

George Kairos

Funeral Service

Saturday, December 3, 2011

Minister Girard Haven's Introduction

We are here to celebrate the life of our beloved friend, George Kairos, and to express our gratitude for the privilege of having shared our lives with him.

The meaning of a student's life is not to be found in its large events, in its apparent successes or failures. The moment Influence C first touches one, the true significance of one's life is revealed: the transformation of a play, lovingly designed and guided by the Gods for a divine purpose.

At the death of a friend, we can see their play as a whole. We can see it as we cannot yet fully see our own: as a miraculous destiny, fully guided by a higher hand, perfect. George's play has come to fruition; he has finished the work which he was summoned to do.

Let us stand and honor George with our silent presence.

(Silence)

Music: Michael Goodwin and Noah Horstock

Bach Air.

Reading: Jean Taylor

William Shakespeare, *Sonnet 116*

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O no! it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come:
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

Eulogy: Blair Wilson

George Kairos, 1947-2011

Something perfect has happened. Our friend and fellow student George Kairos, whom Higher Forces invited to a lifetime dedicated to presence, lived his moments simply and nobly, and when his time came, he gently and considerately left the stage. So poignant; a lifetime like a clear stream, quietly flowing, pure. The kind of lifetime that is indispensable to the school. George played many of the roles that the school offers; he opened centers, hosted a teaching house, organized and led meetings, directed a center, performed as a travelling teacher. But he played these roles without too much of a personal stake. He was not consumed by them. Again, this impression of clear water, neutral, without taint. A lifetime that was, in fact, modest.

Indeed, each one of us is an example of an ordinary life. Each one of us confronts the illusion that the ordinary is imperfect. Until one looks more closely, and realizes that a lifetime is mostly made of ordinary moments. There are few sensational events. Even death, although it appears momentous, is a momentary transition from this world to another. George knew that a modest life, lived for presence, is a fine offering to Higher Forces. A lifetime that tastes of modesty, as presence tastes like water.

George and Aurora joined the school in England in 1980. Although struggling post-graduate students at the University of Manchester, they consistently made the trip to the Hall Farm teaching house where Girard was directing the London center. George's foundation in the work came from his first years at the Hall Farm. Instilled in him was an unfailing love for our teacher, and faith and acceptance in the teaching.

He was, as a friend noted, 'genuinely enthusiastic to reject the false and hold on to what is real'. This spirit of enthusiasm and sincerity were potent in him throughout his whole life: he accepted the unflattering truth about himself; he quietly loved his fellow students; he found ways to kindly and positively offer photographs. When George and Aurora moved to Brazil, two centers were swiftly opened and thrived, and together, they directed the Campinas center. George took a position as professor of Social Anthropology at the university, and became well known and respected in the academic world. Their home served the school for many years, the focus of center meetings and events, and for hosting traveling teachers. Through most of George's subsequent 30 years in the school, he was the father, brother, mentor and friend to students who joined and lived in the Brazilian centers.

Friendship is one of the highest virtues of our school, an expression of our conscious love. We live for each other, because of each other. Each one of us knowing that, as George said, 'I could not manage if I were alone.' A verification made in all modesty. We cannot 'do' without the divine, and we cannot do it without each other. Comrades in the war against sleep. Foot soldiers in the army of light. And as George understood, not doing it alone is not a dependency, it's more a lesson in love. Friendships that develop despite likes and dislikes, despite distance and circumstances; as friends, we allow each other to return to what is real; a life dedicated to presence. And when that life is used up, we share a quiet acknowledgement of the play, the colossal but invisible meaning behind our lives. 'I accept things as they are,' George said, 'and trust that everything is perfect.'

In the last months of George's illness, qualities that everyone knew about him, and perhaps took for granted, began to shine; sweetness, gentleness, intellectual acuity; his steadiness, his 'being the same person in all circumstances'; not overt qualities as such, but when illness began to erode his mortality, they shone through his refined heart. He became transparent.

And now, more and more, we are aware, that as we look at one another, we are looking at a transparency, through which presence emerges. And that transparency, in George, was a part of his illness. What emerged, so fragile, so beautiful and so definite, manifests despite the failure and denial of the body. 'Fading away', as George said. From the physical, to the transparent, to the invisible. From loud and abrupt, to soft and lingering. Which was a quality of George's voice. Soft, refined, yet precise. A beautiful voice, actually; a sign that while something cannot be seen, invisible to the eye, yet it is beautiful, in and of itself.

So there is nothing more to say. The miracle is silent, this offering of a noble, consistent life. We are here because of it. We too arrive at this simplest of moments. And George is one of our friends who shows us how. What a blessing! And he would agree; he would say, 'Yes, that is right, we have arrived. O, what a gift!'

Music: Michael Goodwin and Sasha Alexandra Katchouguina

Bach piece.

Reading: Robert George

Walt Whitman, *Of the Terrible Doubt of Appearances*

When he whom I love travels with me or sits a long while holding me
by the hand,
When the subtle air, the impalpable, the sense that words and reason
hold not, surround us and pervade us,
Then I am charged with untold and untellable wisdom, I am silent,
I require nothing further,
I cannot answer the question of appearances or that of identity
beyond the grave,
But I walk or sit indifferent, I am satisfied,
He ahold of my hand has completely satisfied me.

Minister Girard Haven's Conclusion:

May the quiet, steady, unassuming consistency and dedication which George displayed, both as a person and especially as a student, be an inspiration to us all; may his final suffering deepen our understanding of how firmly the Gods may, in their wisdom, choose to press upon us; and may his willing acceptance of that suffering teach us how to live more deeply.

George, we thank thee.

Minister signals urn bearer. Minister blows out candle. Funeral party leaves.

At the Cemetery:

Minister Girard Haven's Introduction

Here on this beautiful day and in this blessed place, we gather to return George's ashes to the earth. His play on earth is thus complete; he is released to his, and our, true home in the Celestial City of Paradise.

Reading: Wayne Mott

Walt Whitman, *Song of Myself*

Apart from the pulling and hauling stands what I am,
Stands amused, complacent, compassionating, idle, unitary,
Looks down, is erect, or bends an arm on an impalpable certain rest,
Looking with side-curved head curious what will come next,
Both in and out of the game and watching and wondering at it.

Urn bearer puts urn in the grave.

Minister Girard Haven's Last Invocation

At the last, tenderly,
From the walls of the powerful fortress'd house,
From the clasp of the knitted locks, from the keep of the well-closed doors,
Let me be wafted.
Let me glide noiselessly forth;
With the key of softness unlock the locks; with a whisper,
Set ope the doors, O soul.

Minister Girard Haven's Conclusion

Minister puts rose petals into the grave.

The earth returns to the earth, and a divine spark returns to its divine source. 'Love comes from eternity, and returns into eternity.' The circle of life is complete. Let us join together in saying farewell, and then return to the Apollo Festival Hall to celebrate the gift of life yet allotted to each of us.

Rose petals in the grave. The leaving begins.

Toast to George:

Asaf Braverman

'I first met George when he came as a traveling teacher to Israel. I last met George when I came as a traveling teacher to Brazil. In the span of fifteen years between those two encounters, he always impressed me as a man genuinely enthusiastic to reject the false and hold on to what is real. The spirit of enthusiasm and sincerity are what I remember, the spirit of hard work and facing the unflattering truth about oneself. May that spirit, that did not change as his body aged, journey forth courageously into the unknown.'