

Recommended Movie

“The Muppet Movie.” Containing both the appearance of simplicity as well as amazing magical depth, this is the work of a genius taken from the world much too soon. Jim Henson wove together the deepest currents within the soul and the frequently ridiculous and unexpected events of life which ultimately carry each of us to meet our destinies, even as we daily make our own contributions.

What initiates the journey to Hollywood for Kermit the Frog is not some ego-centric desire for self-aggrandizement but the simple wish to “make millions of people happy.” Along the way, he encounters perhaps a wider spectrum and a more bizarre assortment of characters than most of us will ever see: a bear who is attempting to become a standup comedian, a pig who sees herself as a beauty queen, a quintessential misfit in love with a chicken, a band of rock musicians living for the moment, a scientist in love with his work whose inventions fail to harmonize with popular demand, and many others who are each simply trying to find their way through the confusing maze that life offers. What makes them family to one another is simply their willingness to risk leaving the familiar behind, to embrace opportunities for new and unknown friendship, and to adapt to whatever happens along the way without forgetting who they are. More concisely, they are willing to love one another, “not with word or with tongue, but in deed and in truth” (from the Bible, 1 John 3:18).

There are perhaps a hundred ways to describe the archetypal journey of the muppets from various parts of the United States toward the mythical utopia of Hollywood, but among them is simply that they are willing to be fully alive, to take the good with the bad, and to keep going. Heartfelt songs and jokes are never far from their serious struggle for survival. Not much time is spent upon regret, though there is certainly acknowledgment of choices that could have been made and undesirable outcomes. In Life, regret too often distracts us from new opportunities and new ways of being which are virtually right under our noses. Disappointment creates spiritual glaucoma when we no longer have access to the script according to which

our lives are to unfold, and expect the path to turn toward the right but find that it leads toward the left instead. Just when the muppets are experiencing their greatest discouragement, feeling trapped within a desert with a car that will no longer run, old friends arrive with the script in hand. “‘Exterior Desert Night’,” Dr. Teeth reads, “We knew just where to find you.”

Again and again it seems that all troubles are finally past, yet they occur again and again--car troubles, a potentially lethal confrontation with an old enemy, a collapsing movie set--yet they keep going, concluding the movie by announcing that their success is ultimately “thanks to the lovers, the dreamers, and you.” Pay special heed to the final chorus of the movie, for its wisdom is both timeless and wonderful.

Subscription Information:

“Sister Who’s Perspective” is a monthly newsletter available for an annual subscription price of \$25.00 (please make checks payable to Denver NeVaar with the initials SWP on the memo line of the check).

All correspondence may be directed to:

Sister Who
POB 18474
Denver, CO 800218-0474

or email address:
SisterWho@sisterwho.com

Sister Who’s Web Page:
<http://www.sisterwho.com>

Do you know someone who might like to receive a copy of this newsletter?

A single sample copy is free and no “sales pitch” or repetitive offers will follow. Just tell me the address to which I should send a single copy.

Sister Who’s Perspective

Sister Who’s Perspective, Issue #19, January-February 2001, copyright

Life is a collaborative effort, encompassing more than we know. In a time of abundant “information overload,” news, communication, and travel across great distances, we often talk at each other without listening, communicating, or understanding. Humanity needs its icons, but also its iconoclasts to grow beyond the good and bad qualities that now limit and describe us. The essences of both God and us remain, in the midst of questions, to be discovered, experienced, and expressed. Please share in this ongoing dialogue, remembering to indicate whether and how you wish to be identified. Blessings, love, and peace to you.
---Sister Who

The Barrenness and Blessing of Unanswered Prayers

My religious friends don’t like it when I dare to suggest that there are times when God does nothing but watch while we stumble and injure ourselves, caught within our own unjust and cruel world. I cannot think of any words by which to truly justify such times, though I know that in retrospect (ONLY in retrospect) I concede the necessity of such times’ existence. As with most things, there is no one-size-fits-all answer. Within my own experiences, what has most often come out of such high-pressure moments, are choices I would not have otherwise made. It would be most gratifying if I could say that these choices ultimately turned out for the best for me and everyone else concerned, but if that is true, then the “happy ending” is still on its way and has not arrived yet. All I have really been able to conclude is that life is what it is and God is not for that reason less real. My belief has therefore grown over the years that God both understands and expects that we will become very angry with the Divine from time to time and also approves of the honest (and hopefully constructive) expression of those feelings.

Too often we are simply too close to our own experience to be objective about it. One of my frequent complaints of late is that the metropolitan area of Denver, Colorado is (and for the last several years has been) going through a contemporary equivalent of gold fever, as an “economic boom” continues to persuade large numbers of people to forget all of humanity’s most cherished ideals and principles in a mad dash for greater and greater amounts of

financial wealth. How much is enough? No one seems to know. I contend that anyone who cannot answer how much is enough, is little better than a brain-dead robot programmed only for blind accumulation or a Borg drone from some of the newer episodes of the television and movie world of Star Trek, which conquers everything in its path with no regard for the survival of individuality.

The more pertinent question of the moment, perhaps of every moment of human history, is how a free-thinking individual will be able to coexist with such brain-dead homogeneity. Within the world of Star Trek within the ongoing battle between the Borg and individualized humanity, humanity first had to conquer its own fear of the Borg’s differentness in order to discover that they were allowed a fair amount of free movement--as long as the Borg didn’t perceive their existence or movements to be a threat to its own existence. Interestingly, the Borg invent nothing. They can replicate but not grow. To grow, it is necessary for the Borg to discover the creations of individuality and then steal such creations from their creators. (I’m sure I could find numerous artists who would insist that this is exactly society’s relationship with artists.)

Whenever anyone struggles to survive, like the canary in the mine, this is a sign to the rest of us that unhealthy and quite possibly life-threatening conditions exist. If we do not either deal with the situation or get out, in some way or another, we will die.

What is especially profound about death is that it encompasses both

termination and transition. Life doesn't end, but rather radically changes form. What does end are the familiar forms and connections of which the majority of our understanding was constructed. What is absolutely required is an understanding which will fully contain the essence of life while providing new spaces within which that essence can continue to grow. While it is absolutely necessary to fully participate in the process of loss and grief, it is equally if not more essential to remember that a funeral ends at the graveside for no one but the corpse. For everyone else, there are continuing lives to which they must return, continuing lives which must now be (sometimes dramatically) reshaped to accommodate the absence of the person, whose body now lies in the cemetery.

The December holiday season is generally my most favorite time of the year. This year, however, I returned to the home of my close friend and now ex-lifepartner to find myself traversing a cemetery of dreams. Every corner seemed to hold a reminder of something we'd either done or hoped to do together. Every gesture and phrase and event seemed to blur the line between present and past for me. The distinction between the two, ultimately, was simply that the present did not include me in the same way the past did. I was more like a ghost from the past, looking for a resting place in the present, seeking a dream to follow which had not been buried by the heaviness of too many changes.

I'm sure many a lover or spouse has paused by a memorial stone for weeks after a funeral has ended, trying to discover the dream which leads from the mound to a new life beyond the boundaries of the cemetery. I think it is much more than just coming to a full acceptance that a dream has died and that a life has gone to a distant place beyond my reach. Such acceptance would leave only a void. A complete healing requires that the void be filled with something good, but such goodness is not a mass-produced product readily available at a local department store. An artist may labor for years,

creating incredible amounts of priceless treasure within her or his soul, before suddenly by choice or by coercion being emptied into a frequently thankless world. Suddenly the world is beautiful again, filled with music and dancing, but the artist knows only the emptiness of the evacuated chambers of his or her soul. Suddenly there is no longer any dream or creative work drawing the artist forward. Rather, somewhere in the mist of the settling dust, there is a seed waiting to be discovered, from which the next explosion of divine energy will someday emerge.

And so the cycle continues, each of us playing different parts with each new verse or chorus, as God continues to hope for a little more wisdom and self-awareness within each of us within each successive line and word and feeling. Each time, for those who listen, there is a divine whisper to love the artist in their emptiness and the world in its ignorant dancing, for by these inner forces the universe continues to turn and dreams are born, grow old, and die. May we each be blessed with a new dream, whenever we must grieve the death of one that has gone before.

**"I find
I don't mind
my problems
quite so much,
when I remember
that they
sometimes serve
as divine guidance."**

---Sister Who

CHANGES WITH POSITIVE POTENTIAL

Nine and a half years ago when I first put on the costume and makeup of Sister Who, I'm sure I had no idea where such an action would eventually lead. In all honesty, I still don't. Nevertheless, a few new things have come to mind recently and as with a thousand other preceding creative choices, I've decided to give them a try and see what happens.

I have decided to begin creating a new issue of this newsletter each month, rather than every other month. In gratitude for your support during the first few years of this newsletter, everyone who is currently a subscriber may renew indefinitely at a cost of \$12.00 per year. Subscriptions initiated after January 1, 2001 will be at an annual cost of \$25.00 per year.

I have also decided to offer to the world a new cyber-church entitled The Order of Incessant Revelation (OIR), defined at present as "a cyber-based network of persons of independent thought and diverse beliefs, facilitated by Sister Who a/k/a Denver NeVaar, for the purpose of individual and collective personal and spiritual growth." I do not know at this point how much interest and response will be received, but intuition suggested that I should at least extend an invitation for the creation of such a collaborative network. OIR is at this time neither a legal entity nor a tax exempt organization, though I do hope that OIR will soon be both. I welcome all opinions and comments which may help this organization to grow and develop with integrity and effectiveness and which may help me to serve as a wise and effective facilitator. In the interest of encouraging the development of this cyber-based network and also of encouraging personal and spiritual growth in general, I intend to investigate adding a "chat room" to my web site which will allow for direct exchange of ideas and information between individuals. Active support of others or active response to the needs of others will remain a matter of purely individual choice. Funds given to OIR will support the maintenance of the web site, the newsletter, and other functional elements; a modest standard of living for myself (and any other staff members added to the organization in the future, as needed); and the eventual construction and

maintenance of an interfaith retreat center entitled, "The Center for Spiritual Growth and Celebration". Any and all questions regarding this new idea (which has only barely even begun to find its own shape and expression) are welcome.

My web site has been reconfigured to include a page entitled "Sister Who's Internet Emporium" which lists various items for sale, including newsletter subscriptions and older costume pieces, which are no longer used. Eventually I hope to also be able to offer "The Tarot of Sister Who" through this cyber store, which is a project begun five years ago, essentially a system of symbolic images by which to explore and develop one's own subconscious and conscious awareness of the elements, possibilities, and influences of one's life.

The book manuscript, Re-Inventing the Sacred Clown, possibly the closest thing to an autobiography of Sister Who that will ever be written, is approximately half-finished, having exceeded its projected length some time ago.

Additional possibilities, subject only to available resources include audio recordings of newsletters for the visually impaired, radio shows, independent production of television shows for syndication or direct retail distribution, and regional workshops dealing with issues of cross-cultural communication and peaceful integration of diversity.

Whatever happens, the archive of all things related to Sister Who in any way, shape, or form, will continue to grow within the Western History Department of the Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado. I do hope to make more lucky guesses than mistakes and have more successes than failures, but more importantly than the specific record that accumulates within the above-mentioned library, I hope that we all learn something good by all that is done. Most importantly of all, may one and all and everything, blessed and loved ever be.