

Aya Thompson

10/03/1955 - 27/12/2020



Thank you for gathering to remember me and celebrate my life. Thank you all, each one of you, for your contribution to the rich tapestry that my life ended up being.

The night I was told I had cancer I was pondering the question: What am I ultimately made of? - I was quite surprised with the answer that came to me – “I am made of Love”. And it reminded me of Leonard Cohen's lines: “It is in Love we are made, in Love we disappear.”

I have spent many happy moments in this beautiful place. To me it represented the beauty of England, which I loved from the first time I came here in 1980. Coming from Israel which is a little arid, I simply loved the moisture in the air, the ponds, the green grass and big leafy trees – the sense I had was that nature here was enjoying plenty of water. I did have during my forty years in this county, periods of being quite lonely and lost and in those times I knew that the beauty of nature here, around Highgate and Hampstead would always nurture and sustain me.

Everyone of you who is here today, whether we spent time being present together, whether we were close friends, whether it has been a while since we met, whether we knew each other as acquaintances, or even if it seemed that were enemies - it is from the connection with each one of you that, my life here was made.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star, Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar: Not in entire forgetfulness, And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!

Wordsworth - Intimations of Immortality

Do not stand at my grave and weep
I am not there; I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow,
I am the diamond glints on snow,
I am the sun on ripened grain,
I am the gentle autumn rain.
When you awaken in the mornings hush
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circled flight.
I am the soft stars that shine at night.
Do not stand at my grave and cry,
I am not there; I did not die.

Mary Elizabeth Frye

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,
But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.
Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark.

Crossing the Bar (extract) - Alfred Lord Tennyson.

Center of all centers, core of cores,
almond self-enclosed, and growing sweet—
all this universe, to the furthest stars
all beyond them, is your flesh, your fruit.
Now you feel how nothing clings to you;
your vast shell reaches into endless space,
and there the rich, thick fluids rise and flow.
Illuminated in your infinite peace,
a billion stars go spinning through the night,
blazing high above your head.
But in you is the presence that
will be, when all the stars are dead.

Buddah in Glory - Rainer Maria Rilke



Weep not for me, for at my death my life became eternal,
and when I seemed to close my eyes, I opened them to light divine. Petrarch

