

At the Apollo Festival Hall:

[Pre-service music played by Justin McKay, piano]

[Minister Graylin Ross's Introduction]

Dear Friends, we are gathered here today on this beautiful afternoon to honor and to celebrate the life of our dear friend, Michael Adams. We are grateful and inspired by Michael's quiet dedication to his evolution, and to his steady and inconspicuous service to the Teacher, and to the Fellowship.

Each student's life impacts our school. Which is as the God's would have it. Michael's gentle quiet nature will resonate throughout the school like a wordless melody, persisting in our memories, reminding us that the quiet heart is the home of presence.

Let us stand, and honor Michael with our silent presence.

[Silence]

Thank you. Please be seated.

How we die is a great indicator of how we have lived and what we have loved most on earth. For Michael the answer is very clear. His great love was awakening. His wife Suzanne tells us that in the final hours before death, Michael's aim was to stay awake, not letting himself fall asleep. So, when our Teacher tells us that ascending souls finish their roles very well prepared, having received the presence allotted to them in this lifetime, how true this was for our dear friend Michael.

As Michael returns to the divine source, let us remember we follow the same path. Death is not the end of life. At death, life begins in another phase, the phase of the soul.

[Reader: Donald Richmond]

When I Die by Rumi

When I die^[SEP]
when my coffin^[SEP]
is being taken out^[SEP]
you must never think^[SEP]
I am missing this world^[SEP]

don't shed any tears^[SEP]
don't lament or^[SEP]
feel sorry^[SEP]
i'm not falling^[SEP]
into a dark abyss

it looks like the end^[SEP]
it seems like a sunset^[SEP]
but in reality it is a dawn

when the grave locks you up

SEP that is when your soul is freed

[Music: *Wonderful Life* – Michael Meeks, trumpet; Justin McKay, piano; Bruce Helft, bass]

[Eulogy: David Wood]

Michael was born on October 20th, 1952, in occupied East Germany where he lived with his grandparents until the age of seven. After that he joined his mother in West Germany before the wall was erected to separate both Germany's. Later he went with his mother to America where his father was working as a carpenter. But after two years, he and his mother returned to Germany, so his time in America was brief.

In his magnetic center days, Michael studied the Sufis before joining the school in Munich in the summer of 1979. In the fall of 1986, he moved to Apollo to be on salary in the winery. And in 1989, he married Suzanne, his loyal wife and loving friend for over thirty years. He was a reliable and consistent dishwasher and a pot washer at Apollo d'Oro and the Galleria for many years. A student observed that he was one of the quiet servants of our school.

Michael did not pretend to be different than he was. He had a good sense of humor, loved reading books – loved book stores, loved music. Many of his essence connections with other students were built upon his love of music and books. He had good intuition about other people.

Michael was a very private person. He didn't belong to any one particular group. He was not a joiner, although he was always open to any emotional approach. His smile was never far away. His gentle observant nature went very deep. One student said they were often struck by how silent he was, or how he would make little comments about little things, and then quite suddenly he would say something very deep. Friends found that his true depth was in his behavior and kindness, not in his words at all. He was light, weightless without laughing, without showing it externally.

He was generous in his own quiet way, and liked to give little gifts to his student friends, expecting nothing in return. For over ten years, Michael sent hand-made, individual Christmas cards to a few friends. Pictures with quotes of conscious beings, and then a Christmas greeting—they were from another era, from a time of childhood experiences. Essence cards.

One student observed that while Michael worked on washing dishes at Apollo d'Oro (which is not an easy octave), he never complained. He did his octave in a quiet way, bearing with all the dirty plates, and how one server might re-organize the dishwashing set-up, then another server would later re-organize the re-organized set-up in trying to create a more efficient system. During which, Michael never complained, never asked for something to be done his way, or for his benefit, always doing whatever he was asked to do without complaint or personal interest.

It was hard to know Michael because of his very private nature. Some report, in amazement, that they could not remember any instance where Michael ever expressed negativity! Others say that he was like a child, full of wonder. Many say that he was a gentle being, ready to smile and help in any way he could. One student remembers him vividly because being with him helped to create presence. Michael didn't want to talk; he just wanted to be.

Michael struggled with health issues over the years, periodical headaches and kidney problems, and in the last two weeks of his life breathing was difficult for him. But his aim to remain awake never

faltered. To awaken was his main subject in life. And the most important thing—at death, to be as awake as possible.

A student said: “All these years he has been for me always the same person, since I first met him until I saw him a few days before he passed away. The beauty is that he never dies in our Heart, he remains in us, this saturnine friend, sweet, gentle, humble and discreet, always ready to serve, fully immersed in his child essence!

[Music: *Glory*, singer Sharon Shelton]

[Reader: Ann Nielsen]

Hafez: *Death is a favor to us.*

Death is a favor to us,
But our scales have lost their balance.

The impermanence of the body
Should give us great clarity,
Deeping the wonder in our senses and the eyes.

Of this mysterious existence we share
And are surely just traveling through

Our marriage with the cruel beauty
Of time and space cannot endure very long.

[Minister Ross's Conclusion]

Once again the shock of a student's death surprises us. This earth is not our home, our bodies not a shelter. For ascending souls presence is our one true sanctuary. Though the pain of loss goes deep, our Teacher helps us to transform this when he says, “Nothing cuts deeper than death except Presence.”

As we say farewell to Michael, let us remember the lessons he leaves with us. May Michael's efforts to support Robert and our school in his sweet childlike way guide us toward a higher understanding of service to God. May his consistent pursuit of essence-presence give us the courage to accept our plays willingly and with grace. May Michael's humility serve to remind us that we too are here only through the grace of the Gods. Dear Michael, we thank thee.

[Candle ceremony]

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

[Extinguish and light the candles.]

[Music played by Justin McKay during departure from hall]

At the Cemetery:

[Minister Ross's Introduction]

Here in this sacred place, consecrated by those here present and those who lay here, we release Michael to his and our true home.

[Reader: Patrick Stuart]

Rumi: *Remember Me*

Look and you will see my form
Whether you are looking at yourself
or toward that noise and confusion.

Don't be blurry-eyed,
See me clearly-
See my beauty without the old eyes of delusion.

Beware! Beware!
Don't mistake me for this human form.
The soul is not obscured by forms.
Even if it were wrapped in a hundred folds of felt
the rays of the soul's light would still shine through.
At the end of my life, with just one breath left,
If you come, I'll sit up and sing.

[Urn bearer puts urn in the grave.]

Rabia said, "Love comes from eternity, and returns into eternity." The inner divine flame returns to its divine source. The circle of life is complete.

[Minister guides funeral party in placing rose petals into the grave.]

Let us withdraw for a farewell toast to our Beloved Friend at the gazebo, and celebrate the life still yet allotted to each of us.

[Toast: Geoffrey Rowlands]

[Music played prior to toast: Christopher Bautista, guitar]

Graciously and inconspicuously our dear friend Michael
shared his essence-presence with us these 40 years.

As Robert has said: "Presence is the only state that mirrors Paradise."

Let us lift our glasses in Presence to our dear Michael and wish him Godspeed for his final journey thither.

... To Michael !!!