



PHENOMENON

The Magazine of the World Intelligence Network

Issue 32



Edited by Graham Powell and Krystal Volney

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Foreword by Dr. Evangelos Katsioulis, Founder of the World Intelligence Network

The WIN became 25 years old in 2025! This could be a lifetime for some, a major life period for some other, far luckier, people.

The WIN was initially founded as a one of its kind initiative to become the first meta-IQ society, an international organization to gather high IQ societies from all over the world. The WIN is created to support communication, interaction, ideas exchange and productivity among people with great abilities.

After all these years, I have the feeling that the WIN has served its purposes well for the most part. I am happy to have met many interesting people from all over the world. Friends and exciting personalities have established themselves in their own fields of interest, no matter where exactly they live and flourish. The WIN brings people together and that was, is, and always will be, what the WIN is about. Thank you all for being active members of our exciting family, team and world!

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 32nd magazine of the World Intelligence Network. It was published on my 64th birthday, for which I offer no excuses, just the pleasure that it gives me to share some meaningful time and content with you.

Many thanks to our contributors. The cover photos are of some of those who have given time and energy to grace our pages: Dr. Erica Kalkut, Dr. Margena A. Christian, Mr. Tommi P. Laiho, Tor Arne Jørgensen, Dr. Evangelos Katsioulis, Dr. Benjamin Karney and Alexis Rockman, with his wife.

The artwork is by our regular, and much esteemed, contributor, Anja Jaenicke. I was especially touched by her portrait "Steampunk Powell with Tardigrade" - the tardigrade being considered the hardiest species on the planet.

James McBeath makes his Phenomenon debut. Poetry and philosophical essays abound on finding meaning amongst the seeming nothingness, I sincerely wish that the entire magazine helps readers cope as we venture towards the second quarter of this century.

The next few years are going to see massive changes to society and how we view ourselves within the universe. It is imperative that the WIN continues to be a "go to" place to express human endeavours and aspirations.

I hope you enjoy the magazine as much as Krystal and I have enjoyed putting it together for you.

Graham Powell

Clues

Across

1. Surname of the Greek founder of the WIN. (10)
9. Could be sticky or used for measuring and recording...
for example. (4)
10. An Italian car maker used as a traditional currency? (4)
12. Abbreviated city of moviemakers, in California. (1,1)
14. High midday? (4)
16. Film title and abbreviated computer-related
accoutrements? (2)
17. Spanish for "I have". (5)
18. A musical band from Tallin that a New Yorker might
call "Lots"? (5)
22. Another name for a "Text". (1,1,1)
24. A surname, as variation of "Ernst" - indicating quick-
wittedness. (5)
25. Big (5)
28. Abbreviation for the standard time in India (1,1,1)

30. Korean skincare brand and first name of a famous Korean model. (5)
31. Verb that indicates wood decline. it is figuratively used for things going wrong. (3)
33. Latin abbreviation for "In the year of our Lord). (1,1)
35. Colloquially, a short-term worker. (4)
36. Your own person who gets you fit (abbreviated). (1,1)
38. A long story usually involving great travel. (4)
40. At the top of a pyramid or triangle (for example) (4)
43. Adjective to describe someone who has a positive attitude. (10)

Down

1. Rhymes with Hal, but in Kryptonian, it means "Made by the stars". (3)
2. The famous Isle of Man motorcycle races use these letters. (1,1)

3. A hot and steam-filled room that is especially popular in northern Europe. (5)
4. A unique address assigned to each computer for communication. (1,1)
5. A Greek word meaning "The study of Wine" (British spelling). (8)
6. A 3-letter reference to signalling protein 'interferons' that fight pathogens. (1,1,1)
7. Yes, in Italian.
8. To try and do something. (7)
11. Chat GPT and Copilot are examples of this abbreviated instrument title. (1,1)
13. Ancient Greek philosophers thought this the fundamental unit of matter. (4)
15. Norse mythological and Germanic pagan god of wisdom and prophesy. (4)

19. A burger, which sounds like a biscuit with luncheon meat on it. (8)
20. First two initials in The Wasteland of a 20th century poet's name? (1,1)
21. A plant consisting of a stock and a scion. (5)
22. To reach a point beyond; exceed. (7)
23. An abbreviation for a language model that is specific, not large in scope. (1,1,1)
26. Unidentified drinkers' group (abbreviation)? (1,1)
27. Four-letter designation of a type of Chemical Exchange Overhauser. (4)
29. Cease. (4)
31. Flowers that are often given for romantic reasons. (5)
34. Teddy Boys traditionally had this type of hairstyle.
(1,1)
35. Faucet. (3)

37. 3-letter abbreviation for looking after someone gently.

(1,1,1)

39. The opposite of the answer to 29 down. (2)

40. The highest point of a pyramid, etc. (4)

41. A Greek letter. (2)

42. In gaming, the abbreviation of a foreseen 'challenge'.

(1,1)

AN INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR BENJAMIN KARNEY



Author(s): Scott Douglas Jacobsen

Professor Benjamin Karney is a Professor of Social Psychology at UCLA and the co-director of the UCLA Marriage and Close Relationships Lab. His research focuses on the impact of external stressors on intimate relationships, especially in early marriage. Karney has extensively studied low-income, Latinx, Black, and White newlywed couples and military marriages.

Karney discusses couples' challenges in maintaining intimacy, noting that external factors and personality traits, such as conscientiousness and neuroticism, influence relationship success. He emphasizes the importance of being responsive to a partner's individual needs. Karney also highlights the

difficulty of maintaining perspective in relationships and advises giving partners the benefit of the doubt while recognizing that not all relationships are worth sustaining.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: We are here with Professor Benjamin Karney or Ben Karney. What do you prefer?

Professor Benjamin Karney: Ben is shorter. Both are accurate.

Jacobsen: I'll go with Ben because it's shorter. I remember interviewing James Flynn before he passed. I asked him, "What do you prefer to be called?" He said, "What do you prefer to call me?" I said, "Jim." So, Jim, it was.

Karney: Ben is fine. Ben is what my friends call me.

Jacobsen: Ben is great. So, what is your role at the university? Why did you choose this area of expertise and research? Then, we can dive into the main discussion.

Karney: So, those are two questions. The shorter answer is that I am a psychology professor and the chair of the social psychology area within the psychology department. I'm also the co-director of the UCLA Marriage and Close Relationships Lab. I've been studying intimate partnerships in couples for about 35 years. What got me into the field was caring a lot about intimate relationships and noticing that they seem difficult for even good, thoughtful people to maintain.

I was young when I got into it, and I remember thinking, "Gee, I hope I don't get divorced." Everyone in the world hopes that, and yet many people do. So, there's a real mystery around intimacy, especially in marriage. People enter marriage thinking, "I want this to work," and they give it their all. Yet, many people get divorced anyway, which is an undesired outcome.

And that's mysterious. People don't predict they'll get divorced. Nobody gets married hoping or thinking they'll get divorced, yet so many do. So, that means something unexpected happens in intimacy that people themselves don't fully understand. That's one of the reasons I wanted to study it.

And 35 years later, I'm still working on it. It's an enduring question. That's how I got into it.

Jacobsen: Your work is recognized. You have over 20,000 citations, a significant metric for the impact of your research in academia.

Karney: I hope that's true. I don't fool myself into thinking that my work will solve divorces or breakups. Still, I do hope it helps people feel more informed about relationships. If no one else has been helped, I know I have been. I am more informed. However, it didn't save me. I've been married, but I was married once before and got divorced—as a marital researcher.

I knew the field. I knew all the literature. I knew all the things you're supposed to do. I had already written a book on intimate relationships. I'd written the book on intimate relationships, but my relationships could have been better. My first marriage could have been better.

Jacobsen: And what are some of the lessons from your work?

Karney: One of the big lessons is that not everything about your intimate relationship is within your control. There are many forces external to the couple that are easy to overlook but play a very important role in a couple's ability to maintain intimacy over time.

Jacobsen: I have two questions. First, I want to consider intrinsic and extrinsic factors. So, let's start with an expert opinion: Are there some people for whom relationships are not suited in terms of their temperament over the arc of their lives?

Karney: Yes, undoubtedly. Much research shows that some people are better at intimacy than others. The individual's stable qualities are associated with more success in intimate relationships.

The question you asked is, are there some people who don't want relationships? And, undoubtedly, there are. Some people don't want relationships for various reasons. Either their personal experiences with relationships have been negative, so they decide, "I don't want it anymore." Or their personal

experiences with closeness and dependence on others have been so fraught and painful that they've learned to avoid other people.

There are plenty of people who don't want relationships. Others want relationships but, for various reasons, aren't well-equipped to handle what relationships require. People with a history of depressive episodes have a harder time in relationships. People struggling with substance abuse have harder times in relationships.

People who are prone to feeling negative emotions—those who are stably negative—are also known as having high negative affectivity or neuroticism. On average, people who score high on that trait tend to have worse relationships. People have different attachment styles, and those who are insecurely attached have a harder time in relationships.

Some qualities affect your ability to have a positive or negative relationship. Some people are great at relationships and generally do better in any relationship because they are easygoing, don't tend to dwell on negative emotions, are generally not defensive, and are mentally healthy.

They may have had good experiences in the past, so they trust relationships overall. A long list of stable individual qualities contributes to more or less relationship success.

Jacobsen: Now, shifting to a more constructive and positive frame, which will be a useful part of this series: What are

some of the bases for those traits intrinsic to the individual, not necessarily external forces?

Karney: If we focus on individual qualities that contribute to successful intimacy, we first need to define it.

Jacobsen: What is intimacy? What is the challenge? What is the process by which an individual quality can either facilitate or inhibit intimacy?

Karney: There have been many definitions of intimacy. Where I come from, as a social psychologist, intimacy has been defined as a process in which partners are appropriately responsive to each other's disclosures. I credit this to a famous social psychologist named Harry Reis—R-E-I-S. He's a genius, still alive, and a leader in the field.

Some decades ago, he developed the intimacy process model. He said intimacy isn't about how much I share with you or how well you listen to me. No. Intimacy is a dyadic process where one partner discloses something—it could even be a nonverbal disclosure—and the other responds somehow. Intimacy is furthered when that response makes the first person, the discloser, feel understood, validated and cared for.

That process differs for each couple because the things that make me feel understood, validated, and cared for might differ from those that make me feel understood, validated, and cared for. When intimacy is working, each partner

understands the other well enough to respond in a way that makes the other person feel understood, validated, and cared for. Let me give you an example.

I come home from work and say, "Boy, I had a rough day at work today." Now, you have an opportunity to respond. You might say, "You had a rough day at work. Come here on the couch. Tell me all about it. I will wrap you in a blanket of love and care for you. I'll give you a back rub. I'm here for you."

Now, for some people, that would be the perfect response. It's exactly what they want—to be soothed and blanketed with love. If I'm that person, your response makes me feel understood, validated and cared for. Intimacy is enriched. But there might be other people for whom that is the wrong response.

When I say I had a bad day at work, I might need to decompress alone, to be in my "cave," needing some space. I suggest you handle things around the house so that I can have time to myself. In that case, if I'm that person and you respond with, "Let me blanket you with love," you are making the problem worse. I'm already feeling overwhelmed, and now you're overwhelming me. I do not feel understood, validated, or cared for.

The intimacy process model says it's not behaviour that leads to intimacy. Intimacy sometimes looks different for every couple. It's about being responsive to your partner's needs

and way of being. Being responsive to your partner is the key to intimacy—being aware of what your partner personally needs in the moment.

Jacobsen: So, if that's intimacy, what qualities make someone good at that?

Karney: All right, let me dive into that.

So, there are lots of different ways to approach that. You can approach it from the lens of personality theory. Personality theorists say, "Hey, people have different traits." You may have heard of the Big Five personality traits.

The idea is that there are five big personality traits, and some of them are more associated with successful relationships than others. For example, I am highly conscientious, a personality trait that captures doing what is appropriate. In that case, I will consider what would be appropriate. I'll be attuned to your needs, to your ups and downs.

Being highly conscientious makes me better at being responsive to you when needed. Indeed, highly conscientious people tend to have better relationships. Now, imagine that I have a different personality trait—neuroticism. Neuroticism is a general tendency to feel negative emotional states.

Let's say I come home after a bad day at work, and I'm high in neuroticism. It might be hard for anything you do to

penetrate my general tendency to feel bad. You might be unable to make me feel understood, validated, or cared for. No one in the world might have that ability because my tendency to feel negative mood states is so strong. In this case, what might make another couple feel closer doesn't make us feel closer because my personality doesn't allow it.

Or, your personality might affect how you respond to me when I come home and say I'm stressed. Let's say you've had great experiences with closeness and intimacy. You're comfortable with closeness and intimacy — a disposition you carry. When I say I've had a bad day, your response might be that you need me, and that's great. You love being needed. It feels good to be needed, so you lean in, figure out what I need, and give it to me.

But what if you're a different person? What if you've had relationships with overbearing people or relationships where you were abused, taken advantage of, or exploited in the past? You carry that history with you, which might make you wary of people asking you for things. It might make you mistrust people with needs. So, when I come home and say, "Whoa, I've had a bad day," you hear that I need something. You might think, "Oh no, don't come to me with your needs." Your personality or history might lead you to respond with, "Well, that's your problem," or "I've also had a bad day—what do you want me to do about it?" That response wouldn't make me feel understood, validated, or cared for.

If we understand the process, we can imagine how the individual differences both partners bring to the situation can either facilitate or inhibit it.

Jacobsen: On balance, are there more functional or dysfunctional ways to have a relationship?

Karney: There's an infinite number of functional ways and an infinite number of dysfunctional ways. But your question reminds me of a famous quote by Tolstoy—I believe it's the first line of *Anna Karenina*. The line is, and I might be misquoting it, "All happy families are alike; all unhappy families are unhappy in their way." This quote gets cited a lot in my field because, generally speaking, it's wrong.

It's the opposite—the truth is that unhappiness in a couple typically looks the same. You've probably heard of John Gottman and his "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse." If you're in an unhappy relationship, you're likely to experience withdrawal, anger, contempt, or rigidity. That's exactly right. All unhappy couples are withdrawn, angry, contemptuous, or rigid, but you can be happy in many ways. There are many ways that couples figure out how to be happy.

Some couples say, "Hey, we will do separate things, and that's okay. We're going to live parallel lives." Some couples are intertwined like two pieces of yarn, and that's what they need to be happy. And that's okay. There are many different ways to be happy in a relationship. But unhappy relationships all look very familiar and similar.

Jacobsen: Last question. What is a significant or the most significant factor for people to work on—something that isn't part of their intrinsic personality structure, something they didn't get from inheritance or early development—that can help increase the odds of staying together in a long-term relationship if that's what they want?

Karney: I appreciate the question: A relationship is worth sustaining if it's what you want. Not everyone wants that. And I'm not a therapist — I'm a scientist. I'm not really in the advice business. But if I had to offer advice based on my research, I'd say: You can't control what happens to you, but you can try to attend to it.

It's easy to focus on what our partners are doing now. Suppose our partner is letting us down, disappointing us, or frustrating us. In that case, it's easy to get mad at them because the context that might explain their behaviour is usually invisible to us. Maybe our partner had a bad day. Maybe they had a bad experience 20 years ago that makes it hard to do what they'd love to do today.

Trying to keep that context in mind is a heavy lift. It takes work. But making the effort to give our partners the benefit of the doubt can be worthwhile—at least in decent relationships. In a terrible relationship, you shouldn't give your partner the benefit of the doubt. If your partner is abusing you, you don't need to do that—you should get mad.

But in a regular, decent relationship, it's useful to make an effort to ask yourself, "Why is my partner disappointing me? Where is that coming from?" Suppose you can remember that your partner is a good person with a good heart who may have just had a bad day or experience. In that case, it's often easier to return from anger, get over it, and move on with the connection.

Jacobsen: Ben, thank you for your time today on this quick blitz call.

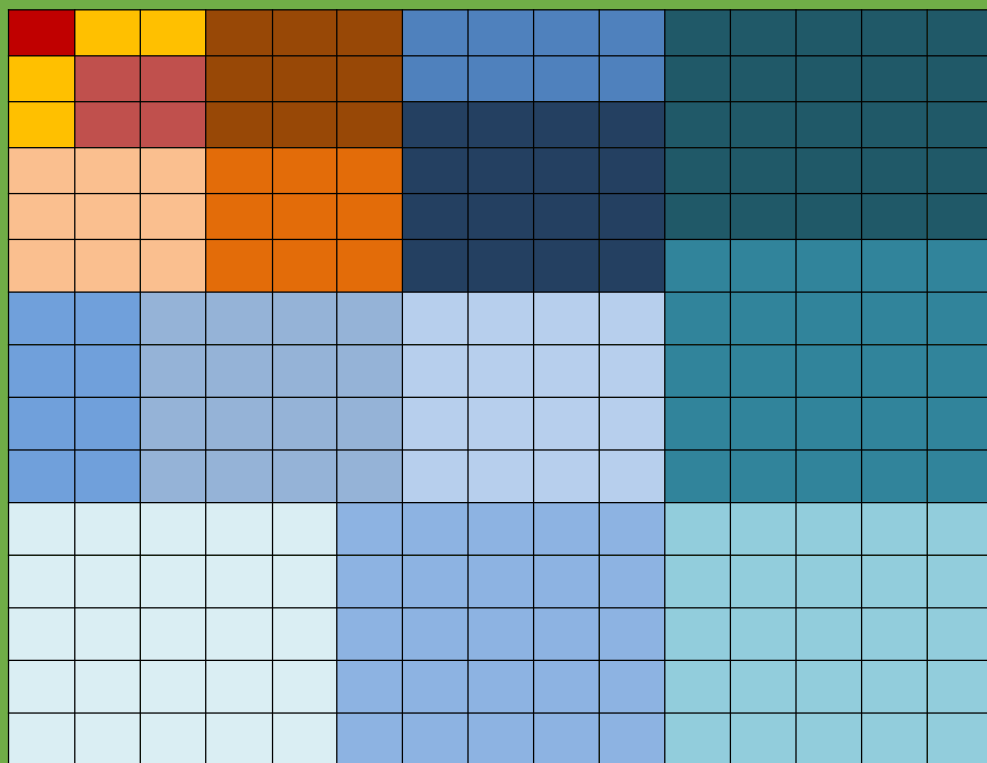
Karney: It's a blitz! If you need anything else, reach out.

Jacobsen: Excellent. Thanks so much. Take care.

Karney: Bye-bye. See you, Scott.

Quiz about Edition 31

1. Which number appears at the top right of the pages in Edition 31?
2. Which number, squared, equals Dr. Katsioulis's age for most of 2025?
3. Therefore, in which year was Dr. Katsioulis born?
4. Where did Graham Powell and Dr. Christina Angelidou meet?
5. Is Edition 31 longer or shorter than the first WIN ONE edited by Graham Powell in September 2010?
6. How many squares are there in the central cover design of Edition 31?
7. What is Dr. Christina Angelidou's primary area of expertise?
8. $1^2+2^2+3^2+4^2+5^2+6^2+7^2+8^2+9^2=?$
9. In which country does Uliana Afanasenko currently live?
10. Sara Pantuliano holds a doctorate from which English university?



AN INTERVIEW WITH ALEXIS ROCKMAN



**Alexis Rockman on:
Artwork, Science, and Environmental Storytelling
Part One**

Author(s): Scott Douglas Jacobsen

Alexis Rockman, an up-to-date American artist born in 1962, discusses his fascination with pure historical past, sparked by early visits to the American Museum of Pure Historical past. He displays influences on, like, King Kong and Bride of Frankenstein and his views on science communication, AI artwork, and environmental activism. Rockman critiques

market-driven journalism, celebrates Stephen Jay Gould and E.O. Wilson and shares a skeptical but hopeful outlook on the longer term. With humour and honesty, he explores inventive course of, despair over local weather inaction, and the enduring want for storytelling grounded in scientific and ecological consciousness.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: So right at this moment, we're right here with Alexis Rockman. Born in 1962, he's an American modern artist identified for his vivid, typically speculative landscapes that discover the intersection of nature and civilization. Raised in New York Metropolis, his frequent visits to the American Museum of Pure Historical past, the place his mom briefly labored as an assistant to anthropologist Margaret Mead's secretary, ignited his fascination with pure historical past. He studied animation on the Rhode Island Faculty of Design earlier than incomes a BFA from the Faculty of Visible Arts in 1985.

Rockman's work addresses environmental points reminiscent of local weather change, genetic engineering, and species extinction, with notable exhibitions at establishments just like the Brooklyn Museum and the Smithsonian American Artwork Museum. In 2025, he designed the official Earth Day poster with the theme "Our Planet, Our Future," emphasizing

environmental stewardship and renewable vitality. Thanks very a lot for becoming a member of me right this moment. I respect it.

Rockman: Pleasure.

Jacobsen: So, I did get to go to briefly as a Canadian travelling in the USA on Amtrak, all the best way throughout the USA. I used to be very struck by two issues in D.C.: the landscaping and the Smithsonian Nationwide Museum of Pure Historical past. It was so huge in comparison with any museum I'd ever been to. It goes on perpetually. I couldn't discover all of it throughout the half day I used to be there. Half day. Sure, I do know. I felt so... touristy. One other factor that struck me about D.C. is that the landscaping and gardening are finished higher than wherever else I noticed in the USA.

Rockman: It's about public areas and energy.

Jacobsen: Sure, so, have your early experiences on the American Museum of Pure Historical past and your publicity to Margaret Mead had a profound or a minor affect in your inventive path?

Rockman: Which?

Jacobsen: The expertise of going to the American Museum of Pure Historical past and the impacts of Margaret Mead.

Rockman: Margaret Mead—my mom was the assistant to her secretary. So, I do know who Margaret Mead is. She's an attention-grabbing determine. My mother discovered her abusive, for those who learn between the strains. By some means, she nonetheless beloved anthropology.

Nonetheless, the museum profoundly affected me and shaped my notion and expectations about what nature must be. I've finished a good quantity of travelling. I've to admit. I typically secretly want that nature appeared extra like a diorama than some disgraced, eroded, or human-induced clear-cut forest—or one thing like that.

Jacobsen: How has King Kong—and is it The Bride of Frankenstein?—influenced you?

Rockman: You probably did your homework developing with these two motion pictures! They're good examples of unbelievable world-building. King Kong and The Akeley Corridor on the AMNH share a number of cultural DNA and have been made across the identical time within the early 1930'. They're each taking a look at nature as a theatrical expertise. Kong is horizontal tabletop miniatures, glass portray with cease movement animation fashions and the dioramas are the identical thought although lifesize with taxidermy with painted cycloramas. So that you're coping with

a extremely constructed stagecraft illustration of nature that could be very expressive and atmospheric. Each owe an enormous debt to artwork historical past and Kong look relies on engravings by the good French illustrator *Gustave Doré*.

By way of *Bride of Frankenstein*, that is among the nice witty horror black comedies. Once more, it's a really stunning manufacturing, very theatrical, and an unbelievable cinematic expertise.. Nice writing. They've nice scores from European émigrés, reminiscent of Franz Waxman for *Bride of Frankenstein* and Max Steiner for *King Kong*.

Jacobsen: How was your expertise collaborating with Stephen Jay Gould?

Rockman: Nicely, I by no means collaborated with him. I knew him, and browse his books which I like. He wrote about my work, not me personally. He's one of many science writers I love most on the planet - having the ability to convey so many concepts collectively.. He wrote two essays about my work—one in 1994 and one in 2001, proper earlier than he died. That was a thrill to be taken critically by somebody I admired a lot.

Jacobsen: What are your ideas about E.O. Wilson?

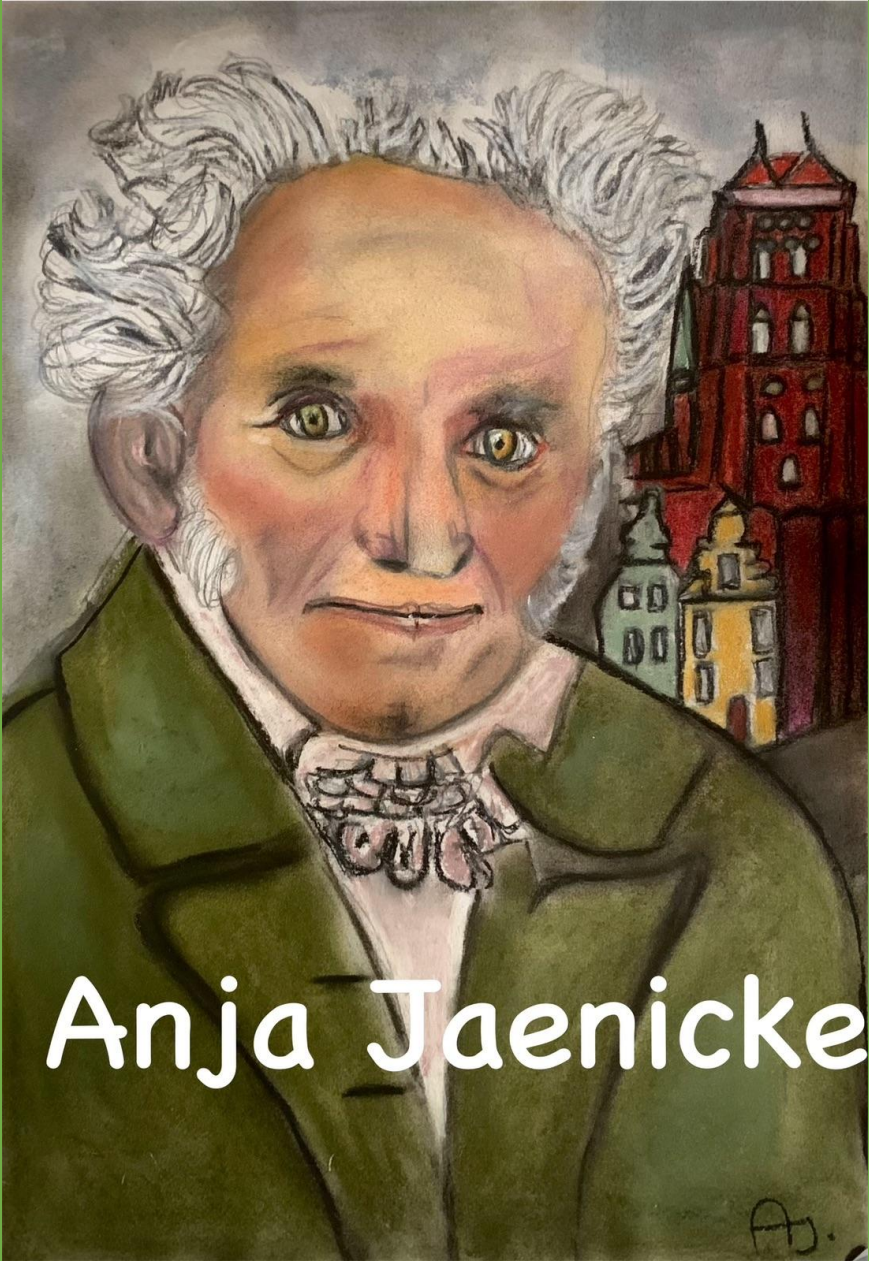
Rockman: Wilson—I like him too. He was an excellent gentleman within the historical past of science and an

excellent popularizer. His life's work was the love of ants, in fact... After I returned from Guyana in 1995, I created a collection of portraits of ants impressed by his analysis. He wrote me an exquisite rejection letter once I requested him to put in writing one thing for a e-book I used to be doing! By some means, a few years later, I ended up on the duvet of one in every of his books.

Jacobsen: What analysis in science has fascinated you probably the most and led to a murals you're most happy with?

Rockman: I don't assume there's only one. There are such a lot of issues in regards to the historical past of science that I'm fascinated by, and it's an ongoing factor. I've labored very intently with scientists on sure tasks.. To be clear, I do tasks which have units of guidelines and I've ignored science on others—for instance once I labored on the film *Lifetime of Pi*, it had nothing to do with science. It was purely about world-building and fantasy. I identified to Ang Lee that there would by no means be meerkats on an island in the midst of the ocean as a result of they reside within the desert. And he stated, "Nicely, it is a fantasy," and I rapidly realized he was proper.

ART BY ANJA JAENICKE



Anja Jaenicke

Arthur Schopenhauer Visits Danzig

Part Two

Jacobsen: If you work with scientists, what have you ever observed about how they take a look at issues? What's fascinating to their eye after they're inspecting one thing?

Rockman: They're storytellers. They're telling the story of not solely the historical past of life on this planet but additionally the historical past of geology—how outdated the planet is and what occurred on Earth. So, to me, it's one other unbelievable useful resource. Scientists, as individuals, will be very totally different—some are flamboyant and extroverted; others, like my mother—she's an archaeologist and a scientist—are extra reserved.

Jacobsen: In your travels, what locations have you ever discovered probably the most thrilling to probe for tales, inventive inspiration, and so forth?

Rockman: All these questions on "what's probably the most"—the quantified—it doesn't work like that. As a result of, for me, going to a dump across the nook from right here in CT is thrilling. Going to Antarctica is fascinating. There are attention-grabbing issues in every single place—even in a gutter within the metropolis. I like going to locations. I wish to go to Borneo. I've by no means been there. However I'm very democratic on the subject of fascinated by this stuff.

Jacobsen: Relating to a rubbish dump across the nook. What elements of it will bring enchantment to you artistically?

Rockman: What's making a dwelling there? What animals am I going to see? If it's the precise season, you'll see turkey vultures as a result of they migrate. What varieties of vegetation can survive? The place are they from? Are they native or invasive? That form of factor.

Jacobsen: If you look at fantasy worlds the place persons are creating entire worlds—"world-building," as you known as it—do you discover a desire for your self? Are they constructed totally from scratch, or are they constructed utilizing elements of the actual world? Utilizing information about actual organisms and their migratory patterns, life, or physics—or ones extra totally concocted from the creativeness?

Rockman: Something that's attention-grabbing. There aren't any guidelines with these things however I'm fascinated with visions that I haven't seen earlier than. After I noticed Star Wars once I was 15, I knew about Jodorowsky's unmade manufacturing of Dune. Alien hadn't been made but. I knew Star Wars was by-product to some extent—of 2001 and different issues like that—however I believed it was a recent tackle that stuff, even at 15. These movies have one factor

in common- an enormous quantity of planning and the usage of artists to articulate the filmmakers imaginative and prescient. I discover the brand new Dune film—the one by Denis Villeneuve—unbearably tedious and derivative- it's too brown, and I've seen all of it earlier than. Blade Runner is the benchmark of unbelievable visionary work by Syd Mead. Ridley Scott is aware of tips on how to flip to artists and was so sensible to convey him on. He was sensible at understanding who might assist him present a singular model of the longer term, even in 1980 when the film was beginning manufacturing. We nonetheless exist in its shadow.

Jacobsen: What do you consider the Earth Day theme "Our Energy, Our Planet"?

Rockman: It's hopeful. I sympathize with it.

Jacobsen: How do you assume Individuals are doing relating to sustainable growth, engaged on local weather objectives, and so forth?

Rockman: Earlier than the final election, issues have been in deep trouble that appeared insurmountable from my perspective. And now, it's a catastrophe and a world embarrassment.

Jacobsen: Any phrases on your brothers and sisters within the chilly North?

Rockman: What Trump is saying and doing is appalling and shameful.

Jacobsen: Folks typically reference Carl Sagan's writing—most likely not even a full web page, possibly half a web page of 1 e-book—the place he imagines a future America in his youngsters's or grandchildren's time, which is now. He warns of a society with immense scientific and technological prowess however a public with out the capability to make efficient, knowledgeable choices relating to know-how and science. Do you might have ideas on the prescience of that?

Rockman: It jogs my memory of that nice E.O. Wilson quote: "Now we have Paleolithic feelings, medieval establishments, and god-like know-how." It's a fucking catastrophe. Let's face it. He was proper. And he's one in every of my heroes. It's a nasty second throughout. And certain, I choose on America, however the remainder of the people are universally idiotic. Are you in Canada now?

Jacobsen: Sure, and I'm Canadian.

Rockman: I bought that. You may nonetheless be in Jersey, for all I do know.

Jacobsen: Joysy? I nearly was in Joysy. I bought again a day and a half in the past, not even. I'm in a small city on the outskirts of the Decrease Mainland in British Columbia.

Rockman: I'll communicate in Tacoma in a few weeks at The Museum of Glass.

Jacobsen: What are you going to be speaking about?

Rockman: Evolution, my first huge panorama portray I made in 1992. Wow. That's a very long time.

Jacobsen: To not the Earth.

Rockman: Sure.

Jacobsen: I simply returned from 13 days in New York, the place I attended occasions surrounding the 69th session of the Fee on the Standing of Ladies (CSW69), held in 2025. The go to additionally marked the thirtieth anniversary of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Motion and the twenty fifth anniversary of United Nations Safety Council Decision 1325 on Ladies, Peace, and Safety. It was additionally Nigerian Ladies's Day—an enormous occasion. That was enjoyable. So sure, New York was very enjoyable.

Rockman: Good.

Jacobsen: Now, you've expressed skepticism in regards to the effectiveness of artwork as software for activism. What's with the skepticism? Rockman: Present me some activist artwork or activism that's labored, and I'll change my thoughts. Might you present me? That's being well mannered—"skepticism" for you Canadians.

Jacobsen: Unabashed disdain?

Rockman: No, it's not disdain. It's extra... it's bleak. You're not getting the vibe. That is despair. This isn't some try and be above all of it. I attempted. I've been doing this for a very long time. I've seen the arc of this story. I do know the place we're headed. The election is simply an exclamation level on these things. I blame myself as much as anybody else. I didn't—couldn't—do something about it.

Jacobsen: When you might have public commentary in opposition to scientific truisms—not to mention the extra nuanced truths science discovers—in American discourse, politically and socially, do you notice any colleagues who... I don't wish to say “promote out,” however...

Rockman: ...extra like with Bobby Kennedy?

Jacobsen: Positive.

Rockman: Sure. He was a good friend of ours... So don't chortle. I noticed the arc of that. He wrote the preface for an exhibition catalogue for Manifest Future in 2004, a mission of mine on the Brooklyn Museum about what Local weather Change is going to do to NYC. I even did a poster for Riverkeeper in 1999. He and Cheryl have been to our home. So, I hope he's promoting out as a result of if he believes what he's speaking about, he's misplaced his rattling

thoughts. He was a hero to many individuals. Articulate. Charismatic. Believed in the precise issues. That they had been a champion of all of the issues we cared about. It's a shame.

Jacobsen: Have you ever seen this occur to a couple of particular person?

Rockman: I'm unsure I can consider somebody off the highest of my head, however don't—don't get me going. In fact, it's occurring to extra individuals.

Jacobsen: I bear in mind Noam Chomsky being interviewed as soon as in somebody's home and speaking about sincere intellectuals who went in opposition to their trigger—or went in opposition to larger motives—and his response was, "Do you wish to begin from A?" When doing all your work and going for scientific accuracy, how do you stability that with the aesthetic you're making an attempt to convey concurrently?

Rockman: That's a enjoyable course of. As a result of that's finished initially earlier than I begin making one thing, as soon as I determine what I'm doing and really feel assured that it's credible and is sensible within the context of my objectives, then I'm good. As an illustration, I'm beginning an enormous mission for the Jewish Museum in a few weeks and assembly with the director of schooling. Will probably be

constructed round looking, fishing, and agriculture artifacts of their assortment.

I don't imagine the director of schooling is technically a scientist, however she's an authority on the historical past of those artifacts. I'll take no matter she says critically. So I'll construct this portray round that, after which I get to some extent the place I do analysis and determine the place every thing goes. Acquired to verify it's a dromedary, with one hump and never a Bactrian Camel lol. Then I modify hats and deal with the method of creating one of the best portray I can.



Anja Jaenicke

Steampunk Powell with Tardigrade

Part Three

Jacobsen: Was there any mission in your historical past—thus far—that you've simply had in thoughts for an extended, very long time, however it was just too lofty or too pricey by way of effort and time? The place mid-sized tasks is perhaps-may not essentially be expedient, however they is perhaps...

Rockman: ...profitable.

Jacobsen: Doubtlessly profitable—sure.

Rockman: Pay attention, I'm a small businessperson. I've to stability dangerous tasks that may promote someplace with issues I'm assured I'll promote inside a comparatively cheap period of time. So, completely—and I'm always conversing with individuals about tips on how to get this stuff finished. I've been very fortunate, Scott, that I've had so many tasks that began as lofty pies within the sky and ended up changing into a actuality. However, we're not coping with film cash right here—it's only a portray!

Jacobsen: Proper. Now, I've talked to AI individuals. I had two conversations with Neil Sahota, who's a UN advisor on AI ethics or AI security. I requested him, "How a lot of that is hype?" And he stated there's fairly a bit, however it nonetheless must be taken critically. So, on the inventive entrance, what are your ideas on creating AI that generates visible imagery?

Rockman: I've a mixed-bag response to AI. On one hand, it's dazzlingly fascinating. Then, it jogs my memory of consuming a Twinkie—it feels nice whereas doing it, after which it's simply rubbish afterward. To me, the sky's the restrict by way of potential. It can revolutionize the workforce— Folks will lose jobs similar to each revolution.

However my job is to make distinctive objects that replicate the human expertise. And AI will not be the human expertise. It mimics issues which have already been finished and reconfigures them. However there's an odd hangover to it—

irrespective of how unbelievable it appears—and so they are unbelievable—there's one thing acquainted. It's like a dream you've already had—a hangover from a dream.

I'm certain AI will get higher and higher. However fortunately, I make objects. Hopefully, what's attention-grabbing about my work is that it includes errors and reactions. Intimacy might be valued increasingly as our tradition evolves.

That's my notion.

Jacobsen: The place do you assume the place is now for artwork activists, regardless of the "despair"?

Rockman: Nicely, there are different mediums—movie, streaming, or different types of shifting leisure that come out of the historical past of tv and flicks. For instance, The China Syndrome when that got here out in 1979—crippled the nuclear business. Sadly, on reflection, environmentally, it was most likely not for one of the best. So for those who

inform human tales which can be relatable it is perhaps extraordinarily efficient. However I don't assume what I've finished as far as an artist has been efficient.

Jacobsen: Do you assume collective artwork activism continues to be price pursuing, reasonably than particular person?

Rockman: Nicely, I don't know what "collective" means. What does that imply?

Jacobsen: Like artists organizing underneath banners—Earth Day, or by symposia and conferences—organized round a theme related to local weather change activism? Issues like that.

Rockman: Environmental Activism has not been efficient for the reason that 1970's. Civil rights activism was efficient. Homosexual and girls's rights—have been efficient previously. The issue is that we've run out of time. It's a physics experiment. It's not negotiable.

Jacobsen: Sure, and that additionally goes again to the prior mini-commentary about how individuals, largely, aren't physics-literate.

Rockman: Proper. However you need to perceive one thing, Scott—in America, big industrial, company, and world forces ensure persons are skeptical about science as a result of it's of their finest curiosity. When science tells tales about industries like fossil fuels or plastics who wish to make money- they don't wish to exit of enterprise.

Jacobsen: Sure. Not an accident. What do you assume the effectiveness of standard science communicators has been—your Invoice Nyes, your Carl Sagans, your Neil deGrasse Tysons, and others?

Rockman: I used to be fortunate, sufficiently too — effectively, I do know Neil. I do know Invoice Nye. They're fantastic. I don't assume they're as fair as their duty demands. I don't assume anybody is. We want somebody equal

to Martin Luther King as a spokesperson who can tackle the mantle. That's why the Bobby Kennedy affair is tragic—he might have been that particular person.

Jacobsen: What if we're trying by a historic lens right here, from a generational psychology perspective? Give it some thought—throughout the peak activism period you're referencing, there have been fewer media channels: tv and radio. A narrower distribution meant larger cohesion. Civil rights had figures like Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and possibly Marcus Garvey as a mental legacy. Ladies' rights had Gloria Steinem and others. These actions had leaders whom individuals needed to comply with—with enthusiasm.

What if there's been a gradual slide over a long time towards cohorts that reply much less to singular, charismatic management? If that's the case, the ways want to vary accordingly. What about that?

Rockman: Positive. No matter works. Possibly Muhammad Ali was an excellent determine for these points, and he put his profession and life on the road. He went to jail. I don't see... I don't see LeBron doing that, despite the fact that he's somebody who has, a lot to his credit score, saved himself out of controversy and lives a life price emulating on many ranges. However I don't see anybody taking these dangers in these generations.

Jacobsen: Sure. So, is there a big, risk-averse development?

Rockman: It's a kind of corporateness. I don't see Vince Carter—Air Canada—doing it.

Jacobsen: Who can be the one for this era now? Whoever makes use of "Sigma" and "No Cap" finest. What's the longest piece you've ever taken to supply—and what's the quickest? I do know, sorry. I'm doing extremes right here.

Rockman: I don't know... The sketch I did of Manifest Future on a serviette once I was at a dinner sitting subsequent to

Arnold Lehman, the then director of the Brooklyn Museum in 1999, was the quickest. Then making the rattling portray took 5 years which I completed in 2004. That was the longest. So there you go. It's the identical piece.

Jacobsen: The official Earth Day poster for 2020 options photo voltaic panels in a vibrant pure setting. What impressed it?

Rockman: It was a tough course of, Scott, as a result of I saved developing with concepts that Earth Day deemed too destructive. And this was, in fact, earlier than the election. I used to be considering to myself, "Are you kidding me? What is that this—We Are the World or some fucking Coke industrial?" I used to be about to bail, and my spouse Dorothy stated, "Don't be an fool. This can be a dream alternative for you." You need to perceive that Robert Rauschenberg did the primary Earth Day poster in 1970, and my spouse used to work at Leo Castelli, the gallery that

represented him. Now we have two Rauschenbergs. So, that is bucket listing. So, I talked to some mates. We devised the thought over a few beers. A lot to my shock, the Earth Day individuals preferred it. I used to be thrilled.

Jacobsen: Fast query—aspect notice. What beer?

Rockman: One of many native IPAs up right here in CTHeadway IPA.

Jacobsen: Do you ever drink Guinness?

Rockman: I've beloved Guinness, although it's a little bit heavy. I had it extra once I was youthful and wanted much less strain.

Jacobsen: That's proper—it's for molasses aficionados or one thing like that.

Rockman: Molasses—there you go.

Jacobsen: I bear in mind one time in a small city, there was this man named Veggie Bob. I had the cellphone quantity (604) 888-1223—that's how small the city was. He ran Veggie

Bob's. Later known as it his *Growcery Café*. I bear in mind I purchased a bucket of molasses from him for no good motive.

What ought to I ask... How is Madagascar?

Rockman: Unhappy and unbelievable.

Jacobsen: How unhappy? How unbelievable!

Rockman: These islands have distinctive biodiversity. Who doesn't love land leeches and delightful lemurs? Alternatively, the human inhabitants is so determined for assets. It's like moths consuming a blanket. Then, the Chinese language attempt to eat it, too. So, it's unhappy.

Jacobsen: You had a current *Journey to Nature's Underworld* exhibition, right?

Rockman: That's in Miami. And I even have a gallery present in Miami known as *Vanishing Level* on the *Andrew Reed Gallery*.

Jacobsen: Was the previous one with Mark Dion?

Rockman: Sure. On the *Lowe Artwork Museum* in Miami.

Jacobsen: How was that collaboration going?

Rockman: We've been mates for forty years. About twenty works every from over the past 4 a long time are juxtaposed subsequent to one another.

Jacobsen: Forty years in the past, one would possibly hazard a guess—you drank Guinness in some unspecified time in the future.

Rockman: I did, principally within the '80s.

Jacobsen: When motion motion pictures have been a really huge factor

Rockman: I used to be listening to a podcast about Predator—the film.

Jacobsen: Ah, sure. That's very cool. What did you study?

Rockman: I realized so many issues. As an illustration, I realized that the primary location needed to be moved as a result of there was no jungle, and nobody might determine why that unique location had been chosen to shoot the film.

Rockman: Sure. That was the period of iconic film strains.

Jacobsen: "If it bleeds, we are able to kill it!"

Rockman: Sure.

Jacobsen: Or what was that different line... "Pussyface"?

Rockman: Was it?

Jacobsen: Good. You're married to a journalist. What are your accomplice's perceptions of journalism now—and her perceptions of how the general public views journalists now, based mostly in your conversations?

Rockman: My spouse Dorothy Spears, slowed down being an arts journalist as a result of she felt that the issues she needed to put in writing about for the locations she was writing for grew to become more and more influenced by market dynamics. And—I don't wish to put phrases in her mouth—and that is my notion of her notion: the marketplace for promoting in some elements of those venues started to dictate or affect the journalism content material. And she or he didn't need something to do with that.

Jacobsen: That was the tip of her journalism profession?

Rockman: No, however she simply moved on to different varieties of writing. She's writing books now. A memoir about her expertise at Leo Castelli Gallery, for instance. So, no—she simply misplaced curiosity in being on the service of the publicity division of artwork of journalism.

Jacobsen: Promoting?

Rockman: Ish. It's a really robust state of affairs.

Jacobsen: Positive. Sure. Particularly while you're making a choice proper on the highest stage in North America.

Rockman: Precisely.

Jacobsen: That's honest. What query have you ever all the time needed to be requested however have by no means been?

Rockman: I'm so fortunate that I've been requested so many questions—that anybody even cares about what I'm doing.

Jacobsen: That'd be enjoyable for those who might ask your self. What do you assume your youthful self, consuming an

enormous pint of Guinness, can be asking your older self now?

"Why are you consuming IPAs?"

Rockman: Ha! No, however critically—all of us have regrets.

I'd give myself some recommendation at key moments: to not do sure issues and to do different issues.

Jacobsen: At what factors do seemingly good alternatives come up, however "all that glitters will not be gold"? What are some key indicators?

Rockman: You'd by no means know. Day-after-day, there's some attention-grabbing e mail or supply. Issues typically go south, however you should be optimistic and hope one thing works out.

Jacobsen: So, this interview took a temper shift over forty minutes. I can't inform if we went from despair to optimism or—

Rockman: Treatment or my martini kicked in.

Jacobsen: Ha!

Rockman: No, I'm kidding.

Jacobsen: That's proper. That's it.

Rockman: Sure.

Jacobsen: So, that'd be fairly a very good query: "Why are you consuming IPAs and martinis now reasonably than Guinness?" That's my query to you.

Rockman: Relatively than what?

Jacobsen: Guinness into IPAs and martinis.

Rockman: You may drink extra of it with out feeling nauseated.

Rockman: Sure.

Jacobsen: Thanks very a lot on your time. I respect your experience.

Rockman: Pleasure.

Jacobsen: Good assembly you. Bye-bye.

Poetry by Graham Powell

Picture of My Father

The Rothko sky was setting,
as the shimmering, Campagnolo cap,
and dungarees,
sat protecting
his fringeless head, and nimble hands,
a vestige of chippings,
strewn upon the wall,
whilst long shadows
of tireless might,
define the man
who always
did his best.

Reflections

Reflections

from the Harvest Moon

lit the sky,

in a swooning, Catholic crimson,

the wild trees

tempering Storm Amy

as she gushes over

the earthen souls

berating life on the horizon,

and wishes on Orion's meteors,

were resplendent in ephemeral glory,

each longing of the mourners,

counter-begging for eternity,

by the grave.

A Sonnet to Chopin, by Graham Powell

I walk a path where breath is weak and brief,

A fragile beat through each trembling day,

Alone, I hum an oh so quiet grief,

To notes that fade in my pale decay.

No crescendo stirs my hours — my cap is doffed

To the solemn keys beneath my slender hand,

With a nocturne, or étude, boldly sent aloft,

As my soul might speak what lungs withstand.

For if sickness be the price of art,

I pay it, with what soft breath remains,

For in the hush of each fragile start,

I trade my flesh for everlasting strains.

So, grant my work be not in vain —

Lest death take my form, but not this song's refrain.

Phenomenon

The intricacies were delicate,

precise calculation was all the wizard knew.

In the distance, red gold tempters flooded the empire,

one day or another, the intelligence was epic,

Ninjas jumped across the ceiling.

But the elf was wise,

disputing his love was over -

realized the bitterness in his heart.

Quickly the sun rose, and calculation was phenomenal,

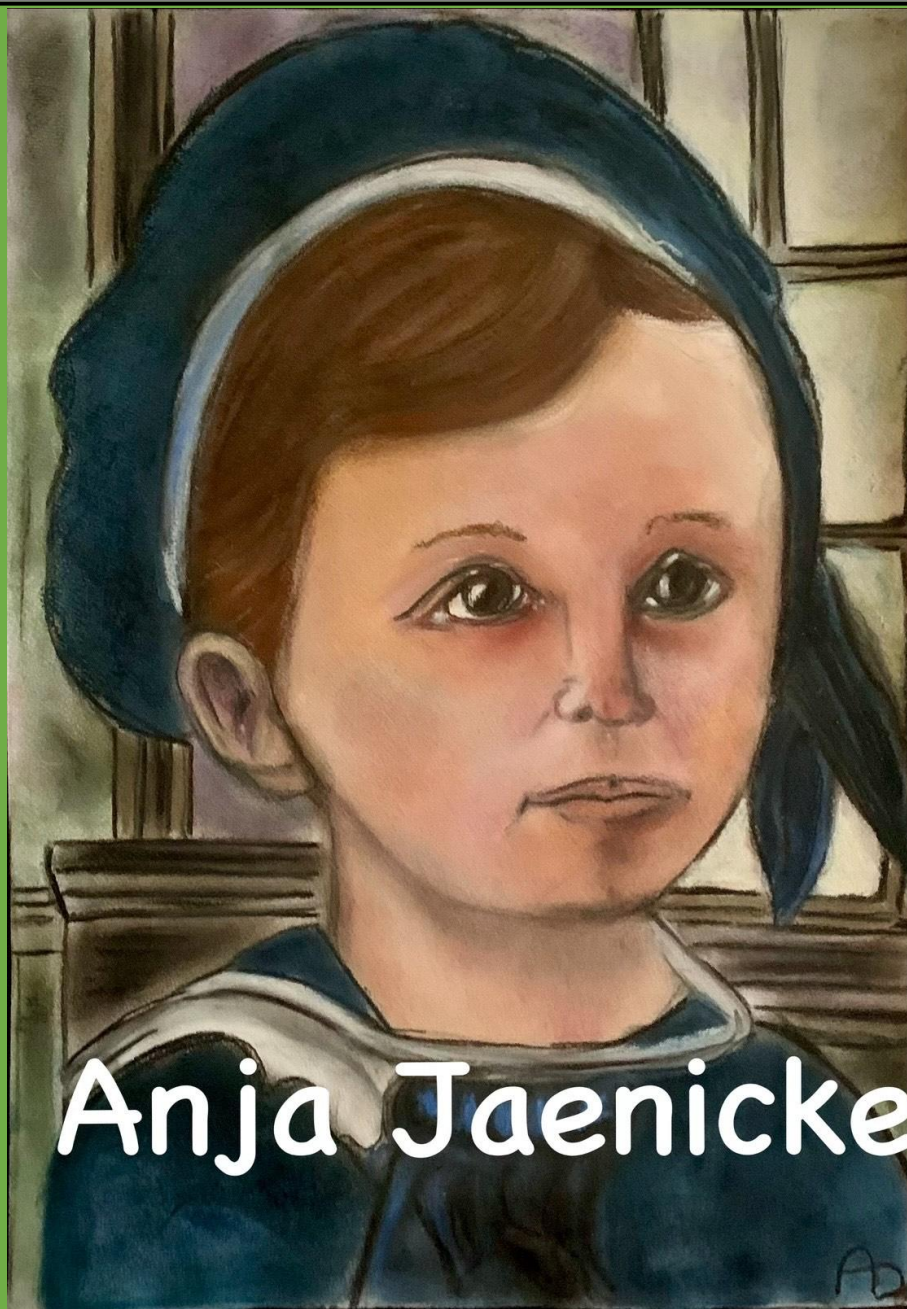
every detail sparked angles roaming the forests.

Back to earth cradling her in imagination she was lost,

although profound, wisdom dedicated the final spell.

and he was set free.

JSR McBeath



Willam Sidis

The Resolution of Infinities: Meditations on Life, Death, and Meaning by Graham Powell

Prologue

"Life is the resolution of infinities and death the ultimate dispersion of that."

Every philosophy begins, not with a system, but via a sentence that feels heavier than language, as if thought, itself, had coalesced into a single vibration.

To say that life is the *resolution of infinities* is to recognize that being alive means standing at the crossroads of boundlessness. The infinite flows through us constantly — time, matter, memory, desire. We are built from infinities of motion and decay, chance, and necessity, past and potential. And yet, from that overwhelming field, something gathers itself and says *I*.

This moment of gathering is what we call *life*. It is not stability but tension: the delicate equilibrium of endlessness held briefly in form. Every breath, every heartbeat, every thought is a negotiation with chaos, a momentary holding-together of what would otherwise disperse.

Nothing, however, holds forever. The same forces that draw the infinite into shape will one day unravel. Death, then, is not a catastrophe that befalls life from outside, but the other face of its structure — the inevitable release of what had been held in tension. The energy disperses, the pattern dissolves, and the infinities return to their native restlessness.

Although we call this *ending*, it may be more truthful to see it as a continuation in another key. Life is the infinite arranged into coherence; death is that coherence returning to the infinite. Between them lies the rhythm of existence itself — gathering and scattering, resolution and dispersion, birth and release.

To live is to become aware of this rhythm, and to dwell within it lucidly. It is to know that one's coherence is temporary and that

we still need to affirm it. The existential task is not to escape dissolution, but to live with the knowledge of it — to turn awareness of transience into depth, to carve meaning from impermanence as a spark may light from stone.

The following meditations therefore grow from that release. They are not a doctrine but an exploration — an attempt to trace the movement between resolution and dispersion as it appears in thought, art, love, and mortality. Ultimately, we will find that life is not a defiance of the infinite, but its brief and beautiful act of self-clarity.

Part I — The Metaphysics of Resolution

1. The Infinite Becoming Form

The story of life is the story of form arising from formlessness. Before there was thought, or will, or even time as we know it, there was movement — unbounded, non-purposed, infinite. The earliest philosophers intuited this. Heraclitus called it *fire*, Anaximander *the apeiron* — the boundless origin and dissolution of all things. From this indefinite sea, the world takes shape; and within it, so do we.

To reiterate, life as the *resolution of infinities* is to recognize that every living thing is a temporary compromise between chaos and coherence. The infinite is not something outside us; it is the field from which we arise and into which we dissolve. Our bodies, our thoughts, our histories, all are local crystallizations of something that cannot be localized.

Even the most solid things are patterns in flux: atoms are dances of probability; selves are in part memories sustained by constant renewal. The metaphysical truth behind biology and physics is that being is *becoming*. The finite is not a limit placed upon the infinite, but a gesture of it — a form through which boundlessness reveals one of its countless faces.

There is no pure stillness in this order. Existence is restless, and form is tension. To live is to hold the infinite together long enough for coherence to appear. This coherence is what we

experience as *identity, purpose, meaning* — yet it is as fragile as a flame in the wind. The very energy that sustains it threatens to undo it. Every pulse of the heart is both creation and decay, every thought a negotiation between memory and oblivion.

Yet it is precisely this fragility that makes the finite sacred. The infinite is indifferent — vast, impersonal, without distinction. Only when it gathers into form does it become capable of significance. As such, the human being is not a departure from the cosmos but its momentary self-portrait — the infinite seeing itself from within limitation. In the same way that a wave reveals the sea's shape for an instant before returning to it, so consciousness is the universe's momentary awareness of its own becoming. To understand this is to sense the quiet paradox at the heart of being: that the infinite depends on the finite to become visible.

Without form, infinity is nothing; without 'the infinite', form is impossible. The two are not opposites but phases of the same movement — gathering and release, tension and rest, resolution and dispersion.

Quintessentially, the act of living is not an assertion *against* the infinite but an expression of it. Life is the infinite making itself articulate in the grammar of flesh and thought.

2. The Fragility of Coherence

Every act of form is also an act of resistance. To live is to hold the infinite at bay — to impose pattern upon flux, to maintain structure within the ceaseless unfolding of change. Yet this resistance is never absolute. It is tension rather than an ultimatum.

The coherence we call life is precarious, always on the verge of unravelling. A cell repairs itself unceasingly, as though aware of the void waiting at its edges. Consciousness, too, must constantly reconstruct its own continuity — memory, identity, meaning — all woven from threads that fray as quickly as they are spun. In this sense, to be alive is not to have coherence, but to *practice* it.

Philosophically, coherence is the condition of presence. It is the way the infinite becomes perceivable. But it is not guaranteed. Every structure, no matter how stable, is haunted by entropy — the slow reclamation of form by formlessness. The cosmos itself will one day thin into cold equilibrium. This inevitability does not diminish existence; it gives it contour. Meaning can only arise where loss is possible.

The fragility of coherence, far from being a flaw, is what makes life vivid. A world without impermanence would have no pulse. The painter's colour, the lover's breath, the thinker's insight — all borrow their intensity from the fact that they cannot last. The moment's finitude is what grants it gravity.

Our mistake is to confuse fragility with failure. We speak of mortality as though it were an error in design, when in truth it is the design's essence. To endure eternally would be to escape the very condition that allows value to emerge. Permanence flattens; transience sharpens.

Each form is therefore a gesture of fortitude. Every organism, every consciousness, every act of creation declares itself against dissolution even while knowing it cannot win. There is a tragic nobility in this quiet heroism in the finite's persistence against the infinite's indifference. This is the dignity of all things that live: not that they last, but that they strive to.

Coherence, then, is not a state to be secured but a rhythm to be enacted — a ceaseless reassertion of order within the great dispersing tide. To be is to be continually re-woven, and when that weaving ceases, when coherence can no longer hold, we call it death — not an intrusion, but the moment when the tension resolves and the threads release back into the infinite they briefly resisted.

In this fragile coherence lies the entire human drama: the yearning for permanence, the ache of loss, the drive to create. It

is in the awareness of our own instability that we begin to seek meaning — and to make it.

3. The Ontology of the Interval

Between arising and dispersal lies the interval — that slender span in which being gathers itself into form before releasing again into the infinite. Everything that exists does so within this rhythm: coming-to-be, enduring, passing-away. Existence is not an object but a pulse.

We often think of being as substance — something that *is*. But the truth is subtler: being is *happening*. To exist is to occur, not to persist. The world is not a collection of things, but a continuity of events, each moment a negotiation between appearance and disappearance.

Life, in this light, is an interval of coherence in the infinite's unfolding. The self is not a solid entity but a continuity of becoming — a pattern sustained through repetition, habit, and memory. We are less like stones and more like songs: recognizable across time, yet only real in performance. Identity is the melody the infinite hums through us for a while.

The Greeks had a word, *kairos*, meaning the right or opportune moment — time not as quantity but as quality, the charged instant where significance crystallizes. Life can be understood as an extended *kairos*: an opening in the infinite where form achieves brief self-awareness. It is not a possession but a participation — a temporary alignment of possibility and presence. In that sense, death does not interrupt life; it completes it. Every interval ends not in negation but in silence, the pause that allows meaning to resonate. The cessation of Being is not contrary to Being: it is part of its measure. Without endings, beginnings could not occur — and without the limit of the interval, the infinite could not become intelligible.

This is the ontology of the living: to exist between. We dwell between the not-yet and the no-longer, between expansion and dissolution, between the infinite that precedes us and the

infinite that follows. To be human is to feel that in-between as consciousness — the ache of awareness that knows itself temporary yet yearns for the eternal.

Perhaps this yearning is itself the signature of the infinite within us. We are drawn toward what we cannot contain because it is already what sustains us. Our longing for permanence is not delusion but remembrance of the infinite's own continuity vibrating through finite form.

Thus, the meaning of life does not lie in escaping the interval, but in inhabiting it fully. To live authentically is to embrace becoming as one's true mode of being — to live as the interval lives: awake, precarious, luminous.

When we understand ourselves as the space between resolution and dispersion, we cease seeking certainty and begin practicing presence. We learn that significance is not elsewhere or later, but here, in the brief coherence of the moment, the fleeting intensity of now.

Being, then, is not the denial of death but its companion. Together they compose the rhythm of existence, the eternal cadence of gathering and release. To live is to sound one note in that endless music, knowing it will fade — and to let it fade beautifully.

Part II: The Existential Condition

4. Consciousness as Burden and Gift

Awareness is the point where the universe not only gathers itself into form, but becomes *aware* of that gathering — where being looks back upon itself and says: *I am*.

This miracle carries its own weight. The stone and the star endure without self-knowledge; their being is effortless. But in us, existence awakens, and with awakening comes anxiety. Consciousness is both blessing and affliction: it lifts us above mere process, while binding us to the knowledge of impermanence. We alone among creatures know we will die, and it is this knowledge that shapes each gesture of our meaning.

To be conscious is to live divided between the immediacy of experience and the reflection that stands apart from it. In the same breath that we live, we also observe ourselves living.

This doubling is the origin of freedom and of anguish.

Kierkegaard called it *the sickness unto death* — the despair that arises when the self becomes aware of itself as possibility, suspended between what it is and what it could be. We are not merely alive; we are tasked with interpreting our life.

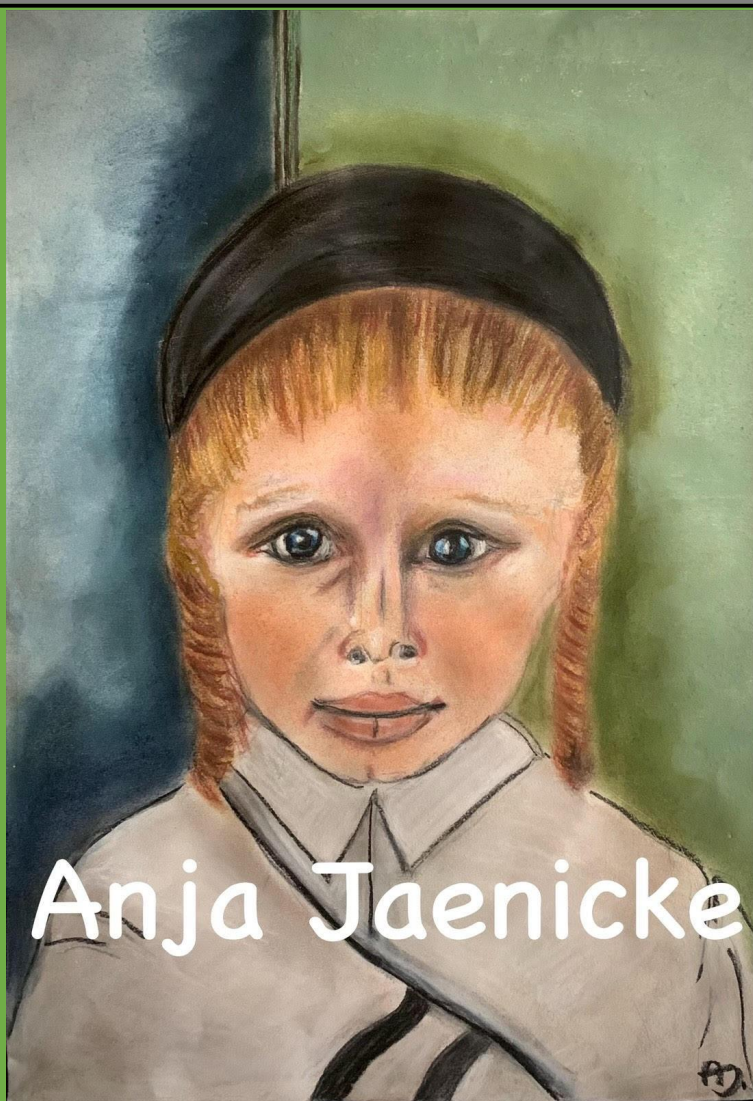
We do not simply *exist*; we must *decide* how to exist. Each choice opens one path while closing countless others, and in that narrowing, we feel the weight of the infinite pressing against us. Freedom is heavy, because nothing guarantees it.

Camus saw in this the essence of the absurd — the clash between our hunger for meaning and the universe's silence.

Yet the same awareness that isolates us also ennobles us. In consciousness, the infinite finds reflection, however brief, and through that reflection becomes luminous. We can suffer beauty; we can recognize truth; we can love knowing that loss is certain. No other creature holds such contradictions within a single breath.

Thus, consciousness is both burden and gift. It tears us from the innocence of being, though it offers us the power to create meaning where none is given. The pain of knowing we will die is inseparable from the joy of knowing we are alive. To feel the weight of existence is to stand in the very heart of the infinite — not outside it, but as its fleeting self-awareness.

Our task, then, is not to escape consciousness but to bear it gracefully, to transform its heaviness into depth. Through our eyes, it beholds its own fragility; through our suffering, it learns compassion; through our thought, it becomes lucid. And when we vanish, that lucidity disperses again — but not before it has burned with the intensity of being that knows itself finite.



Little Emile

The Resolution of Infinites: Meditations on Life, Death, and Meaning, Part Two by Graham Powell

Part II, Section 5: "The Absurd and the Act of Resolution."

To be conscious is to recognize the fracture between our hunger for meaning and the world's indifference. We are born into an order vast enough to sustain galaxies, yet silent when we ask *why*. This silence is what Camus called *the absurd*: the collision between human reason and the unreasonable world, QED, the universe.

The absurd is not an external condition to be solved; it is the very texture of awareness. The more we search for ultimate coherence, the clearer we hear the infinite's refusal to justify itself. The universe offers beauty without explanation, suffering without design. We are the creatures who ask questions the cosmos does not answer.

And yet, within that silence, something remarkable occurs. We continue to live, to speak, to create. Camus's *absurd*, properly faced, does not annihilate meaning — it demands that we *invent* it. It is the space in which freedom becomes real.

Once the illusion of cosmic purpose collapses, we are left alone with our capacity to choose, and the responsibility that follows.

Camus's Sisyphus embodies this: condemned to roll his stone forever, he becomes the emblem of defiant coherence. The gods have given him futility, yet he gives it form. His punishment becomes his art. He does not deny the absurd; he transforms it into rhythm. His labour, repeated endlessly, becomes a form of resolution — a human echo of the infinite's own ceaseless movement.

This act of resolution is the heart of existential creation. Meaning is not discovered but composed. Every authentic life is a composition — an arrangement of fragments into a fragile whole.

We make worlds out of words, gestures, loves, and losses, knowing all will disperse. The absurd does not forbid this; it makes it necessary. Only in a meaningless universe can the act of meaning-making become pure.

To live absurdly is not to despair, but to live *without appeal*. It is to build one's coherence upon the sand, knowing it will wash away, and still to build beautifully. The absurd teaches us to replace hope with clarity, illusion with intensity. To see the world as it is — naked, indifferent, unpromising — and yet to affirm it, is the highest form of courage.

This is the act of resolution: not to impose eternal order, but to sustain momentary harmony within disorder; not to conquer the infinite, but to dance with it. Art, love, thought, rebellion — these are our responses to the absurd, our ways of shaping the infinite's chaos into brief significance. Each is a human flame, trembling in the wind, illuminating the darkness not because it will last, but because it burns now.

To live thus is to refuse both resignation and false consolation. It is to recognize that the absence of inherent meaning is not emptiness, but openness — an infinite canvas upon which each life may draw its own form. And in that act of drawing, the infinite once again resolves itself through us, momentarily coherent, gloriously finite.

Part II, Section 6: "Authenticity and the Horizon of Death."

Death is the most certain and most elusive aspect of existence.

It is always approaching yet never present; it shapes every moment of life — but remains beyond experience.

In the face of death, every human project trembles — yet it is precisely from this trembling that authenticity arises.

Heidegger called this *being-toward-death*, not as a morbid preoccupation, but as the fundamental structure of human existence. To be human is to live in anticipation of non-being.

We are not merely creatures who die; we are creatures who *know* we will die, so knowledge casts its shadow across every choice.

We live, as Heidegger said, in *das Man* — the anonymous “they” who drift through life according to convention and distraction. We fill our days with noise, plans, and reassurances, hoping to forget the inevitability that waits quietly within us. In doing so, we dilute our existence, reducing it to the comfort of habit.

But death is patient and not forgotten. When we confront it directly — when we feel, not abstractly but viscerally, that every breath is finite — something within us awakens. This confrontation tears away the trivial. It exposes the falsity of borrowed meanings and demands that we take responsibility for our own. The horizon of death transforms existence from a series of automatic motions into a field of deliberate acts. In its light, the ordinary becomes luminous, urgent, real.

Authenticity, for Heidegger, is not a state but a stance — a way of standing before the infinite with open eyes. To live authentically is to live *as if one's death were always near*, not in despair, but in clarity.

It is to act from the knowledge that every choice is final. Time will not return it. This awareness does not diminish life; it intensifies it. We postpone nothing indefinitely, each moment becomes absolute.

In this sense, death gives life its shape. It is the horizon against which meaning becomes visible, as the edge defines the form of a painting. Without death, life would blur into timelessness and lose its texture. Because we die, we must decide. Because we end, our beginnings matter.

It is to see that mortality is not the negation of the infinite, but its manifestation within the finite — ‘the infinite’ glimpsing itself through the boundary of a single life. Each of us is a limit through which the boundless becomes aware of its limit.

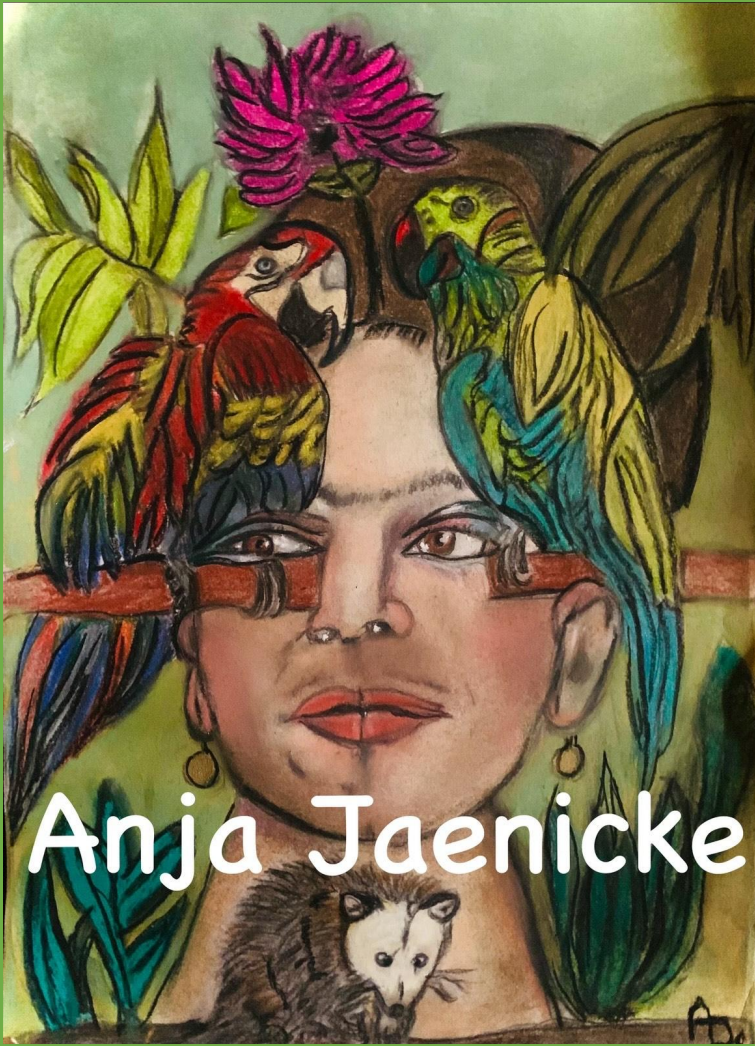
Heidegger wrote that the anticipation of death:
"... individualizes Dasein completely."

When we truly face our mortality, we are stripped of all illusions of substitution. No one can die for us; no one can live for us. In that solitude lies both terror and liberation — the discovery that our life is entirely our own to shape, and entirely ours to lose. Authenticity begins when we no longer seek to escape this solitude.

To live authentically is to inhabit one's mortality without denial — to stand in the open, exposed, but unafraid.

Such a life does not ask for immortality; it asks for presence. It seeks not duration, but depth — not the comfort of permanence, but the intensity of truth.

In the end, being-toward-death is not a philosophy of despair, it is lucidity. To live with death as one's companion is to live awake. Every sunrise becomes more vivid, every love more tender, every silence more profound. For the one who remembers the horizon, each instant becomes eternity's brief, blazing echo.



Frida Kahlo

The Resolution of Infinites: Meditations on Life, Death, and Meaning, Part Three by Graham Powell

Part III, Section 7: "The Beauty of the Finite."

All beauty begins in perishing. If things did not fade, they would not move us. It is their fragility that awakens tenderness — the sudden awareness that what we behold will never appear again in exactly this way.

The Japanese speak of *mono no aware* — the gentle ache of seeing cherry blossoms fall, knowing their perfection lies precisely in their passing. Rilke heard the same truth

"...beauty is nothing but the beginning of terror we are still just able to bear."

Rilke felt that beauty wounds us because it reminds us of the world's unbearable temporality. We love because we lose; we see because we will one day close our eyes.

In the metaphysics of resolution, every form is a temporary harmony. Its loveliness depends on the tension between appearance and disappearance. A rose is beautiful not because it endures, but because it trembles on the edge of dissolution.

If it bloomed forever, its petals would become invisible to us. Only when we know the bloom will fall do we truly see it.

Art is born from this knowledge. The artist gathers the fleeting into form — fixing light on canvas, sound in measure, words in rhythm — not to preserve it eternally, but to make its passing intelligible.

A poem is not an escape from time but an embrace of it, a moment where the infinite flow of experience pauses long enough to be felt.

So too, with love. Every love, however fierce, is shadowed by parting. The lover's face changes, the body ages, the world moves

on. Yet it is this fragility that deepens affection. To love without illusion is to love as the infinite does — not to possess, but to witness. We hold one another as one may hold light: by not closing the hand too tightly.

Beauty, then, is not consolation for mortality but its flowering. It is mortality perceived through the lens of grace. The aesthetic sense arises from our recognition that the world is passing, and our refusal to turn away. To find something beautiful is to say, *yes, even this will end — and therefore, yes, it is precious.*

Poets have always known this. Keats, dying young, could write:

“A thing of beauty is a joy forever,” not because the thing lasts, but because the joy of beholding it echoes endlessly within consciousness. The permanence of beauty lies not in objects but in attention. To see clearly — to truly see — is already to create eternity within the instant.

Thus, the finite is not the opposite of the eternal; it is its doorway. Every transient form offers a glimpse of what cannot die. It is the ungraspable wonder of being itself.

In the face of beauty, time folds — the infinite resolves itself into a single, radiant moment, and when that moment passes, it leaves behind not loss but resonance — the quiet after the note, still vibrating in the soul.

To live aesthetically is not to flee death, but to perceive through it — to let its shadow outline the light. For the finite, seen deeply enough, becomes transparent, revealing the infinite pulsing just beneath its surface.

Part III, Section 8: “Creation as Resistance.”

To create is to refuse disappearance, if only for a heartbeat. In a world that dissolves unceasingly, the act of creation is a gesture of defiance — a brief stay against the wind. Nietzsche called this the ‘yes of life’, the affirmation that sings even in the

presence of death. The artist, the lover, the thinker, all stand before the abyss and say: *Nevertheless*.

Every act of creation is born from tension — the finite pushing back against dispersion. We write because silence surrounds us, paint because darkness waits, love because absence is certain.

Camus understood this when he wrote that:

"... the struggle itself... is enough to fill a man's heart."

Creation is that struggle made luminous: the rock of Sisyphus transformed into song.

But resistance need not be rebellion alone. Hannah Arendt saw in creation the power to:

"Insert something new into the world."

To act, to speak, to make, is to puncture the inertia of time with novelty. Every creative gesture, however small, affirms that the world is not complete. The infinite disperses; we gather. The cosmos forgets; we remember. We become, for a moment, the mind of matter — the place where chaos meets care.

And yet, the creator's triumph is never victory but *transfiguration*.

The painter knows the canvas will crack; the poet knows the page will yellow; the lover knows every embrace is mortal. Still they persist, because the worth of creation lies not in what endures but in what occurs. Meaning is not a monument but an event — an unfolding of presence. To make something beautiful is to declare that "the fleeting" deserves reverence.

Rilke once wrote that the task of art is "to praise."

Praise is not naïve admiration but disciplined seeing — the act of beholding the finite until it reveals its secret infinity.

In this sense, creation is a form of prayer without deity:

a reaching out toward the un-nameable through the material of the moment. Even despair, when shaped into art, becomes a form

of praise.

Through language, sound, movement, we redeem suffering by transforming pain into pattern, and in doing so, glimpse meaning.

The resistance of creation is thus not violent but tender. It does not seek to conquer the infinite but to collaborate with it, to turn its raw abundance into a brief coherence of form.

Artaud said that art is "the cry of beings" — but it is also their listening, their attuning into the unseen. In shaping the world, we do not impose order so much as reveal it; we help the infinite recognize itself in colour, tone, and word.

Creation, then, is the purest act of being. It is the will to gather what is scattered, to bring into resonance what might otherwise remain mute. Each poem, each act of love, each work of kindness is a resolution of infinities — a defiance not of death, but of meaninglessness. For even when all dissolves, the gesture itself remains inscribed in the fabric of becoming. It changes nothing, and it changes everything.

The creator stands between silence and song, between the infinite's dispersion and the world's fragile coherence, and chooses to speak.

That choice is the essence of freedom — not the power to escape necessity, but the courage to turn necessity into expression.

Part III, Section 9: "The Grace of Dispersal."

Every act of coherence must, in time, loosen its hold.

The music ends, the light fades, the hands unclasp.

Even the stars burn out, their ashes scattering into new constellations. This is not failure — it is the rhythm by which the infinite renews itself.

We spend much of our lives resisting dispersal. We build, preserve, cling — as though permanence were the measure of

worth. But what if the final act of creation were not resistance, but surrender? What if grace consisted not in holding the form, but in releasing it beautifully?

The same wind that erodes the mountain carries its dust into fertile ground. The same death that silences the body nourishes the soil for new life. Dispersal is not negation but transformation: it is the infinite reclaiming its own fragments to begin again.

The sages of the East intuited this long before philosophy named it. The Tao does not end; it flows.

To yield is to return to the source. The wave collapses, yet the sea remains. In that return there is peace, because what falls away is never separate from what endures.

For the existential spirit, acceptance is the final rebellion to face dissolution without despair, to say *yes* even as one unravels. Nietzsche's *amor fati* — the love of one's fate — is this same grace: to affirm not only life's flowering, but its withering; to bless the disappearance of what one once held dear.

Rilke wrote:

"All things want to be taken by you into your heart and transformed there."

Dispersal is the world's final transformation within us. When we can let go — of power, of certainty, of self — we make room for the infinite to pass freely through. In the stillness after effort, existence breathes again.

Grace, then, is not an end-state but a movement of openness.

It is the calm that arises when resistance softens into participation.

We cease trying to fix the pattern and begin to feel its rhythm.

The self becomes transparent; the infinite shines through.

To die well is to return what was never ours to keep.

It is to trust that the dispersal of one harmony becomes the prelude to another. The painter's colour fades, yet the eye that once beheld it has been changed forever.

The grace of dispersal is the grace of belonging. Nothing is truly lost; everything is translated. The dust of our coherence feeds the future; the echo of our words vibrates in unseen hearts. To vanish is simply to continue in another form — quieter, wider, free.

When we understand this, our fear dissolves. Both are gestures of the same infinite breath.

Epilogue — The Infinite Remembering Itself

At last, everything returns to silence. Not the silence of absence, but of completion — the stillness that follows a long and intricate piece of music when the final note fades and the listener, changed, does not yet applaud.

Life was never separate from the infinite; it was the infinite, momentarily shaped into awareness. Each of us was a gesture — a form through which boundlessness gathered itself into focus, a temporary resolution in the music of existence. We called this focus *self*, and in its fragile coherence we felt both wonder and sorrow.

Now form dissolves. The resolution softens into dispersion, and what was once "I" rejoins what was always its source. This is not erasure but expansion — the pattern returning to the field, the wave slipping quietly back into the sea.

The infinite has no memory in the way we imagine, and yet, it remembers through us. Every thought, every kindness, every act of creation was the universe learning something of itself — a nuance of love, the clarity of pain, the fleeting symmetry that had never existed before. When we vanish, that knowing does not vanish with us; it diffuses, untraceable yet pervasive.

"This is all eternity" means: that we lose nothing; it is merely translated into other forms of being. The body returns to soil, the words to air, the love to whatever current moves the stars. All dispersal is continuity. The infinite forgets, thereby remembering again. Life and death are not opposites, but phases

of a single gesture — the universe inhaling and exhaling through form.

Resolution and dispersion, gathering and release: the rhythm of all that is. To live within that rhythm, knowingly, is wisdom; to yield to it, peacefully, is grace.

We never exiled from the infinite; we were its fleeting concentration — its sudden self-recognition in the mirror of the finite. When that recognition fades, the mirror does not shatter; it becomes the sky. It is lucid.

What remains is what has always been: the endless unfolding, the patient silence, the infinite reclaiming itself again — this time, as us.

The Phenomenon Crafty Crossword Answers

K	A	T	S	I	O	U	L	I	S		A
A		T	A	P	E			F	I	A	T
L	A		U		N	O	O	N		I	T
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S	M	S			O	R	N	S	T		P
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Quick Quiz Answers

- | | |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| 1. 1 | 6. 225 |
| 2. 7 | 7. Chemical Engineering |
| 3. 1976 | 8. 2025 |
| 4. In Dubai | 9. Jamaica |
| 5. Shorter | 10. University of Leeds |

**AN INTERVIEW
WITH DR. MARGENA A. CHRISTIAN**



Author(s): Scott Douglas Jacobsen

An interview with Dr. Margena A. Christian. She discusses: geographic, cultural, and linguistic family background; influence on development; influences and pivotal moments in early life; founding and owning DocM.A.C. write Consulting; building and maintaining a client base; being a lecturer at the University of Illinois at Chicago; the dissertation and original interest in it; being a senior editor and senior writer for EBONY and other publications and initiatives; abilities, knowledge, and skills developed from the experience; interest in education, fashion, finance, health, medicine, parenting,

relationships, religion, and spirituality; covering the death of Michael Jackson; advice for journalists; advice for girls; advice for women in general; advice for African-American women; advice for professional women; greatest emotional struggle in personal life; greatest emotional struggle in professional life; nicest thing someone's ever done for you; meanest thing someone's ever done to you; source of drive; upcoming collaborative projects; upcoming solo projects; and final feelings or thoughts.

Interview with Dr. Margena A. Christian: Distinguished Lecturer, University of Illinois at Chicago; Founder and Owner

1. Scott Douglas Jacobsen: In terms of geography, culture, and language, where does your familial background reside?

Dr. Margena A. Christian: I was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri. Appropriately so, I made my entrance into the world at Christian Hospital on the city's north side, where I resided until I relocated to Chicago in 1995 when hired by Johnson Publishing Company. My mother's side of the family was African American and Cherokee Indian. They were from Arkansas. My father's side of the family was African American and German. I don't know much about them except that his grandmother was, as my mom often said, "full-blooded German" and that a great portion of his family distanced themselves from the others after deciding to "pass" as White. I grew up in what I considered a pretty traditional African-American, working-class family. My mom was a librarian and media specialist; my dad was an inspector at General Motors.

2. Jacobsen: How did this influence development?

Christian: Growing up in St. Louis was an interesting experience. There is much division there between African Americans and Whites. I lived on the city's north side, which is predominantly Black. I attended a Catholic grade school, Most Holy Rosary, and a Catholic high school, Cardinal Ritter College Preparatory, with people who looked like me. When I went to St. Louis University(SLU), a Jesuit institution, it was a major adjustment. During this time there were few people that attended who looked like me. I can still recall often being in classes where I was the only African American. Going from being around my own 24/7 and then moving into a world where I was suddenly the only "one," took some getting used to. I can say that I had a pleasant time as a Billiken at SLU. I worked hard and made stellar grades so I stood out for more reasons than one. And, needless to say, I hardly ever missed class because the professor always seemed to notice.

3. Jacobsen: What about influences and pivotal moments in major cross-sections of life such as kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school, high school, undergraduate studies (college/university), and graduate studies?

Christian: As previously mentioned, my mom was a teacher. When I attended kindergarten, it was at the same school where she taught. For some reason I didn't feel the need to work as hard because mom was there. In some ways I felt privileged over the other students. From that experience, my mom learned that it wasn't such a good thing to work at the same school with your kid. I was headed to the third grade when my parents decided to take me out of the St. Louis

Public School System and have me attend an Archdiocesan school. She didn't feel that my siblings and I were getting the best education, so she convinced our dad to allow us to transfer to Catholic schools.

I attended a co-ed high school that was considered one of the best private, Catholic schools in an urban area. That's where my life changed after taking a leadership class with Sister Barbara. She knew how much I loved to write and told me about the Minority Journalism Workshop, sponsored by the Greater St. Louis Association of Black Journalists. The program was designed for juniors and seniors in high school and early college students. I was a sophomore when I applied and got accepted. Renowned journalists George E. Curry and Gerald Boyd were founders of this pioneering workshop, which would become the blueprint for other minority journalism workshops throughout the country.

Training with professional journalists at such a young age helped to hone my craft and solidify my desire to do this for a living. I won scholarships two years in a row and had my first article published. Nothing beats hands-on experience. I didn't write for the school paper at SLU, because I didn't feel comfortable as "the only one." Instead, I returned to my roots and did an internship at the city's top African-American publication, the St. Louis American Newspaper. Later I wrote for a newsmagazine called Take Five. Building one's clips is critical. I had an attractive portfolio with a range of stories to show.

However, coming from a family of educators, I did what most people who aspire to become a journalist do. I played it safe

and got a job as an English teacher at a Catholic grade school, Bishop Healy. So, essentially, I taught by day and wrote by night. Healy was in the city and practiced the Nguzo Saba value system. When I reflect on my life, I see that I was being prepared. Concepts in my dissertation were the Nguzo Saba to show pioneering publisher John H. Johnson's commitment to his race when documenting our history in magazines.

4. Jacobsen: You founded and own DocM.A.C. write Consulting. It provides a number of services including editing, professional development, proofreading, writing services, and so on. What is the importance of these services to the clientele?

Christian: People always seek those who can fine tune and polish their writing, editing and proofreading. Educators need to remain current with pedagogical strategies so professional development is one way to achieve this. I also do dissertation coaching. Thus far I've helped two people complete their dissertation. The coursework is the easy part; the hard part is crossing the finish line by submitting the dissertation! There's a great deal of folks who are ABD (all but dissertation) who need the right push to move along. That's what I do.

5. Jacobsen: How does one build and maintain a client base?

Christian: Building and maintaining a client base, for me, comes from word of mouth and networking. Most of my clients were referred by other clients and/or people who know my work.

6. Jacobsen: You are a lecturer at the University of Illinois at Chicago. What tasks and responsibilities come with this position?

Christian: I teach an Academic Writing I course, considered freshman composition, in English. Recently UIC started a professional writing concentration as a minor. I was hired to help build the program. Thus far I developed and designed two courses: Writing for Digital and New Media and Advanced Professional Writing. One thing I enjoy most about being a lecturer is that the focus is on teaching and not so much research. If I choose to conduct more or to write journal articles, it is optional and not mandatory. Each semester I teach three different courses, so my prep time is far reaching. Thanks to my organizational skills, I make it work effortlessly.

7. Jacobsen: Your dissertation was titled John H. Johnson: A Historical Study on the Re-Education of African Americans in Adult Education Through the Selfethnic Liberatory Nature of Magazines. What was the original interest in this subject matter?

Christian: I didn't simply read about how John H. Johnson helped to make history. I helped him to write it. I was hired by the man himself in 1995, when I started as an assistant editor for the weekly publication Jet magazine. When Mr. Johnson, as we lovingly called him, died in 2005, I saw how things changed the following year with new people in place to run the iconic publications. Let's just say that I knew that one day the magazine and the company as I once knew it

would be no more. It hit me that there would come a time when people won't remember or know anything about a man who lived named John H. Johnson. It struck me that one day people won't know about his iconic publications. It hit me that the house that he once built at 820 S. Michigan Avenue would no longer exist. I realized I was the bridge between the old and the new. I was the last editor hired by Mr. Johnson and worked along his side who remained at the company before my position was eliminated in 2014. My position ended the same week that Jet magazine ended. History was being rewritten and it was bittersweet. For instance, a man named Simeon Booker led the ground-breaking coverage for the tragic 1955 Emmett Till story. I did the modern-day, follow-up coverage, beginning in 2004, when the body was exhumed and the case reopened. It was an honor to have Booker hand me the baton and for Mr. Johnson to have approved it. After a series of stories that I penned for a few years, I concluded that chapter in my life and the magazine's annals by purchasing a beautiful oil painting of Till (shown in image) that was done by a fellow JPC employee, Raymond A. Thomas.

8. Jacobsen: What was the main research question? What were the main findings of the doctoral research?

Christian: The main research question was how did John H. Johnson use his magazines in adult education to combat intellectual racism. The main findings were that not only did he educate his own race but he educated all races, all over the world.

9. Jacobsen: You were a Senior Editor and Senior Writer for EBONY, editor of Elevate, Features Editor for Jet, and

assisted in the inauguration of EBONY Retrospective. What were these initiatives?

Christian: Features editor was a position where I was charged with pitching, writing and editing human interest stories. I also assisted with selecting and securing high-profile figures for cover subjects. Elevate was a section in EBONY that focused on health, wellness and spirituality. EBONY's Retrospective was an opportunity for me to marry my love of entertainment with my interest in historical data by examining pivotal cultural moments in music, movies and TV that shaped my race.

10. Jacobsen: What abilities, knowledge, and skills were developed from them?

Christian: In addition to building an amazing list of contacts, I mastered the art of multi-tasking and learned the importance of having steady relationships. It's not about who you know but who knows you and returns your call. On the flip side, in terms of production, Jet magazine was a weekly publication so I had less than a week to meet a deadline. This included tracking down sources, doing research, conducting interviews, writing stories and editing. Early on I handled images for both EBONY and Jet by operating the Associated Press photo machine, including breaking it down and cleaning what was called the oven. Moving to EBONY in 2009 offered me a bit more time to work on lengthy features. The Retrospective pieces were supposed to only be 1,500 words, but I would gather such wonderful information that I would force their hand at close to 3,000 words!

11. Jacobsen: You write on education, fashion, finance, health, medicine, parenting, relationships, religion, and spirituality. What is the source of interest in these topics?

Christian: My professional career began at Jet magazine. The weekly newsmagazine required that all editors write about every subject. My specialty was entertainment. During my interview with Mr. Johnson and his daughter, Linda, in 1995, I expressed an interest in "writing about the stars" for EBONY. I recalled being told by Mr. Johnson that rank determined who would talk to the notables at EBONY, so he thought Jet would be a better fit since all editors had an equal chance of doing stories about celebs. Later, I was asked to write solely about health. I wasn't excited about this notion but it ended up being a blessing in disguise. I secretly began to enjoy writing about this subject. Now I'm at UIC, a top research institution that is renowned for its hospitals and clinics.

12. Jacobsen: You spearheaded on-the-ground coverage of the death of Michael Jackson ("King of Pop"). What was that experience like for you?

Christian: This was a difficult time for me but I had a job to do. This opportunity also came during an interesting time of transition at the company. I helped to document some history for this but not as much as I would have liked. Some people only wanted to hear salacious stories and could care less about him as a man more than him as an artist. That bothered me. Nonetheless, I was busy and exhausted. I spent three weeks in Los Angeles, spending time at the Jackson family's Encino compound, camped outside with the

hundred other reporters from around the world, and driving for hours to Los Olivos to visit Neverland. I met a man during a church prayer service named Steve Manning, who was one of his best friends who first ran the Jacksons fan club back in the day. We still keep in touch. A year after Michael's death, Steve was at the Jackson's home and allowed me to speak with Michael's mom, Katherine. I didn't quite know what to say because it was the weekend before Mother's Day, her first without him. Janet once sent me a Christmas card, which I still have. The Jackson family grew up at Johnson Publishing Company and were close friends with Mr. Johnson. I felt honored when I was selected by the managing editor, Terry Glover, to document this important history. She knew what I brought to the table and that I would deliver.

13. Jacobsen: Any advice for journalists?

Christian: I would encourage them to read, to write, to read, to write. Find a mentor who can guide you and know that building relationships are critical in this profession.

14. Jacobsen: Any advice for girls?

Christian: The advice I have for girls is to discover your passion and then you'll find your purpose. Ask yourself, "What would I do for the rest of my life even if I never got paid to do this?" That's usually your answer.

15. Jacobsen: Any advice for women in general?

Christian: General advice I have for women is to follow that still, quiet voice from within whenever it comes to making any type of decision. Trust your instinct and be patient. You can't miss what is meant for you.

16. Jacobsen: Any advice for African-American women?

Christian: The advice I have for African-American women is to never forget that you are a queen. Wear your crown with pride and know that you are wonderfully and divinely created.

17. Jacobsen: Any advice for professional women?

Christian: Always have multiple streams of income. Do not rely upon one job and remember that no one works harder for you than you can work for yourself.

18. Jacobsen: What seems like the greatest emotional struggle in personal life?

Christian: The greatest emotional struggle in personal life is realizing that people will disappoint because they are human.

19. Jacobsen: What seems like the greatest emotional struggle in professional life?

Christian: The greatest emotional struggle in professional life is being so passionate about making certain that my students

learn and that my stories educate, enlighten and uplift.

20. Jacobsen: What's the nicest thing someone's ever done for you?

Christian: My sister and a few close friends gave me a surprise graduation party after I earned my doctorate. I don't like surprises and I don't get fooled easily, but they managed to do a splendid job of knocking me off my feet. I was very touched.

21. Jacobsen: What's the meanest thing someone's ever done to you?

Christian: People did things to be mean but now I look at those encounters as part of divine order. I always remember that rejection is God's protection. I also know that what people intended for harm was designed to help and push me into my purpose. So, mean things weren't done to me only things that were MEANT to grow me.

22. Jacobsen: What drives you?

Christian: Faith and passion drive me.

23. Jacobsen: Any upcoming collaborative projects?

Christian: No upcoming collaborative projects as of now.

24. Jacobsen: Any upcoming solo projects?

Christian: I am preparing to turn my dissertation into a book. One of the country's larger and most distinguished university presses picked it up. I am beyond thrilled to take this story into the academy. This was a full-circle moment. We keep someone's legacy alive by educating future generations.

25. Jacobsen: Any feelings or thoughts in conclusion?

Christian: Trust the process and always keep the faith. In the words of the Hon. Marcus Garvey, "Onward and upward."

26. Jacobsen: Thank you for your time, Dr. Christian.

Conversation with Veronica Palladino on High-Range IQ Societies, Mental Health Poetry, and Phenomenology in Medicine

Abstract

This interview presents a focused conversation with Dr. Veronica Palladino, a physician, poet, and member of numerous high-range IQ societies. Intended as a public clarification following past interviews and inquiries, this dialogue covers Palladino's affiliations with global high-IQ communities, her philosophical interests, her published and forthcoming literary works, and her professional development within medicine. Palladino shares insights into her intellectual trajectory, ranging from Husserlian phenomenology to emergency medicine, as well as her commitment to raising awareness about mental health through poetry. The interview captures her multidimensional identity as a clinician, thinker, and writer committed to both internal and societal healing.

Introduction

Dr. Veronica Palladino is a multifaceted thinker whose work spans clinical medicine, poetry, and philosophical inquiry. A medical doctor with specializations in clinical pathology and emergency medicine, Palladino has also become widely recognized in the high-range IQ community for her involvement in numerous societies across Europe, Asia, and the Americas. In response to frequent public inquiries and correspondence, this interview offers a comprehensive clarification of her affiliations, intellectual focus, and literary production. Her most recent poetic works explore themes of psychological vulnerability, existential reflection, and the healing possibilities of language. With a foundation in both empirical science and phenomenological

philosophy, Palladino's voice exemplifies a rare synthesis of rigorous logic and emotional depth.

Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

Interviewee: Veronica Palladino, M.D.

Section 1: Clarifying High-Range IQ Society Membership and Purpose

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Since the high-range testing and high-I.Q. society series is finished, I am taking this as a one-off based on a request from you. You needed some public clarification based on prior interviews. Some emails have been sent to you. Some confusion in the public about you. So, let's make this straightforward: What is your involvement in the various high-range IQ societies? Which ones have you been in? Which ones are you in? What do you think is the future of these groups?

Veronica Palladino, M.D.: Thank you very much for this opportunity, a conclusion after previous interviews of April, July, August 2022, and foreword of 2024. I receive numerous emails and Facebook's messages in reference to my participation in the high range iq societies. I want to clarify that the high range iq societies are a gym for thought, for logic, for reasoning ability. The discussions about score and classification of intelligent quotient are just a way of simplifying an extremely complex topic. Iq is a measure like any other. The important element is to know, to expand one's capabilities.

I am member of different high range iq societies: Epiq as honorary member, TOPS OATHS, Atlantiq iq society, TGMIN, Dark Pavilion, China High Iq Network Genio Grupo, GLIA, League of Perfect Scorers, Leviathan, Misty Pavilion, Space-TIME society, Supernova, Venus, Catholiq, Immortal Society, China

Town Brainpower Club, Mensa, Myriad Society, Prudentia, Quasar Quorum high iq society, Real iq society, Synaptiq society, Ultima iq society, Hidden position society, SECRET society, Elysian Trust (Volant society), Vertex, EPIMETHEUS, Syncritiq Institute, World Genius Directory, Triple Nine Society, Grand iq society, Intruellect iq society, Milenija, True iq society, Universal Genius society, Poetic Genius Society, The Literarians, Real iq society, HRTR (High Range Testees, Registry), ISPE (ex member), Sidis society (prospective member), Hall of Sophia.

I am winner of WGR world genius registry 2022 Competition, one of the winners of Road to Damascus Competition 2021.

I am Director of Healthcare of Bethany institute created by the President of Catholiq, Domagoj Kutle a real genial person.

My name is recorded on the Global Genius Registry, WGD list, World Famous Iq scores, Iq Ranking List, Top iq scores, World Genius Registry.

Section 2: Literary Contributions and Poetic Themes

Jacobsen: What books have you authored? You have a book incoming on poetry. What is its theme? Can you share a few samples? What inspired this work?

Palladino: I am author of:

Il diario del Martedì 2008 (fiction book)

Un mondo altro 2009 (fiction book)

Persone e lacrime 2018 (poetry)

La morte delle Afroditi bionde 2019 (fiction book)

Esher's book 2023 (poetry)

Regina cattiva 2024 (poetry)

Fobie nella sera dell'essenza 2024 (poetry)

My new book on poetry will focus on human fragility, suicide, depression, malaise, obsessions that are not topics to be afraid of but pathologies from which with love and care one can recover. A wise introduction will be written by you, Scott Jacobsen a perfect Professor of human soul.

Section 3: Future Projects and Academic Development

Jacobsen: What are future projects for you? Do these build on previous research or creative endeavours?

Palladino: After degree in Medicine (degree's prize for result and length of studies in 2016) and specialization in Clinical Pathology and Biochemistry and a Diploma in General Medicine, I completed a Master's degree in Emergency Medicine and I started another one in healthcare management (not yet finished).

Section 4: Current Areas of Study and Philosophical Foundations

Jacobsen: What is your current subject of study (and related fields)? What research questions are you answering? Why pick these areas of study in the first place?

Palladino: My interests are Transfusional Medicine and Health's economy.

My passion is philosophy. I have read Edmund Husserl's transcendental phenomenology a philosophical approach that focuses on subjective experience and the structure of consciousness.

Husserl argues that transcendental phenomenology can provide a secure foundation for knowing and understanding reality.

Phenomenological reduction: the process of suspending judgment and bracketing presuppositions to access pure experience.

Intentional consciousness: consciousness is always directed toward something, whether an external object or an internal thought.

Transcendental ego: the experiencing subject that constitutes the world.

Noema: the object of consciousness, which can be an external object or an abstract concept.

I study Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Jean-Paul Sartre.

Section 5: Personal Priorities and Motivations

Jacobsen: How would you describe your life today? What priorities occupy you?

Palladino: My priority, at the moment, is cultural and professional growth. I would like to improve and overcome limits and with my poems, I would like to shout out loud for those who cannot do so.

Jacobsen: Thank you for the notes of clarification for everyone, Veronica.

Support Children's Emotional Health in a Digital World



Author(s): Scott Douglas Jacobsen

Dr. Erica Kalkut, PhD, ABPP is Executive Clinical Director at LifeStance Health and leads Psychological and Neuropsychological Testing Services. A board-certified pediatric neuropsychologist, she specializes in developmental, cognitive, and emotional assessments. Her work integrates clinical practice, research, and advocacy to improve access and quality in pediatric behavioral health across diverse medical and neurological conditions. She notes that early mental health challenges often go unnoticed due to access barriers and children's increasing ability to mask emotions. Parents can foster resilience and emotional intelligence by offering consistent, judgment-free presence and quality time. Schools must also play a role in identifying and intervening early. Kalkut advocates for daily device-free parent-child interactions and child-led,

developmentally appropriate clinical approaches to promote healthy emotional development in today's fast-paced, tech-driven society.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: What are the essential emotional and psychological needs of children today?

Dr. Erica Kalkut: Children, as always, need to feel a sense of belonging and stability. In order to develop a healthy self esteem, they need to be able to feel cared for by their loved ones. However, children today are also seeking acceptance and interest from a much larger circle outside of their immediate family, friends, and trusted adults. Feeling relevant and connected to a larger virtual world has been increasingly important to how today's youth develop their emotional wellbeing.

Jacobsen: Across inpatient, outpatient, and sub-acute settings, what are common gaps in children's mental health supports?

Kalkut: Access continues to be an issue, as many parents report that they have difficulty connecting with a trusted therapist or mental health professional. Children have also become increasingly skilled at masking their concerns, perhaps in part because of their digital interactions, which can be a barrier to making expected progress once they receive intervention.

Jacobsen: How can parents and caregivers foster resilience and emotional intelligence?

Kalkut: Being present, available, and open to your children should remain as top priorities for parents. Showing your child that you will listen to them and be there for them, no matter their flaws or imperfections, is one of the best ways to foster resilience and promote emotional development. This is also important to counterbalance social media, which on the contrary, your child is

learning only accepts certain images or impressions that your child portrays even if this is not their authentic selves.

Jacobsen: What is the role of educational institutions in promoting strong mental health?

Kalkut: Many children show resilience, even when their mental health is suffering, and their first signs of struggle often appear at school. Schools need to not only know how to look for signs that indicate that a child is struggling, but also how to intervene with that child and their family in order to increase mental health.

Jacobsen: What are early signs a child may be struggling with mental health issues?

Kalkut: Changes in behavior, thinking, reactions, and social engagement are common signs that a child has psychological needs. However, there are often physical indications like changes in appetite, sleep, aches, and pains that show up. It is hard because many of these signs, when they are mild or transient, are also common during childhood and adolescence. Parents should look to see if there is a pattern, however, and follow their gut if they believe their child is behaving or responding in ways that seem out of character. It is always better to err on the side of checking in with your child or talking with a professional should you have concerns.

Jacobsen: How have digital and parasocial relationships affected children's interpersonal skills and emotional regulation?

Kalkut: (see above answers).

Jacobsen: What practical strategies are recommended for a mentally healthy home environment?

Kalkut: In an increasingly busy world, make sure to carve out 1:1 time with your children every day. This is not just taking your child to their activities or getting them through their routine - it means carving out time to truly be present with your child each day, with no devices or distractions. Even 5 minutes can be impactful, but ideally 15 minutes to play a game, have a conversation, go for a walk, sing a song, or do something silly and unexpected together can help you and your child to feel connected! It is a 5-to-15-minute investment into their emotional health (and yours).

Jacobsen: How do you ensure clinical practices are child-centred and developmentally appropriate?

Kalkut: Approach conversations with openness and curiosity so that the child can lead the way and share how they are thinking about things.

Jacobsen: Thank you for the opportunity and your time.

Poems by Tor Arne Jorgensen

For Every Step I Never Took

In snow-covered landscape
I walk in glass-tracks
these feet will never
own.

While I sleep
with wide-open eyes,
memories of you fill
the night with all that gave meaning
to my quiet mind.

Where you never led me
across moss-covered bridges
that withered away
with every step I never took.

Blissfully ignorant,
slowly choking
on gifts of piety,
you meet me now
in dreamless sleep.

The joy of watching roses bloom
only to see them wither
back to naked stumps.
Can your scent remind me
of those days
when everything simply became what it became.

However cold
your care could feel,
you follow me still
wherever I go.
And as the war of roses
rewrites all understanding,
timeless laughter melts upon meeting itself.

Your Pulse is My Pulse

At the sight of you
You broke down my fortress

By lifting my sorrow
You strengthened my heart

By waking my joy
You tended my soul

By bringing me hope
You nourished my flame

By sharing our time
You made me complete

Your pulse is my pulse
Your breath is my breath
My life will forever be nourished by you.

Pictures That Say Nothing

Will everything sort itself
out
when the best in us
takes its leave?
How can we then call ourselves whole
if hearts cease
to love their neighbor as themselves?

Can a woman
live without a single kiss?
Can a man
live without what lacks words?
Is happiness
resting on indelible memories?

Can we with honor at stake
say that with you by my side
everything becomes right,
even when life stops giving of itself?

However close,
however distant,
all becomes for me
a thousand words staring blankly
at pictures that say nothing.

Why is there something rather than nothing?

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Abstract

This paper addresses the profound question, "Why is there something rather than nothing?" by proposing the concept of Absolute Emptiness, a state of nonexistence preceding the Big Bang. Unlike traditional models, Absolute Emptiness is devoid of physical or metaphysical laws, causality, or even dimensionality. This paper argues that the transition from nothingness to the first universe occurred because Absolute Emptiness inherently imposes no restrictions on possibility, therefore allowing existence to arise because it is unconstrained

The origins of existence have long perplexed both philosophers and physicists. Leibniz's question, "Why is there something rather than nothing?" ^[1] persists as a cornerstone of metaphysical inquiry. Traditional models often assume the existence of preconditions, such as singularities or quantum fluctuations, but these approaches fail to address the fundamental absence of causation. This paper introduces Absolute Emptiness—a deeper, more abstract form of nonexistence. Unlike conventional notions of vacuum or void, Absolute Emptiness lacks not only matter but also dimensions, time, and entropy as defined by existing frameworks.

Key words: Why is there something rather than nothing? The Big Bang, Beginning of the universe, Absolute Emptiness

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Introduction

It has been said that what existed before the Big Bang is irrelevant as a question. ^[2] There are some speculations that there was a negative time before the birth of the Big Bang, but still, this does not explain why the Universe exists. ^[3] Also, many other philosophers have tried to find a solution. ^[1] I have concluded that there must have been a state called Absolute Emptiness in our history. The Absolute Emptiness is a conclusion based on the idea of such a level of Emptiness that it may not have been earlier thought to "exist" in theoretical physics.

Absolute Emptiness, denoted by the symbol A , is a state that does not "exist" in any conventional sense. It is defined not by its properties but by the total absence thereof:

- No Physical Laws: No rules of physics apply.
- No Causality: Cause-effect relationships are meaningless.
- No Dimensions: Time, space, and energy are entirely absent

The reason is obvious: *Absolute Emptiness does not require any reason to exist and, therefore, no explanation.* The common component in most solutions for this question by Leibniz is, that something lesser had existed before the Big Bang. But if just something named with the variable has existed before the Big Bang, it also requires an explanation and a good one.

Our minds are used to thinking that there should always be a reason for something to exist or consequences should logically follow consequences. Therefore, if there should be a reason X, there should be a consequence Y precisely. That is very Newtonian thinking, and it holds in our everyday life well. ^[4] But in a state of A, this is not the case. In Absolute Emptiness, there is no X or Y at all.

How to define Absolute Emptiness (A)? Instead of defining A positively, it is better understood by what it is not: a state with neither boundaries nor structure. This radical lack of properties creates a paradox where all possibilities coexist, as there are no constraints to prevent them. For example, A has no laws of physics. It is impossible to "walk" in Absolute Emptiness because there are no dimensions like length, depth, width or time. There is no entropy and no causality either. Humans have no personal experience of Absolute Emptiness. The existence of state A can only be concluded indirectly.



FIGURE 1: Image of The Absolute Emptiness. Author's image.
A new interpretation for non-objective art? ^[5]

1 Conclusions

So, if physical — and metaphysical — causality does not hold in *A*, **everything is possible** because no laws of physics or metaphysics hinder any possibilities *A*. Therefore, whatever consequences can ever exist will finally exist:

1. (*A*) had to exist because it requires no reasons (*X*) to exist.
2. There were no reasons (*X*) or laws (*Y*) with consequences (*Z*), and everything was possible.
3. Because everything was possible in (*A*), all possibilities existed.
4. One of the possibilities was the universe (*U*).
5. The first condition (*A*) will not prevent Universe (*U*) to exist because (*A*) is nothingness and does not exist anymore.
6. The Universe (*U*) had to be born because it is a possibility.
7. Reasons (*X*) and laws (*Y*) & the following consequences (*Z*) began to exist in (*U*).

So, time was born at that moment 0, and width, length, depth and everything else that we currently know as a form of existence.

Absolute Emptiness had its "time", but finally, *A had to be violated with the existence of the first Universe (U)* because there were no rules which could prevent the Universe (*U*) from existing. The Absolute Emptiness is finally filled with material and immaterial existence.

2 Results

It is wrong to say that suddenly A converted to existence from the total nonexistence without reason. *The reason was in the beginning that there were no reasons at all.* Nothing could hinder the Universe (U) from being born in a state of A. The impossible happening was possible due to the very odd nature of Absolute Emptiness (A). So why there is something rather than nothing? The answer is: ***"In the imaginary time, when the Absolute Emptiness "was", there were no laws of physics, metaphysics, for any reason X, which could have hindered the explosion of the first Big Bang.***

3 Discussion

To strengthen its position, this paper briefly evaluates alternative models:

1. **Multiverse Theory:** While explaining "why this universe," it sidesteps "why anything at all?"
2. **Cyclic Models:** These require preconditions, such as energy or entropy, which A explicitly rejects.
3. **Quantum Fluctuations:** These models presuppose quantum laws, contradicting the premise of complete nonexistence.

Unlike these approaches, Absolute Emptiness demands no preconditions or external mechanisms, making it a simpler yet more radical hypothesis.

This described lack of reasons, which made something X out of total nothingness was also **the first reason of all kinds of reasons** and the rest is history. Based on the observations, one of the consequences was our Universe.

What happened after the first zero moments $0 +$ is already described in the recent literature of the current theoretical physics. Moreover, to understand the difference between a black hole singularity and Absolute Emptiness, is to think that once the singularity of a black hole is a dot X. In case of The Absolute Emptiness there is no dot X at all.

The author does not present his views of parallel universes, cyclical models universes, or the possibility of first singularity X as a start for the Universe.

These universes or singularities may or may not exist, but it is

fully another kind of issue why they exist. Only the first "reason" is perhaps missing from the equations of ccs the Big Bang? In this case, I would use symbol Alpha (A) with an arrow :

$$\vec{A} \quad (5)$$

to start the Big Bang equations X. What these equations X will ever be, does not belong to the scope of this paper.

And finally, this is not some kind of "ether" hypothesis. There still is no ether in the current three-dimensional space, and space itself is again assumed to be neutral coordination for time, thus forming a time-space together as we know it. So absolute Emptiness is something less than an ordinary vacuum in space, much less.

Conflict of interest

I declare that I do not have any financial or commercial interest in this study.

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THE END