

BORN AGAIN

Performance Note (PN): I wrote this “song” a few hours after hip replacement surgery in August 2021... A few weeks earlier I had heard the announcement of an upcoming episode of “**To the Best of Our Knowledge**” ~ I’m an NPR “junkie” and this is my all-time favorite NPR program ~ an episode titled “When Mountains Are Gods”. Just the title triggered something deep inside my soul! When I heard the “ad”, I literally fell to the floor, sobbing! And for the first time in many years, I felt compelled to write a song. I knew exactly what the phrase “When Mountains Are Gods” made me FEEL, but I had no idea how to express it in words at that moment... And I was way too busy taking care of the animals at WolfStone Ranch and getting ready to train a couple devoted supporters to cover for me for the 2 days I’d be in surgery... so I told myself, I’d have to wait to write this song until after that ordeal was behind me. But in the early morning hours of the day following my surgery, as I lay in my hospital bed in the worst pain I’d ever experienced, the thought struck me that perhaps I could work on the new song as a way to distract me from feeling so sick. And within seconds of finally giving myself permission, I suddenly felt like I was taking dictation from the Sacred for the next 2 hours... and it was basically done!

I don’t know if I’d really call this a “song” because there’s very little singing in it. Mostly “spoken word” or “chanting” or “rapping”. A few days after I’d written (or “channeled”) this poem or lyric, I realized that this work was partially inspired by the Balinese Monkey Chant that had so thrilled and captivated my sacred heart and soul ever since I’d first heard it years ago! Check it out for yourself (this video is just an excerpt of the full Monkey Chant).

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

I’m thinking that many of the lines (or stanzas) of the lyrics will be performed by 4 singers, sometimes trading solo lines, sometimes sharing lines. But other lines will require more singers or musicians, as in the link I’ve shared of the Balinese Monkey Chant. We’ll have to play with this in rehearsal to see what works best...

Furthermore, several of these stanzas are repeated several times... as you will hear in this demo.

!! This is the only piece in the concert that will be accompanied by a VIDEO !!

No matter which box you check... the one marked Religious... or the one for Spiritual... or perhaps the one for Humanist... or Atheist... or even for None of the Above...

I assure you...

No matter which box you check...

We all bow down to a god or two...

Sometimes, it may be a question of just more wisely choosing our principles and priorities, so we can establish a healthier, more humane and harmonious balance in our lives, for ourselves and for our planet...

For some, that may mean just getting our desires and pleasures under control... as opposed to allowing THEM to control US! And it may also mean trying to find that healthy sweet spot of BALANCE somewhere in between vanity and shame.

But for others, who may be fighting real demons... like addictions, mental illnesses, or internalized societal pressures that they simply can't handle on their own... it may be a question of finding ~ and then courageously reaching out for help ~ to a compassionate, supportive community... key words, COMPASSIONATE and SUPPORTIVE!

That respectful, kind and empathetic community might ~ or might not ~ include family members, close friends, our church family (*if we have one*), or some other "tribe" we feel we belong to... or nonprofits, or professionals, or all of the above!

But for still others, it may literally come down to the quintessential question of Good versus Evil... Death and Darkness versus Life and Light...

**And always ~ ALWAYS! ~ it's an answer of karma and consequences...
for ourselves AS WELL AS for the whole world...**

***** ***** ***** *****

Oh yeah, we all feed a god or two... or maybe more!

Such as...

[Call & Response]

The ferocious gods of...
Fame and Fortune
Power and Privilege
Prestige and Popularity

Oh yeah!

Or the celebrity gods of...
Musicians or Movie Stars
Athletes or Entrepreneurs

That's right!

Or the gluttonous gods of...
Fine Food, Junk Food, Sugar or Caffeine

Oh yeah!

Or the classic gods of...
Alcohol or Drugs
Sex
Rock'n'roll
Gambling

That's right!

Or the twin gods of vanity and shame...
Beauty
Fashion
Fitness

Oh yeah!

Or the tribal gods of...
MY gang or MY team or MY sport
(*think football or "football"*)

That's right!

Or the shop-shop-shopping gods of...
Pretty Things
Expensive Things
Exclusive Things
or just plain ol' more 'n' more 'n' MORE Things

Oh yeah!

Or how about the privileged gods of...
Bigger Guns
Faster Cars
Fancier Yachts
Private Jets
Second or Third Mansions
Keeping Up with the Kardashians

That's right!

Or the techno gods of...

Keeping up with Facebook or Instagram
TikTok or Twitter (*now "X"*)
Computer games
Movies, TV, YouTube and more

That's right!

(PN): ??? WHERE TO START THE LOW RUMBLE of an earthquake???

Or the twisted gods of...

Head Games
War Games
Doom-Scrolling
Conspiracy-Seeking
Sowing Discord Instead of Harmony Games
Sowing Chaos Instead of Cooperation Games
Fanning The Flames of Self-Righteous Indignation
Feeding The Fires of Fear, Resentment, Hatred and Violence

That's right!

And the list goes on and on and on...

***** ***** ***** *****

(PN): add very low pitch/volume drum roll (or slow beat) that builds until the end of this intro

What you love and what you live for

HOW you love and HOW you live

!! MATTERS !!

whether you mean it to or not...

it's literally a matter of life or death!

Yeah, always ~ ALWAYS! ~ it's a matter of

Karma and Consequences...

for both YOU and for the WHOLE WORLD!

Oh yeah...

We all worship at the altar of one or more, so please...

!!! CHOOSE THE RIGHT GODS !!!

!!! CHOOSE THE RIGHT GODS !!!

(PN): IMMEDIATELY BEGIN VIDEO... which starts with a loud volcanic explosion

when Mountains are our Gods
and Rivers are our Goddesses
then and only then will We be Born... BORN AGAIN !!

when the Wolf and Snake and Spider
are our Kin...truly Kin
then and only then will We be Born... BORN AGAIN !!

when We truly see each other
as our Brethren... no us and them
then and only then will We be Born... BORN AGAIN !!

!! and then and then and then and then !!

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the Mountains will stand tall and proud
the Rivers will run fresh and clean
and all the Plants and Animals
will THRIVE and THRIVE and THRIVE !!

and so will we... if we but see
that we can be... One Holy We

!!! ONE HOLY FAMILY !!!

?!?! Can't you SEEEEEEE ?!?!

We can truly be
One Holy We
if we Let It Be
no us and them
just One
only One Holy One !!

for then and only then
then and only then
then and ONLY then
will We be Born... BORN AGAIN !!

if or when?!
if or when?!
IF?! IF?! IF?!
WHEN?! WHEN?! WHEN?!

(PN): **COMMUNITY DRUM BREAK**... 5 minutes or more... timing to be determined by our Drum Facilitator **OR** by the length of the accompanying **VIDEO** of **SUFFERING** and **DEATH** (*of humans and animals*) and **DESTRUCTION** (*of Mother Nature and Cities*)... climate change... plant and animal extinction... war death famine... extreme weather events... Man against Nature... Man against Man, etc.

if or when?!
if or when?!
IF OR WHEN?!

when and only when
only One Holy One
ONLY when !!
only ONE !!
only One HOLY One !!

Mother Earth and all her Children
Mother Earth and all her Children
Mother Earth and ALL her Children
will be Born... BORN AGAIN !!

but only when We can see
that we can be One Holy We
and only when We can see
that we are One Family

and that is when and only when
Mother Earth and all her Kin
will be Born... BORN AGAIN !!
!! BORN AGAIN... BORN AGAIN !!

**** **** **** ****

when Mountains are our Gods
and Rivers are our Goddesses

then and only then
will We be truly... truly... TRULY...

!!! BORN AGAIN !!!

!!! BORN AGAIN !!!

!!! BORN AGAIN !!!

!!! BORN AGAIN !!!

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