

borealis

MANIFESTO



Photo by Steve Davis

DIG...
Dig...
Dig...

Children and animals captivate my attention. They move with utter awareness, powering movement and being empowered by movement. Both are acutely alive with natural integrity exhibiting complete intelligence, simply and divinely employing the interrelationship of the body. I am held captive by these life forms as their same capacities of ease and efficiency, simplicity of need, and genuineness of expression seem hauntingly familiar.

A friend from Seattle calls and cries. I tell her I will wait for as long as she needs. Both my silence and her weeping breath are powerful communication, listener and informer, and I wait for her words to describe and distinguish her sorrow. Melody says, "I'm feeling cold, like a machine and no longer a human animal." Her choice of words delights me and I laugh and agree in adoration, "Yes, we are human animals!" I then ask her "Are you being true to your own human animal or are you trying to be a human animal you are not?" She laughs and we envision our disconnected selves, unaware and unawake to our desires, as we talk about mental limbs flailing and flinging and the body responding in some helter-skelter fashion. This loss of connection can lead one to burrow in bed with many covers and weep.

As an artist I desire to move with rapture. I want to feel the moving body function and experience my center moving my limbs. With this awareness, I find ease and increased range with ordinary and extra-ordinary movement. Understanding my center enables me to extend into the world, gather information and respond back to myself for warm, authentic evolution. As an artist I desire to communicate truths within my chosen art form. I do not want to communicate tasks of should be's and should do's, tasks of fulfilling dictated external sources. I want to teach how the body moves, how the body truly functions. I want to teach about asking our bodies if they are warm with truth; to remember sheer presence of action; to connect the how you are to the how I am and return to natural integrity.

Move with your own natural integrity. Reconnect the pathways that awaken your core (umbilical energy) to your distal pathways (limbs). Distinguish your true energy. Feel connected, centered, capable, curious, alive, warm, ready, eager, willing. Return to your own intelligence. Realign your functional anatomy. Live longer. Create more. Respond genuinely. Play. Witness. Partake.

My deepest inspiration comes from my son, Winter. He is 22 months old and invents moments

within moments, maximizing life and devouring every opportunity to evolve into his being. He is ultimately and triumphantly connected to being physically aware and consciously awake. Keenly connected to his center and all his limbs (head, tail, arms, legs), his skeleton functions with ease and his musculature with efficiency. Every day he offers up lessons about involuntary warmth and connectedness, about living and communicating truthfully from the body. Connecting to his animal nature he delights in watching animals, playing with animals, talking about animals and reading about animals. Naturally following him, I am uncovered and renewed.

In this century let us give witness to the outside while conceiving the inside. Within this process, ageless intelligence (truth) arises and expands to others and oneself. Educate yourself on your foundation—the body and how it functions. The more we are aware of our body and awake to its intelligence the more we communicate, connecting to the environment and all life forms.

Herein lies passion—the involuntary manifestation of an individual's presence of animal.

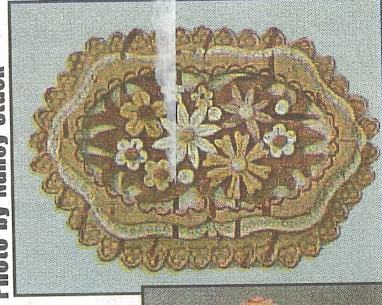
By Jane Hawley.

Recommended readings:

The Thinking Body, by Mabel E. Todd; Making Connections: Total Body Integration, by Peggy Hackney; Somatic Reality, by Stanley Keleman; and Bone, Breath & Gesture: Practices of Embodiment, edited by Don Hanlon Johnson.

Jane Hawley is a founding member of Black Earth Collaborative Arts Company and teaches at the D.E.P.T.H. Foundation, Northport; Leelanau Children's Center, Leland; and Dance Arts Academy, Traverse City. Photo: Steve Davis, member of Black Earth Collaborative Arts Company.

Photo by Nancy Stuck



FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE

We ended 1999 with a visit from Valery Efimov, a birch bark artisan, from Siberia.

Valery's US visit was the culmination of a 3 year correspondence which began with an article Richard Gilliland, a Benzie County artisan, read in a woodworking magazine. Art Link, a New York based organization which sponsors artists from the Baltic region, provided a grant assuring him a US visa. Valery was the keynote speaker at the Association of Michigan Basketmakers at the Grand Traverse Resort in November. He also taught some birch bark classes to enthusiastic students at the conference.

Richard provided local lodging for Valery and introduced him to the Roundtable, a group of artists who meet for Sunday breakfast at Nancy's in Honor. We were all impressed with the quality and techniques of his work. Intricate is a word that only begins to describe Valery's work. He developed original techniques for carving and stamping delicate, multi-layered designs in birch bark which has the texture of leather. He makes jewelry, Easter eggs and larets, a traditional Russian bride's keepsake box. Valery also makes all the tools that are used to cut and stamp the myriad pieces of bark.

Valery is a physicist in Academgozordok. He began working with birch bark for his daughter about 9 years ago. Valery's US trip was three-fold: promotion of the Novosibirsk Association of Artists and Artisans artwork, education of his intricate techniques and exploration of the possibility of authoring a book.

The new millennium promises new works of art from around the world. We look forward to a return visit from Valery and hope that his visit leads to an exchange with local artists visiting artists in other countries.

Pam Yee

Photo by Valery Efimov



Thank you to all our readers, contributors, staff, underwriters, and The Record-Eagle for supporting Arts Borealis and the Arts in Northern Michigan. From all of us, to all of you, May you have a Happy and Prosperous New Year!