

AbraXas

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MYTHOLOGICAL AND LITERARY STUDIES ISSUE SIX



Editorial

As we are sending this issue of *Abraxas* to press, preparations are well advanced for an event that promises to be of some significance for the esoteric genre. In October this year, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles will open a four-month exhibition devoted to the work of Marjorie Cameron.

There are many I am sure who will celebrate a neglected artist returning to the mainstream with such style. And perhaps there will be other visitors who appreciate an exhibition with such a strong emphasis on figurative work, even if the figures are somewhat otherworldly. And yet, notable though these reasons might be, as a community we might see something more, because despite her relationship with Wallace Bergman and post-war Los Angeles counter-culture, it was Cameron's fascination with the occult that remained her principle inspiration. Indeed, for despite the passing of the years, Thelema, Babalon and the astral realm continued to permeate her work. In this exhibition we might then also detect a serious interest in the esoteric moving from the margins of society towards the centre.

In this issue of *Abraxas* we are delighted to offer you a previously unpublished series of photographs by Victoria Ballesteros of Cameron practising the Chen-style sword form of t'ai chi. The spiritual feminine continues with Kelly E. Hayes' powerful images of devotees to *pombagiras*. Mark Williams explores the impact of Ella Young – champion of Celtic spirituality – on the Californian sub-culture of the 1950s. And to mark the recent exhibition of Leonora Carrington's work in Dublin, we are honoured to offer you a special feature on the artist from Susan L. Aberth and Wouter J. Hanegraaff.

However, a note of especial thanks must go to Penelope Slinger. For anyone exploring tantra in the 1970s and early 80s, her books – part Surrealist collage, part poetic manual – were something of a touchstone. And I'm sure that for many readers they represented the first contact with creative, esoteric, thinking. We are therefore very grateful to Anna Dorofeeva for flying out to the States to interview Penny, and to the artist herself, who generously offered to produce a cover design especially for this issue. Thank you both.

So herewith, dear reader, is *Abraxas* #6, charged as it is with resurgent feminine power. And in my mind's eye I see Cameron riding triumphant into the City of Angels astride a seven-headed beast, clutching *Peyote Vision* doggedly under her arm, and laughing.

Robert Ansell

9th September 2014

The Alchemy of Liberation

An Interview with Penelope Slinger

ANNA DOROFEEVA





There is a kingdom that exists as a potential state within us all. But being in search of this experience one must know that this state cannot be found with the mind nor by any route that feels safe, nor any way that we expect but only by the unexpected, unsafe, unprecedented, unritualised raw experience of the heart.

– Christopher Hills

IN RECENT YEARS THE ART WORLD has again become interested in the work of Penelope Slinger – one of the pioneers of feminist art in Britain. Beginning her career in the late 1960s, Slinger used the tools of Surrealism to explore the female psyche. Her work was shown in the exhibition *Young and Fantastic* (1969) at the ICA in London immediately after her graduation from Chelsea Art School and was patronised by Roland Penrose, Lee Miller and Max Ernst. In the next ten years Slinger's career developed quickly, but in 1979 she decided to uproot and start a new life, moving first to New York and then to the Caribbean.

Thirty years later, in 2010, the Riflemaker gallery in London reintroduced the art of Penelope Slinger to Britain with her solo exhibition *A Photo-Romance*. This was followed by a second exhibition in 2011, *Hear What I Say*. At the same time Tate St Ives included four of her collage works in the themed exhibition *The Dark Monarch*.

As I board the plane to San Francisco, to meet the artist at the house built by her late husband Christopher Hills, a scientist and spiritual philosopher, the words of Tot Taylor, the co-founder of Riflemaker, are on my mind: 'Penny already lived several lives in one. She really has done so many things.' I think of her beautifully feminine and erotic collages from *An Exorcism* (1970–7), and I am prepared to meet not only a great artist but also a great and fascinating woman.

However, the meeting exceeded all expectations. We had long working sessions, the conversations making me contemplate the ultimate wisdom of a life lived with integrity. Slinger's latest work, the *64 Dakini Oracle*, made me encounter pure spiritual teaching. The oracle is inspired by the Indian temples to the sixty-four Yoginis. Concerned by the essence of a spiritual path for several decades of her life, she gathered wisdom from across the world to create a divinatory system of sixty-four 'potentials' that one could turn to on the journey to self-realisation.

Anna Dorofeeva: The *64 Dakini Oracle* series seems to come from a place of deep spirituality, which is somewhat different from your previous works. It appears that your spiritual consciousness was the creative force behind this work, rather than spirituality being an effect of art. Could you talk about the journey you have gone through so far?

Penny Slinger: The whole oracle concept was something that I was interested in from my early days, going back to my journey when I was growing up and emerging into the art world. My first book, *50% The Visible Woman*, was looking at the predicament of femininity. I made it when I was still at Chelsea. Already, I wanted to allow the creative energy of the feminine to have a platform. So when I discovered Surrealism and the way it probed the subconscious and dredged things out from underneath the surface and brought them to the light of day, I thought that it had such wonderful tools for femininity to be able to express its psyche.

AD: Is it right that your discovery of Surrealism began with the work of Max Ernst?

PS: Yes, I discovered Ernst, and especially the collage books that he did with the old engravings, when I was a student. For me it was a revelation, because up to that point I thought collage was just bits of paper stuck together, and you could see where they were stuck, and when I saw his collages, you couldn't see any fragmentation, it all became a seamless new world. It inspired me to put together *50% The Visible Woman*, my first collage book.

Then a friend of mine introduced me to Sir Roland Penrose. Roland had a beautiful collection of Surrealist art and had been the biographer of many Surrealists including Max Ernst and was

fig. 1. (page 17) Penelope in the centre of the *64 Dakini Oracle* cards. Photo by Dhiren Dasu, 2014.

fig. 2. (opposite) Penelope Slinger, 'Alchemica', digital photocollage from *64 Dakini Oracle*, 2011.



a Surrealist painter himself. So I had wonderful discussions with Roland, which were very illuminating, as he was so enthusiastic and just really loved the art and the artists. Later when I went to Paris with the art school, he took me to meet Max Ernst there. This was such a special occasion and I was able to get confirmation and endorsement for the direction I was following. It was a magical meeting.

fig. 3. Penelope Slinger, 'Becoming', photomontage from *An Exorcism*, 1977.

I later invited Roland to my diploma exhibition, and when he saw my work, he got me into an exhibition in the ICA. It was quite an extraordinary thing to happen to a young artist. The show was called *Young and Fantastic* and it was all about where Surrealism is now. In fact from that time on, for few years, he became my patron in the true classic sense, helping me so much and was there for me in so many ways. I had many wonderful visits to his home Farley Farm, where he had all the beautiful artworks. He was a key person in my life, who gave me a kind of unconditional support and

appreciation, which I took for granted at that time. But when you look back, it was exceptional how he extended himself to me and recognised me.

AD: In 1977 you completed your collage series *An Exorcism* in which you appeared to use the Surrealist language to explore the female psyche. Reading your interview from 1978 with *The London Magazine*, I see it described as 'presenting the unravelling of self, a kind of spiritual autobiography, offering through images that are mainly erotic and romantic in origin the journey through childhood to the rebirth'. What was the story behind its twenty-one chapters?

PS: My art and my life have always been interwoven. When I left art school I met my then-boyfriend, who was Peter Whitehead. I was accepted at the Royal College to study film-making, but I met him and he was a film-maker, so I went to make films with him. We went to this evocative derelict mansion house [Lilford Hall in Northamptonshire] together to shoot, but the film never materialised, because the issue of who was controlling and directing never quite resolved! However, we also took many photographs, and they became the foundation for *An Exorcism*, which was created later on when our relationship broke down in a dramatic way.

It so happened that my involvement with the theatre group Holocaust caused a schism in my relationship with Peter. Holocaust was the first all-women theatre group in England, run by Jane Arden, who was a strong women's liberationist in the seventies. First I did a theatre production with the group, and then we went on to make a film called *The Other Side of the Underneath*. We lived altogether communally in this unused pub in Wales and made the film. Peter didn't want me to participate, but I did. I made a commitment and I felt that I needed to follow it through, and realise whatever it was.

I had a mind-expanding experience on film; I was very awakened, very much freer and after the film finished I felt that if Peter were to accept the new

me, it would be wonderful and we could move on together. If he didn't then we would separate. But nothing is ever as simple as that and the experience of making the film with Jane Arden was not all hearts and flowers either. We went through many months of hell trying to stay together, but he could not forgive me. We broke up and I felt terrible and guilty about that. I had betrayed him somehow, but I was only following my path for what I felt I had to do to grow as a 'being'. So this was very painful for me and I was very distraught after the break-up. Working on *An Exorcism* for seven years became my own way of processing the situation, my psychoanalysis of myself. This process questioned who I am and how much is really me and how much is the projections of others. How is it that I can't reconcile two parts of myself: the connection with my own inner self and the connection with a man? Partnership is important for me, and feeling that I destroyed it weighed heavily on my soul.

AD: Each of the collages takes place in one of the rooms of the derelict mansion you went to with Peter Whitehead, so it appears to become the main canvas for the events that unfolded. Could you please elaborate on the symbolic importance of that space?

PS: I used the house, the place we went to together, as the symbol of myself, of the whole inheritance that I was coming into – the whole cultural venue. This old stately home represents the power, now derelict, at the same time showing femininity being trapped in a container. So I took the house as the symbol of the self, going into all the different rooms to explore and find out what is happening, open and look at the skeletons in the cupboards, not being afraid to explore all those deeper, darker spaces. One of the first images is the one when she/I goes in, opens the door and there is the brick wall behind the door; this to me represents the imagination, that magical world, being blocked off. And in front is the man with the key. So, it's him, it's Peter playing the man, who actually had that role in my life,



but I used him as a symbol here. It was like taking real-life experience but then making an archetypal glyph from that. Using myself and Peter to create a frozen moment, which would represent a state of being that comes into play through ontological experience, that shakes you to look at all these things about yourself.

I unravelled such threads like cultural context, which made me who I am; projections of my partner I took on. I stripped away everything, so I could find out what am I underneath. Having the journey through all these rooms, I reached death and rebirth of the self. It is like a flood that fills the whole place with water and you drown, surrender, let go into the void and then re-emerge reborn. In

fig. 4. Penelope Slinger, 'The Brick Wall Behind the Door', photocollage from *An Exorcism*, 1977.

the end, she's holding the house in her hands, so it no longer has her. She is in control of her world. It is like a doll's house now, something to play with, rather than something to be contained within and have all these scary monsters. We looked at them, so we are now able to come through and come out. That process that I went through, it is actually one of the first steps of any spiritual path. It is the knowledge of yourself. This was me trying to know myself. Who we are, where we come from, where we are going. Having come through that experience, the question was what now?

AD: Do we go through certain established phases in becoming ourselves?

PS: We do, but many don't fully realise or embody those things, because of the nature of conventional life. As we are growing up, we tend to be selfish and self-centred. We have to, because we are trying to know who we are. For me the natural thing is to admit being selfish earlier on in your life and to come through the phase of getting to know yourself to the phase of seeing beyond yourself. As soon as things work out and you find out who you are and what you want to do, you don't need to do that self-searching so much any longer. Then you are able to look out and perceive another.

In terms of my own path, I guess it was the time when I went to the Caribbean islands and started the portraits of Arawak Indians, who were no longer in the flesh, but their spirit was there. That was me looking at a whole culture, in other words, looking outward.

Once you become self-aware and reach the point where your inner self isn't fettered any more and it's not trapped by unresolved things that you've inherited and limited by psychological trauma, then you are able to look at your possibilities, which can fulfil your true potential as a human being. There's a pot of potentials that we all have, when we are not just dealing with trauma on a psychological level. But when we can get a little bit beyond that, what can we cultivate then in ourselves? And that's when

I started to look at the archetypes of what we call the divine energies.

AD: Is this the point when you began creating the *64 Dakini Oracle* series?

PS: Essentially yes. I moved to creating the archetypes of the sixty-four Dakinis: sixty-four different potentials, which are within us all. When you reach a certain understanding of things, you can't look in the old way any more. Similar to being selfish when you are young, but when you see beyond that you can't go back to those selfish ways again, because you see the bigger picture. You see that the self isn't limited by your own skin, but is echoed throughout your encounters both on the earthly plane and in a higher self, as we call it. It could be that voice that can speak to you, and you know that it is your own voice in a sense, but it is that part of yourself that really knows the truth and is open to universal principles and understandings. It becomes a joy to cultivate an openness to receive that kind of information and when you can receive it, for me the next step is how to embody that. And that is the nature of the potential in us.

The sixty-four Dakinis are all pure energies. It's energy that moves things. The mind can circle it, but it takes energy to move anything. If you look in the Indian cosmology at the notion of shakti, the energy that runs through everything, life force, the vitality, shakti is feminine. It is that creative feminine power. The *64 Dakini Oracle* series is about the activation of shakti in the self and in the whole connection with the world that we have.

AD: How does the oracle work? How can we harness the potentials in ourselves through it?

PS: The *64 Dakini Oracle* represents a map of sixty-four divine energies. Each Dakini represents one of the energies. When you look at the map you see all these energies placed in a circle, like sixty-four rays of the sun. So these are the embodiments – sixty-four shaktis. The Dakini are ways for us to connect

with those energies and the oracle allows finding the one most relevant to you for that moment in time. The image of the Dakini gives you initiation and teaching. The main thing is to help you to self-realise. It gives an opportunity for anyone to have a direct spiritual transmission.

You can work with that over a period of time, it's not a kind of oracle to consult every day. It's more about the energies you can awaken in yourself. And in terms of the art, the image of the Dakini that appears in your reading becomes your meditation piece. By resonating with her, you learn from the experience of part of yourself being awakened and aligned.

AD: Often in our life-choices we are motivated by the rational mind, fears, issues that we still haven't dealt with – instead of being aligned with our true self and wishes and simply listening to the voice of the soul. What is your vision of being in alignment?

PS: For me the highest ideal of how one lives one's life is developing totally in accordance with what the cosmos wants, the higher consciousness, which wants the highest resolutions for all things for the good of all. It wants you to fulfil your highest potential. If you can be in alignment, if you can be tuned to yourself so that you are able to receive those frequencies directly and then act on them so that your life and how you act is the result of what the higher consciousness wants to happen, that to me is all one could wish for. This would be the fulfilment of one's mission in life. We all have different gifts, and hopefully we are given an opportunity to be able to express them and do so in alignment with what the highest good is. That's a life well lived and it's in one's ability to be able to do it, so that spiritual and material life are not separate but are unified.

AD: How did you make the choice of which energies to include in the *64 Dakini Oracle*?

PS: In order both to find the right format and to distil the archetypes, I looked at all the cultures through all times instead of keeping just to a Tibetan or Indian pantheon. I thought it would be able to touch more people. Looking to those archetypes, I tried to figure out which are the core ones, which have the most powerful resonance with the transformation of our times and represent a whole group. Some of them are from traditional cultures and some are new energies. I also realised that the divine consciousness itself shifts and changes with the times. That was integral to the selection of which Dakinis would be part of the pantheon.

AD: Could you give an example of a contemporary Dakini?

PS: Well, most of them are timeless, hopefully; even if they don't have ancient roots, they have an eternal presence.

One of the 'new' Dakinis is Electra-Li. She represents all the electrical systems, which are so predominant on the planet now. But although we didn't have electricity in the way we have it now before, the electrical force is always present: consider the lightning, or bioelectrical structures in our bodies. Electricity is such a powerful force in modern life. Without power, suddenly everything shuts down – no light, no warmth, no communication. We are very dependent on the power of electricity and Electra-Li is the Dakini who presides over this energy field and whose energy it is that powers the systems. The second part of her name, Li, comes from the Chinese trigram for fire in the I Ching. The qualities attributed to Li are: illuminating, brightness, radiance, intelligence, clarity, clinging and attachment.

AD: On the Dakinis map you placed them all in the shape of the sunrays. They all appear to represent equal parts of the cosmology. Do they have equal powers?

PS: I haven't made distinction between different categories of the divine being. I don't think it's the time for hierarchy. There is a level of spirituality that warns you not to go for the powers if you are looking for the true depth of enlightenment.

I think it's the time for the circle and for all to recognise each other with mutual respect, so for example Mermaid is there on the same level, having equal importance and significance to say a great goddess out of Hindu tradition. So that's the kind of liberty that I'm taking here.

AD: What role does Mermaid play in the pantheon?

PS: Mermaid is all about the magical secrets of the underwater realm, the subconscious. It's about all the magic that exists in there and she holds the pole of wisdom in this completely beautiful symbiotic relationship with all of the creatures of the underwater world. It's like a glimpse into the magic that we know exists, but a veil is drawn over it. Mermaid opens up the magic again. When you put the shell to your ear, you hear the song of the sea. Mermaid is that song of the sea in your heart, calling you home, to your authentic, genuine self.

If she comes to be the energy that you need at a given point, she will encourage you not to be afraid to go into the unconscious and into the imagination, helping you to embrace the magic of the world beyond its appearances.

AD: Let's talk about the image of the Metamorphia Dakini [EDITOR'S NOTE: See back cover]. Does her role relate to the process of metamorphosis that we can come through? What does she represent?

PS: She is a butterfly Dakini. Her life cycle is a glyph for the metamorphosis we can all achieve given the opportunity of a human life. Starting as a humble caterpillar, crawling on her belly on the earth, she then owns a cocoon and goes through a radical transformation. Within the chrysalis her whole



fig. 5. Penelope Slinger, 'Electra-Li', digital photocollage from *64 Dakini Oracle*, 2011.



being is literally liquefied before being re-formed into a completely new being, a beautiful butterfly with wings to fly.

In many cultures of the world, the butterfly has been seen as a symbol for the soul and for rebirth and renewal. In some African cultures, the butterfly is considered to carry the spirit of the ancestors.

When you look to the image of the butterfly Dakini you will see how she proudly displays the stages of her evolution and transformation that have brought her to this moment of her unveiling, the revelation of her inner beauty. At the base of her image, she is seen wiggling in her caterpillar body. She goes through the 'dark night of the soul' and all her organs liquefy as she re-forms her new self. Metamorphosis then awakens and pushes her way out, breaks free of her containment. When she emerges and pumps her blood, her life force, into her new wings, she enters the world of beauty, air and light, which is the world of the butterfly.

AD: What does it entail to have her image as a meditation piece?

PS: She makes you question what processes you need to go through to release your inner beauty, to unveil the 'real you', your inner butterfly. What needs to transpire to initiate the process of metamorphosis? Things may not look very promising, but if you look at the big picture, there can be beauty and majesty in the unfolding of destiny, if you are willing to go through with whatever needs to melt down in the process. Do not be trapped in the self you have been, but see the self you could become. Be prepared to take whatever action for the self, or for the situation, that is necessary to reach the objective. Surrender to a necessary meltdown in the process of whatever you have going on. Appreciate each stage as part of the path and realise that for the seeker of liberation, the journey is as relevant as the destination. You need

time for inner process, a period of seclusion and privacy before you emerge. The chrysalis is a symbol for creating a safe space for you in which to work through whatever needs to be processed, in order to allow the new form of things to come out. You may have to go through a period of darkness before re-emerging into the light. I feel it is really vital now that the integration of the dark and the light should not be perceived as being good and bad. Instead, embrace the unknown that the dark represents; pass the fear, because it is only fear that creates negative archetypes. Be able to look at the darkness. Allow yourself to be lost before you are re-found. Metamorphosis's message is that to earn your wings, you must be prepared to turn all you have been, all you are, to fluid state . . . But don't we all wish that we could fly?

AD: In the 1970s one of your artistic goals, which you stated in your letter to Niki de Saint Phalle, was to forge a new art language to further the feminine identity. Did you have some purely visual interests in terms of the language while working on the *64 Dakini Oracle* or you were more interested in its concept?

PS: I took this template of the sixty-four Dakinis as an opportunity to explore a truly integrated field where the visual language is a direct reflection of the intention that was put into the work from conception to the final piece.

The first step was meditating, receiving and crystallising the visions of the qualities and attributes of each Dakini. Then in manifesting the Dakinis I had very specific intentions. The first thing is that I chose different women to represent the different Dakinis, trying to bring in all the different archetypes and races and thereby show that it's for everyone – that was important. Having envisioned what each one should be, how they are going to look and feel, making the costumes and collecting all those pieces, it was all done with a particular kind of spirit and energy.

I always thought that in our contemporary

fig. 6. Anna interviewing Penelope in her home. Photo by Dhiren Dasu, 2014.



Western society, art doesn't have the place that it does in tribal society, where the art objects were made with intention for magical use. They were used in ceremonies as the reflection of divine energy. It felt to me a kind of dynamic that we need again where art becomes sacred and usable. I hold to the wisdom of the indigenous people because they know how to live in harmony with spirit and nature. They would go on vision quests together to contact spirits and then bring back teachings in order to decide what choices they would make on their earth walk.

The actual shoots where the models were photographed and videotaped were treated as sacred rituals in honour of the particular Dakini. The women offered their service and we created a living example of collaboration and cooperation in action in the process of creating the series.

The visual language I used to present the Dakinis was distilled from my years of work with collage. But now, instead of the cut-and-paste technique, I chose to use the new tools provided by digital media to assemble these visions with more precision. My palette was pan-cultural and the intention was to create pictograms where each element held symbolic resonance in the energy field of the Dakini.

AD: What is the role of art in your life?

PS: My spiritual practice and my art are one at this point. I knew I was meant to be an artist since my childhood. Already then I felt it in my heart. But the medium of expression is secondary to what needs to be expressed, in my opinion. That's why I've always worked with lots of different media. Because it's not just in the object, it's in the energy that goes into it. I like to work with photographic collage. When I was at art school I was told that 'Penny wants the glue that can stick anything to anything', and I really feel that pretty much describes my approach. Certainly as a Surrealist, bringing together different elements of reality to create a new reality, that is what I always felt my art to be. So art has always been my means of expression. I often found it much easier to create a connection through art than just through normal social exchange. Through art you have already done the alchemy. And I see myself as much as an alchemist as an artist. The alchemy is in the refinement. You take all these raw experiences and emotions and then you transform them within the crucible of yourself, of your own psyche, and you create something new and offer it as the gold. It has the vibe of alchemy and when it becomes a little bit like a magic formula, somebody else can tap into it and make their own alchemy from it.

AD: You said before that you realised that the spiritual energy itself is shifting with the time. Can you explain further the shift that is happening now?

PS: The new spirituality has none of the trappings of the old dogma of religion. I believe it is keen and central to our whole life and our view of life. We know we have a spirit that is bigger than the body and it's eternal. I believe that when you work from the heart-centric template, the heart wisdom knows it all because it is rooted in compassion. When

fig. 7. Penelope Slinger, 'Sigh of the Rose', photocollage from An Exorcism, 1977. 50 x 35 cm.

you have that as the dictating force behind all the other kinds of decision-making, then it naturally knows its own wisdom, because its wisdom is rooted in what is good for all. The true, the enlightened being knows that the self is all of this and it's not a separate thing.

The old spirituality has been kind of stuck for a long time, and I don't blame any of the initiators; for instance, it is not really to do with Christ when some things are done in the name of Christianity. I don't like the things that happened in Christianity, and other, religion, all the dogmas and oppressions. I had a vision and a realisation a few years ago, where I had direct experience of the Sacred Heart. I got to see this glyph of a man with the arms outstretched, which is Christ on the cross. It's not the suffering part that everyone holds on to, but the liberating part. I think that he was just put in this situation where it became his responsibility to show people that whatever situation you are in, forgiveness and opening to unconditional love can enable you to reclaim your sovereign self. Christ put himself in this ultimate humiliation, physically, mentally and spiritually. The situation could not have been any worse, but still within that, he offered total and complete surrender and forgiveness. And he gave that unconditional love and forgiveness to all who would put him into this situation. That's the key. Openness is for me the symbol now of the perfected male. He holds his heart open. That's who Christ really was – unconditional love and forgiveness, and it needs to be renewed for our times, and not through suffering, but through joy.

AD: Would you say that unconditional love is a foundation stone for the new spirituality?

PS: Unconditional love means that you can hold everything in your heart – the joy and the suffering of all being. You have to be able to hold it all. Suffering is kind of the effect of life, so you have to know how to deal with that. It is the same as an experience that one has about pain. The experience of pain that we have to come through wouldn't hurt

in the same way if we stopped resisting it. It would pass through like a wave. The spiritual journey is not about denying the senses and denying the sensations of either happiness or sadness. Embrace all of it; open yourself to feel all of it, with as much intensity and passion and compassion as you can. For me it is really about opening yourself fully and I could describe it like going out into the rain and, instead of wrapping yourself up, opening up your body to receive it. When you are open towards the experience, even when it seems unpleasant, it will become pleasurable. It is one of the tools that I would pass on to anyone, to feel life with passionate intensity and living things to the fullest, not denying the senses, but appreciating them.

We have a choice at every moment to take the higher or the lower road. It is the same as whether to see the best in us, or the critical side that can come in and see the worst all the time. So if you choose the higher, it's not that you are being naive or not seeing the lower; you see what the lower is. You just select to see the highest potential in yourself and others, for in this way it helps to enable it to come into being. If you don't do that, then there is no space being held for that evolution to happen, either for yourself or for those around. And I believe that as much as you hold it for yourself, you hold it for others, and as much as you hold it for others you hold it for yourself: it is directly connected.

Unconditional love is also a feeling that one isn't looking for love outside of oneself, but one is a source of love, because one is connected directly with the source. It's not limited. You constantly are able to give, because you are always receiving directly from the source. You are not looking for others to fill that hole, because you are receiving the love directly. You are able to be one with love, rather than seeking it in others. You are a giver.

