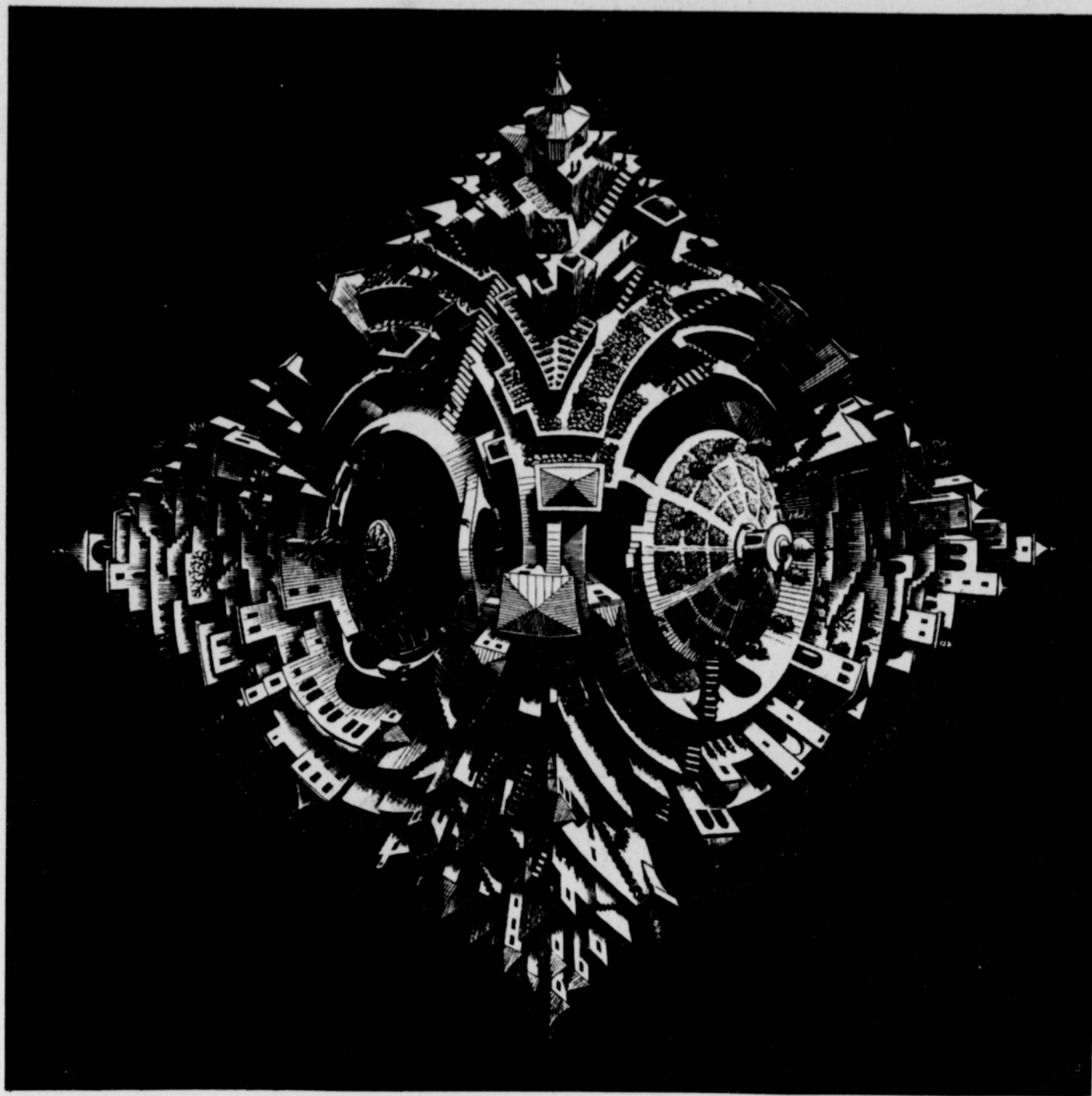




M. C. ESCHER, "TETRAHEDRAL PLANETOID" (1954)

AN EXPERIMENT IN SPIRITUAL DEMOCRACY

by Jim Cummings

August 16 and 17, 1987. Planet Oceania; alias Earth. The humans begin to remember. The amnesia clears.

You will hear about it as it comes closer. Perhaps just a short mention on the radio the day before, as happened prior to the December 31, 1986 global meditation. More likely, given the media's recent bemused fascination with "New Age" topics, you will see a few articles or reports and wonder what and why (since most brief media stories do little more than sketch the "these people actually believe something unusual, even — get this — hopeful" surface).

The semi-official name is Harmonic Convergence/World Harmony Days. The "what" is the second global gathering of humans who dream of humanity rejoining with the planet. It is a time to celebrate and remember the strength, purpose and peace to be found when we attune to the ways of the earth. The "why" is because it is the only way to keep at least humanity and perhaps even the planet alive.

Most fundamentally, it is a piece of myth-weaving, a tale both cosmic and practical, which hopes to stand as a clear alternative to the currently ruling myths of defense from our neighbors and human supremacy over nature. It has visions, ceremonies, individuality, consensus. It has spirituality, fun and hope. And while it draws heavily on several native traditions, it lives squarely in the technological present with its quest to coordinate simultaneous events, bringing the awareness of a significant minority of the world's population together on August 16 and 17. Around a core of at least one hundred and forty-four thousand people at sacred sites around the globe, the goal is for five hundred and fifty million others to take part in local events (meditations, concerts, fairs) or see the planned global video concert-celebration, and for two billion people to at least know that something is happening that weekend.

And what in fact is happening? Around the planet, people will gather to feel and share their visions of how best to live as a part of our world. The first gathering took place on December 31, 1986. This one is the next step in humanity's growth into being fully conscious players in the planet's evolution. The many paths are being combined into one. By simultaneously coming together in our many homelands and each sharing our contributions — spiritual, technological, creative — we begin to sense the full spectrum of what humanity can be and how we may live. As we learn from

other individuals and from other cultures and from the plants, animals and stones, the many will become one. E Pluribus Unum. This second gathering of the dreamers has no prerequisites: neither will the ones that follow as we continue to explore our global common ground. It is a time for any who have ever held a wish that humans would stop their destruction, would see their unity, would live with the rest of life.

You need not know how to build your part of such a world; yet many have forged deep and strong pieces of the foundation. You may not have much experience or faith in spiritual or energetic realms; you will join with Buddhists, Christians, Native Americans and people who have learned from many paths, all of whom know profound faith and connection with the creative life force. You might wonder how we could possibly hope for change. Many among us have realized that only by forging ahead, often in new and ancient directions, might we find the ways out of our current crises. And many traditions that know the ever changing nature of life have pinpointed August as an unusually volatile time. Whether the change is physically noticeable or is a subtle shift in the life force's creative patterns, or is "merely" an alignment of human attitudes and goals, there are mythic tales and prophecies which paint a dramatic picture of these times. There are many versions of the tale, as is usual in the realm of myths. And as also usual, all the tales are descriptions of an underlying pattern or process or energy. The words and images are attempts to describe the subtle in concrete terms.

The Aztec calendar ends and begins again that weekend. It marks the end of a series of "hell" cycles which began the year that Cortez arrived on the shores of Mexico, and the return to "heaven" cycles. Ancient prophecies declare that the plumed serpent Quetzalcoatl, a divine Christ-like being who was a creative force and teacher of wisdom and peace, will reappear in commemoration of this cosmic event. In his first incarnation, Quetzalcoatl described the current cycle: it began in 843 A.D., and was said to include thirteen Heaven cycles and nine Hell cycles, each fifty-two years in length. The Aztec culture flourished near the end of the Heaven cycles, and in 1519 the first Hell cycle began — the calendar and prophecy were confirmed to the day by the arrival of Cortez. The prophecy says that each of the succeeding Hells would be worse, not only for Mexico but for the world. As the

final Hell cycle ends, on August 17, 1987, the god of death and destruction is predicted to rise up and remove his mask, revealing himself to be none other than Quetzacoatl, the original bringer of knowledge, teacher of the arts of civilization, science, healing, and the spirit, thus ushering in a new cycle of remembering and basing life on a sacred view in harmony with the patterns of life. I find it interesting that the perceived Hells wrought by the god of death and destruction are revealed in the end to be the workings of the creative force — could our current technological ways be seen not as inherently destructive but as simply lacking the guidance of a spiritual world view?

The Mayan calendar, which does not end until 2012, singles out August 16-17 as a time of "harmonic convergence." This calendar, while astronomically more precise than any other pre-space age system, seems also to be a representation of some deep patterns of underlying energies, with dates marked by numbers which relate in patterns which suggest the mathematical/musical concept of harmonic overtones. On this weekend the harmonic progressions imply a focusing of energy which will accelerate and continue on through to the end of the Great Cycle in 2012.

On the subtle-energy extreme, mystical traditions that understand the earth to be a physical manifestation of an etheric crystalline structure claim that these dates will see the shift of the planet's energetic framework from a dodeca-icosahedron (sixty-four pointed) to a double penta-dodecahedron (four hundred and twenty-four pointed). This shift may be compared to a valence jump of an atom, which happens when more energy is pumped into the system, and a more complex, higher energy electron orbital level is established. The source of the new energy to be focused on August 16-17 may be seen as a pattern or field inherent in the cosmos, a reaction of the earth itself to the current ecological and mental imbalances, or the focused consciousness of a critical mass of humans.

On the more observable social level, August will mark a coming-out and coming together of the many networks of people long committed to seeking and creating alternatives to the current socio-political madness. The diffuse and decentralized nature of these networks have kept them largely unknown, but in coming together to celebrate and proclaim their alternative visions, they are and will become more