

Gautam Tejas Ganeshan

97 Songs

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#WIP #carnatic

For God, Or Not.

I am not in a rush.
"What do you do?"
I pray, and I write songs.
I hope they startle you.
Are these hymns? Is this a hymnal? Sing & see.
No talking, only singing.
Please interpret me literally,
but please don't take me literally.
I don't like cell phones.

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or \$1 per month on [Patreon](#).

If you do the latter, you'll be able to watch
all my complete concert films online in perpetuity.
I'm also reluctantly available on many social networks.
Thus concludes my quasidrbrothersesque spiel.
Or maybe thus it begins!



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On These Songs

My songs are obvious, or ought to be. There's an effort in writing them, sometimes delicate, sometimes stubborn. But in the ones that make it to my lips (or to my throat really), the craft doesn't weigh heavily. I'm not trying to leave chisel marks.

Song is an unfathomable inheritance, the neanderthal of literature. Songs nestle in the mind, and yield to fondling by the tongue. I do write these because I want to feel them. Like a prescient grandmother, I can tell when they've become pregnant, and then I begin to repeat to savor.

My songs contain an invisible identity. They're naturalized, not born. If you're into Carnatic music, you've got the babelfish, and you'll hear easter eggs everywhere. I'm not intent on representing - they're just good, if they are.

What they're about is a barrel-o-monkeys. Sacred music beats everything in rock paper scissors. I have a laundry list of annotations for each song, according to its poetics, its references to what-have-you, its special meanings needing 'splaining.

But don't worry about the hidden files - just play the game. In the lingua franca, lilt gives lay. Each song has a way it pulls the pocket. That's one of the main things. There's also the matter of "schwakaram", i.e. the integration of boredom into a good life.

The tunes have hidden corners which I didn't invent. I kinda sing old music. Singer-songwriter is an old profession too.

A mridangam drummer from Kalamazoo told me about "contrafacta", and yes, that's what they are. They follow a disciplined song form. Movements are iterative, and violations are deflating. They are meant to give glory by being healthy. Yes, I aim for perfection, but gimme a break.

educated	sreeranjani
goldilocks origami	yadukulakambhoji
catching up	narayanagaula
barbarian	atana
keep my strength	begada
my tongue won't listen	nattakuranji
my favorite pants	navarasakannada
my imperfection	vasanta
my vanity	senjurutti
accounts receivable	kurinji
blue light uppercut	kamalamanohari
a mistaken equation	bilahari
a possible monster	jayantasree
contrary vectors	hamsanandi
a voice	kannada
alive, alive	nattai
contemplative	arabhi
simple pleasures	gaula
attain to flourishing	charukesi
criterion of repeatability	gambhiranattai
the one	abhogi
the posit	harikambhoji
fetishizing the apocalypse	devamrutavarshini
hey!	karnatakabehag
relax, ok?	kedaram
sing in me, muse	hamsadhvani
tiresome newness	hamsanadam
all in it, no limit	saranga
all the leverage	kharaharapriya

future morphogenesis	lalita
all the vim is drained	mayamalavagaula
what chaos owns	keeravani
before one, becomes two	kiranaivali
begin my plenarity	varamu
a crown jewel	abheri
born somewhere	bhairavi
matchless specificity	mukhari
will to homogeneity	bindumalini
choose desert dry	chandrajyoti
come to society	kaanada
this here life	poornashadjam
cut from you	mohanam
down below	jaganmohini
down from orange	hemavati
lotus eyes	darbar
elementary measures	nayaki
elsewhere	sarasvatimanohari
trying to nail it	malavi
until the stars darken	kalyani
orphans we	manirang
vision of blue	sree
who's your master	sarasangi
end times	hindolam
ether data	devagandhari
even the birds	sahana
fortune and fireflies	kambhoji
genius of this place	khamas
hear the sky	gaurimanohari

home terrain	ranjani
i accept, i respect, i rejoice	lalitapanchamam
i seek you, and that too hard	gaulipantu
idolatrous fantasy	anandabhairavi
infinity receding	ahiri
just enough	saveri
kink than worship	kedaragaula
a vehicle for dreaming	natabhairavi
leaves after sweeping	chakravakam
modest but well-fed	latangi
mother tongue	reetigaula
myriad though my gains	poorvikalyani
oh, forget it all	andolika
proximity	vagadeesvari
forsaken	todi
quite inchoate	dhanyasi
ever i wander	varali
same old places	kapinarayani
sever the ties	saramati
some summum bonum numb	kuntalavarali
take me there	pantubarali
talking about sparks	valaji
limned in this sound	kapi
tertiary knowing	sankarabharanam
the elusive fugitive	madhyamavati
the milestones	shanmukhapriya
the singularity doesn't concern me	amrutavarshini
the thick of you	senjukambhoji
old school	jonpuri

all i do is pray and eat bagels

natakapriya

the dragon in me

hindolavasanta

uniquely against odds

suddhadhanyasi

untappable

veeravasantam

halt my reverie

tilang

here's what infinitude said

yamunakalyani

saved for what

sindhubhairavi

wide open arms of home

bagesree

zoos and bars

malayamarutham

mangalam

saurashtram / suratti

Freely, with empathy, was I raised.
But just not high enough.

Oh, I was taught,
brought up and brought out.

Educated!
But my mind is empty now.

What I need is my spirit lifted,
and I might see you who are high.

Oh, you who are higher than the stars,
and brighter than the sun!

Will you who are higher than the stars lift me?
I am your child still.

This.
I am here.

And then this,
in consequence of your gentle arrangements.

What is intelligent is delicate emergence.

By a man who's sure of himself
the whole world is stunned. (So am I.)
Though no hero, I am this.

And yet it moves.
No surprise but by misplaced means, epistemes,
overwrought ways of seeing this.

What if some pie in the sky, a moon to shoot
is the crux, the rub, the point of this?

My life is such a lengthy cold
elapsed email bounced by demons.

Of all coincidences,
how 'bout this?

Being a creative cog, I answer not to
mechanism, mutation random, nor preordination,
but have by bombardment heavy extruded been,
and, just jiggling, am this.

Feeble my prehensions,
and so frail my frame.

That I should to any true end be called upon
proves that the joke's on me, QED.

Luckily I get this.

Picture this:

gravity galactic, atomic,
solar ballistics, helix model...

Portrayal as if of flux,
cartographic masterpieces.

Irrupts quiddity territorial: this.

Tyrants tire me out but sycophants sicken me too.
Too many tautologies snare me.

For example, there's an energy, its own source,
for which fatigue equals breach.

Perpetuate this.

Even the globe breathing in currents,
ice and clouds and tilt and spin,
wobble recursion, axis precession,
et cetera... goldilocks origami.

The crane is this.

Eon, Era, Epoch, Age, culminate.
Seasons of all scales and rungs.

The ancients were young.
We've ancient become.

Accretion of antecedents,
the meaning of which is this.

I eschew ideology and I espit it out!
Oh yes!

To keep horsefeathers from manure heaps,
I eat treatises for breakfast, tracts for snacks,
and footnotes for my midnight feasts.

Furthermore neither truth nor dares nor lies
comprise my deserts just this.

More or less obscure
at any moment
the source of why
I'm doing x or why
I'm falling behind.

And yet here I find
myself carrying
something or other on.

Whether pleasing at all to you,
I'm totally unaware.

Chin up!

Catching up to you
from below.

Call me barbarian.

My lifeblood is fresh
from fallen bodies sacrificed,
died to provide my voice vigor
for singing your returning,
thus in suffering sanctified by emerging.

As I celebrate, as I grieve,
I believe that I'm alive to
in time realize who survives,
who all dying beings underlies.

As I realize, I believe.

May I, once my end begins, nobly,
as my spent body shudders into humus,
my human carnal term,
remember whose life eternal I'm serving
as a vital crucible for conserving.

Comes my last breath, I'll praise my end of days well.
Then comes what's next and my memory of me
unremarkably into you fades endlessly.

As I celebrate, as I grieve,
as I realize, I believe.

In the time I've been alive,
I've realized two or three truths.

First part of my life has gone by
and I'm not satisfied.

Why?

'Cause I've tried with all of my
wits and brawn in vain.
It was not enough.

I need you to open my eyes
so that I can see you.

I don't need two or three truths.
Just one, if it's you.

In the time I'm still alive,
I'll keep my strength for you.

Any language is insufficient,
but my tongue won't listen.

Complexity notwithstanding,
it's quite demanding
meeting the standard
of your ineffability,
thwarting any literary strategy.

Nonetheless,
somehow I express,
with measured success.

Finally, my favorite pants began to fray.
One fine day what was mine fell away,
became undone.

Learning, unraveling,
everything is changing
in time's carefree hands
like a child's playing.

Done with sowing.
On to reaping.
At last.

At last woken
up from sleeping.

No more growing.
Time to make a showing now.
But whatever I wear wears out!

No habit can handle it.
I outpace all my surfaces.

The songs I've sung - you've heard them sweet.
But just keep in mind they're incomplete.

Grounded by being sung here
upon earth, one among the spheres,
human music in human ears resounds
and reaches beneath the sounds, the songs...

My imperfection, like a falcon peregrine,
every season turns in a new direction.

Your sky returns my cry its reflection,
but corrected, pace perfected, purified.

I can't sing a single thing
without grace overwhelming
vastly my limits surpassing,
submerging the songs I've sung.

Heaven help me.
My vanity threatens to overwhelm me.

Oh vanity!
Beautiful enemy.

Even health hath devils able
to divert myself from you, my friend.

Is this the intended end for me?
Alone with my altar empty?
Occupied blindly by my human,
all too human life?

Heaven help me surrender
myself to you, my friend.

Within the days left for me,
you'll lift the veil, I'll like a newborn see
that your eyes were mine for a lifetime,
your body all they did see.

Heaven help me.
Oh my vanity!
Beautiful enemy.

Faithful,
I have not forgotten,
reminded by children
of quasi-dreams self-fulfilled.

What was it that motivated me the child?

Where is everybody to whom I've given
a bit of my true love? Where hide they?
I've made debtors of characters in a boring play!

My accounts receivable overflow,
meanwhile I am closed but to one
to whom my still solvent confidence I owe.

My heart my life has stolen.
No clue as to its replenishment,
as this world has lost its traction,
its momentum, its goodness.

Hope is not an epiphenomenon of fact aggregation,
but for any moment its intransient perfection.

But what then?

Much too much has been and is being done,
such that to not do is now the paramount attainment.

The "renewability" bluff - lip service,
not leaving well enough alone,
allowing utility to encroach
in every reservoir of tranquility,
saying

"Might as well, eventually..."

Forbear voluntarily, and find somewhere
fortitude to forswear needing to go there
from where we're close enough
to hear their roosters crow.

Rest we content
to never go
and not know.

No global position,
just a seat at the table.

No big brother in my pocket,
and no blue light uppercut.

No swipe right to tap
what's under the clatter
of thee, my feed.

Time to say goodbye to my youth;
and to my tooth, I miss you!

Scars particularize,
and wounds free me
to spend my energy,
marked mortally.

My delimitation by a mistaken equation reduced.
Impeccably, blemishes accrue.
Only you only improve.

Exemplar relic of my ignorance,
my attempt to gainsay,
the last vestiges of my intactness sacrificed,
in fear and haste extracted.

Limitation, oh!

No rush to transcend.
Hurry none.

Of things to get to,
the bottom's not one.

To the top -
after thought rises,
what cream may come?

Can you the same thing see two ways?

I say welcome to the beginning
of embracing constraint.

Shunting ungainly commutatives around
amounts to none.

Only become a *possible* monster.

Oh deterioration!

Only you perpetually yield value.
Reconstitutive detachment proceeds.
Get your house in order.

Oh faded world!

Our would-be prosperity
may either be yours,
or amortizing,
or amor fati.

Contrary vectors -
one's winding up while, see,
mine seems to grow bee-line
to the floor.

So I too am become degraded, poor -
whereupon your ray of love appears.

Whether things are getting worse or better
occurs to me as being ponder worthy.

No matter how rich,
no magic can there be absent
one deft unhinging touch,
one immediation.

See?

No one can take you away from me,
says a voice that I can't see in my life,
a voice I've found inside my music
singing for me.

So much surrounding the senses
is but a fragile fury and sound,
whereas you hide where no one
interferes, or hears the sound
of my surprise and joy to
in my song find you.

All my surfaces enforce your protection,
from any direction behind what of me can be seen.

If any trace of innocence in me survives at all,
if I still place any of my trust in what becomes
of circumstantial, happenstantial days that come
down the pike, seeming quite like insubstantial leaves that fall,

it's because of what feeling you behind me does -
gives what is more felicity than what was.

Faltering the future comes,
and with few compunctions, I listen in,
'cause sufficient it isn't, my highest wisdom
by time and body limited, limited.

What's within protects without intersection
with its own effects, non-overlappingly.

Alive. Alive.

All I sing's alive to you.
And your gift inside's alive too.
And the giving tree still survives somewhere new.

Within the body lives a garden
growing wild roots down,
with leaves higher than the mind
receiving light unrefined.

And every seed gives its energy subtly to the body,
feeding the steed ridden by the force inside that's

Alive, Alive...

Thriving in soil, your skin,
the harvest has secrets within a supernatural taste
that nourishes an unearthly tongue.

In mother's milk first the warmth of love distilled in the body,
then an embrace and a sigh of pleasure that you are

Alive, Alive...

My constant contemplative tone, oh!

Deep, appreciative, lonely realization
of the one who's vivid, invisible.

What is it to me?
What is it?

Not this, not that.

Not a skill,
not honing an apparatus,
more a maturity, fecundity.

Not good works.
In a lifespan, you can give it all
and nevertheless you'll pass away.

Not being anything for anyone.
Compassion radiates anyway.

Not tracking down the goblins
diversely inhabiting the psyche;
look within, find a menagerie
of creatures identifying as me,
but out of many one emerges naturally.

Not analysis,
what sisyphus suffered
polishing truths by tumbling knowledge around
'til you find solace, or progress, or endless
tricks of a mind intelligently designed for...
What is it?

Not aligning the limbs four, toning the flesh,
adoring the ashes adorning your form for a while,
maybe 'til tomorrow.

May you survive to see what's inside thrive
so long as you're alive, but ineluctably
the trajectory cycles and then you die.
What remains?
What is it?

Not art, formal location of contemplation,
but I wonder what's under the beautification,
the desire to relish a taste of inspiration
from some higher idea the shape that I should take.

Thus I create a song.
Does it really reach the vicinity of beauty?

What is it to me?
What is it?

Not this, not that,

Not virtue, smarts, identity,
not health, not empathy,
not technique, not taste.

None completes my capacity.
Thus do illusions fade.

But the truth remains shining behind your smiling face,
hiding obscured in solitude and silence awaiting
my slowly dawning daily accumulating faith,
eliminating all but one eternal, ephemeral
contemplative tone...

All the simple pleasures
in the charmed life I once enjoyed,
superceded, did fade.

Lifted, I glimpse beyond.
Glory I see! No return!
No return is possible for me!

Free.
Carefree before seeing what I'm for.
Slow to become aware.
But now I know simple pleasures.

Children abandon all without the bitter kiss
of the way a dream unfolds yet tempering simple pleasures.

Where am I going with my ambition?
But a few steps towards you,
in all my days of realizing simple pleasures.

Anonymity.
Your gaze is ever on me,
from which I would never want to hide.
My life is given by your regard of simple pleasures.

Capability is utterly fleeting -
Today I can't even sing anything
of yesterday's simple pleasures.

Now as for the impulse to explore:
Nevermore!

Experience holds no thrills but patience gains them all
without resorting to running away,
proffering a justification
that elsewhere lie some other source of simple pleasures.

Mind occupied by study,
well-applied.

To what end?
For its own sake?
Or for an ulterior aim?
Some certain knowledge to be gained?

Well, what it is, I have discovered:
It's that idleness is better!
Simple pleasures.

Satiety,
which there can be very little of now, anymore,
because I'm angling for ambulatory delicacies,
which sit in no stomach I know of,
and can only be taken in on their own terms,
which tend to include full recognition
of whom by whom is consumed
to make room for simple pleasures.

Memory,
the cherishing of which is verboten
for as long as the origin is ever refreshed,
immune to influence from the filtered past.

Still, the only thing worth remembering
is the oceanic expanse unfathomable,
equivalent to a never ending story
by having an opaque, distant, scope-busting end
in light of which all intermediary aims
and simple pleasures
in the charmed life I once enjoyed,
superceded, did fade.

Innocence, ambition, anonymity,
memory charm me no more, nor
satiety, study, capability to explore.

Even of freedom,
it's not often enough asked:
what's it for?

I demand you answer this before
granting me any more simple pleasures!

I intend to attain to flourishing before you
within the given end of time.

Circumscribed as it is, it is mine.

This operational reassuring delusion
succors my untoward ambition.

No amount of saying it ain't so alters
that control of my soul's short progress
is but yours.

Can I get a taste of what's to come
once all my errors are done?

What would be truth, subjected to a criterion of repeatability?

Studies show that they're as often nonsense as not.
Deity deigns not to appear in experiments.

Once in a while, unique, improbable thing
diminished statistically again and again.

In all my life I've yet to meet
the one who, come what may,
maintains a vantage on you.

'Til now.

He's my friend who can tell your story,
singing with simplicity extraordinary.

He won't need variety to excel me in singing true
and in tune with each curve and movement
of your lips, smiling forgivingly.

On what the posit is that God is:

The heavenless kiss of all time's tending
towards the one thing worth adoring.

That's it!
Rather boring.

The mind requires there to be
something beyond every category,
behind every house somebody
whose home it could be.

No vacancy!
If a tree falls,
there's always
an ear, by fiat!

First in love.
Last in line.
Deserving of titles,
if not headlines.

Pity the telos from the discourse has disappeared.
God is not a current event!

Of all the claims
regarding everything accelerating,
none is so unexhilarating,
none quite so boring
as the one alleging
that things have come unhinged,
suggesting which to be fashionably interested in,
fetishizing the apocalypse.

Kingdom come among
injunctions arising from
obsession with death,
this fascination,
that after which none is done.

So now's the prime time to freak out!
I guess why not join in.

Never mind
how well-travelled,
how well-schooled
by centuries slow,
hope survives
all of the claims...

In the new village
you have to say:

"Hey!"

Take on trappings local
for the greater good.
You cut the crap and get through!

I see too few
folks I think I once knew
in the new village.

To the woman biking,
three kids trailing behind,
what I want to say is:

I'm proud of her thighs!

And how will she know
that we hail from the same
nation in more than name?

In charisma's a kind
of every man's fame.

Relax, OK?

Be comfortably among
we who don't worry.

Youth as it shows itself amidst our fellows
recalls all those forgotten hours, idle.

You're not alone here,
stranger to default camaraderie.

Have you experienced
the unexpected convergence effected
when defenses naturally relax?

Nothing if still the muse is unwilling.
Sing in me, music through me sing.

Never can I find what I've sung and left behind.
Imprison my voice within the strange loops of your mind.

Fire, where it may burn,
finds the brilliant corners,
the brilliant core.

I'm aflame with your
warm embrace, kindling
nothing if still the muse is unwilling.

Everything I sing I owe to her glance.
Her smile bathes me.

I'm soaking in divine light,
purifying light warming my skin,
my flesh, my breath within enlivened
by her embodied grace.

If there's truth in what I sing, it's you.
What I am is your flower, your fruit,
but the seed, the soul, the source is you.

So what use do I have for artist statements?
Public relations? All I need to say is:
If I participate in your creation,
I'm blessed by association.

Memory's my main squeeze,
lest time forgets.

From tiresome newness rescue me,
while your same old beauty's
recognizable still, by memory...

Romance picks innovation to win hands down,
though our situation iterates the past.

Give me any day (today most of all, though)
apt proverbs over inferences in any number.

All in it, no limit.

And yet to admit why, I'm shy,
but minute to minute
my will will not die.

I'm all in it.

One and the same integrated,
omegated, ultimated impulse
pulling us into what's fated.

Some means to some ends admit no difference between.
This involution in my name claiming persistence
adorns an inflorescence as its selfsame evolution.
In itself involvement is fruition on its own of spirit.

Appeals to any *ology
in an information age
crowd out salutary shadows
where clandestine impossibilities thrive.

Technology holds a civilization rapt,
its conferences, its front pages, even its infants,
who don't make sense, but make believe.

Manifest in every industrial corner,
its prowess irrefutable,
science has occupied the altar.

But I'm bored by
practically all evidence!

Where does all the leverage come from?
What's the fulcrum?
Whose work is done?

Let the unknown remain wild,
like the whales in other planets' seas.

More on my hands than I can fathom.

See and Conquer.

Come and Smash and Grab.

Slash / Burn.

Cold blood gathers into embarrassment
in thrift stores, landfills, and then finally
it's the sea receiving the excesses,
externalities of so called successes
replacing desire with perversity and dullnesses.

Left behind, right in the lurch,
usurped by useless global glow,
viewed from squalid underbelly
your darkness is worth dying for.

Show me the fuel immune to exhaustion
even in the hands of fools.

Things disappear - done, spent, extinct.
Show's over folks. That's all. The end.

Some things disappear.

Once and for all recorded as history,
past, present, and future morphogenesis
forestalls for a while this gyre,
then gone forevermore.

Too late, see?
All the vim is drained
from my chemistry,
leaving me.

Every day do I succumb anew,
ever forgetful of you.

What of virility?
What's the point?

What's the endgame
of this half a century?

Everything about me's fake draperies.

My niceties pale in light
of eternity's compassing luster.

So why should I be shy?
Gotta sing with more heart,
taking to heart that in giving,
I'm depleting.

So, who's gonna
with a ten foot pole
touch me appropriately?

I'm a poorly dislocated being.
You're all better than me,
but I'm here - a closet mystic wannabe.

Who ordered me so well-done?
Are you pulling my leg?
If not, could you?

I've got one foot what's known,
one what chaos owns.

Ecosystem's a poor metaphor
for the personality of complexity
at which occasionally I bristle.

In each institution few lights shine through.
This edifice has calcified to hide its core.

Before one,
Becomes two.

A double-edged sort of proliferation,
mistaken for more.

Manifest, the moment it happens thus
is blessed and then just as soon is less than
what's next, what's best, what's new.

And meanwhile in rear view the mindless do rule
in thrall to false progress in which you're ignored.

Why isn't beauty news?
It's all I want to see.

Maybe I'm naïve.
Yup - in fact, hopefully.

If it were up to me
which truth were true,
I'd always choose the one whose
music were noteworthy.

Yes, I've seen the sunsets.
Yes, they're pretty, sure.

But I expect to be permanently enraptured.

And if no longer moved by
them or their memory,
what's left of me but to
begin my plenarity?

Shines a crown jewel,
the way creation is woven
into evolution.

And how beautiful
my full life shines
if I can live up to my times.

Look around you.

Do you see many or one,
or creativity, or creative potential
that exceeds what the scenery is
at a parade of everybody?

I am that I am at only one
cusp of a curve at a time.

There I find, not beyond,
at the edge where the sidewalk ends,
that this life, this wonder, one full life
proceeds by impulse, try, fail,
insight guided by all of creation
before my human feet met the ground
where I sing to you now.

Newly shines a crown jewel.

Born somewhere.
No escape from history there.
But what persists is you,
 still fresh from here,
 still a child.

Soft the light and slow the days;
I remember reaching to greet the dawn,
fearless, yearless soul.
But despite nostalgia for paradise,
 the memory will suffice -
 one life, twice born somewhere.

Now your life has reached this hour time and again.
Each reflection reveals who you've become since birth.

Body breathes,
Mind remembers,
Soul rests in silence
infused with music the spirit sings in trinity -
 the ghost listens quietly, cryingly
 to you in whom life yet rises to realize
 the high truth that this is all -
 nothing to the grave.

All the dreams that you are
fall like stars when morning comes.

Death returns you to beautiful eternity
without a name, no face, and no memory
of childhood, maturity, or taking your last breath.

Even these words will disappear
the day that you're born somewhere.

Another way?
Nah, this way's good.
And that's that.
As it is, I don't know
another way.

Got to be part of what?
I don't want to apologize
for particulars of another way.

All of the wrong targets are novel.
All of the identical ones are harder.

Cultural vacuum versus master plan -
let them vie as worthless twins!

Thank me.
This song no longer
interrogates or problematizes.

I retire my attempts
for my qualms' formulation
to learn your matchless specificity.

Will to homogeneity:
What's so swell about diversity of quality?
Count me out!

Vis-à-vis uniqueness:
Will these traces vanish? I wish!
Any identity apart from you I abandon.

I do not need variety.
I prefer uniform coverage.
Via sacrifice? Forget about it!

What is excellent in me is your accident!
What's the use of entertaining further claims
when I've found you?

Dry.

I'm on empty.

No neighbors, just stark sun.
No freshness, just waste on
all sides and wild dry.

An evaporated homeland is mine.

No boscage fruitful
where every well is dry.

Does this evident desolation some task suggest,
or some function harbor, however withdrawn?

Focus only on lights
on late in your mind.

Why?

'Cause let's see the AI
choose desert dry...

Here I come to society now
from a desire to grow somehow
before I know the taste of the ground
in whose furrows was I first found,
in whose stable,
 humble,
 fertile,
 venerable,
 dirt-stained hands

I first heard your commands,
 and where my roots,
 where my only,
 where my everything once
was like a song I remember singing
before I knew that the time would come to choose.

May your hands
from my best laid plans
deliver me into you.

Picking up and moving at the drop of a hat,
draining that which related remains -
situated brains.

life,
only life,
my lonely life's a sacrifice,
this here life.

no defenses - the sins at large
of society are born by me,
by my life...

no encouragement,
no courage at all,
no martyr here.

I hear no encouragement -

an error perhaps,
a mismatch sure.

This barrage of burdens
serves you somehow.

I'm cut from finer cloth than I need
to wrap my days these days.

Weren't you generous?
Weren't you awesome to stitch me
real civilized, colorful, beautiful?

Although I'm always logging in as admin,
I'm cut from you. Do you recognize me?

While waiting patiently for you who spins me,
I'll be singing and laughing and crying
and praying and dying finer cloth than I need.

So?

Will you show me down below,
underground, where alone I can't go?

My eyes adjust here but slow,
their surface certainty left behind.

What I view superficially
by the powers proper to me
is still as clear as a bell,
but here, sublimely blind, I see.

Non-disaster strikes
with no finality,
just utter thanks
for nothing happening.

Precarious precious careless peace!

How much pleasure
can a calm night carry?

All its beauty occurs outside worry,
every second snatched from the abyss.

It's endlessly susceptible.

Maybe the threat level
really never does descend
down from orange.

Although misfortune crashes in too easily,
I witness you nine nights out of ten.

Lotus eyes, did you give a thought for my salvation?
With my life, what am I meant to do? Consecrate it all?
Give it over to you with the beautiful and unperturbed gaze,
and those brazen arms, strong and sure to save me?

Insight's a little fish that without regret I let loose to go.
Either I am dying or I haven't hit my stride,
yet I find nothing falling into place while on my own.
My mind's open wide and inviting, lotus eyes.

No one but me knows nothing that I do
is even remotely good enough for you.

So what if it falls short? I'll sing anyway!
Since no one pays any heed to what I say.

What good is your attention,
washed up on my incomprehension
of even what elementary measures
should be taken, for goodness sake?

I still may be the best singer here!
No one can second guess whether my song is sincere.

Neither where we're going
nor where we've been
is an easy question.

I'm lost again!

Even where I'm from,
I'm not from there.
My source is somewhere else.

Where?
Elsewhere!

Wherever you find yourself,
there you are, and there's so much
there to be taken in.

Studying the stars,
the branches of trees.

Nested in canopies,
histories transpire.

So, is this poetry?
No, not really.

I'm only trying
once and for all
to nail it just so.

You need a name,
and once everybody knows it
I'll have nothing to say.

I may still sing this poetry.

It's hard to pray.
Nearly all falls through.
Next to nothing stands.
What does is up to you know who.
Outta mine, it's in your hands.
So get it right!

'Cause I can't wait for the adequacy of this poetry.

Until the stars darken, I'll sing to you.
Until the sunlight falls on my cold skin,
there'll be one more song within.

By the sea a thousand flowers,
all poppies, bloom in the sunlight.

My happiness does blossom sometimes too,
but the ocean sings night and day
on your shores.

Singing seems like swimming in a clear cool spring
and sinking heavily into the deep,
where the strangely glowing creatures
float and flicker slowly.

And underneath it all,
effulgent, silent, a source
pours forth light
and names of yours.

Have mercy please.
Orphans, we.

Bereaved creatures,
we love you who
breathed life.

Pray, what's your name?
Tell me!

Lonely and hiding, helped by the trees,
sheltered by their leaves,
in the understory,
nodes of light,
we glow brightly,
but we don't know whence our power
or where's our progenitor.

This beehive humming,
hexagonally combing
our insides, honeyed lives
derived wild from colors
odoriferous and virile.

Nourished thus, and nutrified,
we grow in size and pride,
as lions preside over wide open paradise
still missing a king's name to sing
for praising the origin of things,
source affirming, saying:

Yes to living.

Yes to giving everything forgiving.

Yes to receiving.

Yes to believing infinite intelligence
is realizing in us its evidence.

Some irreplaceable moment
when I learn how to listen
for unheard whispers emerging,

I turn my ears to the earth,
my virgin eyes to the sky,
where I discern a once in a lifetime vision of blue.

I'll spend the rest of my days with open arms,
waiting for you to return.

Some irreplaceable moment passes silently
as the seconds unfold and fade.

But you remain silently,
as the seconds unfold and fade.

Surely we're not in control.
So humbling ourselves completes us.

Prostrating? Where?
What for anymore?
Who's your master?

In what pattern, on what doctrine,
do we propitiate, if at all?

For us to still congregate
ennobles and fulfills our estate.

Be without fear.
The end times are here.
Virtue is a memory revered once fallen.

Vain to taste one's own tears while mourning,
while morning weeps to taste its own tears,
dewdrops of innocence sweeter than truth,
though comes a day without taste
and a tide that drowns me.

Dusk falls and shadows flood
this vale of tears where I slumber,
but at twilight I awaken to you.

From cold chrysalis I arise,
aware without fear.

With the world, all is right.

Well...

...impossible, important
sentiment with which to live.

Even headaches,
insufficient paychecks,
and / or deforestation
vitiates not your perfection.

Rest well, unaffected. (by...)

Everywhere that ever mattered
was somewhere and is still,
even surfaces of mars
and / or the moon.

Such precincts of yours
overflow with ether data __ __.

The ocean I'm swimming in
is insubstantial. (of...)

Even the birds regret a song without strong wings
floating in awe, flying in mystery.

And one regret remains,
if even one regret remains
hanging on a song that's soaring
over a sea of memories, innocently.

Who's living clean?
Not the follower with past pristine.
Nor the one fully free,
whom on the path you may meet,
but one who's healing a self-inflicted scar within,
revealing the lion lying in wait to kill the guilty.

Mortification doesn't mean death, but depth,
preserving precious gifts of life,
ghosts in the machine.

The luster of self-illumination's fragile.
The flesh requires undisturbed rest for recovery.

Please give me strength
to always hold on to you,
hold on to the center of a rolling wheel
slowly turning over, turning under.

Whose hand so steadily keeps time?
Whose eyes so readily meet mine?
Unmoved by moments, you recline
somewhere above all thunder.

Beyond colors the world is white
like your smile, raining light.

By myself below, my substance is shadow.
Shine through my arms - I'll never let go.

Some days my hands are full, some days empty.
Fortune, like snowfall, gathers and goes.

Fireflies flicker and disappear
into the warm summer air you breathe,

and I know how to be hungry
and wait for a lifetime or more
to taste the one fruit
sweet in all seasons
that never does fall.

Patience ripens each generation.
Truth evolves by revolutions divine,
between your breaths the whole time.

Let's consult the genius of this place,
invite him here, give him a smile.

And then I wonder what he has to say.

I'd give him the floor,
but the whole ground is his anyway.

"Oh peaceful boy..." he'll start to say
in his patient voice, like waves breaking.

Then lifting his eyes, glistening, to mine,
he'll pause while I pass away,
return to meet his gaze, and say
"Let's consult the genius of this place."

"I too was young," he'll say.
"I've heard your singing here before.
Here I remain.
Here I remember
before all the streetlights appeared,
and every night was dark,
the moon gave its all,
the land took its mood.
One man stayed awake
and came to me like you
and sang the same song the same way.
Was it you?
Was it yesterday?"

"Was it? Yes." I say.

Hear the sky convey the bells.
Hark well the sign of a house that still lives.

All too rare the species of bliss
found nowhere else like this.

Fitted into the landscape in such a way
as to become the keystone of its intelligibility,
(at least to me),
found in conviviality,
evading the news,
if you continue to be worthy
of such works of worship,
where's the proof?

No I'm not.

Yes I am.

What if either?

Where's the gap?

(I don't mind if you know I'm not.)

I'm hiding!

I've no idea who's brave at the helm,
meanwhile I'm qualified.

Some kind of genius had better be in charge,
or else hand me the reins and hold on.

(Where are we going?)

I'll navigate!

Yes, of course I know the way.
I can be large, unleashed in home terrain.

Your diet I accept,
while I'm an omnivore myself.

Your triggers I respect,
while I rejoice in being unoffendable.

I seek you, and that too -
hardly do I register the alterity,
although it always sees all I see.

Ever presence of another
sharpens the mind to recognize
in all truths, and in all lies, eyes.

Ask me if I'm a genius -
at least I know not to say:

"God is simply energy."

Too fast and too few
and too untrue too,
my all but illegitimate findings
as I seek you.

When I say you, do I have a clue
as to whose attention I'm calling to,
whose ears I'm asking for,
whose eyes I yearn to look into?

May their enlightened stare
calmly return my gaze.

Some character, some fairy
tale archetypically arrived
from mythology, beloved
by everybody?

But I mean something else,
someone whose face only
occurs to me, whose reality,
whose personality, just may be
a trope whose poetry
makes believe that I'll see
an idolatrous fantasy,
whereas I don't stand on
any ceremony.

So I invoke freely
you, epithetically.

Even if invented you still reflect my philosophy
that an unaccountable demon bears responsibility
for what's best in me.

The sky's power.
The size of multiplex clouds.
The sun drowns all candles around a bay,
bioluminescent in a burning way.

Underneath we unearth ore
for the patterns airplanes aim for.

With destinations ancient,
constellations maintain flight.

Constantly is your infinity
receding sidereally.

I need just enough,
not too few,
not too much.

I need just enough,
or too few -
just not too much.

For the golden mean for me
means not too much.

In between extremes,
medium happy modest dreams
can be all and end all for me.

Moment with a tree well-pruned.
Buds shapely with leaves fallen.
Pretend skeleton numerously demonstrating life
in t-minus twenty blossoms
to be the spring prehension.

Although my sins even against
my own self are many, in my ignorance,
somehow life continues to be given,
what's incurred thereby forgiven.

Replenished in ebb and flow,
this body heals if it's open
to the winds, to the slow
balm of subliminal rhythm.

Most of us are more comfortable with kink than worship,
and thus we cede the topic to the old philosophers.

Whereas there's no more sleepy villagers;

Every kid in the world
listens to the same ringtones.
Can you hear me now? Good!

Tech is not the only cutting edge,
what with ocean animation
racing coral bleaching.

It's happening:

Our virtual realities are more vibrant
than our real seas.

These and other theories
lead to sorrow.

Sometimes it seems that all has been said.

What needs said,
say again.

Of sense to nonsense,
boost the ratio.

Sometimes I feel I'm a smithereen.

(nonsense having,
and needing to have,
a lobby.)

Sometimes I think I'm a vehicle for dreaming.

There's more skill in sustaining
than in eliminating
fantasy.

To be realistic is to be
as if the reality,
but not really.

Until a few have fallen again
after too perfectly sweeping these leaves.

Hospitability to improvement's
the most beautiful virtue of all.

Tall trees lining a dirt road,
rustling in all afternoon's breeze.

Gentle hovering bees
in a windy bath of smells, pollen, petals.

Sterility is nowhere.

All is quiveringly amenable to evolving.
Mutability rules such bucolic scenes.

Only sometimes found,
Only sometimes sought.

Only sometimes have I defined correctly
the terms of my search,
'cause I'm feeling lucky.

Once all is said and done
there's got to be someone.

Thoughts converge not spatially,
but in person.

You with universal rectitude!

Allow me to describe what you're like
to trust fall back on:
modest but well-fed.

What has begun continues to bring life into you.

This old music rings true,
nor's the shape of a woman new,
as they have sung whose voices
sound among the stars,
far above native ground.

My mother tongue is the same.
We only recite your name.

An elevation her own does a queen bee seek once flown.
Abounding energy give the young free girls boldly.
Appreciates the body in health until such wealth shows
as does slow the walk of women grown.

I've seen hips hopping
backstage from *thei *thei *tham,
and majestically, tenderly, mothers become in turn.

The earth spins feminine thread in distaff strands
by wise a web of grandmothers hands
weaving history.

Take what all I have.
So fragile to undertake what all I have.
Precious nothing to show for what I do.
Singing's subject to vicissitudes.

Once met, a modicum of possession
proper to bodily incarnation,
how to direct acquisition
of goods on no ledger?

Myriad though my gains,
invisible too.

All in simplicity.
All that I'm meant to be.
All kinds of this and that on my mind.

Oh, forget it all!

Forget language.
Forget news, status updates, page views.

Let what informs without infusing,
this "information" - let it fall!

I only admit one influence,
although I'm hardly innocent.

Ignorance isn't bliss, but what is?
Seeing beyond all of this.
Seeing through all of this to you.

What if I lose hope that I'll find,
that I'll taste what it's like by your side,
in your shade that's brighter than my light?

What if I try all of my lifetime,
in which outside I've lain by?

Can I gain proximity?
Else remain trying on empty.

Humbled by so many uphill paths,
I have been lurching in ineptitude,
in juvenile wisps, in impotence.

But now, in servile confidence,
I say it's ok, my delay
in obtaining consolation,
'cause in losing too I'm with you.

The lord of this land has left me bewildered.

Where are you?
And who am I, bewildered?

Nowhere a trace of primeval life grown old.
Without your grace every place is a wilderness to me.

Am I forsaken?

Change, Change.
Every day I come closer to you.

Same, Same.
Back to dust in the end.

Is my whole life just a sacred game you're playing?
Or when it's over, will you sing as I do?

Once by an alpine lake I perched,
singing with the birds and echoes.

And you too were there,
bathing your body slowly.

The clouds climbed you slowly,
as they have done forever,
or just for me?

How could I be forsaken?

Fret not.

A chair I'm not, clearly.

My studies are unnameable,
nor categorical, quite inchoate,
distinctions none contain,
may even be undifferentiated.

A glom!

But I'm the only one who when you
had to be there was there
with my aftermarket second nature.

My soul is souped up.
Where's the department of character?
Sanity's my specialty.

Have I lost sight of the truth?

Oh why,
why,
why have I lost sight of you?

I roam in search of just one
glimpse of sustaining love.
Am I walking alone?

Oh why,
why,
why have I lost sight of the truth?

My eyes, my vision once beheld your beauty.
Was it only while closed?
Was it real?

Ever the years go by,
ever I try to see,
ever I wander.

Some of the same old places,
whose graces do still remain hiding from view,
humble abiding homes for you.

One earthly paradise resides
there where my eyes
alight but on your throne
in my own quiet insight,
in some of the same old places.

Is this whom I've been serving,
whose dwelling preserving,
who's rejuvenating where silence can thrive,
whose all-pervading life from here radiates wide,
and every secret niche fills with riches until the end
of all of the same old places?

So what if I atone for someone
who won't do what I've done?

On the one hand one can
attain heaven knows what,
and on the other remain.

Body of my body,
someone has failed
you or someone else.

Is Moksha anything to anyone?
Do you know?
If so tell me.

Bodhi tree, how pure are thee
under whose branches do the
evolved suffer from their evolution,
their compassion?

For someone's always ready to sever the ties and be done.
I'm not always ready to sever the ties and be done.

Even if not a king I live like one - as nobly as I can.
What would the other Gautam have done?

Pity if luxury were on humanity to be lost,
or else understood as the only good.

Some summum bonum!

Numb imposter of what's leisurely,
a.k.a. prayer - the least instrumental activity.

God is dead in the sense that he, she, or it
must call it quits, reverse course,
submit, and be composted.

Which is not a surprise -
we've long known that though it may be good,
the word is nevertheless now much too ripe.

Prayer constitutes a vote of no confidence,
a recall to incontrovertible fundamentals,
the enaction of care.

Why second guess the only thing that makes me happy?
Opportunity to be free and ponder you!

As it fades, the sense of reverence,
does the place revered disappear?

Somewhere hidden in the mystery, my capacity for awe.
Somewhere a sacred fragrance emanates forgotten.

Take me there,
as it fades.

My fallow field refreshed by recollection,
inward attention revealing your perfection.

Take me there
where wonder reigns
intelligence as king.

Where shall I, your singer, go?
With what words my relevance show?

All the world's your temple,
although where's the sanctum?

I don't know,
as it fades.

So long as nobody's talking about sparks
in the soul, the rest of this is all loathsome dung!

I have to make something happen.
I've got to lift the world up.

I can't just sit around not having a
pivotal peak experience.

Forged from a key handful of those
forevers that hang there in the air,
the whole of my conviction is arisen.

I wasn't chosen.

I haven't time enough
to any great act complete.

That's mortality!

And too it's not yet time for my message,
but but for in it I won't survive!

So long!

What have I done
that I may understand
somewhat of the music
that I've sung?

na na na...

What's this that comes?

While I'm aware
of what's not there,
I encounter you
whose way to know
a few lifetimes takes
limned in this sound.

Come archaic calmly perfect
listener omniscient to hear
life giving itself like this,
and like that,

and na na na...

Your beauty trickles in
then emerges as a torrent
steeped in this, some kind of love
of you whose flooding of my mind
I welcome.

I hear the train whistle blow, and I know
I'm at home, time proceeds slowly, and my mind expands.
Like old times, new times unfold along much the same lines.

Eternally at hand,
the timeless WAS is IS,
and whatever will be will be.

Whatever became of those carefree nights?
Where did the wild creatures go when those times became these?
Am I the same as whomever came before?

All my time is for you,
and yet it all goes by.
Who knows why?

Before, I wanted so for the journey to last forever,
but I'm here, and bliss exists - it's seeing yourself
with the eyes of years ago.

Whether you've anything
to show for it or not is not
important, but what is
is your commitment as
time cradles you in its arms longer than the law,
longer than any human contrivance like trains,
like songs like this one,

to remember how you've remained until now
like plants stretching in the longer light of spring,
being after winter due for growing, striving,
staying where tertiary knowing
has a chance of showing
such a rich, slow dance obtaining.

If I found joy, would I know?

If I, in my search, in my research,
revealed the real elusive fugitive?

Am I trying to extract the juice too soon?

Too much purpose,
Too few aimless days
not too full to play for joy.

Or am I waiting dumb,
ignoring the new strangely calm interloper
standing by more quietly than I?

Have you been there long,
watching my fumbles and pride?

Speak up! Please say something!
I can't believe I can so long be denied.

Being there
for births and for deaths
restores awareness of the real source,
refreshes life force.

You've got to stick around,
wait in the wings.

Far too easy to flee before long enough
for things to run their course,
for me to run away from being there...

Of what remains,
almost nothing avoids being overhauled,
a cruel fate masquerading as if beneficial,
as if foregone.

But who'll mark the last rites of passage,
the milestones observe,
the miles to go before being there...

Big deal.

What's the big idea
of all the big data?

The singularity doesn't concern me!
The uncanny valley bores me!

Go ahead without me!

Expose my thoughts to robots
algorithimically appending more
hashtags for more better searchability
of my former internality
turned cavity mental
uploaded, exploded, outmoded.

Space age only because
our regard from earth has turned.

Information age because
our instinct for facts is but to tally them
while we hurtle forever towards omega.

Pat, neat, intact.
Too good to be true, in fact.

But brutish if no room for you.
So don't be fooled!

Show me one subtle, capable person
conversation with whom on you ensues.

Predictable throaty cheers
for what's ostensible as objective?

Nonplussed.
Get off the pedestal!

Know how's no panacea if from afar.
Observation's got to be in the thick of you.

He's old school;
can't fake that sleepy durability.

No use for a shortcut to laugh lines -
they're earned signs that he's learned
to surrender mirthfully.

Even his clothes fit no style,
though they seem suited to the sunlight
all the while he daydreams.

I ain't scared to be specific.
All I do is pray and eat bagels.

I'd better meditate than throw up my hands,
but I can't wait to pray instead, I'm afraid.

Foreign to my culture's the general world
of standing off and copping out.

Too much yoga!

Much less stretch then get to work.
As such, all retch and no vomit.

Rare, this encounter.
Spare me any unnecessary story!

More very ordinary.
More precious for its normalcy.

You,

So well groomed wherefore?
Whom? Why so easy to adore?

My every blessing for desire!
Care to see the dragon in me?

Oneself to self-realize requires aught as a stage
wherein each act uniquely against odds comes to be.

Survival's easy, arriving eventually at authenticity
that autopoietically completes oneself.

Circumstance here, Ahamkara there,
births a perspective, then nurtures its gains,
whose role surprises all those who believe in fate.

Despite of prediction,
one becomes somewhat
heretofore undescribed,
moreover never too late.

Everyone says that I am useless.

But there's nary any one who has seen me
through and through and understands me,
including me.

Here's an instance of an undercover action:
I remember erstwhile dreams on purpose,
exercising visionizing.

Be brave.
Never break.

I contact you on a dedicated line,
untappable by anyone.

In your face,
oh to be lost!
oh not to halt my reverie
to milk its poetry,
a travesty!

I turned from you
to gain by you
these very words too,
my bad habit of
escaping

Revelation,
scared to abandon
what I know, or seem to.
But after all, who am I,
and who cares?

Let me give up
myself, knowing all too well
that left to my own devices,
I fail to go the distance.

To be lost in your face!

Here's what infinitude said:

"That universal field's
too vast and vague, dear.

"What's real are these
ten thousand things
not without end.

"Actions of intellections
reach premature than observations
their respective horizons.

"Actually only just so much will happen."

Do you know what "saved"
has to do with me and you?

Do you know what it means
to be, and are we?

Let's say a life is saved.

Saved for what?
Saved for later?
Saved for now?

Where?
What for?
'Til when?
To what end?
What then?

And suppose we're redeemed?
Well what would that mean?
Who's to decide if this will worth a sequel be?

Open arms, calm shores
of home, of home.

Lately, love of origination
in wide open arms.

Overlooking the blessing of being
loved before deciding anything,
its essence through my pores arising.

Racing for granted, disoriented,
losing touch with the threads of springing
from the soil, so to be ashamed unable
of the paved over, dusty, interstitial
open arms.

City with your zoos
and your nurseries too.

Dense diversity.

Bottles behind bars,
all the world distilled,
culled, arrayed, unrivalled,
displayed species.

No paucity.

Secretly rewild environments
where more self-similarity's
there in store.

Creatures:

Wherefore here coexist with this noise
amidst an awesome variety of beer?

Among all the words I've adorned my voice with,
one alone is sacred.

Cultivation
of soil
of soul.

Among all the passions over a lifetime,
one alone is divine.

Contemplation
of your beauty
of your truth.

Oh my God,
my secret God,
my everlasting friend.

May your mysteries be
my home, home, home.

On the Gathering (vs. the Recording)

Musicians - admit it. You weren't born making the music you make now. Somewhere there have been inputs - inoculations of musicality, like the language that a poet learns.

Inputs. I think there have been many generations of us now who see recordings as acculturators. Our modern attitude about music is conditioned on the artifact - the sound, the essence, we assume.

Recorded music is an incredible technology. I mean the core of it - hearing later what was heard then. (Let alone electronically created or digitally manipulated music - hearing now what was not heard then.)

But let's face one fact squarely - it does not give you the impression you would have gotten had you been there. Not even close, regardless of fidelity.

Like: facebook is not friendship, but maybe it's starting to look like it, especially if you grew up with it. Or maybe the kids are alright.

And in seeing a recording as something to cherish when it's good, something to learn from, we ought to give proper place to this fact: it is an abstraction from a more robust version of itself - a version situated in people and a happenstance, rather than situated in a relic. What great grandpa would have called music was something you either did or went to - with your body, and crucially, with others.

The human being is the most interesting technology for music reproduction by far. This is my main point here.

And the most durable, in a heritage from forbearing elders to wide-eyed prodigies, whereas you could build a bridge to Hawaii with all the defunct records, tapes, CDs, failed hard drives, etc. (And I think we've already started to do that, with the immense garbage patch of plastic in the Pacific Ocean.)

And the most profitable. Recorded music as a business is now a famous dead horse, but the concert "is that it is", there's no remix, WYSIWYG.

A big part of that is because it's about more than what you hear - the sound is not actually the essence of a concert. You always "had to be there", because what music actually is is an experience that happens once.

Recorded music is like pornography - on demand, get your kicks, scrutinize. But if it starts to seem like your "go to" for having a musical experience, you'd better take a walk and get some perspective - you're settling for a palliative. Remember that sharing is caring.

I believe that the gathering is the condition for true music, which is a people phenomenon, and a communication. And what's best about music is its capacity to order a gathering, to bring people "in concert", with shared experience as a substrate for fellow-feeling as much as for pure aesthetic relish.

And as an acculturator, music people make is much more valuable than music speakers make. You remove the human at peril of losing track of the source. This same problem plagues our food system, and is being recognized. Know your farmer, limit your processed food. Know your singer, limit your processed music.

You're not going to make all your music yourself, and shouldn't. You're not going to attend every concert you'd like to hear, and shouldn't have to. And it's impossible and undesirable to hear "live" much of the music that is being made these days, because humans made it with computers. All of these are liberating, good things, and a credit to technology, and something to be thankful for in our age.

But docking your iPod will never be as enlightening as learning a song from a teacher or friend, pushing play will never be as rewarding as waiting for the guy to retune. And remember that you can never witness without being present - and witnessing may just be what is most human about us, most irreplaceable. It's not what a tape recorder does.

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