-legalisation because he believed it a victimless crime in the first place and in the second place he believed that the price, and the related crime statistics, would fall as a result.

Between the poles of the avowedly initiatory and the secular recreational falls the syncretic approach. In this your relationship with plants changes through your experiences with them, finally maturing to the point where some acknowledge them as teachers and the substances they contain as sacraments, which in turn leads the participant to use rituals of their own making to recognise and honour the plant spirits. Creativity is a means by which this can be explored: the art you produce on the basis of the visions becomes a vital link between you and the plant spirit, and this is one way for the individual to “bring to earth” the insight and exaltation they have gained. Simple rituals can employ elements drawn from a variety of sources: mysticism, shamanic traditions, Western magickal techniques, Hermeticism – and be brought together by the individual as they see fit, with the intention of consciously working with the entheogen.

The definition of entheogen is that it “awakens the divinity within”, and in this regard it is not limited to naturally occurring substances at all – instance the examples of LSD

and Ecstasy. However, most people are predisposed to viewing the plant entheogen as the more serious, or genuinely spiritual, avenue of inquiry and the chemical creation as recreational. Plant entheogens are surrounded by centuries of human use, guided and guarded by initiated shamanic tradition, wherein there is no doubt that the entheogen is a sacred medicine and that some are called by the plant to become, themselves, initiated guardians of this sacred tradition. The degree of social integration apparent in such communities is impressive, wherein it is assumed that a person is a part of a greater whole, where spirituality affirms the unity of all things and is seen to pervade every aspect of the individual's world. It is easy to see that the example of traditional usage would impart to plant entheogens a strong spiritual aura.

By contrast, the artificial entheogen is purely a Western concoction, a by-product, if you will, of scientific analysis. In the West, chemical compounds are valued for their objective practical applications; they are not attributed the special significance of being manifestations of the divine. Though the West may pride itself on its achievements in the cause of material science, and rightly trumpets the accuracy of the models it has created, no one is venturing an opinion as to what these models actually depict beyond relationships between known things. Molecules are, perhaps, the material building blocks of a distant God – but this is something left very much to the individual to consider privately. As we cannot prove the reality of the unmanifest, orthodox Western culture says nothing definitive of it – at the edge of the world map of materialist philosophers, the words “here be dragons” might be appended.

In other cultures there is no doubt that unseen dimensions exist which interpenetrate the mundane world, or that a shaman may enter these regions, wherefrom he may manipulate events on this side of the veil. Standing “between the worlds”, the shaman is both greatly honoured and greatly feared, for his knowledge not only enables him the power to heal, it also grants him the power to harm through sorcery and witchcraft. People would not hesitate to approach the local shaman for healings. By use of plant entheogens he is enabled to perceive sickness in the bodies of the afflicted (for this reason he is also referred to as the “Glass Man”) and, having identified the cause, treats it by sucking the sickness from the afflicted person's fingertips and then vomiting it forth. On the other hand, the shaman faces the real danger of being accused of sorcery by superstitious people from surrounding communities, a charge which might result in his murder. The accusation of sorcery might follow should women of a neighbouring village suffer stillbirth, or general sickness overtake a community. The shaman's survival depends largely on him maintaining a good reputation in his local community.

In traditional communities the entheogen occupies a known place in the collective worldview; it has a purpose and is not available unless the individual is in need, or demonstrates the characteristics that alert guardians of the tradition to their being another potential shaman. It is a fact that the majority of people in the West are introduced to entheogens through recreational use, that is, vicariously. Of these, some number perseveres, and in the course of their recreational use they gather experience that transforms their attitude to the practice. They begin to see the experiences as a spiritualising influence in their lives and desire to acknowledge this deeper relationship by what means they may. It is also a fact that not every psychedelic experience will be a deeply spiritual experience. For all the effort one might expend in creating circumstances conducive to the “spiritual” trip, there is no guarantee that such a trip will follow, nor that,

The definition of entheogen is that it “awakens the divinity within”, and in this regard it is not limited to naturally occurring substances...

were it to do so, it would necessarily be a “nice” experience. Somewhat like the converts to a hair product, the advocates of a spiritual high are left to say, “Well, it may not happen the first, or even the fiftieth, time, but it will happen...” What is being spoken of, really, is the will to allow the possibility that an entheogen might catalyse personal development: nothing more.

One common metaphor has been that the entheogen flies you to the mountain and you stay awhile, you get your happy snaps then it brings you back, which the classicist mind would say is a different thing entirely to endeavouring to live at those heights and prospecting the climb. To which the

psychonaut might well add: yes, nor would my climbing seem worthwhile had I not visited their heights – spiritual epiphanies are pretty few and far between here on the streets, it has to be admitted. If you can get it from the pulpit or the press you’re doing well; I just can’t remember the last time a clerical outburst moved me that way, in such a way as to be reaffirmed in my inner being of the divine harmony of all things, and to be thereafter transformed in life. But read any of the burgeoning literature available on the impact of psychedelics and you will see such statements being made, notably in connection with DMT. That the mundane and the spiritual are joined in one’s perception, that thereby one perceives the sacred nature of all things and learns about oneself thereby – this is why we call them entheogens but know them as sacraments. Yes, there is more to life than meets the eye. Yes, there is a palpable benefit to be gained. Yes, this is a valid line of inquiry. Ultimately those who know, know, while those who don’t look on in bemusement.

“We wanna be free – and we wanna get loaded!”

(Primal Scream/Screamadelica)

There is a clear consensus that the use of entheogens should be decriminalised at least, preferably legalised, and their abuse considered a medical matter. In the main, people would like to go in search of their ultimate high by their own ingenuity and without interference; they would like to be informed but not advised, they would like their experience to be respected as being either recreational or spiritual as they elect, sans guidance, interpretation or judgement by others. Though ideas such as personal transformation and spiritual growth have achieved great currency in the marketplace, and while many see entheogens as a potential path to spiritual awakening, the fact is that most people are burdened by secular materialism to which the West has defaulted after faith, and harbour doubt about the validity of the spiritual quest even as they



struggle with the drive to express it.

People are understandably reticent to countenance striking out alone and initiating a practice without an established framework of milestones and guidance. The testimony of those who have gone into traditional entheogenic cultures is a reassuring affirmation of the beneficent power of entheogens in those cultures, certainly, but those cultures are a world away from the suburbs. Yet there is a genuine entheogenic culture developing in the West. It is coalescing around the precedent and experience of the pioneers of the 60s and it is struggling to engage both a community health problem and the need to re-educate. While the entheogenic experience has the power to heal, in our culture it has attracted opprobrium through the prejudice of a society that makes much of the casualties that have occurred through ignorant misuse in the psychedelic community. People are burning themselves out through being misinformed, through failing to recognise excess in their practice, or through failing to make the connection with spirituality at all and being blown away when their number comes up.

We who advocate the entheogenic experience have a responsibility to convey not merely that the experience is positive, that it is a valid direction for human inquiry and that it is vital that this inquiry be conducted; we must also address the pitfalls. As we are agreed that this inquiry has spiritual dimensions we should address the lessons of our spiritual traditions for whatever practical methods and salutary admonishments they may hold, which might potentially represent preventative medicines, both physical and psychological, for anyone setting out on the journey. Advocates of entheogens struggle against the perception of being merely hedonistic adventurers; of irresponsibly hoping to "get enlightened" without raising a sweat. What we do is persistently and crudely portrayed simply as taking drugs and abusing ourselves, whereas in fact what we are interested in is exploring consciousness for the reward of insight.

The Bush administration is ramping up its "War on Drugs" and has cracked down even harder on anyone associated with scheduled substances. The prohibition policy has been demonstrated to be a costly and ineffective failure, and yet scarcely a month passes without the scheduling of yet more. Thousands of innocent people across America are being imprisoned, deprived of their livelihoods and disenfranchised of the right to vote, for a practice that has been a cornerstone of human evolution since the Stone Age. Around the world, and often at the threat of loss of trade or humanitarian aid, governments are falling in line with Washington and are doing their bit for the "War on Drugs". The drug cartels and the private corrective services companies, meanwhile, enjoy business as usual and increased profit. Is there something wrong with this picture? Why is the establishment not addressing this with a health and education strategy?

Entheogens are so named for their capacity to open the mind to deeper awareness, to catalyse new perspectives of what it means to be human, to awaken the divinity within. This experience is so attractive precisely because it offers the confirmation of what is normally only a hopeful dream: the knowledge that life is meaningful in ways far beyond those apparent to us in mundane consciousness. The entheogen gives this knowledge directly, and though we inevitably must return to our normal state we do so with the memory of having transcended its bounds. We have our connection with the sacred remembered within us. In identifying what is sacred to them, a person wakes an inner

strength from which to judge and act. They establish the foundation upon which the frames of character and mind may evolve, the necessary internal points of reference by which experiences gain meaningful relativity, and discrimination develops. The person who has developed in faithful harmony with their inner strength, who resists the myriad temptations to defer or renege its directives, becomes accustomed to independence and is their own creature. This strength is won through a living connection with meaning – without which there seems little reason not to be a “clockwork orange”.

The West needs its own equivalent of the shaman, but in typically hypocritical fashion the establishment would prefer to kill the messenger than hear the message. The entheogenic movement is being hounded and persecuted by a pig-ignorant and profoundly frightened “moral majority”, who, being in fact neither moral nor in the majority, see the changes that the entheogenic renaissance heralds as a threat and resort to draconian measures to hold the tide back. What are they so frightened of?

Maybe it is not so hard to see why the orthodoxy has opted to shoot the messenger: entheogens have contributed to the rise of a spirituality that stands upon direct experience and rejects dispensation, and which therefore inherently contradicts the very basis upon which much of the establishment stands. Would it be too long a bow to draw to suggest that, were the people’s sacred connection re-membered to them, they would simply walk away? Perhaps. At the least, re-memberance is a seed of the greater transformation we would all see in trying to heal the culture of our times.

the journeybook



Undergrowth #8: Journeybook is an essential map of hyperspace for the contemporary psychonaut and the uninitiated alike. Travel through time and space and partake of mushrooms at Harvard, hemp in Nimbin, DMT in the Amazon and anti-depressants in the suburbs of the West, to name but a few of the experiences which await you. Dance at Dionysian festivals, meet alchemists in the laboratories of Switzerland, trippers in the corporate highrises of Brivegas, and journey to the edge of the universe within our anthology's pages...



The Journeybook is a collection of tales of altered states, essays, history and manifesto for psychedelic culture in the 21st century. It covers the modern usage of sacramental plants and offers insights into traditional and contemporary shamanism, as well as analysis of the current state of global psychedelic culture and its place in a sustainable future.

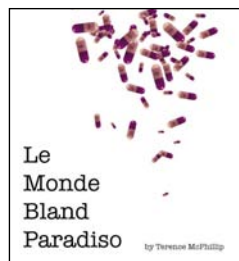
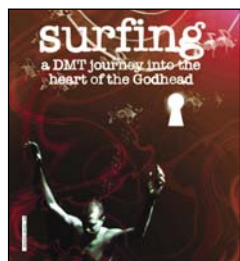
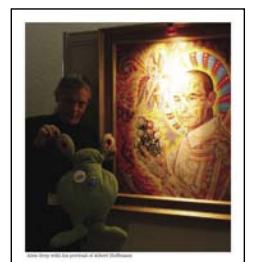
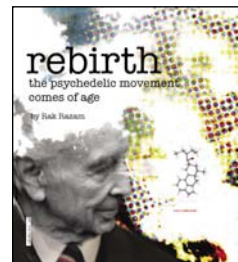
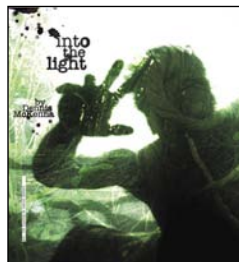
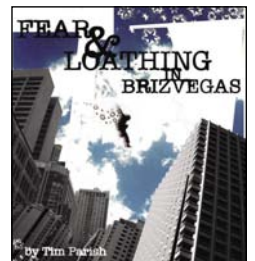
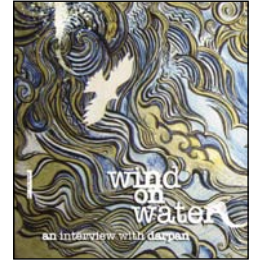
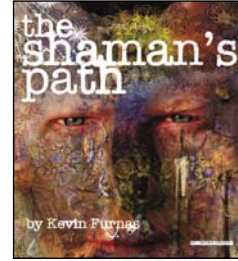
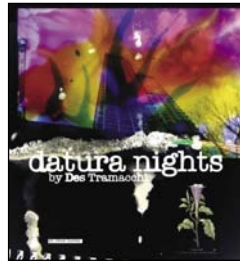
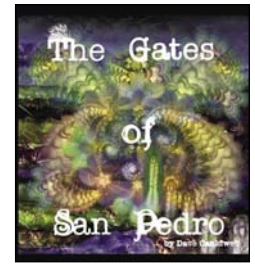
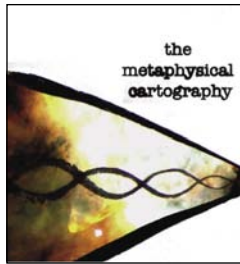


It features interviews with Terence McKenna (previously unpublished), Dennis McKenna, Daniel Pinchbeck, as well as articles by Rak Razam, Erik Davis, Graham St John, Tim Parish, Tim Boucher, Dave Cauldwell, Des Tramacchi, Brummbaer, LS, . At 280 pages, it is fully illustrated with dozens of colour paintings, photography and digital graphics from the Undergrowth art collective, including new works by regular Undergrowth contributors Gerhard Hillmann, Oliver Dunlop, Izwoz, Ahimsa, Tim Parish and others.



The Journeybook is an essential handbook for those interested in the subject of consciousness, spirituality and understanding the rich pharmacopia of thought that exists beyond the confines of mainstream cosmology.

Read on. Tune in. Discover.



To order a copy of the Journeybook online go to
<http://www.undergrowth.org/journeybook>

undergrowth

the journeybook

taster



the transition
and sleep

travels on the frontiers
of consciousness