

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT



EMISSARIES
OF DIVINE LIGHT

WILDNESS

19 JULY 2010

(Previn Hudetz offered preservice music on piano. Participants in the Heartbeat Drum and Dance Festival offered a musical piece: Steve Lange, Steven Kroll and Greg Hanson on djembe drums; Puck on didgeridoo; and Bill Grindell on Native American flute. Judy Holding Wilson sang "Heartbeat of Love," by Keith Hancock, accompanied by Keith on piano, and by Steve Lange and Greg Hanson on djembe drums.)

Good morning. I want to give deep thanks for what has happened on this property over the last few days during the first Heartbeat Drum and Dance Festival. As many of you know, I've been a drummer since I was seven years old, mostly in drum corps for ten years. When we come into July here in Colorado, every year they have a big show in Denver at Invesco Field, called *Drums Along the Rockies*, and this year they had a smaller show right here in Loveland at Thompson Valley High School. And I got to go!

It is a thrill to watch over a hundred young people—they're all under twenty-one years old—with incredible discipline. They work for perfection. *The Cadets* from Allentown, Pennsylvania, performed with nine snare drums whose sticks never break rhythm—you lose points if your sticks aren't exactly the same. So that's part of the beauty of it, watching their drumsticks whose motion is as synchronized as their march down the field.

As I enjoyed the concert here in the Dome last night and watched Greg Hanson's class perform, I was aware of the diversity of students in the class. Some sat down with a lot of ease, some sat down with a little trepidation, and others looked like they'd been drumming their whole lives. But when they started playing, I couldn't stop smiling as I took in the joy that they were throwing around the room. It would be hard to be there without smiling and joining in the fun. It was joyful to watch the drummers follow Greg's lead, all of them interested in one thing—being part of that team, bringing the magic they were creating together. And there has been more of that joy this morning.

Both discipline and freedom create the magic. In drumming, you get to be wild and free because you have discipline, not because you are in chaos. One of the reasons Sunrise Ranch exists is because people who want to know that experience in their living everyday together get to do it here. The heartbeat we feel touches and connects us all, whether we know it or not. So the stronger the association with the heartbeat, the more people have the opportunity to experience what we just witnessed on this stage in every day of their lives.

In our service last week, David Karchere was quoting *The Three Musketeers*: “One for all, and all for one.” There is a victorious, joyous experience when I know that I’m doing something for the collective, of which I am a part. And when I am, I feel uplifted by the collective experience. The power of the experience is the oneness of what we’re doing together.

I notice the joy of watching Steve Lange when he goes crazy on his djembe. Being a drummer, I know exactly what’s happening, and I’ve seen it before. Some of you have seen it when I take a drum solo, when it seems like I’ve lost it and just take over the whole stage. When you hear someone say, “We’re going to have to put a net over that girl,” you know something’s happening! But the drum solo is in a context. If Steve had just gotten up here and done what he did without anyone else onstage, it might have been beautiful but it was very different having him in the context in which he offered his vibrancy.

Having drummers holding a steady beat that you are playing around, on top of, inside of—it is ecstasy! Have you ever had the experience of being wild in your own expression because something else was being held and you felt safe, and you knew that the wildness was going to serve all? We need to find a way to welcome the wildness of everybody by holding and caring for the container in which the wildness can come. Then people can say, “Hey, that’s me! I did that! We did it together, and I played my part.”

You have to be both disciplined and free to have that experience. Our cultural background or our family background may hold us back in either of those areas. And it is possible that there are ways in which you see yourself that need to be “wilded up.” There may be ways you approach your life that need to be freed up, knowing that a staid approach to life may have served you in the past, but that’s not necessarily true in *this* context. It may not be true for you now.

So how do you reboot? How do you say, “That worked because it kept me safe and it kept me fitting in before and I was creative that way, but I have *more* to bring than what I learned in the context of my family pattern”? For me, I have more to bring than I learned through growing up in an Italian family in Buffalo, New York, versus in Los Angeles or Canada. And by the way, everybody from Canada is so polite—has anybody noticed that? I was in line once in the airport, and you know how they say, “Next...next...”? There was a group of passengers saying, “Oh, no, go ahead, go ahead.” One of them said to me, “We Canadians are paralyzed by our politeness,” because neither one of them would go forward and take the next step. And I apologize now to all the Canadians I’ve just offended, because there are several in this room—and they’re not all that polite, quite honestly!—but you get my point: our cultural background, whatever it is, can imprison us if we let it.

There are ways in which we have seen ourselves that may no longer serve. When you step back and see and feel the heartbeat of life that is beating in this whole planet, you can sense the vital part you have to play in that. Many times human beings have said, “I’ll do it the way I always have and see if it works out.” And it doesn’t. You end up creating misery. You create hell for yourself, and probably other people. You participate in life by being wild—not out-of-control wild but disciplined wild—wild in the sense that our nature is part of life, it’s part of the dynamic of birth and creation and co-creation, and all kinds of things that are life-giving as opposed to life-draining.

Watching *Drums Along the Rockies*, I have been shocked to see they have dancers. We never had dancers when I was playing. I want to say, “There’s no dancing in drum corps! You can’t do that! That doesn’t fit the real drum corps experience.” And yet I realize that people are being new, wild and creative in the structure of what the rules are, and there are very specific rules.

Last year, one drum corps used lawn chairs as part of their performance. “There are no lawn chairs in drum corps!” But they set them up, and the brass line would sit on them and play, and then they would dance with them. It was incredibly inventive to see how you could be exact and gorgeous with a lawn chair.

Our service to the world is to think new thoughts about how we can be creative and bring the highest and finest we have to life on earth, and then do it. That’s your heartbeat, your life beat, the highest and finest that can manifest through you when you say yes, I will. I will bring my wildness, my newness, because I love to be part of the dance.

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