

## Chapter Seven

### PERSONAL/TRANSPERSONAL

*It's not so much a matter of "look at me," as it is a matter of "look at what comes through me." In other words, it's not about me. It's about the work.*

LU



#### **O**                      **Me or Not-me**

As you know, I rarely speak of myself in so-called “personal” ways, simply because everything I say is an extension of who I am and what I have become. There is no “personal” or “impersonal.” It’s *all* me. Or *not-me*, however you wish to look at it. I do what I can to see clearly, without filtering perception through a distorting “personal” lens. No “goods/bads,” “shoulds/shouldn’ts,” just *what is*. I’ve still got a ways to go, but that is the gist of it.

#### **GS**                      **An Observer**

What gets me through the night?

Exactly the kinds of conversations you and I enjoy in these e-mails!

In these letters, I give you the person I am, but in a certain ambiguous sense the things I say are not exactly personal. I am sincere. I examine my thoughts carefully before I speak to you or others. I feel you deeply and compassionately. I recognize your personhood, your individuality, your unique and very special reality, and I mean what I say and do my best to say what I mean.

But when it comes to myself, it's as if the true me is a transpersonal observer of my thoughts and feelings and the physical world around me, a witness who has no agenda, no particular purpose one way or another, and no selfish acquisitive motives. I feel loving and warm, and am deeply empathic, but I simply do not think in terms of "personal" or of acquiring anything from others or of insisting that the spotlight of attention be focused on me instead of the issues we happen to be talking about at the time.

When you ask What gets me through the night, I think you mean, What are some of my characteristics and what do I enjoy? Am I right?

I simply am who I am. That is, I read books, I write poems, essays, letters, sometimes books, I play piano, and share with you and a few others some of the things I see and feel and think that might help you feel a little better, and that in some small way might help the world become a little more kind, loving, and beautiful. I've got a good woman, I rent a nice house in a mountain forest beside a running stream, I have lots of good books and CDs, and I rarely go out or visit with others. It's a simple life, yes?

My main source of excitement is reading those books, listening to those musics, and looking deeply into the kinds of questions and issues we are talking about here. Not everybody finds these things interesting, of course. But some do, and it seems you do too — and these kinds of conversations are what get me through the night!

SL

## Darkland Instincts to Clear-Light Bliss

I don't see myself in either/or terms — either ethereally transcendent (as I recently joked) OR lost in madness and depression. I see myself rather like a bird who can fly across the entire spectrum of consciousness, stretching across each level and touching all extremes with the wing-tips of love and understanding. I reject nothing, but accept and integrate all elements of myself.

And so I can wallow in the mire of sensuality, yes, even the sleazy and tawdry and self-indulgent elements. And I can wing up into clarity, reason, rational perspectives, logic, order, discipline. I can fly still higher, into creativity and the joys that come with it, standing on the shoulders of darkland instincts and rationality that lie below, winging still higher into the clear-light bliss of Higher Consciousness.

Each level is beautiful to me, human, and, yes, even sacred [just as are all the different kinds and generic styles of music (from cathartic rock, to complex jazz, into Euro-American classical genius, on up into Higher Consciousness bliss-music).]

I guess I'm just saying I am all things, I do not split myself up into separate personalities and qualities, approving and accepting some, condemning and rejecting others. I embrace all things within myself and integrate them into a single shining rainbow. All things harmoniously fulfilled constitute mental and physical health.

Happily, I spend most of my time in the rational-creative-awakened zones [but then it's fun to dive down into the darkland rock 'n roll depths once in a while too, wild,



Indeed, if I were to pick a middle name for myself it would be *Enso* — bridging and uniting my first and last names, even as I aspire to transpersonal Unity Consciousness.

My self is no-self.

I am I, and there is no “I.”

Like the enso circle, my very emptiness contains all that is — fullness, emptiness; thought, no-thought; experience, innocence; sound, silence; history, timeless presence. Even as the edge of the circle unites inside and outside, so I too have no boundaries. In body, mind, and spirit, my love and compassion embrace everything — matter, life, and consciousness in all forms.

Inclusiveness is everything, isn't it? That's why the Enlightened ones, including enso calligraphers, have said along with Sosan and ten-thousand other awakened ones, “All are One. One is All.”

**JC-E**

## **My Own Lifesong**

In response to your inquiries —

My life before Tim was something of a non-life. That is, I was still struggling to emerge from the depths of my parental and social conditioning. I was trying to escape the clutches of programmed conventional thinking and feeling, in order to become myself — whatever that meant. That's why I said almost nothing in *Blue Melody: Tim Buckley Remembered* about my life prior to Tim (giving it a passing nod only in the first two paragraphs of the "Prelude," p. ix) and even then I usually used it only as a contrast to Tim's background.

But that is a bit abstract. I think you want to know more about some of the concrete particulars —

My life did not really *begin* until I picked up my guitar and typewriter, left my wife, and ran away with a dancer named Jennifer to play blues and folk music in San Francisco (mostly my own material, but also songs by a few others, including Dylan, Odetta, and Spider John Koerner; briefly talked about on p. 15). That gesture — leaving my conditioned life and embarking into the unknown — was the first step in what became a rather interesting and often exciting developmental journey, even if I say so myself. (There are some early pics of me in BM, p. 5, p. 15). The Jennifer/Tim years constituted a bit more than a decade. It was wonderful — new, adventurous, exploratory, exciting, chaotic — all the stuff in *Blue Melody*.

The time from Tim's demise in 1975 to the present, however, has been in many ways considerably more interesting, expansive, nourishing and enlightening for me. There has been not as much chaos after, say, 1980, but a heck of a lot more substance. I've grown a great deal. Some of that growth, development, writing experience and insight into myself, my life, and other lives, enabled me to write not only *Blue Melody*, but all the published and unpublished writings and music that preceded that book and have followed it, including a zillion e-mails to various on-line friends.

(As a professional writer, for example, I became an internationally respected music journalist in three different fields — country/funk/rock music, jazz, and New Age Spacemusic. As a musician, I became well known as a solo acoustic guitarist in L.A. and Santa Fe, recording *California Sigh* along the way. Then I became a well-known author, first with *Inside Paul Horn*, then with *Blue Melody*. And during the past 10 years, I wrote a lot of poetry, published some of it, gave readings in central

and northern California, and taught myself how to play piano reasonably well, recording *Phantom Light*, and now *Gathering Light*. All of those things feel good.)

One of the people who attended that Atlantic City concert Tim and I gave in 1969 (discussed in BM, pp. 122-123) contacted me in later years, and we became close e-mail pen pals. When I recently let him (and others) know that I was no longer giving interviews to journalists about Tim, he wrote to me and said:

"Ever since I got to know you, I never thought of Tim as your main point of attraction. Instead, it's been the music you made, the growth and wholeness you've attained as a human being over the years, and the things you've given to others (even pen pals). Any debt you owe Tim's memory, you've paid many times over many years in many ways. I don't doubt it's a good time to take a break."

I thought that was perceptive and supportive of him, a really nice acknowledgement, yes?

## **SL                      Not a Public Me and a Private Me**

In reading your letter, I see certain truths contained in your concerns, even as I suggest that there is also an assumption that is not quite accurate: sixty percent kept secret, and hiding behind a wall. I guess your assumption has to do with the notion of a divided self, one of which I show to you (a public self, as it were), and a hidden self (a personal self that I do not reveal).

Actually, the truth is that I don't think in personal terms very much any more. While I live life on a daily basis like everybody else, virtually the whole of my focus is nonpersonal. There's almost no "me" any more, no egoic self. In nearly all weathers,

there is simply an observing presence that sees with clarity and feels great compassion. I can't claim complete egoic transcendence. I have to grow some more. But for the most part I rarely deal with myself or others in terms of my personal likes and dislikes, my opinions, judgments, etc. Most of those perceptual lenses are behind me now. They no longer distort my vision and divide my thinking into compartments, opposites, value judgments. My focus is not on me, which would literally be self-indulgent, but on the person I am talking to.

I feel deep empathy for others. I do everything I can to put myself in their shoes so I can feel through their heart and see through their eyes. I understand their thoughts and feelings with kindness and compassion. If (and only if) they welcome my input, I do what I can to share whatever I may see and know. Merging with them, I offer whatever strength, beauty and encouragement I can that might prove helpful.

While I appreciate that others often live in psychological domains aswirl with conflicts, multiple personalities, emotions, doubts, fears, heartbreaks and other normal, understandable cross-currents and inner conflicts, I rarely visit those zones, simply because, through many years of steady work, I have pretty well come to understand and untangle some of those knotty perplexities in myself.

I've looked into the sources of various problems that used to affect my life and other people's lives for the worse. I've faced the "demons" underneath the conscious mind, dissolved them for the most part, and integrated the remainder into the fabric of my psychological and spiritual being. As a result, there is little or no division. Not a dozen or more faces inside my mind. Not a public me and a private me. Not a person who speaks with you, and another person hiding somewhere else.

I look into things more than most others; mull things over; consider them; evaluate them in terms of my own internal and external experience; see into complex internal dynamics with a little more clarity; and therefore am able to understand some peoples' complexities a little more comprehensively than most. Not that this makes me "great" or "better than." To the contrary, it puts me into a sympathetic, empathic



synchronicity with others. Because I know myself, I can see into others, empathize with their hopes and dreams and sorrows, and sometimes offer a helpful insight here or there. The things I share with you, inspired by the wonderful, deeply felt letters you share with me, are direct extensions of who I am, the whole person, not a fragment.

## **DS            Public Person, Private Explorer: Football, Music, Mind**

It's a delight to me that you picked up on the athletic aspect of my checkered life. You are the only one to have done so — another tip of the hat to you.

It's not something I talk about very often, because few people I have known were "able to play ball with the guys," as you phrased it. You did not indicate what sport(s) you played, or the degree of your involvement, but at least you HAD an involvement, which, to me, is significant. By all means tell me more if you feel like it.

I give enormous respect to anybody who has courage enough to step out on the field, any field, and put themselves on the line. Athletics combine ALL facets of the participant, not just the body, not just the mind, not just emotional fluctuations. ALL facets are involved — and in real time. Whatever knowledge is accrued, whatever philosophical position is maintained, whatever artistic sensibilities are involved, whatever intellectual capabilities are relevant — all of it is merged with the real-time physical moment, profoundly compressed. There is no detachment, no separation. The *whole* person is there, body/mind/spirit. It's *all* energized, distilled, amplified, intensified. Great stuff, but difficult to communicate to those who have not stepped into the arena. I've learned as much from athletics as from music.

In my own case, I played football in high school. A running back, in Colorado, Texas, and upstate New York. And I ran track, 100 yard dash, 220, 880 relay, long jump. The whole trip was extraordinary, not only in its own right, as it was for my team mates, but peculiarly for me because I was exceptionally talented (scholarship interest from Clemson, Syracuse, Cornell in only my junior year; did not take them up on it. Won the gold medal in the long jump in the All-upstate New York track meet, 21'3").

So there was an intense spotlight on me; competition took on serious qualities; a lot of people cared, not the least my father, who lived much of his emotional and social life through my exploits on the football field. And I had to cope with the strange experience of being viewed by others in the hallways through their perceptions of me on the field, rather than through their experience of me as an individual standing before them as a human being in real-time and living color. Very odd sensation.

Another public dimension added spice. I played piano in high school and led my own jazz and dance bands. I found the athlete/bandleader public persona a wonderful cover for deeper interests.

I loved reading. That was my greatest passion. Not so much school stuff (with literary exceptions), but great philosophers: Plato, Socrates, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Bergson, et. al. And I loved listening to music, especially Dave Brubeck, Lenny Tristano, Louie Armstrong, and then Miles Davis (while acquaintances were listening to Elvis, Little Richard, Johnny Cash, whom I appreciate today as part of music's wonderful spectrum, but found simplistic and somewhat crude back then). So there was this double life: public person, private explorer.

For a while, as you know from having read *Blue Melody*, a split existed. Today, I regard the many facets of my psyche as a single totality, and appreciate each facet as I might appreciate each child in a family or each jewel in a collection. However, for many years, because of the pressures put upon me in high school, I later rejected athletes as "dumb jocks," and embraced only intellectual pursuits. Then I embraced

the dark zones—Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Genet, etc. al.—and drank too much and took too much dope and lived the rock 'n' roll life with Tim, the *Blue Melody* years. But with the help of the therapist I mentioned in a previous e-mail, I pulled out of the downward spiral.

Now I see athletics, philosophy, creativity, mind explorations, meditation, music, silence, art and nature as one totality — what a marvelous complex of interactive dynamics!

Happily today, I don't see thoughtfulness as intellectualizing, but simply a way of utilizing the mind's strengths to shine light on verbal and nonverbal interior domains. As a writer, it is important for me to be able to translate nonverbal musical experiences, nonpictorial sensations, preverbal and transverbal intuitions and other wordless interior events into language. If that is intellectualization, I don't see it as a bad thing, because it is not the only thing. Mind serves perception.

So I am continually sharpening perception, largely through playing piano: which is a process of listening. In the listening, silence exists. I'm outside of mind and its words and concepts. In that listening-silence, I transcend egoic mindstuff, and music flows through me. Music is meditation; meditation is music. Silence is the answer. When silence and its resultant music infuses perception, I disappear as a personality, then return from that transpersonal domain, and do what I can to share the beauty every way I can.

You, of course, have created this letter, for which I thank you. If you weren't a bright, well-informed guy and a superb listener/receiver/responder, I would not feel free to yakkity-yak like this. I appreciate your being there. It has been wonderful hanging out with you and sharing a few treasured moments that have not seen the light of day elsewhere. Thanks. . . .

GS

## “Why The Interest?”

I had to chuckle as you asked me “Why the interest? Do you think my thoughts are of worth, my outlook, my beliefs, interests? Please do not feel offended by my question. I am just curious as to what my thought process appears to be. Goodness knows, not many people follow my thoughts beyond a certain point.”

Well, my interest is simple enough. Along the way, you have said many things that I can relate to, especially as they pertain to a certain stage of my life a while back. Your particular kinds of confusions, reading interests, psychological orientations, philosophical outlooks, etc. ring a bell in me.

The fact that you are a serious reader is in itself a fine point of recommendation. But that in itself would not be enough. Your interest in the poet Philip Larkin, for example; your own poem on your photo site about your rather doubting, depressed, and somewhat pessimistic outlook; your responses to Tim and his music and to *Blue Melody*; your enthusiastic and insightful responses to me and some of the ideas and books I talk about — all of these and related things suggest to me that you are in a certain stage of development that I know about, that I explored, and after many searchings and difficulties, that I finally passed through, emerging into new and brighter climes.

Because I see these things in you, which have been and/or still are in me, I feel like reaching out to you. It seems to me you have a strong, quick, intelligent mind. So I am encouraging your intelligence, your self-explorations, your efforts to move through confusion and certain kinds of discomfort into a sense of self-awareness, self-affirmation, and perhaps a flowering of creativity in whichever forms may appeal to you.

In short, if I can share something of my life and insight, and it proves worthwhile and nourishing to you, it is deeply gratifying to me. If you find my thoughts helpful, and you receive and welcome and make use of them, then it is I who feel grateful to you for your generous receptivity. It is I who should thank you, not the other way around.

My view of you might be off-base, of course. There is every chance that I am simply projecting my own developmental stages on to you and that you may have little interest in my information or insights, and perhaps no interest whatsoever in moving into those zones indicated by Colin Wilson, Hesse, Osho and others we have mentioned. If that proves to be the case, that is okay by me. No problem at all. We all have to go our own way. I respect that.

Besides, simply sitting down to write to you is immensely rewarding to me, because it gives me an opportunity to consciously examine and clarify my own thinking. Have I learned anything in my life? If so, what might that be? Is any of it potentially interesting or relevant or worthwhile for you or others? Are you the kind of person who might find these books and people and perspectives even remotely interesting? If so, which books, which thoughts, which music? And so I share what I can. And as I discuss the subjects we have been talking about, I also find the writing process itself deeply rewarding.

At the moment, we just happen to have hit a vein of gold, so to speak, in which the things I am reading and thinking seem (in my own mind, at any rate) to apply to you and your life too, so I am sharing them with you, even as I share them in different ways but in the same generous spirit with a few other e-mail pen pals.

If you find them of value and want to look into them, wonderful. If not, again that's okay. Whatever feels good for you is great with me. I just happen to be in a zone that seems to me to be applicable to you, so I send a few of my thoughts to you and hope you find them stimulating.

After a while, you or I may move into an entirely different zone that may not have anything to do with one or both of us, in which case, of course, I would not trouble you with my thoughts, simply because they would be irrelevant to you.

Meanwhile, absorb whatever you want, set some aside for later, throw the rest away — do whatever you like. Every way is good! No rush, no demands, just a sharing, for which I am indebted to you.

I loved the Larkin quote you sent, life has “a beginning, a muddle, and an end.” ☺  
Keep on keepin’ on!

P.S. I attach a prose poem entitled, “Listening Song,” which gives you a broad overview of my life’s journey.

## **MH                      An Affable Zen Monk Socializing**

You asked about some of my activities, a good question. Indeed, it makes me stop for a moment and think.

All is well here. I tend to hibernate, often without realizing it. I fall in love with my books and music, more accurately with the writers and composer/musicians who move me deeply, and I spend most of my time with them. It's a way of fraternizing with geniuses, you know? Great input. Good for the smarts, good for the soul. As well, I enjoy chopping kindling wood for our household wood stove and hauling small logs into the house from the woodpile out back.

Between reading, writing, listening to music, playing piano, and taking walks by the stream, I feel pretty good, rather like an affable Zen monk. I don't have a great need

to socialize. Before I know it, I haven't seen any friends for weeks on end, and Sonia starts getting edgy.

So, every once in a while, we invite a few people over. Sonia is a terrific cook. People love her chicken stews, chocolate cake, delicious salads. Last Wednesday we had two couples and an artist friend over. We didn't know the two couples very well, which is exactly why we invited them. I wanted to get to know them better. Precisely because I felt hesitant about asking them over, I thought it a good idea to do exactly that. We had a good time, happy to say. . . .

On the whole, the evening went well, and, for me, it served its purpose: we got to know both couples better, and one of them proved to be pretty much attuned with the values and interests Sonia and I share.

I've always been a bit retiring, as I am sensitive to nuance and seem to be exceptionally insightful, which does not always serve me well. When I see into a person too deeply for their comfort, it tends to make them a bit nervous if I speak too soon, before they are ready. Therefore, I've learned to see clearly, but take care with what I say about whatever I see. When the comfort zone between me and the other expands and deepens naturally, then I can say more; and, to be sure, they feel free to say more too.

So the pace of intensifying friendship remains slow, casual, and not pressured, which is good. It's rather like making love — take one's time, relax into things, touch slowly, gently; move ahead at a mutually easy-going tempo. Pretty soon, if/when wavelengths synchronize, the communication process unfolds like a flower in the sun.

So the socializing area is the main area I hope to explore and expand as time moves along. Reclusiveness is wonderful, but if Sonia and I are going to continue living in

this small town, it is important for our morale to expand our circle of friends. We've been here some nine years now. It's time to get to know a few of our acquaintances a little better, which is what we did with those two couples.

I'm always a bit shy and hesitant when the subject comes up — should we invite so-and-so over? — but once we do it, and then jump into the mix, whatever transpires is good. If it works out (as it did with one of the couples), wonderful; if it doesn't, nothing lost (in fact, the new knowledge of incompatibility is a gain in itself).

I will never be a social gad fly, as the saying has it, but I am willing and able to strengthen my interactive capabilities. For me, it's a good and healthy activity. For Sonia, it's something of a natural and healthy need. I don't want to deprive her of outside friendship and conversation; and I can use some interactive stimulation for my own well being. While it seems that socializing is taken for granted by most people, for me/us it's a special activity, something of an oddity and a bit of a challenge. So, onward and upward for us too!

**JC-E**

### **Serving Art, Beauty, Love**

You may have noted when you read *Blue Melody: Tim Buckley Remembered* that there is very little in the book about me directly. Almost everything I say about myself is only in relation to Tim — how this or that affected him, or how he affected me; various events in my life that took place in relation to him, or that reflected him, or that constituted either a contrast to him or an insight into him or a validation of him and his work. The focus, in other words, is almost entirely on him throughout the book, with myself and my various doings before and after him barely touched upon.



Even to this day, I rarely speak of myself and my so-called “personal” stuff. I don’t hide anything. I just try to serve music, art, beauty, love, and other psycho-spiritual domains greater than myself. That’s why the focus in my writings almost never points to me, but to whatever subject is being discussed, usually in terms of the other person's thoughts and feelings. I'll tap into my experience once in a while in order to help us explore whatever thought is under consideration. But for the most part, the many other aspects of my life are probably irrelevant to that thought, so I don't bring them in. To do so would only narcissistically distract from whatever we’re talking about. See what I mean?

Interestingly enough, because of your questions and comments, this letter to you contains more about me and my history than I have divulged to almost anybody. Again, it's not that I hide anything. It's just that I take myself and my life-history rather for granted. It's simply there, like colors in a painting.

In my own mind, I feel as if I have nothing to brag about. Others (such as Tim) have done far more than I ever dreamed of, much less accomplished. I've done a few modestly worthwhile things, but the people I most admire, from Tim to Bach, to Chopin, to Glenn Gould, to Keith Jarrett, to John McLaughlin, to Miles Davis, stand on the peaks of mountains I could never climb. Not a problem. We are who we are, we do the best we can, we dance on the stage a while, then vanish. "Just like a song, in the air and gone," as I wrote in one of my poems.

And it's all okay. We give voice to whatever music is in us, and hope that a few people find a little energy, nourishment, and optimism in it. For some people it is a question of "look at me." That's okay. To be seen and heard is a powerful motivating force. For others, it's a matter of simply expressing a vision and sharing it with whomever can relate to it. That has more or less been my outlook: service to love and beauty in general, to music and writing in particular. It's not so much a matter of "look at me," as it is a matter of "look at what comes *through* me." In other words, it's not about me. It's about the work.

**JK**

## **Surrounded by Giants**

Thank you so much for your heartwarming response to my recent e-mail. Allow me to say that although you may think of me as being “higher” than you, I am not. I'm just hanging in there the same way you are, doing what I can to expand the scope of awareness, heighten sensitivity, and deepen well-springs of compassion.

After all these years, I still feel like a slow-witted child surrounded by giants who know everything I wish to know, but who give only clever hints and twinkly-eyed winks. Alas, I'm a dolt among geniuses. A dwaddler stumbling behind a dancing deer. A stranger at a party, who doesn't quite understand the jokes and why everybody is laughing and having such a good time.

I have a long way to go, but I also have enough self-love to know there is no goal but here; no rush either, because there is no time, just the eternal present in which all things happen; no need to reduce anything to fit the narrow confines of intellect; and no need to despair. Existence is abundance, especially when one perceives without motive, and enjoys all of it in and of itself.

**SL**

## **Shedding Identities**

I've been going through a number of personal changes as well, mostly dropping zones of activity that I have fulfilled and no longer find interesting.

For example, I have two filing cabinets with five deep drawers each. For at least 30 years I've been cutting articles out of newspapers and magazines to feed individual

files in each of those ten drawers — everything from psychology (with a multitude of sub-divisions) to astronomy to physics to art to drugs to ancient civilizations to individual novelists and poets, to a whole cabinet filled with personal letters back and forth to various e-mail friends. Each large cabinet weighs about 300 pounds, and there is almost no room remaining.

I have often used individual files over the years as this-or-that subject comes up that I want to write about. However, I do not intend to write anything else, as I've pretty well mined whatever gold has been in me — essays, poetry, stories, various books, letters, yatta-yatta-yatta. So writing feels completed. I've enjoyed the journey, but at the same time, there have been heaps and tons of work with relatively little success in the marketplace. With or without marketplace success, I feel done with the writing process anyway. Therefore the files and the enormous expanse of knowledge they contain are now irrelevant. This winter I intend to weed everything down to a manageable size — throw out files I know I'll never use; and keep only a few (if I can summon up courage and strength enough to heave out even one single piece of paper!)

My relationship with music has also changed. *Gathering Light* is my final statement. I remember I mentioned this to you before, and you encouraged me to remain open about it — which I do. However, I've plumbed the depths and heights of my musical capacities for many years now, since childhood, as a matter of fact. There is too much of a gap between what I can do in a non-self-conscious context and what I can (and cannot) do in a recording situation. Recording forces me to confront my psychological and musical limitations that arise in that particular context. The confrontation is painful, to say the least. I've said whatever I have been able to say in *California Sigh*, *Phantom Light*, and now *Gathering Light*. So I'm dropping recording, and in fact am in the process of weaning myself away from music altogether.

That may change, of course, but I hope to liberate the energy that goes into music when I'm preoccupied with it and playing regularly, and rechannel it into new interests that have yet to emerge. I'm even thinking of selling my piano and my acoustic D-28 Martin guitar (which I've kept in the closet all these years, but which I will almost surely never play again). Don't know if I'll do that, but I am thinking about it.

It all seems to be a natural progression in my life, at this stage shedding identities, liberating myself from still more activities and labels that in many cases, more often than not without my awareness, created one persona after another. Suits of clothes. Can I ever attain those psycho-spiritual heights where I'm standing naked in the sun?

A tip o' the hat to my old friend Candide. Time to make a new garden of my own.