



M. C. ESCHER, "CONCENTRIC RINDS" (1953)

obvious to both the present powers and to the disaffected masses.

Finally, and most dramatically, a prominent, if controversial, Native American teacher, Harley Swiftdeer, has prophesized that on that weekend one hundred and forty-four thousand medicine-wheel dreamers will "totally awaken into their dream-mind bodies and become a major force to help the rest of humanity to dance their dream awake." These Sun Dance teachers may include "any human being who has awakened, who has balanced all their shields (a reference to the medicine-wheel system of knowing the four directions — innocence/trust, wisdom, introspection and radiance), who has gained the dream-mind body and who honors all paths, all teachers and all ways."

If all this seems like rather outlandish or overly cosmic mush, I can empathize with you. We are not used to such concepts. But looked at as the convergence of several independent lines of inquiry and tradition, all of which are based on a deep connection with the planet and its ways, the common choice of dates is cause for curiosity.

I first heard about all this by chance several years ago when a friend of mine returned from a visit to Spence Hot Springs bemused by the claim of a Los Alamos scientist-turned-recluse that the astrological charts he had made up for them were good only after August 17, 1987, because thereafter "everything will change." We filed that one away under Inexplicably Bizarre and left it at that.

A couple of years later, in the spring of 1984, a friend recommended I go hear a talk by Jose Arguelles. Arguelles was fascinated by the similarities and synchronicities he was finding between the I Ching (an ancient Chinese description of the fundamental patterns of life), the Mayan calendar (Mayan map of same), DNA (physical architect of same) and Ben Franklin's "magic squares" (of unknown significance, though suspected to be an insight relevant to the mystic traditions of Freemasons), all of which are based on the number sixty-four and all of which may be seen as physical and conceptual representations of insights into some single underlying energetic structure (such as the crystal image/metaphor/reality?) Through a combination of research and inspiration, Arguelles had developed what he thought was a map of humanity's growth. Built largely from his study and reflections on the symbolic calendar and pictorial archives left by the Maya, as well as the I Ching's symbolic nature, his

map showed August 16-17, 1987 to be a very key point for humanity and the planet. Perhaps it was as I started to file this, too, under Inexplicably Bizarre, and found a previous reference, that I decided to explore his story a bit more.

His tale was one of fundamental cosmic patterns of growth being played out by humanity and charted in advance by the Mayans. It was a story of the globalization of civilization beginning in 3113 B.C. when Upper and Lower Egypt merged into the first known confederation, an event marked by the start of the Mayan Great Cycle, which lasts until 2012 A.D. This globalization continued through 1618, the start of the thirteenth and final (and current) subcycle, at which point European culture had established beachheads on every continent, and the scientific and industrial revolutions were about to follow the paths blazed by the traders and missionaries. Arguelles claimed that by one hundred and fifty years ago, all of the globe's leading powers had subscribed to science and industry's myth that man could reign supreme over nature. Six generations later it is becoming clear that they were mistaken. (Interestingly, Native American wisdom calls for all actions to be first judged by their affect on seven generations hence.)

There exists a long tradition within our culture, from Thoreau and Emerson up through the Beats of the 1950s and the Hippies of the 1960s, of pointing out the folly of such a belief in the supremacy of man over nature. The last thirty years has seen a small but determined minority forging alternatives. Some followed Thoreau's lead and strived for non-technological simplicity and a personal moral ground. Others were inspired by Buckminster Fuller's vision of efficient and non-destructive applications of technology.

Networks of people pursuing and advocating alternatives had become well developed by the early 1980s. There are national and international groups focusing on specific issues like appropriate technology, disarmament, agricultural advances, and the like. And most communities have "countercultures" committed to organic food, alternative education, local environmental issues, social issues, etc., which, while never organized together, serve as mutual philosophical support for one another.

Arguelle's vision of these times seemed optimistic in 1984, but it appears to have been more on target than I had at first imagined. He thought that the fundamental movement of the 1980s would be the emergence of these networks of alternatives as a viable option to the one hundred and fifty year reign by the current system of destructive beliefs. By the summer of 1986, he said, we would see the networks linking into a network-of-networks. It was this linking which was celebrated on December 31, when individuals from many different perspectives joined for a simultaneous global hour of alignment around the common ground of their interests, a peaceful planet.

Arguelle's interpretation of the "harmonic convergence" reflected in the Mayan calendar bears resemblance to the Aztec story, as well as the crystal-earth jump and Swiftdeer's prophecy. He feels that the earth's resonant field has had its steady pulse thrown "out of

phase" by human electromagnetic pollution (radio, TV, atomic explosions), and it will be shifting into a higher frequency which will no longer be significantly affected by our output. Our global telecommunications and other technological tools are seen to be "part of the plan," a development which brings our rational cognitive abilities and awareness "up to speed" with the ancient intuitive ways of communicating and knowing the earth. The earth's response is to shift its energies so as not to be negatively affected. Humans who are sensitive to these energies will also experience the shift.

A final observation. Though there is plenty of room in my beliefs for the idea that the earth as an organism or our sector of the universe is going to experience an actual physically measurable energy change in August, I also do not discount the possibility that the shift is primarily one of awareness. In the classic role of myths through the ages, the belief in any of the many descriptions of harmonic convergence (crystalline, electromagnetic, historic, spiritual or social) serves to focus individual humans toward a common ideal and deep understanding of what it is to be a piece of this dynamic planet.

As energy is organized into matter and matter must be organized to make a living cell, and many kinds of cells must join together to make a conscious being, so, too, must our many awarenesses work together toward some shared image. It may be that these myths are serving to help in the necessary evolution of bringing the planet's most widely conscious beings into a group coherence. We may be beginning to recognize the next step. In so doing we remember or create our purpose. It is time to bring the humans into resonance with the planet. Then we can serve our role as the pieces of life which look back at life itself. These two days serve as a reminder that our primary allegiance is to the Earth. By affirming that all other social and political bonds are secondary to our personal and human responsibilities to be a part of the life of the planet, we declare to our leaders, to each other, to ourselves and to the earth itself that in our many ways we are all united in our purpose. By looking to the earth rather than merely our human desires for our inspiration, we will feel ourselves as parts of a pattern of growth bigger than we now comprehend. This will not mean a loss of individuality but a celebration of our individual contributions joining into a human and planetary being.

Keep the Earth alive in your dreams.

Jim Cummings lives in Kennebunk, Maine, and is the author of many essays on social-spiritual issues. He wrote "Spiritual Democracy" to be reprinted and passed from hand to hand. On August 16-17 there will be a gathering on Saddle Mountain on the north Oregon coast to celebrate harmonic convergence. Also, North Coast CALS asks people to send their visions of a peaceful planet to be read on its monthly KMUN radio program. Barbara McLaughlin, co-host of the program, says they do not have to be fancy or long, just heartfelt. CALS address is P. O. Box 59, Cannon Beach 97110.

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