

TARGET

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MAN AND HIS OYSTERS

The Search

The ephemeral search for a suitable mate is, and always has been, man's initial lust for life and life-giving.

But, as age causes the body to give up most of its ability to produce life-giving fluids, he turns inwardly and searches for spiritual guidance as an alternative and acceptable substitute for the partial – or total – loss of the physical lust for life.

If a man is so inclined to give credulity to the existence of a god, he has a tendency, also, especially as the years pass by and his visual sight starts to fail him, to blame this supernatural power for his physical inabilities.

To know the night is to recognise the day.

The rising and the setting of the sun, eventually, become the final curtain call, marking the end of one's sojourn on earth.

Man notes the unmistakable shadows that he leaves behind, during his traverse through life: The indomitable wake, left in his passage.

But for the man, who has lost the ability of visual sight, the night is everlasting ... there is no today; there is no tomorrow; and, of his shadow, he cannot know that it remains in his passing.

In respect of the sighted youth, he will have the ability to perform seemingly miraculous feats of daring, but those feats were only with the able assistance of the faculty of visual sight: Without sight, there is only blackness – eternal night.

Diversity is the death of unity: They cannot complement each other, try as they might. In unity, there is asceticism; in diversity, there is sybaritism.

The thoughts of man are, forever, in a state of flux: There can never be a stable thought.

Thoughts take on physical, three-dimensional appearances.

These appearances are based, for the most part, on the experiences of the thinker; there is, always, continuous change and mutations within a single thought process.

In the wildly unreasonable or illogical mind, one may rightly assume that the thoughts of such a person must take on the appearances of the experiences of that illogical mind, ingrained in the storage place of all thought processes.

In the mind of a wildly religious zealot, since he is unable to fathom the artificiality of the concept of the existence of an all-powerful, all-loving god, other than that of his teacher's forcible thought applications that there exists a '*real*' god – for there is no explicit evidence, *res ipsa loquitur*, of the existence of such an anthropological, three-dimensional being – his mind's processes have to follow the path of the fanatical.

For such an individual, his mind has little ability to concatenate that which has come into being amongst the natural thought processes that have been deeply embedded.

He accepts without demur that which has come to be his mind's natural inclination, obliterating, completely, the ephemerality of days gone-by in order to consider as being within the realm of undeniable truth – to accept in the existence of a permanent, ethereal force for which he is unable, fully, to visualise or to understand.

Man is born; man dies.

Immortality is non-existent.

There are no waters that one may drink that would permit a man to live forever.

And even if such waters did exist, would one want to partake of those waters?

In the words of William Shakespeare in his play, Hamlet, Prince of Denmark:

*'For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin?'*

Does immortality play an important role to the man who has come to accept the inevitability of life?

The Mirror Does Not Lie

As an elderly man looks into his shaving mirror in the morning, he notes how his face has changed from the days of his virile youth.

Such a man has learned, due to osmosis, to accept that beautiful females no longer give him a second

glance.

After all, what earthly use is such a man to a comely female, looking for an acceptable mate in order to impregnate her, leading to the birth of children and the sharing of the duties of the raising offspring until the children are able to fend for themselves?

The mirror does not lie: The elderly man knows, only too well, that his days upon this earth are numbered.

That which is left for such a man are his memories of bygone days; of sweaty bouts of copulation with a willing mate; of the giving of life's bounteous fruits that, with the passage of time, will result in coming into being a new life that shares the genetic code of both its parents.

But those days of glory; of innocent love; of lovemaking; those joyous times, expended in the creation of new life; and, then, noting the love that an innocent child showers upon its parents; they are gone: Never to return.

What Is Left?

What, therefore, is left for the elderly man or elderly woman who has only reveries on which to recall in the quietness of the day?

If an aching body troubles him/her, exceedingly, the sufferer may well want to be rid of this physical shell that, day by day, grows more and more frail, causing the sufferer to think of the time that he or she might be able to '*shuffle off this mortal coil*', in the immortal words of William Shakespeare.

One truth about art, as opposed to the life of most people, is that it leaves a great deal more to be explored by the person, taking note of it, than one may realise, initially.

The least stated in definitive terms within a painting or sculpture, depicting the human form, a pastoral scene, a sailboat, manoeuvring in a stormy sea, the more there is to be explored.

In the alluring and enticing pastel shades of the egg tempera paintings of Paul Cadmus (1909 – 1999), one may note a number of aspects about this talented artist.

It is obvious to anybody with an inkling of intelligence that the artist made no attempts at hiding the fact that he was either a practising homo sexual or a latent homo sexual.

(In the history of the world, gross indecency – as homo-sexual practices were once labelled at law in many parts of the world – was punishable by prison sentences ... or worse.)

In one of his self-portraits, it is as though Paul Cadmus was laughing at the world, looking askew as though to suggest to the person, viewing the painting:

‘I am here, having donned this Russian fur hat. Do you like it?’

In one of his famous egg tempera paintings, depicting a spring scene, the hose of a vacuum cleaner, in the hands of the side view of a young, muscular, completely naked man, one notes, without any outwardly discernible apology, the strong suggestion of an extraordinarily elongated penis – also, without any suggested indication of that which it was meant to be obvious to the viewer of the masterpiece.

The works of this artist are, for the most part, high drama, without any dint of effort to the contrary: The least stated; the more to be explored.

In music, as in most other disciplines that man determines to attempt to master, or just to obtain a modicum of empathy with the composer of a specific work, varying degrees of excellence are made manifest, according to a person’s level of artistic temperament, perception, appreciation, and, perhaps, adoration, all of which seem to merge, one into the other.

Music, in fact, could be said to be akin to a mental orgasm that causes one to cease all other activities in order to bathe in the music that seems to fill his very being.

National anthems are composed, especially, in order to move the hearts and minds of the human population of a country or territory to cause them to rejoice that every man and woman, living within the country or territory, are one with his fellows in a land that they should all love, cherish and be willing to defend to the death.

Patriotism is meant to become clear in national anthems, and some of the best-known are: La Marseillaise (France); The Star-Spangled Banner (the United States of America); and, God Save The Queen (The United Kingdom).

But, in addition to patriotic musical works, it is difficult not to fall in love with the mastery of the music of that 19th Century, Russian musical genius, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840 – 1893). He was the man who composed, among his many famous musical works, his much-loved Violin Concerto in D Major.

That other musical genius, this time from Italy, also of the 19th Century, was Guiseppe Verdi (1813 – 1901), whose operettic works are among the most-performed operas of his day ... and of today.

Another musical genius, this time from Poland, also of the 19th Century, was Frederic Chopin (1810 – 1849). His Fantaisie in F Minor was, in 1841, as it is, today, one of his most-famous and greatest works.

Music of many differing varieties, popular songs of the day, operas, concertos, symphonies, ballads, all played on a variety of instruments, all tend to move the hearts and minds of most people of the world to a certain extent.

The world would be that much poorer without music.

Creation, be it sculpting, painting, a high-degree of the mastery of a musical instrument; the ability to compose music; the writing of stories; or, of the composing of poems are all mental outlets that permit a person to maintain a consciousness with the real world in which he finds himself.

To indulge oneself in the arts, a person finds himself, living in a very different universe, separate and distinct from the mundane.

In creation, there is joy; there is beauty; there is satisfaction; there are new horizons in the never-ending, but always fulfilling journey to obtain artistic perfection.

Upon a person's deathbed, however, there are no thoughts of a god, of angels in attendance: One by one, the organs of the body start to fail and, with each organ failure, closer comes the Grim Reaper.

Death may be beautiful, but dying is not.

Breathing becomes shallower: Sleep.

Blessed sleep!

That which is everything left, of that once valorous body, is but its decaying shell.

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