

SHUMEI'S ENGLISH LANGUAGE BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

SHUMEI

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LOVING AND CARING: A WAY OF LIFE

Rev. Afrie Songco Joye

CRESTONE IS FOUR YEARS OLD

MISONO'S GRAND SAMPAL, 2006

OUR PURPOSE: Shumei America is a spiritual organization comprised of people from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds who transform their lives and the lives of others by focusing Divine Light.

We provide an environment for spiritual growth by practicing Jyorei as a purification of the spirit, appreciating art and beauty, and promoting Natural Agriculture.

SHUMEI MAGAZINE is the English language publication of the Shumei Family for the American and international Shumei communities. Our purpose is to inform and inspire through the presentation and discussion of Meishusama's teachings, and through being a forum for self-expression, art, and beauty.

ABOUT THE COVER: Attendees at Misono's May 2006 Grand Sampai approach the monumental sculptures known as Tenmon as they leave Misono's Great Plaza and Meishusama Hall, which is seen in the distance. The sculpture group, Tenmon, is comprised of eight monoliths created by Masayuki Nagare and is known as the 'Heavenly Portal' in English. Stories concerning the Grand Sampai begin on page 11. The photograph was taken by Shumei Magazine's photo editor, Don Riedel.

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Information concerning Jyorei: www.jyorei.org

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Excerpts from Meishusama's Teachings on Kannon's Way

This is the fourth of six excerpts from the "Kannon's Way" teachings by Shumei's founder, Mokichi Okada, that are scheduled to be published in SHUMEI Magazine during 2006. The texts of the three teachings that follow are new translations into English. They have been edited for use in SHUMEI Magazine. These texts were extracted from two sources published in 1935.

Many of these newly translated teachings were originally transcribed from lectures and informal talks usually followed by question and answer sessions.

We are deeply honored to present these writings to our English language readers for the first time.

The Kannon movement helps people behave in ways that in truth should be taken for granted.

The Kannon movement¹ helps people behave in ways that in truth should be taken for granted. That we have even to mention this shows how much people have strayed from proper social behavior. There are too many examples of how people today have become derailed from acting properly. If you understand this, you will see the significance of Kannon's Way. I have been trying in many ways to help people understand this because the world that we are trying to realize is very different from the one that we now live in. It is people's entrenched habits that thwart them from practicing Kannon's Way, and we must make it the Kannon movement's main objective to help each individual to be a better person. In short, we want to humanize people. Looking over our modern civilization, it is becoming more and more difficult to find a truly civilized person, and there are so many people in our society. I recall reading a poem in which the poet described humans as "beasts in human skin." As this poem points out, people's hearts and behavior have become much less humane.

God's original model for creating humankind is not at all like the human beings we see today. Surely, there is a reason that people have degenerated so much. Now, it is time for us to change course. At any time, God's will might be clearly manifested, and truly humane people will evolve. This event will guide people back to the right path to follow as human beings. Because people are easily sidetracked from following this path, they invite many misfortunes and troubles upon themselves. This is where the causes of sickness, poverty, and war are rooted. In line with this, people these days are almost all sickly, none having attained a perfect state of health. Currently, many people are suffering from illness, and even those who appear physically fit are not ideal paradigms of mental stability.

Kannon always acts impartially.

Although it might seem easy to reach the Kannon movement's final goal, which is that humans behave well, in actuality it is quite difficult to accomplish. Because people are so accustomed to acting improperly, bad behavior has become a habit and the norm. And, it is one of our

objectives to correct bad habits. As is well known, the deity Kannon always acts impartially, and therefore, our Kannon movement embodies this characteristic of objectivity. Kannon is neither man nor woman and Kannon cannot be symbolized by the power either of the sun or moon, or by either fire or water. Kannon, however, works simultaneously with a combination of the elements of fire and water, producing in the end something like a warm bath, the temperature of which is just right, making one feel relaxed and comfortable while bathing. Kannon's work also can be compared to a temperate climate in which the seasons of spring and fall are neither too cold nor too hot.

Ideally, humans need to cultivate their hearts, align themselves with Kannon's nature, and learn how to behave well. This means that to practice Kannon's Way, one never does things partially, nor does one go to extremes of action. We are different from other spiritual groups in Japan because we make this point in a straightforward manner. It is still common for people affiliated with religious groups to become extremists. The more actively involved they get with a religion, the more easily they lose their common sense. They tend to talk in fanatic ways and they limit their relationships to only those in their own sect. Although this type of faith looks strange when viewed objectively, the people involved in it, even despite strong opposition from their own families, fail to see anything at all bizarre in their own behavior at all. Instead, they think their practice is perfectly in accord with the will of God. On the other hand, if one deepens one's faith by following Kannon's Way, others will be unaware of that individual's actual beliefs. In other words, when following Kannon's Way, one is never arrogant or showy about their particular beliefs. By following Kannon's Way, people learn to communicate with others and to handle their affairs flexibly according to the time, place, and the situation, varying their behavior and actions to suit each circumstance.

This flexibility has to be as versatile as the weather, sunny or cloudy according to the day, and people following Kannon's Way have to be as constant as the water flowing steadily down a stream, never becoming stagnant.

*Both of the excerpts above are from "My Spiritual Path."
(January 11, 1935)*

The true cause of sickness is found in the soul.

The principle of our healing method,² which focuses on dissolving spiritual clouds, can be applied to all kinds of diseases. The true cause of sickness is found in the soul. Modern medicine, however, being unaware of the spiritual cause of disease, is studying and making efforts to cure the symptoms of disease, which only appear at the physical level. This is a 'cart before the horse' approach. Even if medicine succeeds temporarily, it is impossible to expect any fundamental solution to the problems of illness. On the other hand, our spiritual healing method, a form of spiritual acupressure, uses Kannon's Light to dissolve spiritual clouds, and as the amount of clouding decreases, impure secretions simultaneously start to discharge, resulting in a lessening or complete healing of the disease. Once the process of purification moves from the soul to the body, the healing process ends.

1. By "movement," Meishusama is referring to the Kannon Society of Japan (Dainippon-Kannon-Kai), the first spiritual organization that he founded. Its opening ceremony was held at the Hanzomon Center in Kojimachi, Tokyo on January 1, 1935, the same year that these texts were prepared.

2. Here, Meishusama is referring to the "Okada-style Spiritual Acupressure Therapy." This healing method later evolved into what today is known as Jyorei, in which divine light is directed to a person to dissolve spiritual clouds and thereby promote healing.

Yet, all this said, healing sickness is still not fundamental to creating happiness. Although spiritual healing is more elementary than modern medical practice, it cannot be an absolute method of producing contentment by itself because we cannot have true peace of mind until the soul is completely purified. This purification of the soul can never be thoroughly accomplished if one lacks both faith in God and the willingness to put one's faith into practice. Kannon's Way is the approach that

makes this possible. If we truly understand the principles of Kannon's Way and learn how to live according to them, spiritual clouds will not accumulate at all. At the same time, one will become a person who constantly gains toku energy.³ Not only will one be free from sickness and misfortune, but also blessed with

health, longevity, and prosperity, not only for oneself but also for one's family and friends. Finally, one will be able to live a life filled with joy.

The above excerpt is from "The True Cause of Sickness Is in the Soul" (1935)

3. Sometimes referred to as 'Divine Light' or 'Grace,' toku energy is the spiritual wealth gained by doing good works and making others happy. Although good always comes

from amassing toku energy, its specific benefits ultimately are in the hands of God.

Loving and Caring: A Way of Life

Rev. Afrie Songco Joye, Ph.D. (The Philippines)

Reverend Joye was the first Asian-American to be ordained a clergywoman of The United Methodist Church in America. She is presently a faculty member of the Union Theological Seminary in Cavite, The Philippines, and was formerly pastor of St. Paul United Methodist Church in Tarzana-Encino, California. She graduated with a Ph.D. in Theology and Religious Education at the Claremont School of Theology in Claremont, California.

Since becoming a member of Shumei, she has been a prominent figure in both Shumei America and Shumei Philippines.

Many of you might have read a recent issue of Parade magazine with a picture of Kurt Russell on the front page. It was featured in an article that had the headline "Love Comes First." I will quote what Kurt Russell had to say about love:

You can be very upset with someone you love. You can feel hurt and worried, but you don't start there. You start out from the fact that you care. Love comes first in everything.

Now that is thought provoking. When we reflect on the essential law of love, we say that we need to make 'genuine' love our goal—love that is giving, love that is unconditional, love that is reconciling—make it our way of life. There are always competing claims in our lives, and we need to be very clear about what our most important claims are. What comes first in our lives? Love should be our foremost virtue, value, and way of life, if we want meaning, healing, and wholeness in our lives.

When I was seventeen years old, I had just entered college, my professor was a missionary named Elizabeth Johannaber. One day in her class she said some words to us that I will never forget. They changed my life. She said:

Being a follower of Christ is not following a set of rules. It's a way of life. It's a way of love.

Those words changed me. I realized then that I did not have to be bound by rules, but by love, the love of God and love of my fellow human beings. It is still my philosophy today, and it has expanded in meaning and implications since then.

I was in Cyprus one December a few years ago with a group of people from different religious traditions. The event was a consultation, sponsored by the World Council of Churches, on how religious education can make an impact on our communities. We had Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, and Jewish participants. One of my fellow participants gave me a big poster that had the Golden Rule as stated in various religions printed on it. It is amazing to know that all religions might differ in words and phrases, but have only *one* message:

Love comes back to you when you love—love begets love.

How powerful is that for all humanity, human beings, all six billion of us around the world! I wish we had that kind of love in the world. If we did, we would not have war. We would not have violence. There would be no hatred or injustice if we had love in our hearts and shared it with others, because love that is so giving brings peace, unity, and justice. It brings healing to humankind and to the whole world.

Love bears the truth. There is no falsehood in love. Love believes in truth.

I was in Geneva, Switzerland for twelve days attending a twelve-day consultation on the theme "The Truth Shall Make You Free," sponsored by the Ecumenical Institute, in which there were thirty-five participants from twenty-nine countries. I was given a scholarship to attend. It is incredible how writing a few sentences can do wonders for you. I simply wrote to the WCC sponsoring unit and asked if I could attend, and they provided me with a full

scholarship. I believe that love bears the truth and that the truth can set all of us free. It can set us free from fear and free from guilt because we know the truth and we share it. Right now we live in a world that is full of lies and half-truths.



Afrie Songco Joye

It makes me so upset to think that there are so many cover-ups in our many institutions today, in societies, in governments, and in politics. Let us remember, love rejoices in the truth.

Also, love holds the power to heal. The writer Norman Cousins had an illness that was diagnosed as terminal. He was given just six months to live. His chances of recovery were one in a hundred. He wondered if illness could be caused by negativity, and if health could be created by something positive. So, he decided to do research. He discovered that laughter was one of the most positive activities that could lead to health and healing. So he suggested watching all the funny movies one could find and reading lots of funny stories as a means of healing. He asked

his friends to call him whenever they saw or read something funny. That was the first thing he did. The second thing he suggested was to remove all the negative things in a person's life, and start loving more. He himself followed his own suggestions, and instead of living only six months, he fully recovered from his illness and lived another twenty healthy and productive years. He wrote such books as *The Anatomy of an Illness* and *The Power of the Mind*.

I shared his ideas with my mother. She followed his words and lived to the age of ninety-two. Norman Cousins credited his health to love, laughter, and the creation of positive images. Love heals. We all are part of the fabric of God's world. So, let us not allow rage, hatred, and terror to shred that fabric. We need to recognize our mutual humanity.

I visited Palestine-Israel three times with my husband and tour groups. Each time, I felt an affinity with the people there, particularly those Palestinians who loved and fought for justice. I did not even see the difference between Muslims and Christians because of their love. There were also Jewish people who advocated justice. A man that I remember very well named Constantine spoke to us in the Gaza Strip. I remember what he said: "We do not hate the Jews despite that they took away our homes and destroyed our hundred year old olive trees." I was in tears when I heard him. I could not believe what I heard because I knew what had happened to him. He said, "All we need is our land."

I think that to be able to love what is unlovely and unloving is one of the most difficult things we can do. It is easy to love those who love us in return. It is easy to love those who are kind to us. But to love those who have done us wrong is very difficult. It takes the power of a higher spirit, a power higher than we are, to do that.

A Filipino woman lawyer who is a member of our commission on theological education for our seminary sent me a text message. It read:

The healing of the mind happens by letting go of bad memories. The healing of the heart happens through forgiveness. The healing of the soul happens through prayer.

As I was preparing this message, it hit me: this is the philosophy of Shumei! This is what Meishusama¹ is telling us. This is one of the main reasons I joined Shumei. We can heal our bodies through the practice of Natural Agriculture.² We can heal our mind through Art and Beauty. We

can heal our souls through Jyorei. When we practice makoto—an ancient word that sums up a basic way of life that demonstrates sincerity, truth, honesty, trust, commitment to values, virtues of love—our lives reflect and manifest what it means to have self-giving and unconditional love. What Meishusama teaches us is the essence of love. Love is a burst of truth. It heals. And when love is genuine, there is no mask, no façade, because love is sincere. When we love, we mean what we say and do.

One thing that I like about children, especially the very young ones, is that what you see is what you get. Yes, young children can trust and forgive easily. They are vulnerable, they are alive and full of life, and they are accepting and open to possibilities. And they look up to adults as their models. I only hope we adults provide the kind of model that they can live up to.

Love is sincere.

Lastly, love serves all people, whoever they are, wherever they are. Service to God and to humanity is the central expression of self-giving love. Love cannot be love unless it serves. And no service is genuine unless there is love in it. There is a Roman Catholic priest in the Philippines named Father Roberto Reyes who is called the "Running Priest." We invited him once to our seminary. Father Reyes is called the Running Priest because he jogs, and as he jogs he often stops to meet people, especially the poor, and listens to them along the way. He listens. He does not stop listening. After he listens, he makes calls and writes to government officials asking them to do something for these poor people. He acts. I think his superiors in his church might be unhappy because he acts too much and they think he is too political. But when you live out your faith you become political, because you are using the power of your mind and voice to help others. Because Father Reyes cares for the poor, he loves them. So he has to help them. Here is one of his prayers. It was published in a well-known newspaper:

O God of truth, justice, and freedom. Teach us to trust a little more. Teach us to believe and open our eyes to see that something good, true, and worthwhile is happening. Teach us to appreciate what others do and will continue to do despite the many risks. You ask just a little more from us, a little more faith, a little more love, a little more sacrifice for our country, and especially a little more for the poor. Yes, Lord, it is not much, just a little more. Just a little more.

My challenge to each of you is to love a little more. Justice is the social order of love. We cannot speak of genuine love without including peace and justice. Let us work more to bring peace and justice to our families, to our communities, and to our world. I close with the words of Boris Pasternak:

It is not revolution and upheavals that clear the road to new and better days, but someone's soul inspired and ablaze.

Genuine love illumines and inspires our soul and leads us to acts of service. In the midst of a hostile and violent world, may each of us grow in our love for the power beyond all human powers. Before God, may we share that self-giving, reconciling, and healing love with others.

STORIES FROM CRESTONE

The Crestone Center is now four years old. On May 20 and 21 of this year, the Shumei International Institute celebrated the fourth anniversary of the opening of its headquarters in Crestone, Colorado. The following five articles concern this event. Four of them were drawn from addresses delivered by friends of the Shumei Family who were invited to speak at this celebration.

Behind the Scenes

Matthew Crowley (USA)

Matthew Crowley has been a resident of Crestone since January of 2004. In April of 2005, he came to work for the Shumei International Institute as its Operation Manager. Eight months after assuming that position, Matthew became a Shumei member.

It feels a little odd to be writing this, as I almost feel I was not there at the Shumei International Institute's anniversary in Crestone on May 20 and 21. Of course, I was, but my job as a Shumei staff member is to make sure things are in place and going smoothly for the enjoyment of our guests. The staff was pretty well exhausted from all the preparations before the event even began, but excitement and adrenaline re-awakened us for the big days of celebration that lay ahead. My small efforts did not alone make this year's anniversary a success. It was the combined efforts of our local volunteer anniversary committee, all the Shumei International Institute staff, and the many people from the Crestone community. Others who contributed their time and efforts came from Shumei's International Center at Misono,¹ Shumei America's National Center in Pasadena,

1. 'Meishusama' is an honorific often used by Shumei members when referring to Mokichi Okada, Shumei's founder. Meishusama means 'Master of Light.'

2. Natural Agriculture is a spiritually based horticultural practice created by Shumei's founder, Mokichi Okada. The essence of the Natural Agriculture method is having reverence for nature and cultivating the food crops in a manner close to how plants thrive in a natural setting.

1. Misono is Shumei's International Headquarters and Spiritual Center in the Shigaraki Mountains of Shiga Prefecture, Japan. The name 'Misono' means 'Sacred Garden.'

Kaicho-Sensei leads members and friends in chanting the Amatsunorito at Shumei's Crestone Center Hall.



the Shumei Hollywood Center, and from our various Natural Agriculture projects throughout North America. Our special thanks goes to Shumei's president, Kaicho-Sensei,² whose powerful and peace-filled presence lent so much to this event. We thank her for her insights and her light.

It was a small miracle to witness events unfold one after another in two short days after months of planning and preparation. This was the second Crestone anniversary in which I have participated. Looking back at last year's anniversary, which was my first, I must admit that I was clueless concerning that event, as I had just begun working for Shumei little more than a month before.

One of the high points for me during the past two years has been the Saturday Interfaith



Matthew Crowley

gatherings at the Crestone Center, where representatives from all of the many spiritual centers and communities in Crestone are invited to share something of their traditions with each other. I am grateful that my job allows me to discover and learn from these many people and their various paths. This year we had people from fifteen spiritual communities share with

2. 'Kaicho-Sensei' is an honorific name used when referring to Ms Hiroko Koyama, the current president of Shumei. The word 'Kaicho' means 'president.' The word 'Sensei' means 'master,' in the sense of being a teacher.



The beat of a taiko drum accompanies the silent prayers of guests at the anniversary Sampai.

us. In Crestone, this is one of the very rare places—perhaps the only one—where this many people from diverse spiritual followings gather at one time.

Unfortunately, I was too busy to attend all the talks given at the anniversary. However, that does not mean I was not able to hear them—do not forget, this is Shumei, so everything was recorded and photographed. That is what I love about our organization—we do not simply host events, but also through the skilled use of electronic media, we share these gatherings with a worldwide audience. Just the other night I was transcribing the talks of several of the speakers for translation and publication in a Shumei Japanese language publication. Now, that is world citizenship in action! Among some of the 'firsts' at this year's event, we successfully provided a live Webcast of many of the anniversary's events, making them available to people throughout the world.

The centerpiece of all the weekend's activities was very simple, very pure, and extraordinarily powerful. It was that point during the anniversary Sampai³ when Kaicho-Sensei shared Jyorei⁴ with those attending. This is something that no words can adequately describe, rather an experience one can only share in the moment.

Another first this year: we provided a tasty and healthy Sunday luncheon made almost entirely from Natural Agriculture ingredients. The ingredients included wheat from the Makoto Wheat Project in Canada, and various vegetables from Santa Cruz, Hollywood, Japan,

3. Sampai is a special time or place set aside for honoring God. It is an occasion dedicated to receiving Divine Light.

4. Jyorei is divine light, directed by a member of Shumei to another person. Repeated sessions may bring improvement in physical and emotional problems, and enhancement of one's general well-being.

Kaicho-Sensei, third from right, joins guest in a toast at the anniversary luncheon.



Candles are lit and held at a peace vigil at the Crestone Center Amphitheater.

Crestone, and the Catskill Mountains. What a unique opportunity for our guests to experience the literal fruits of Shumei's labors!

There was yet another first this year. Bill Ellzey⁵ and I were talking about how to express Shumei's gratitude for the many artists who participate in the Crestone International Institute's Artist Symposia series, for which Bill is the organizer, when Bill struck on the idea of a reception for artists that would follow the keynote speech on Sunday. It was a great success, with about 100 guests visiting the circular gallery, which we dedicated at last year's anniversary to display art as part of the office-building complex at the Center. The reception was an elegantly casual end to this year's anniversary, with everyone sharing bread (Natural Agriculture of course), wine, cheese, and crackers amongst stunning art and the artists who

5. Bill Ellzey is the first American to become a Shumei member at Shumei's Center in Crestone, Colorado, where he presently is an advisory board member. He is also a renowned landscape photographer.



created it. It was wonderful to see Kaicho-Sensei absorbed in the appreciation of both the art and the artists present. It was the perfect moment to share a private greeting with our president. There was no official end to this reception, and people drifted in and away in a splendidly natural manner. And for some, the wine flowed long after most of the guests had called it a night.

I want to share one last 'behind the scenes' story, concerning how Carol Pearson came to be this year's keynote speaker. I was driving Sensei Alan Imai⁶ from Denver to Crestone a few months before the anniversary. Recently having returned from my first visit to Misono and still 'processing' that experience, I described to Alan Sensei how I had this image in my mind of Meishusama Hall,⁷ as I caught partial glimpses of it while approaching the structure. Passing the entrance post, coming into Misono on the long driveway to International Center's main complex, one glimpses a corner of the Hall's roof. Then once again, one gets a peek at it while walking across an open courtyard and ascending the stairs toward the Heavenly Portals.⁸ All the while, as I approached the Hall, everything I had heard about it seemed to float in my mind, along with images and photos I had seen. In particular, I recalled the story of the architect Minoru Yamasaki's inspiration for the design, which was the shape of Mount Fuji. Even though one does not see the entire structure until after washing one's hands and mouth at the waterfall on a stone paved path skirting the stairs to Heavenly Portals, and then walking past a grove at the edge of the grand plaza, strangely I felt as if I saw the entire shape with each hint and glimpse of the building.

6. Sensei Alan Imai serves as International Programs Director of the Shumei Natural Agriculture Network, and Executive Director of the Shumei International Institute.

7. The centerpiece of Shumei's main Center in Misono, Japan, Meishusama Hall holds over 5,000 people and is used for both daily Sampais and special events throughout the year.

8. Also called the 'Tenmon,' the Heavenly Portals are composed of eight majestic granite columns that rise above a terraced stairway on the approach to Meishusama Hall in Misono. Designed by Masayuki Nagare, they symbolize the boundary between the worldly and the sacred.

I was relating this experience to Alan as the majestic Rocky Mountains rolled past us, when I struck on a word that I knew related to this experience. The word was 'archetype.' It was new to Alan Sensei and I tried to explain its meaning. Webster offers the following definition: "An inherited idea or mode of thought in the psychology of C. G. Jung that is derived from the experience of the race and is present in the unconscious of the individual." Carl Jung found that people of various cultures around the world with little cultural or ancestral connections shared common images in

their dreams. From this discovery, he developed his theories of the 'collective unconscious.' Archetypes appear in our dreams. Dreams of Mt. Fuji have been considered sacred dreams. Meishusama's dream of Mt. Fuji was a fundamentally significant one for him, and now for us.

After Alan Sensei and I arrived at the Crestone Center, either that very night or the next morning Alan asked me to research a recommendation he had received for a keynote speaker. I was startled to find that she, Dr. Carol Pearson, was a Jungian psychologist who wrote contemporary books on archetypes. Between then and the anniversary, I spoke several times with her. She seemed as excited to be a guest speaker as I was to have her speak. I told her my Meishusama Hall story and she immediately understood its meaning. During the course of our conversations, she became enthusiastic and impressed by Shumei's efforts in the world. It was wonderful to work with someone so willing to explore the connections between her own field and the organization she was to address.

An abridged version of her address follows this article. The complete version appears on the Shumei International Institute's website www.shumeicrestone.org.

Archetypal Stories and the Creation of Heaven on Earth

Carol S. Pearson Ph.D. (USA)

Carol Pearson is Director of the James MacGregor Burns Academy of Leadership and a Professor of Leadership Studies in the School of Public Policy at the University of Maryland College Park. Books by Dr. Pearson include "The Hero and the Outlaw: Building Extraordinary Brands Through the

Power of Archetypes," co-authored by Margaret Mark (McGraw-Hill, 2001) and "Mapping the Organizational Psyche: A Jungian Theory of Organizational Dynamics and Change," co-authored by John Corlett (CAPT: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, 2003).

The following is an abridged and edited text drawn from her keynote address given at Crestone, Colorado at the Anniversary Celebration of the Shumei International Institute.

Meishusama teaches that everything in the material world has its origin in the spiritual world, and that one must first deal with problems in the spiritual world to bring about real solutions to troubles in the material world. In this spirit, he challenged us to create Heaven on Earth.

Every ancient culture recognized the role of archetypal elements in the act of creation and balancing of energies in the body, society, and nature. Whatever begins in the world of spirit, must become manifest as thought. But this is not enough for an idea to be actualized. For this, we need the elements honored by Shumei: the Fire of passion and will; the Water of love, compassion, and human connectedness; and the Earth of stability and groundedness. Fire helps us commit and act. Water helps us love one another and work for the common good. And Earth stabilizes, gives structure, and supports activity within orderly processes. Without Earth, everything is



Carol S. Pearson

ephemeral. Fire burns itself out, Water flows on, but Earth remains, creating containers to hold and sustain the physical manifestation of the spirit. For this reason, I dedicate these remarks to Earth, our mother.¹

Universal stories or myths help us learn to live as global citizens, charged with creating

1. Of Shumei's three sacred places, Misono is dedicated to fire, Kishima Island is dedicated to water, and the Crestone Center is dedicated to Earth. Therefore it was particularly appropriate that while delivering this speech at Crestone Dr. Pearson dedicated it to Mother Earth.

Heaven on Earth. Many people think of the word 'myth' as meaning stories that are not true. However, the word really refers to the sacred narratives that provide the belief structures of any society, stories that help us understand the meaning of our lives.

The 20th Century Swiss psychiatrist C. G. Jung wanted to study anthropology, but could not get a scholarship for that. So, he took another scholarship, which let him study medicine and become one of the earliest and most brilliant psychiatrists. Through his interest in anthropology, he continued to absorb the literature, art, rituals, symbols, and religious beliefs of the world's people, both ancient and modern. His interdisciplinary knowledge helped him perceive that the dreams of his patients contained symbols and narrative patterns that recurred in every culture and every period. From this, he developed a theory that beneath our many cultural differences are fundamental ways of thinking and feeling that unify all people. He called these patterns 'archetypes.'

My own work, influenced by Jung, focuses on archetypal stories that people both tell and live throughout the world. It strives to help people understand these stories so they can live them at higher and more effective levels. It also helps them, when they are stuck in a counter-productive story, to shift the story by calling up a different archetypal energy—developing what I call 'narrative intelligence.' The capacity to recognize the stories we are living can be a powerful tool in promoting global citizenship. It can also help design educational experiences that foster ways of living essential to Meishusama's dream of manifesting Heaven on Earth.

The beauty of Meishusama's idea of realizing Heaven on Earth, and his emphasis on the importance of art, have inspired me to use a parable.

Once upon a time, far, far away, beyond the distant side of our galaxy was a beautiful planet swirling around a bright and shining star. This grand ball of light generously gave off energy in all directions, and this planet was just the right distance from it, and had just the right orbit around it, to support life. It took billions of years for life to evolve to a species similar to humans, with the capacity for language and conscious thought. They called this planet Ichtar.

The first people evolved close to the equator where the temperature was warm, vegetation lush, and food plentiful. No great effort was required for them to feed or clothe themselves, and all they needed for shelter was a simple roof to keep off the rain. Ichtharians were, quite simply, in paradise. Everything they needed was given to them by their planet, which they honored as a generous mother.

But this species was curious and adventurous, and soon began to travel throughout the

globe, settling in all sorts of less auspicious climates where arctic cold and harsh deserts made life hard and survival tenuous. Over time, their bodies and skin color evolved to assist them in that survival, and their cultures and attitudes became distinct from one another.

Over hundreds of years, forgetting they were all brothers and sisters, they began seeing the others as 'Other,' as foreigners and competitors for the raw materials needed for survival. It was not long before they invented war, justifying the killing of their neighbors by seeing them as evil. The more land and resources a group won in struggle, the more superior they felt, thus further justifying efforts to subjugate others. Over time, this hierarchical view infected attitudes within many of these tribes, so that individuals in each society spent most of their time jockeying with one another for who could amass the most things, the most status, and the most power. Doing so took all the energy they had.

Now, imagine astronauts from our future Earth landing on Ichtar. Imagine too that by the time they landed on Ichtar, it was in real trouble. Its people were depleting and exploiting their planet's resources in a way imperiling its future. Individuals and groups were so compulsively protecting themselves and ensuring their ascendancy in the social order that they could not slow down to address this issue. Furthermore, each tribe had amassed enormous weaponry with which to invade other countries or simply protect their own boundaries. The few who were aware recognized that some of these weapons were so destructive they could destroy the species, if not all life on the planet.

Remembering a similar time in Earth's history, the human astronauts were concerned. They had learned how close Earth's peoples had come to exterminating life on our own beautiful planet. They realized how real the threat to life had been on Earth and now how real it was again on Ichtar. They huddled together to figure out how to get the attention of the Ichtharians and tell them the good news of how Earth had averted its own crisis and learned to create Heaven on Earth.

They knew they needed to explain that the solution on Earth began when people understood that the story they were living was not the only one available. In the spiritual realm, there are many mythic or universal stories, all of which can guide human behavior. One human space traveler remembered the ideas of Carl Jung, who noticed that narrative patterns in his patient's dreams were similar to those found in cultures all over the world. People's sense of Otherness came from cultural differences and differences of appearance, but at the deeper psychological levels people were more similar than different. Not only were their dreams the same, but they lived out many of the same archetypal story patterns.

Now let us step out of this story long enough to recognize that we know a lot about how we live stories in our everyday lives. If you think about it, you can see something similar in life patterns we all take for granted: the maturation process of growing from a child to an adult; the progression of attraction between lovers to the fulfillment of love and commitment; the way mothers nurture and even sacrifice for their children; the way we all grow old and die; the yearning people have to connect with their Creator; and so on. At different times in life, people all over the world live out stories of growing up, making commitments, caring for others, letting go, and of seeking union with the divine. Each of these situations tends to give rise to a certain type of plot, with some people living out its positive narrative, moving toward a happy ending, and others living it out in its negative or tragic form.

Let us think about ways of naturally shifting stories in terms of a real person. As a young adult and way into his thirties, Bill lived an Explorer Story, exploring new ideas, traveling, joining the Peace Corps to live in Costa Rica, and generally enjoying and maximizing his independence. He gave little thought to marrying and settling down, until he met Susan and fell in love. Soon he amazed himself by his willingness to make a lifetime commitment to her and by how happy he was in his new married life. He transitioned from living an Explorer Story to a Lover Story.

Still, he recognized how important some degree of freedom and independence was to him. For that reason, he was reluctant to have a child. Yet, because his wife wanted one, he agreed. Imagine his surprise, then, when his daughter was born and he found himself suddenly in love with her, too, but in a different way, wanting to protect and care for her. When his wife returned to work, he chose to quit his job and stay home temporarily with the baby. When a potential employer tried to recruit him for an ideal job, he was reluctant, saying how much he valued being home with his daughter. For the first time ever, he found it easy and natural to sacrifice his independence and put his career on hold to care for someone else. We can see this as a Caregiver Story.

Each one of us has a series of life events that fundamentally shift our circumstances and affect the narratives we live out. Generally, we have an idea of how to live in each of these stages, in part because we have the examples of those who have gone before us, but also, if we accept the Jungian notion of archetypes, because somewhere in our hearts and minds we already know these patterns of living.

People live these stories in different styles, in different orders, and at different levels of consciousness, and learning how others have navigated such life passages is often the path to living generously and well. In a very real way, this shows how everyone who has lived such a

story has etched a groove in the collective consciousness of humankind that makes it easier for others. As people innovate in how they live that story, the groove in consciousness widens and deepens, making the story's plot progression ever easier for others to live out, while also helping the innovators develop the virtues of that story. For example, the Explorer breeds independence, the Lover closeness, and the Caregiver nurturance, altruism, and sacrifice.

We can also see that it is natural, as people grow and develop, to move from one story to another. No one has to force them to do so, although cultural forces can hold back this growth and development. Now back to our story.

The astronauts had no trouble identifying the different stories humans had been forced to live to rebalance the Earth. They learned that long ago. The first breakthrough that stopped people from hurtling off the edge into disaster was the realization that the way they were living was not inevitable. Up until then, most people thought it was just being realistic to live out a story focusing on competition and acquisition because that was just how things were done, and how you showed your worth.

Virtually everyone played a role in this drama that was often mistaken for reality. Some were the winners, some the losers, and some kind souls were the Caregivers, trying their best to heal those minds, hearts, and bodies that were harmed in the ongoing battle. Overall, people came to realize, this story was a War Story that required them not only to be at war with one another, but with parts of themselves and life itself.

The astronauts also remembered that although the War Story had taken people to the brink of extinction, it also had its usefulness. Humans learned the Warrior's discipline, focus, and courage, and to the degree that they cared for the wounded and provided some safety net for the losers, they gained the Caregiver's compassion and skills as well. These were virtues essential to the daunting task of cleaning up the environment, finding ways to mutually disarm, and helping those most disadvantaged.

One astronaut wondered aloud whether it was likely that the people of Ichtar could learn anything from another culture. It certainly was worth a try to share what they knew and then let the people of Ichtar decide what they wanted to do, respecting, of course, their right to make their own choices.

The astronauts wanted to warn that the first shift in Earth's story, which led to the eventual solution, had not looked all that promising. Paradoxically, at first it looked as if things were getting worse. People, especially the young, began to feel and act more and more alienated, like Outsiders in their own cultures. And too many of those old enough to avoid being so self-absorbed failed to mature and snap out of it. Everyone

appeared to be quite self-indulgent, for it seemed all they could focus on was themselves, what they wanted, what they believed, and how they wanted to live. Such people often traveled or explored new thinking and new ways of being, but with a focus solely on finding themselves and their own sense of purpose. Everything was just "all about me."

It seemed like global cohesiveness was crumbling more profoundly than before, as more and more people started living this fiercely individualistic Explorer Story. In living this story, they often blamed the Others—those they saw as having power—for the world's problems, taking little or no responsibility themselves. They either stepped out of the mainstream or simply tried to find some expression for their authentic selves within the world as it was, without much sense of responsibility for the whole.

Eventually the shift in Earthly societies from the Warrior to the Explorer mentality underwent a further refinement. The emphasis on narrow-minded fulfillment of the individual or the species moved slowly towards a focus on interdependence (ecological balance) and living together in harmony. The search for a deeper sense of identity through finding one's own purposes, talents, and beliefs led to a new sense of individuality and worth that was absolute rather than relative—not about being better or worse, just being fully yourself.

As people came to know who they were in an absolute way, their thinking changed. They stopped contrasting their worth with that of others and let go of the constant struggle for supremacy. Instead of insidious mental comparisons and competition ("Am I superior to you?" "Am I inferior?" "If superior, how can I retain that superiority?" "If inferior, how do I turn the tables?"), they simply thought: "Who are they?" "What do they know that I do not?" "How can we work together to solve this problem or realize this vision?"

Once we recognize what we know and what our gifts are, we understand that we are partial, just as everyone else is. We also know what talents we do not have and what we do not know. It is as if we are puzzle pieces eager to find those that complement and complete us. The astronauts remembered that it was only when people expressed such willing interconnectedness that humankind began to save themselves and the planet.

What is this story, this story about yearning to find the other puzzle pieces? This is, of course, the love story. Most people have lived some version of the Lover Story, some more successfully than others. Great spiritual teachers throughout history taught the importance of moving beyond romantic love, familial love, and friendship to develop the capacity to love nature, to treat all beings with loving kindness, or to experience union in love with the divine or the divine that is in all beings.

Maybe because Earth's future hung in the balance, people no longer took their home planet for granted. Shifting the story, humankind opened its eyes and fell in love with the Earth—savoring the beauty of a meadow or a flower, the grandeur of a mountain range, the clarity of a clear mountain lake, loving it as they would a lover or a cherished child. Instead of taking it for granted, they marveled at its beauty and cared for it, not out of duty and sacrifice, but gratitude and devotion. As they learned more about the balance in nature and the ongoing miracle of the round of birth and death and rebirth, they also respected the Earth, not as a thing, but as a being with its own life and consciousness. Rather than seeing themselves as Warriors, nature's conquerors, they recognized that they were part of the Earth. Any harm they did to her, they did to themselves.

Rooted in a new sense of individual purpose and identity, people for the first time began living a Lover Story. Thus, they were able to stop judging others, looking for what was wrong with them. They also stopped competing with others long enough to appreciate the beauty of all the different sizes, colors, shapes, opinions, and gifts to be seen among the peoples of the world. Different national states assessed their ability to give in order to avert crisis. Together, they raised the funds, the technical knowledge, the person-power, the prayers, and the strategies of transformation necessary to right the natural and social balance and ensure that life on Earth would not just survive, but thrive.

Over time, people all over the world began to see themselves as Creators and Healers—people who had responsibility for creating the lives they lived. They began this by recognizing the stories they were living, and analyzing whether they were putting their own good in balance with that of their loved ones, neighbors, and the globe. They also learned strategies of shifting the story—by calling on the fire of awareness and the capacity to choose, the water of flexibility and oneness with the whole, and the solidity of Earth to ground this new story in right action and enlightened social structures.

The primary point the astronauts attempted to share with the Ichtharians was that this shift of stories was as natural as that of an individual growing up and learning how to love—caring for others as much as self. No miracle needed to happen. The natural growth of the human heart and mind just had to be unfettered from the falsehood that the story they were living collectively was reality—the way things have to be.

And that was how the people of Earth manifested Heaven on Earth, the astronauts concluded. They simply shifted stories in a way totally natural to the species. But could the citizens of Ichtar learn from Earth's example? The astronauts had places to go and people to see, so they could not wait to see what happened on Ichtar.

But thinking through Earth's history in order to share it taught them how shifting archetypal stories had affected the evolution of their own species and the preservation of their own planet.

As they traveled around the universe, they shared this awareness, providing many civilizations with empowering tools of consciousness. That did much good.

This is the end of my story. What does it have to do with us, today?

I am aware that the story puts a positive spin on the Earth's future—and the future could just as easily be catastrophic. Yet, I also know that the scenarios I have laid out could happen, and if they do, they would start with each one of us. They start with a clear intent to manifest Heaven on Earth right now in all we do. All change starts with a few people, whose actions cause a ripple effect that eventually changes everything. Such changes can be negative, ushering in stories of oppression, exploitation, and devastation. But they also can be positive.

This is why it matters how we each live, even in what we consider quite private and personal parts of our lives. We can begin by cultivating the 'narrative intelligence' to recognize the stories we are living and to notice the impact of those stories on the quality of our individual, family, community, and global experience.

We can also recognize the gifts we are gaining, even by living narratives we have not chosen. Looking back, we might see that we have had personal experience with living all the stories I have described so far.

For example, most of us have the experience of living a Warrior Story, trying to measure up, defeat the enemy or competitor, and generally stand our ground and overcome obstacles. In this story, you see people as inherently flawed unless or until they pull themselves together and use their strength to accomplish something of value. Doing so helps them gain skill, focus, discipline, and courage. Moreover, in the Warrior Story, you will likely project whatever you dislike in yourself onto others, blaming them or even attacking them. However, if you let go of this tendency and withdraw your projections, you can use the strengths you have gained to let go of narrow, parochial self-interest and xenophobia and live as a global citizen, committed to the common good.

At the same time, you may have lived a Caregiver Story, taking care of the young, the old, the helpless, the poor, and the downtrodden, or just being nice to anyone who seemed to need it. In the process, you may have gained great virtues of compassion, nurturance, and altruism. If you can avoid the negative side of the story—martyring yourself and keeping others dependent on you—you can wrap your arms around this world and keep it safe. In this story, your focus is on anyone in need and you are motivated to do whatever you can to help.

Many of you might also have lived an Explorer Story, exploring possible ways to find your own uniqueness. In the course of that journey, you may have found your talents, your gifts, your own perspective and your life purpose. But this story could also have a negative side, stranding you in the role of the Outsider, alienated and sometimes acutely lonely because of a fear of conforming. If you release that sense of being alien or an outsider, recognizing that you are as much an insider as anyone, you might open yourself to appreciating others without having to measure yourself against them.

You also might have lived the Love Story, if you have allowed yourself fully to feel your love for a lover, a spouse or partner, a child, a place, a work, or a spiritual path. If you have been able to let go of the Lover's tendency to be overly attached to a particular love object, you can also let go of the fear of loss that seems to be part of the human condition. When you do this, you may have become a life-lover and a person capable of building community and encouraging coalitions.

Finally, if you have experience with the Creator Story, you not only enjoy artistry and the chance to create, you also know that to some degree you are a creator of your own life. However, most creative people have sometimes created messes in their lives, leading them to distrust their imaginative potential. Yet, such mistakes can be the source of learning. If you have gotten good at knowing which fantasies to trust and which to reject, you might have moved into a process of being a wise creator of your own life—working with others to create Heaven on Earth, at least in your own corner of the world.

While it is helpful to clarify one's own intent to live out the best side of each of these stories, in general you can trust that they arise in all of us naturally as we move through life's many stages and grapple with common problems. Being aware of these patterns in their positive and negative forms speeds things up and makes it increasingly likely that you will live out the more positive, life-enhancing form of each story.

Being a global citizen starts here and now in each moment that we choose to expand our circle of care and concern beyond our own self-interest and our own group or nation. We further our ability to do this by living the great mythic stories, and in the process experiencing union with every other soul who has done so. Recognizing that we are treading well-worn paths forged by pioneers of human consciousness, whether well-known or forgotten, can give us courage and provide us with hope.

As Meishusama taught, man's behavior conditions this world to become a blissful earthly paradise or a cruel hell. This is the truth: the achievement of the Kingdom of Heaven is our ultimate goal.

Words from the Desert

Father Dave Denny (USA)

Dave Denny is a Roman Catholic priest who, with Sister Tessa Baleki, founded the Desert Foundation in a remote mountain canyon north of Crestone, Colorado. The following is a transcript from a talk he gave as part of the Interfaith Gathering on Saturday May 20, 2006 at the Shumei International Institute's Fourth Anniversary Celebration. The text of Father Denny's speech has been edited for use in Shumei Magazine.

Almost a year ago, on the summer solstice, Tessa Baleki and I began what we call the Desert Foundation, which is really just an informal circle of friends who share a love for the desert, both the land and the people, and the spiritual traditions that have come out of the desert.

One of my favorite greetings is Arabic and comes from North Africa; it is "Ahlan wa sahlan," which in essence means, "These are your people and this is your land." That is how people greet you when you come into their homes in that part of the world. Hospitality has always been the keystone of desert traditions. My own interest has always been in the Abrahamic traditions. I found myself at age 17 in Afghanistan. When an American goes abroad like that, if you really go the distance, you never really come back. Whether you like it or not, you become a world citizen. The experience introduces you to a much larger understanding of the human family.

I remember growing up in Indiana. We used to sing a hymn in Church: "In Christ there is no east, no west, there is no north or south." It was always a great challenge for me to try to understand my own tradition in a universal way that does not impose an alienating unity, but rather celebrates a profound unity that is liberating to everyone. That is the kind of hospitality that comes out of the desert. As I thought while looking ahead to today and our coming together, one of the things that probably unites all of us in the Crestone area at this moment is anxiety over lack of rain. People who live in the desert know what that is like. This year we are particularly worried about it. So I wanted to say a few words about thirst. It is something we all share, something that brings us all together on many different levels. Obviously this year we are worried about drought and a thirsty land. Of course, we also have thirsty hearts and thirsty souls.

In the Hebrew Scriptures, which precede the other Abrahamic traditions, the Christian and Muslim, we read in Psalm 42:

As the deer longs for streams of water
my soul longs for you Oh God. My
being thirsts for God the living God.
When can I go and see the face of God?

And then in Psalm 63 we read:

Oh God you are my God for you I long,
for you my body yearns, for you my soul
thirsts like a land parched, lifeless, and
without water.

I think most of us have known the desert as a kind of land, but also as this kind of experience. A longing hunger, a thirst for something that is transcendent and yet at the same time approachable. It is more you than you are, more me than I am, closer to us than we are to ourselves.

So that would be my prayer for us this year—in gratitude first of all to Shumei for the invitation to be here. And then also a prayer for the satisfaction of thirst on every level: The Prophet Isaiah wrote, “The desert and the dry land will rejoice and blossom.” We have decided to take that as the motto of the Desert Foundation. We hope that that rather bold trust will indeed come true on as many possible levels as God wills.

Editor's Note: At the time that this transcription was being prepared, Father Denny's prayer had been answered. Crestone enjoyed an extraordinary week of much needed rain. And for the moment the dry land is rejoicing and blossoming.

World Citizenship

Swamiji Brahmachari (USA)

Swamiji Brahmachari is the Spiritual Master of the Temple of Consciousness, an ashram in Crestone that is part of a worldwide humanitarian organization called Humanity in Unity, which was founded by Her Holiness Sai Ma Lakshmi Devi. Swamiji Brahmachari delivered the following address on May 20 as part of the Interfaith Gathering at the Shumei International Institute's anniversary celebration. The following was transcribed from a video recording and edited for use in SHUMEI Magazine.

Om Jai Jai Ma as we say in our tradition, “Hail to the Blessed Mother.” And I feel drawn also to say “Boli Baba Ki Jai,” for the Father. I have a message from Her Holiness Sai

Ma Lakshmi Devi for all of you of Shumei: “Love and blessings for your continued work.” And I say, for all of our continued work in our communities together.

I am going to say some words, and I invite you to feel and experience these words. I feel in speaking about World Citizens¹ that this is about ‘being’—being—ness—being world citizens. Not as much about doing, although we still ‘do’ as world citizens. There are different perspectives about world citizenship and world citizens. First of all, within us, we are already world citizens. Within us we have the whole world. Many of us know this and I am only repeating what you know, what you practice. But it is always wonderful to be reminded. So, just to feel this right now, that we have the whole world, the whole cosmos, the whole universe within us, and that we are world, global, cosmic, universal citizens—it is a matter of revealing this to ourselves, doing the work, purifying ourselves, transmuting.

This is also all about consciousness and energy, as many have spoken about today. It is about allowing this to expand within us through our practices, through the work that we do on ourselves. Then we have our spiritual communities. We have the Temple of Consciousness—Humanity in Unity. We have the Haidakhandi (Universal Ashram), we have the Carmelites, and the Zen Center. We have Shumei—just to name a few of the many centers in Crestone. So we have our Sangahs² where we create this vortex, this grid, this unity consciousness within our communities.

Where two or more are gathered the power increases, the consciousness expands. We have this within our own communities and we are experiencing this right now. Today we have all these glorious spiritual communities sitting here. We unite together in our expanded consciousness together in this grid, in this vortex, in this unity consciousness right here. We do this right now and we do this together on different occasions, by creating together. We have the Crestone Spiritual Alliance³ and other projects we can create together to expand our unity consciousness amongst ourselves. When we do this we create bridges to expand this more and more. We create bridges between Japan and the United States of America, between the United States and India, and other countries. We come together and cross these bridges to do humanitarian work, and to spread this consciousness around the world.

So again, this world citizenship is within us, within our communities, between and among our communities, and expanding more

1. Meishusama, Shumei's founder, believed that people must look beyond envisioning themselves narrowly as members of a particular ethnic, cultural, religious, or national group, and instead consider themselves as ‘Citizens of the World.’

2. ‘Sangahs’ means ‘communities.’

3. The Crestone Spiritual Alliance is an interfaith group that includes many of Crestone's Spiritual Communities.

and more. This is our work. These are our various practices. As I said, we may already know this, but I just want to share this so that we feel this here and continue to feel this as we manifest our world citizenship together.

I do wish to emphasize one more point that concerns youth. Several people have spoken today about children and youth. Sai Ma and all our people are very devoted to youth and young adults. We have done some work with Shumei, and hopefully we will do more work with you this summer. We also are sending four young adults to Thailand to spend time with a beautiful nun named Mai Chi. There is also a global youth conference happening next month that four more of our young adults will be attending, and a continuation of that at the United Nations in New York later in August. Our work with youth and the work they can do to further global, cosmic, and universal citizenship is an inspiration to us all. It is such a joy to work with these young people.

Once again, I am very, very happy to be here with all of you. I love to hear, meet, and see all of the different communities here. We look forward to continuing to work together to be in that state of being – world citizens, individually, and together.

Om Jai Jai Ma.

GRAND SAMPAI, 2006

Every year, from the third through the fifth of May, Shumei members gather at the organization's primary Center in Misono, Japan to celebrate Grand Sampai. The purpose of this event is to offer gratitude and seek spiritual renewal. The ceremonies commemorate three things important in Shumei's history: firstly, the founding of Misono; secondly, the sanctuary that now stands at the Tamateyama Center in Osaka, which was designed by Meishusama in 1952; and thirdly, Shumei's independence from its parent organization in 1970.

Grand Sampais begin with a ceremony held at Meishusama Hall where members give speeches, chant, and receive Jyorei from Shumei's president, Kaicho-Sensei. Later during the observance, Kaicho-Sensei delivers a speech. Following the ceremony is a luncheon and later a concert given at Meishusama Hall. Approximately 35,000 people attend this event annually.

Grand Sampais have a particular significance for Shumei's western members, as attending this event for the first time is often a member's earliest experience of Misono's grandeur and, more often than not, a member's first visit to Japan—both especially memorable events.

Meishusama Hall, May 5, 2006.

The following two articles come from two members who attended this year's Grand Sampai. The first is by Dr. Diana Jerkins, who was a familiar visitor to Misono even before she became a Shumei member. The second, by Bibi Chapman, is a remembrance of attending a first Grand Sampai and a first visit to Japan.

A Life in Sustainable Farming

On Finding one's Vocation

Diana Jerkins, Ph.D. (USA)

Diana Jerkins is a National Program Leader with the USDA¹ Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service. Her responsibilities include the leadership of the National Research Initiative (NRI) Natural Resource and Rural Prosperity section in program and RFA development. Presently, she is looking to develop an Ecosystem Services Initiative, which would combine agricultural production with the necessary respect for natural resources and environmental quality. As co-leader of the science for sustainability and organic working groups, she leads agency-wide activities supporting sustainable and organic agriculture programs.

Dr. Jerkins became a Shumei member at the Shumei America National Center, Pasadena in October of 2005, after a close professional relationship with Shumei that began when she directed the Center for Regenerative Studies at the California Polytechnic Institute in Pomona, California. She continues to work with Shumei to circulate information concerning Natural Agriculture. Her dream is to one day settle down and have a farm where she could practice organic and Natural Agriculture.

The following is an address that she delivered in Meishusama Hall in Misono at the Grand Sampai of May 2, 2006.

It is inspiring to be at Misono again, and to be among so many cherished friends. I feel very privileged and honored to also have had sup-

port and belief in my work on Natural Agriculture from Kai-cho-Sensei and Shumei members.

I have always felt that I was part of the Shumei family, even before becoming a member. This was due to the friendliness and hospitality of Shumei members in the United States, and through meeting with members during my visits to Japan. When I meet fellow Shumei members, I feel as if we already have known each other by some previously established bonds. We share common interests in Natural Agriculture, common beliefs about the role of beauty in our lives, and beliefs in the basic human values of treating each other with dignity and conducting our lives in a manner that is not harmful either to others or to nature.

During part of my childhood I was raised on an apple farm. During these formative years, I remember walking in the fields, enjoying the colors of the grass, trees, and sky. Each morning waiting for the school bus, I would sit on the soft moss in a shady forest and rub the moss to feel its soft, fuzzy texture. I remember swimming in a creek, which was crystal clear and very cold because the water came from high mountain streams. I was at peace with my place in life. All of these sensations of nature have remained with me throughout my whole life. My greatest joy still is to be in the garden and to be part of nature.

But life changes as we grow up. The apple farmers began using chemicals. The water became cloudy and smelled bad. Many people in the community over the years became sick, especially with cancer. People's actions change. Those actions change nature. These changes made me sad and angry.

When I went to college I wanted to be a physician so that I could save people's lives. However, I was young and I wanted to enjoy life more than study. I studied psychology to be able to work with children who had emotional problems. After working for several years as a psychologist's assistant, I became impatient with how long it took to change people's mental conditions, and was drawn back to my love of nature. I went to graduate school to receive formal education in agriculture so that the scientific community would accept me. My goal was to be able to practice and teach organic agriculture. I had read



Diana Jerkins

organic farming books and for many years had a small garden. I met Robert Rodale² when I invited him to speak at the Georgia Organic Growers Association's annual meeting. But to be recognized as a scientific professional, it was necessary for me to have a graduate degree. My professors did not know of my interest in organic agriculture because it was not an accepted agricultural practice at that time. Now of course organic agriculture is the fastest expanding area in agriculture. I had finally found my mission in life, to work in the area of sustainable agriculture.

I think most people need to go through many experiences before they find their mission, as these various experiences provide the necessary preparation to fulfill their life's work. Many people become frustrated along the way because they cannot see where the path is leading, but faith in one's self and knowing that we all have a purpose will help us to keep on the path. Being supported by the teachings of Meishusama and our sensei's guidance will help us through these difficult times. We learn to balance the needs of family, career, community, and self. As I tell my daughter, when one door closes another one will open if we are prepared. Another saying is that the Master

1. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) was founded in 1862 by US President Abraham Lincoln, initially to help farmers obtain guidance concerning growing crops. Since then the USDA's role has expanded. It is now the United States' largest conservation agency and leads America's federal anti-hunger efforts. It is the steward of the USA's national forests and rangelands, is responsible for the health and safety of food products, and is a research leader in everything from human nutrition to new crop technologies. The USDA also provides food aid to needy people overseas.

2. Robert Rodale took over the leadership of the Rodale Institute from his father, J I Rodale, after the elder Rodale's death in 1971. J I Rodale and Shumei's founder, Mokichi Okada (Meishusama), carried on a correspondence during the early 1950s, both being advocates of sustainable agriculture. The Rodale Institute continues to be a pioneer in organic agriculture, and in recent years has formed a partnership with Shumei. Robert Rodale passed away in 1990.

Attendees of the Grand Sampai wait for concert to begin in Meishusama Hall.



Visiting the Miho Museum is an option for those attending Grand Sampai.



will appear when the student is ready. We all have talents given to us by God, and must develop and use them in our life's journey to support ourselves and benefit humankind.

While conducting research on Natural Agriculture in California sponsored by Shumei, I felt that professionally it might be perceived as a conflict of interest to be a Shumei member. I did not want the results to be less valid because of my relationship with Shumei. When we finished the field research, I felt able to become a member of Shumei. My family has received many benefits from our relationships with Shumei members and from receiving Jyorei. While recovering from cancer, my husband received Jyorei from Kenji Ban³ when we were at the California Polytechnic Institute in Pomona, California. Kenji also demonstrated Natural Agriculture to our students. My husband believes that Kenji's sharing of Jyorei helped him to recover from his illness.

After receiving my ohikari⁴ last October at the Pasadena annual celebration, I became very sick for several months. This was very unusual for me, as I have rarely experienced any major illnesses as an adult. While being sick I had several unusual experiences. My sickness began with what seemed to be a cold in my head. Over time it advanced down my body into my lungs and into my abdomen, infecting my appendix and intestines. By this time the doctor said I had a massive infection and would need to take antibiotics to survive. I believed him because I was in a great deal of

pain and the illness had continued for so long. When I took the pills, I reacted adversely to them and became even more ill. So, I had to discontinue taking them. At this point, I was not sure that I would survive this illness. One day, as I was trying to sleep, a voice and beam of light came into my head. The voice said that my throat would be well. I immediately felt the pain leave my throat. This voice occurred several times over the next few weeks at different parts of my body until the illness was completely gone. Gradually I have gained my strength back and look forward to working and enjoying life again. This was quite a lesson for me to learn about sickness, fear, pain, and the joy that comes when sickness is gone. I feel now that I can better understand and sympathize with others who have discomfort or sickness. Now I am more open to receiving strength and healing by giving and receiving Jyorei. I feel a great urgency to do the best work that I can in the time that I have left on this earth. I strive to better understand and to be able to communicate about the spiritual and energy connection between nature and humans. And I feel that understanding and working with this spiritual connection will bring about the next evolution in agriculture.

Shumei members are my inspiration, because they are accomplishing so many things while others say these things cannot be done—for example, practicing Natural Agriculture without the use of industrial chemicals, healing with spiritual light, and living in peace with others. You do this work with joy and gratitude. My American senseis,⁵ Eugene Imai, Alan Imai, and Chisako Fukushima, have provided guidance and teaching about Meishusama's philosophy. I

have worked with and learned from many members in the United States, such as Chikako Ishii, Junzo Uyeno⁶ and Masa Noda.⁷ We have had many interesting and wide-ranging discussions. I was introduced to Natural Agriculture practices by Sensei Alan Imai. From the beginning, Matsubayashi⁸ and Alan Sensei have supported research in the United States on Natural Agriculture. Now Deguchi Sensei⁹ and Goto Sensei¹⁰ and the Natural Agriculture research committee continue to support international understanding of Natural Agriculture with the development of a book for farmers. Over the years, I have continued to learn more about Natural Agriculture by visiting many farms in Japan, and have felt the spirit of the farmers. I have tasted the special flavors of the foods that they produce and heard about their healing powers.

I look forward to continuing to work with Shumei and the members in Japan and around the world to continue to learn and teach about Meishusama's philosophy, so that new voices will join ours to make a better and more healthy world to live in for all of God's creatures.

3. Kenji Ban is a Natural Agriculture horticulturalist who heads the Catskill Mountain Foundation Natural Agriculture Farm. Dr. Jenkins and Kenji Ban first met when Mr. Ban worked at the John Lyle Center for Regenerative Studies at California Polytechnic University in Pomona, California and Dr. Jenkins headed the Agricultural Department there.

4. An ohikari is a miniature sacred emblem worn by all Shumei members when giving Jyorei. It consists of a small parchment bearing artistic calligraphy by Meishusama and worn about the neck.

5. Sensei, a Japanese word meaning 'teacher,' is a title given those who have achieved a certain degree of skill and knowledge in a certain field of endeavor. Shumei's senseis are authorized by Shumei to teach, counsel, give spiritual guidance, perform particular spiritual practices, and administer within the organization.

6. Junzo Uyeno is a Natural Agriculture horticulturalist who lives in Los Angeles. He created the Hollywood Garden located on the grounds of Shumei's Hollywood Center and is involved in many of Shumei America's Natural Agriculture projects. Dr. Jenkins met Mr. Uyeno when he worked at the John Lyle Center for Regenerative Studies.

7. Masaharu Noda is the farm manager of Shumei's Natural Agriculture farm in Santa Cruz, California.

8. Sensei Kenzo Matsubayashi was the Director of Shumei's Natural Agricultural Department until he passed away in 2001.

9. Sensei Koichi Deguchi is Shumei's Director of Natural Agriculture.

10. Sensei Yukihiko Goto is the leader of the research committee of Shumei's Natural Agricultural Department.

A First Grand Sampai at Misono

Bibi Chapman (USA)

Bibi Chapman became a Shumei member in February 2004. Since then, she has become a very active member at Shumei America's National Center in Pasadena. She works as a certified massage therapist and instructor, and teaches at Northwest College in Pasadena, California.

Since becoming a Shumei member, I have been able to integrate my life and reflect on my spiritual being. On receiving my ohikari, I have experienced a connection with God every time I exchange Jyorei, allowing my inner self to be purified and grow spiritually. My life has



Bibi Chapman and daughter Danielle (left) having lunch at the Miho Museum. The tour's guide, Atsushi Fujimaki, is in background right.

improved and I have found a deeper level of happiness and peace. Because of Shumei, I also have done some traveling. My first trip was to the Shumei International Institute in Crestone, Colorado in 2005. Being there started a great process of purification¹ for me. This in turn prepared me for another most amazing and unforgettable experience: my first trip to Japan to attend Grand Sampai.

My daughter Danielle and I were overwhelmed by the kindness, sincerity, and honesty of both Shumei's members and the people of Japan. As defined by Meishusama's teaching *Makoto, Sincerity and Truth*, these virtues are the key to solving our problems.

I would like to thank everyone involved in arranging and making possible our trip to Japan in May, particularly Sensei Eugene Imai² for so

1. The concept of purification is a major tenet of Shumei's philosophy. It is the process by which spiritual impurities are dissolved.

2. Sensei Eugene Imai is the Director of Shumei America and the Director of Shumei's International Department.

kindly furnishing us with Francois Kuwata³ as a guide, without whom we would have been lost. Francois made a good coordinator and an excellent companion for both Danielle and me. Thank you, Eugene and Francois.

As we toured and visited several places, not only was the generosity of the Japanese people abundant, but also their warmth, kindness, and openness in every way to ensure that our needs and happiness were met. Their way of opening their hearts to us, their beautiful homes, and their excellent culture, and the sharing of their food and homes were clearly a sign of their true selves.

Some of the things that were particularly noticeable were the cleanliness of every place and everything we encountered, the punctuality they adhered to, their friendliness, and the respectful behavior of everyone—it was all so ingratiating.

My advice to anyone who is out of condition like myself, is to do some extra walking prior to going to Japan and get yourself fit, as there is lots of walking involved at the train stations and getting to certain shrines. And generally you should understand that this is part of the 'hectic' lifestyle—if you don't want to be left behind!

We also found Japanese toilet technology amusing, but very practical. At one end of the scale you have the squatting type and at the other end, the comfortable conventional toilets where the seats are warm with a built-in bidet—the functioning of which is most useful. (In this case, you do not have to purchase toilet tissues before going to the bathroom.) It is like sitting on a computer with the programmed buttons on the handle of the toilet seat.

If you travel on the bullet train or any form of public transportation, what is so noticeable to us Westerners is the conductor's respect for those on board; as he left the compartment he would turn and bow to the passengers—what a wonderful way to acknowledge others on public transportation!

The Shumei international staff and members really worked hard to coordinate, schedule, and handle everyone with style, treating each one as deserving of individual attention. In other words, there could be no fault in the way things were handled at such a demanding, high, and enormous level.

Above all, we came to realize the true nature of our trip and its happy ending; we are now feeling the benefits in both our personal and business lives. Since being back from Japan, our lives have changed in many ways, and all thanks are due to Meishusama.

Thanks to everyone who made this first trip to Japan a wonderful and unforgettable experience for both Danielle and myself. In particular, I want to thank the man who introduced me to Shumei, Dr. John Hauge, for guiding me to this wonderful spiritual organization,

3. Francois (Fumitaka) Kuwata is an Assistant Sensei and staff member of Shumei America's National Center in Pasadena, where he supports member's care.

and all the people in the Shumei Family who have given me support, encouragement, love, and understanding.

Appetizing Beauty Wins Gourmand Book Award

Akiyoshi Hatanaka (Japan)

Akiyoshi Hatanaka became a Shumei member in 1977. He participated in planning and preparation for the Miho Museum's¹ opening in 1997 and afterwards was named Curator of Japanese Art, taking responsibility for the museum's collection of Japanese ceramics and works relating to the tea ceremony. He has helped plan and curate many of the notable exhibitions that have taken place at the museum throughout the years, including the "Kenzan—A World of Quietly Refined Elegance" mentioned in the text of this article. This article is drawn from a speech that Mr. Hatanaka delivered in Misono, Japan, earlier this year. The text has been edited and abridged for Shumei Magazine.

The book *Appetizing Beauty: Kenzan and Seasonal Dishes*, published in 2004 during the Miho Museum's Autumn Special Exhibition featuring the great artist Ogata Kenzan (*Kenzan—A World of Quietly Refined Elegance*), was awarded first prize in 'The Best Photography in the World' category in the Gourmand World Cookbook Awards 2005.

These Awards are not yet well known among the Japanese. They first won the spotlight when Harumi Kurihara, Japan's most famous cookery writer and a charismatic homemaker, won the grand prize at the 10th Gourmand World Cookbook Awards in 2004. The Gourmand Awards were founded by Edouard Cointreau in 1995 and represent the only truly international cookbook competition. About 24,000 food and wine books are produced every year in the world. This time, over 6,000 books were received and there were fifty categories. National winners are first selected in each category, then they compete for the title of 'Best in the World.' The Gourmand World Cookbook Awards are called the 'Oscars' for food and wine books. Since their inception, the awards events have been held in European countries such as Germany, France, Spain, and Sweden. This year the awards event (May 20,

1. The museum designed by I.M. Pei in the Shigaraki Mountains of Japan to house the Shumei Art Collection. For more information in English concerning the Miho Museum, please visit www.miho.or.jp/english/.

2006) was held for the first time in an Asian Country: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Surprisingly, this book is not a recipe book. I thought it would be impossible for a Japanese book to be selected Best Cookbook of the Year for two years running. However, *Appetizing Beauty* won for 'Best Photography in the World.'

According to the Gourmand Cookbook Awards, they always seek a good combination of author, publisher, and readers to create a balanced harmony in the best wine or cookbooks awards. They described our book as follows:

Miho Museum is the publisher of a perfect book, "Appetizing Beauty: Kenzan and Seasonal Dishes." The balance of the food, the text, the photos, and the design makes a combination that touches the reader with the beauty of the Museum. The book won a 'Best in the World' award for the photography by Koshida Gozen, but the design of Awatsuji Design Company and the inspiration of Hatanaka Akiyoshi are equally impressive.

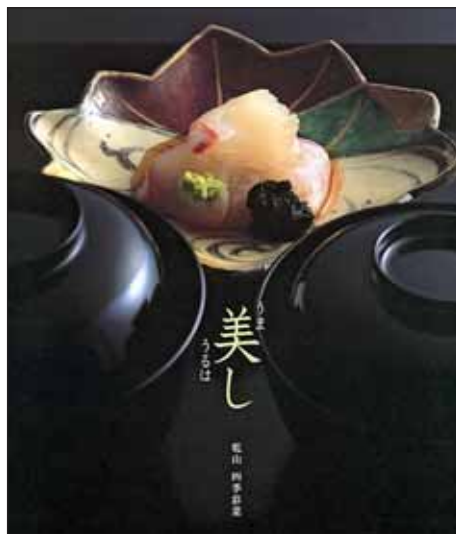
It was the first time a Japanese publication won the 'Best Photography in the World' award.

We began our work in the summer of 2003, and it took almost a year to complete the book. The beautiful photographs taken by Koshida Gozen supplied the finishing touch. His photos fittingly complemented the perfect design by the Awatsuji Design Company.

I did not know about this photographer before the project. When I read a book titled "Azi no Kaze" (Winds of Tastes) published by Aoyagi ('Blue Willows'), a traditional Japanese restaurant in Tokushima Prefecture, Japan, I had an insight that came in a flash: Mr. Gozen would be the perfect photographer for our project. I contacted him directly and he agreed to work for our book. He is a food photographer who was also providing photos for a Japanese book introducing El Bulli, a world-renowned restaurant in Spain.

The Awatsuji Design Company, located in Harajuku, Tokyo, is run by two sisters, Misa and Maki Awatsuji, who are daughters of the late Hiroshi Awatsuji, a popular designer based in Kyoto who worked with the late Ikko Tanaka, the renowned graphic designer. The photographer Koshida introduced the Awatsuji Design Company to us. We always seem to meet the right people by such curious turns of fate.

At the heart of our book is the legendary artist Ogata Kenzan, who lived during the late 17th and early 18th centuries in what is known as the Japanese Edo period. He produced a variety of ceramic wares. Although he practiced a utilitarian craft, today most of his works are treated as art objects worthy of exhibition in fine museums and collections. Therefore, even



The cover of 'Appetizing Beauty,' winner of Gourmand Book Award.

if we visit renowned Japanese restaurants such as Kitcho and Hyotei, it would be a rare thing indeed for us to be served food on Kenzan ware. The Miho Museum houses quite a large number of Kenzan's ceramics, collected by our late founder, Mrs. Mihoko Koyama.² With the generous approval of the museum's current president, Ms Hiroko Koyama,³ this inimitable book breathed fresh life into the Kenzan ware by placing food on the dishes, instantly returning them to their former brilliance as serving dishes. Kenzan produced a variety of ceramic ware from gorgeous colored dishes to monotone dishes. At every photo session, we carefully chose the dish most suitable to the seasonal food we would be photographing. As we proceeded with our project, the Miho Museum was also involved with its special autumn exhibition of Kenzan ware, so it was a very busy time for us.

I first learned about the Gourmand World Cookbook Awards later on, after the Kenzan exhibition, when on February 13, 2005 I read an article in the Asahi Shimbun Newspaper saying that Harumi Kurihara had won the Grand Prix in the 10th Awards competition. I immediately contacted the photographer, Koshida, asking him to find out if we could submit our publication for the 2005 awards. As a result, the awards people e-mailed an application form to me. One of the rules was that only books published between October 30, 2004 and November 15, 2005 could qualify for the 2005 Awards. Originally, we had planned our book's publication to coincide with the Kenzan exhibition, as early as possible in September of 2004. But we were late, and amazingly, the final date of publication was exactly October 30. If our book had come out a single day sooner, we would not have been eligible for the 2005 awards.

The exquisitely beautiful photographs in this book are not the only good things about it. I feel it was a milestone project, in that this publication was produced by a museum, even though

museums generally do not publish food books. In this book, we wove together the artistic element of Kenzan ware, the historical element of the relationship between the period and its cuisine, and Shumei's commitment to ingredients grown without agrichemicals and fertilizers.

We would like to express our deep appreciation to Kumakura Isao, who graciously agreed to contribute to this publication, despite the belated nature of our request. Our gratitude, of course, goes to Koshida Gozen, who shot such amazingly beautiful photographs. He seemed to lose all sense of time in the intensity of his concentration on each object and setting as he photographed in long sessions through the hot summer glare and the cold blasts of winter wind. We truly thank the farmers from all over Japan who provided fresh seasonal produce throughout the four seasons. Our deep gratitude also goes to Ms Naoko Kageyama and Mr. Naoki Omori, who beautifully prepared the appetizing food, and to the many others who have lent their efforts to the production of this book. Finally, our heartfelt thanks go to our president, Ms Hiroko Koyama, whose generous understanding provided the opportunity for the museum staff to pursue and complete this project. Our book could not have been completed without the joint support of all. Its success is the fruit of each individual who dedicated their time and sincere efforts to the project.

In *Appetizing Beauty: Kenzan and Seasonal Dishes*, you will find a photo spread of Meishusama Hall and the 'Joy of Angels' carillon bell tower⁴ as it is seen from the Miho Museum. There is also a brief introduction to the Natural Agriculture method and the Shigaraki-no-Sato.⁵ All the food displayed on Kenzan's fine tableware was cultivated by the Natural Agriculture method. This was something upon which Ms Koyama insisted.

This publication reflects two of the core activities in which Shumei is involved: the practice of Natural Agriculture and the promotion of art and beauty.

Appetizing Beauty is dedicated to the great artist Ogata Kenzan, who left us a legacy of wonderful ceramic works, and to Mrs. Mihoko Koyama, who collected his beautiful creations.

Editor's Note: If you would like to have your own copy of *Appetizing Beauty: Kenzan and Seasonal Dishes*, please contact:

Sandra Snyder-Traverso at
+ (1) 626 584-8841 between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. (Pacific Time, USA & Canada).
E-mail address: shumeisandy@hotmail.com.

2. Mrs. Mihoko Koyama was Shumei's first president and spiritual leader. She passed away in November of 2003.

3. Ms Hiroko Koyama is the current president of Shumei, often referred to by the honorific 'Kaicho-Sensei.'

4. 'Joy of Angels' is Misono's carillon tower. Designed by I.M. Pei, its fifty bells were cast at the famed Eijsbouts Bell Foundry in The Netherlands.

5. Shigaraki-no-sato is a Natural Agriculture farm located near the Miho Museum, where two traditional Japanese farmhouses have been relocated and restored.

From the Miho Museum Collection



Square Plate with Peony Design Ogata Kenzan and Ogata Korin

Japan. Edo period (18th century AD). Kenzan ware, decorated with underglaze and overglaze. Height, 21.9 cm (about 8.6"). Width, 21.9 cm. Depth, 3.0 cm (about 1.2").

During the 'Genroku' era (1688 to 1704 AD) of Japan's Edo period, the samurai and urban classes evolved a particularly brilliant artistic sensibility, which was reflected in the popular crafts of that day. It was in this evocative setting at Kyoto that the potter Ogata Kenzan was born and his artistic vision nurtured, and from there he went on to establish his own distinctive vision of ceramics.

Kenzan was the younger brother of the great painter, decorator, and teacher Ogata Korin, renowned for his bold designs and

striking color contrasts, as well as his use of negative space and nearly abstract style. The two brothers collaborated on some extraordinary works such as this plate that is now in the Miho Museum Collection.

Please see related story on the Miho publication "Appetizing Beauty: Kenzan and Seasonal Dishes" on page 14.

SHUMEI AMERICA

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