

Roger Kent
1949 - 2018

Funeral Service

Saturday, February 2, 2019

At the Festival Hall, Minister Kevin Brown's Introduction

A warm welcome to Elizabeth, Roger's loving wife, to Miranda, Roger and Elizabeth's daughter, Jacob, Roger's cousin, and all of Roger's friends both here and abroad. Here in this moment, we come to celebrate the life of our beloved friend, Roger Kent.

That so many of us are gathered here shows the gratitude we feel for Roger's dedication to his evolution, and the indelible mark he left in the memory of many students throughout the School.

Let us stand and honor Roger with our presence.

(Silence)

Roger's return to the source of creation is a destiny that we all will ultimately share. Robert teaches that ascending souls finish their roles very well prepared for their next role, having received the presence fully allotted to them in this life.

Reading: Sailing to Byzantium by Yeats, read by Mari Reeves

That is no country for old men. The young
In one another's arms, birds in the trees,
—Those dying generations—at their song,
The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas,
Fish, flesh, or fowl, commend all summer long
Whatever is begotten, born, and dies.
Caught in that sensual music all neglect
Monuments of unageing intellect.

An aged man is but a paltry thing,
A tattered coat upon a stick, unless
Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing
For every tatter in its mortal dress,
Nor is there singing school but studying
Monuments of its own magnificence;
And therefore I have sailed the seas and come
To the holy city of Byzantium.

O sages standing in God's holy fire
As in the gold mosaic of a wall,
Come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre,
And be the singing-masters of my soul.
Consume my heart away; sick with desire
And fastened to a dying animal
It knows not what it is; and gather me
Into the artifice of eternity.

Once out of nature I shall never take
My bodily form from any natural thing,
But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make
Of hammered gold and gold enamelling
To keep a drowsy Emperor awake;
Or set upon a golden bough to sing
To lords and ladies of Byzantium
Of what is past, or passing, or to come.

Music: Schubert/ Du bist die ruh by Coral & Justin

Eulogy for Roger Kent, given by Gail Matthews

Dear Roger,

We are here to say we love you and we all, each in our own way, understand, or are trying to. As Michele de Montaigne said, “Every man has within himself the entire human condition.”

Elizabeth and Miranda and Devi send their love. And Elizabeth says thank you for leaving her your wedding ring. And for kindly parking the car where you did.

Roger, because this is a eulogy, you are going to hear a few things about yourself that you already know.

ROGER THOMAS KENT was born on June 30th, 1949 in Los Angeles. His father, WILHELM KANTOROWICZ, came to Los Angeles from East Prussia after the *First* World War. His mother, RENE TEDROW, was an accomplished actress. As a child Roger spent afterschool time at rehearsals. Her specialties were George Bernard Shaw and Shakespeare.

Roger attended Hollywood High, graduating Valedictorian, and went on to Cornell where he graduated Summa Cum Laude. The subject of his Honors Thesis was ‘why Samuel Beckett had to write comedy’. For anyone familiar with Roger’s own quirky take on reality, this makes perfect sense. And that I, a longtime friend, knew nothing of his having attended Hollywood High, not to mention Cornell or the distinction with which he graduated both, which speaks volumes for the humility which governed Roger’s life.

Roger joined the Fellowship in Atlanta in 1976. That year he drove to Renaissance with the aim of becoming a Conscious Being. With Roger there were never half measures. As a six-year old, he was heard to say “If the food is really good, it makes your socks roll up and down all by themselves.”

During the Spring of his sixth year in the School, Roger, now an older student, was preparing a formal dinner at the Clay Street teaching house in San Francisco. One of the guests was a student who had joined the week before. As she tells it, she was seated next to Roger at the table showing off by telling everyone she’d been in Russia on an exchange program, indeed an extraordinary accomplishment at the time. Her name was Elizabeth. Roger turned to her and said “*Vi gavarizije pa Russki?*” ‘You speak Russian?’ She thought to herself, “This is an interesting guy.”

At the time Roger was a student of the renowned cellist Milly Rozner. He courted Elizabeth to Beethoven’s 3rd Cello Sonata. They were married a year later at Renaissance and moved to Stuttgart. Roger’s job was teaching the intricacies of Apple software to the NATO troops stationed there. Ever willing to live life on the edge, he confessed to me at the time, exaggerating perhaps, that he had no idea what he was doing.

Roger and Elizabeth’s daughter Miranda was born in Stuttgart on May 21, 1990. Throughout her childhood at bedtime he would sing her the Zulu lullaby *I Come a Zimba Zimba Zaya*. For Roger, providing emotionally and financially for his family was a lifelong priority. This was of the greatest concern to him during the final months of his life when he considered himself unable to do either.

In 1997 the Kent family settled down permanently at Apollo. With the same fervor with which he supported his wife and daughter, Roger consistently supported the School, assisting in the development of IT systems for the

Fellowship, performing in the orchestra, theater, and in being a solid Friend. Above all, Roger loved and revered his Teacher.

Roger, Friend, three weeks after you were gone, I dreamed that you had been elected President of the United States. You look very handsome, in a beautiful suit, and you're modest about your victory. In the dream, all your Friends are joyous that you're President.

President.

Present.

You were released from your life on Earth on December 21st, just a few hours after the solstice, on the shortest day of the year, just as the daylight hours were beginning to grow longer. You are going towards the light. In the words of the Teacher you loved, "Presence is the only thing a dying man can take with him."

Music: Bach / Sonata BWV 1016 3rd mov by Christopher & Justin

Reading: Walt Whitman, Song of the Open Road, read by Max Myers

Afoot and light-hearted I take to the open road,
Healthy, free, the world before me,
The long brown path before me leading wherever I choose.

You road I enter upon and look around, I believe you are not all that is here,
I believe that much unseen is also here.

Here the profound lesson of reception, nor preference nor denial,

Gently, but with undeniable will, divesting myself of the holds that would hold me.
I inhale great draughts of space,
The east and the west are mine, and the north and the south are mine.

Allons! whoever you are come travel with me!
Traveling with me you find what never tires.

Allons! after the great Companions, and to belong to them!
They too are on the road—they are the swift and majestic men—they are the greatest women,

All parts away for the progress of souls,

Forever alive, forever forward,

Camerado, I give you my hand!
I give you my love more precious than money,
I give you myself before preaching or law;
Will you give me yourself? will you come travel with me?
Shall we stick by each other as long as we live?

Minister Brown's Conclusion:

Dear Friends, let us take comfort in remembering Roger's contribution to the school, his devotion to his family and loved ones, and his persistence in working with whatever was placed before him.

Now, it is time to bid farewell to Roger.

Let us depart this service with a joyous heart, for Providence has granted us more time to promote love, compassion and presence.

Candle ceremony

'Our body is just a shell, our soul will continue.'

Extinguish and light the candles.

Please stand.

Funeral procession.

Funeral party leave and withdraw to the ante-room.

Toast at the Reception, given by Paul Harvey

Roger was an intelligent, talented and sensitive man. He at times reminded me of the absent-minded professor played by Fred MacMurray in the Disney films. Highly inventive but often befuddled by his own impediments. As such he was the epitome of a 4th Way Student. And in that recognition, I became endeared to him and admired his perseverance. God speed Roger, in my estimation you are well on the way to your heart's desire.