

Nonkilling Arts Research Committee (NKARC) Letter: July - August, 2017

(Also as attachment in Word.docx)

Dear NKARC members and friends,

This letter continues our conversation on Nonkilling Arts . As our colleague Hugh Mann writes, "Wordy but worthy, conversations are defined by context and driven by purpose. The context of a conversation is its background, which involves the past and present. The purpose of a conversation is its goal, which involves the present and future. Combining the past, present, and future...conversations intertwine time with design, and mine with thine."

Let me start with this beautiful clip of our planet from our friend Anoop Swarup forwarded on the 88th birthday of late Glenn D. Paige (28th June). Anoop writes about this Carl Sagan reminder in memory of Paige and for a Nonkilling destiny of entire humankind:

"This excerpt from Carl Sagan's book Pale Blue Dot (1994) was inspired by an image taken, at Sagan's suggestion, by Voyager 1 on Feb 14, 1990, from a distance of about 6 billion kms from Earth.

Voyager 1, which had completed its primary mission and was leaving the Solar System, was commanded by NASA to turn its camera around and take one last photo of Earth across a great expanse of space, at the request of Carl Sagan.

The accompanying words, though written 27 years ago are perhaps the best tribute to the visionary genius in Glenn still relevant today."

See the 3 min. Mp4 video attachment: Pale Blue Planet

The following contributions were received on Nonkilling Fiction, Drama, Poetry, Visual Arts, Cinema, Museum, Graphic, Journalism, Music, and Song telling us that the arts as means and end can help expand our consciousness towards creating a nonkilling world.

1. Nonkilling Fiction:

For Whom the Bells Toll by Ernest Hemmingway

Following my comment on the Hemmingway's, 'A Farewell to Arms' in the last letter, I was suggested to read his '**For Whom the Bell Tolls**' set against the backdrop of Spanish Civil War (1936-39). The novel published in 1940 tells the story of Robert Jordan, a young American in the International Brigades attached to a republican guerrilla unit. It tracks three days in his life in the snow covered hills of Segovia where he is on a mission to dynamite a bridge with the help of local guerrilla brigade against fascist forces. The novel's fast moving plot written in a crisp journalistic style is a meditation on life interrupted by the possibility of death seen through the points of view of its varied characters involved in this war. The full plot can be read in more detail on Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/For_Whom_the_Bell_Tolls

A good novel helps us to get into the minds of its characters. Given below are a couple of excerpts from the book narrated by its two protagonists, Robert Jordan and his older guide Anselmo:

Robert Jordan's soliloquy (pp. 303-305):

How many is that you have killed? he asked himself. I don't know. Do you think you have a right to kill any one? No. But I have to. How many of those you have killed have been real fascists? Very few. But they are all enemy to whose force we are opposing force. But you like the people of Navarra better than those of any other part of Spain. Yes. And you kill them. Yes. If you don't believe it go down there to the camp. Don't you know it is wrong to kill? Yes. But you do it? Yes. And you still believe absolutely that your cause is right? Yes. It is right, he told himself, not reassuringly, but proudly. I believe in the people and their right to govern themselves as they wish. But you mustn't believe in killing, he told himself. You must do it as a necessity but you must not believe in it. If you believe in it the whole thing is wrong. But how many do you suppose you have killed? I don't know because I won't keep track. But do you know? Yes. How many? You can't be sure how many. Blowing the trains you kill many. Very many. But you can't be sure. But of those you are sure of? I have avoided killing those who are unarmed. Listen, he told himself. You better cut this out. This is very bad for you and for your work. Then himself said back to him, You listen, see? Because you are doing something very serious and I have to see you understand it all the time. I have to keep you straight in your head. Because if you are not absolutely straight in your head you have no right to do the things you do for all of them are crimes and no man has a right to take another man's life unless it is to prevent something worse happening to other people. So get it straight and do not lie to yourself....

Anselmo, the older guide (p.192 -196):

Across the road at the sawmill smoke was coming out of the chimney and Anselmo could smell it blown toward him through the snow. The fascists are warm, he thought, and they are comfortable, and tomorrow night we will kill them. It is a strange thing and I

do not like to think of it. I have watched them all day and they are the same men that we are. I believe that I could walk up to the mill and knock on the door and I would be welcome except that they have orders to challenge all travellers and ask to see their papers. It is only orders that come between us. Those men are not fascists. I call them so, but they are not. They are poor men as we are. They should never be fighting against us and I do not like to think of the killing. These at this post are Gallegos. I know that from hearing them talk this afternoon. They cannot desert because if they do their families will be shot.

Anselmo continues (p. 196-198):

This was how they were talking in the sawmill while Anselmo waited in the snow watching the road and the light in the sawmill window. I hope I am not for the killing, Anselmo was thinking. I think that after the war there will have to be some great penance done for the killing. If we no longer have religion after the war then I think there must be some form of civic penance organized that all may be cleansed from the killing or else we will never have a true and human basis for living. The killing is necessary, I know, but still the doing of it is very bad for a man and I think that, after all this is over and we have won the war, there must be a penance of some kind for the cleansing of us all. ...I wonder about the Inglés, he thought. He told me that he did not mind it. Yet he seems to be both sensitive and kind. It may be that in the younger people it does not have an importance. It may be that in foreigners, or in those who have not had our religion, there is not the same attitude. But I think any one doing it will be brutalized in time and I think that even though necessary, it is a great sin and that afterwards we must do something very strong to atone for it.

Hemmingway starts the book with John Donne's famous quote: "No man is an Island, entire of it self; every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main;... any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankind; And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee." -John Donne"

A rare nonkilling classic with multifaceted points of view. If you are fond of fiction, recommended strongly (Ernest Hemmingway, (1940, 1968). For Whom the Bell Tolls, New York: Scribner pp471). A pdf of the novel available for free download at http://kkoworld.com/kitablar/ernest_heminquey_ece_l_zengi-eng.pdf

2. Nonkilling Play - Tolstoy's confessions

'A Confession' is a play based on the book by Leo Tolstoy of the same name. As part of Theatre Wakefield (<https://www.theatrewakefield.ca/en/>), it was performed by Peter James Haworth, directed by Julie Le Gal in Wakefield, Quebec.

At the height of his fame and success, Tolstoy, the author of such famous novels War and Peace and Anna Karenina realized that he had become totally disenchanted with life. The play is about him trying to find out why he is so disillusioned? In the piece, written 150 years ago, Tolstoy put his whole career on the line. He repudiated his former writing, criticised Russian monarchy, attacked the Russian Church, set himself up for excommunication, and launched a new era in his life.

Tolstoy objected to the despotisms of the Russian Tsar and the German Kaiser. In his writings of confession he testifies against the pseudo-security of a complacent bourgeoisie and feudal caste: "whether to know that my peace and security and that of my family, all my joys and pleasures, are bought by the poverty, debauch, and suffering of millions, - by annual gallows, hundreds of thousands of suffering prisoners and millions of soldiers, policemen, and guards, torn away from their families and dulled by discipline, who with loaded pistols, to be aimed at hungry men, secure the amusements for me; whether to buy every dainty piece which I put into my mouth, or into the mouths of my children, at the cost of all that suffering of humanity, which is inevitable for the acquisition of these pieces; or to know that any piece is only then my piece when nobody needs it, and nobody suffers for it."

Tolstoy's portrayal of a man seeking his own soul and spirit is as relevant today as ever. He once remarked: "...All this is done only thanks to that complicated political and social machine, whose problem it is so to scatter the responsibility of the atrocities which are perpetrated so that no man may feel the unnaturalness of these acts. Some write laws; others apply them; others again muster men, educating in them the habit of discipline, that is, of senseless and irresponsible obedience; others again - these same mustered men - commit every kind of violence, even killing men, without knowing why and for what purpose".

An excellent play to understand what motivated Tolstoy to champion resistance to violence. He was a nonkilling pioneer, becoming inspiration for Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

3. Nonkilling Animation Graphics:

Syria: Imagine Another Way - A thoughtful creative graphic about peace in general and the conflict in Syria put together by Mathew Legge of Canadian Peace Initiative and Canadian Friends Service Society. Click on your Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/canadianpeaceinitiative/videos/1420482284675348/> If you you don't have FBP, you may click: www.canadianpeaceinitiative.ca
<<http://www.canadianpeaceinitiative.ca/>>

4. Nonkilling Art: Visual Art as activism

Humanize Not Militarize exhibit

Mary Zerkel of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is the curator of the thought provoking exhibit, "Humanize Not Militarize". It features works from nearly 50 artists that portray the effects of militarism and imagine nonviolent alternatives for a more just future. Militarism affects millions of people every day, does it make them any safer? She writes: "AFSC is on a mission to change the narrative around war and militarism, and art is a great way to begin that conversation around the country...The power of the exhibit is it doesn't silo these experiences of militarism --it gets at the systemic connections between border issues and war and policing and prisons." For more click on: <https://www.afsc.org/story/art-activism> .

Mary Zerkel is Chicago based Coordinator of the AFSC's Eyes Wide Open exhibit.

Art of Inclusion exhibit

The two- part article in French on the "Art of Inclusion" exhibit in Montreal is similar in spirit as the above work. The exhibit links Islamophobia and its causes related to Military Industry Based countries. The review is from Montreal based colleague Pierre Jasmin of Les Artistes pour la Paix. Click on: <http://www.artistespourlapaix.org/?p=12402>

5. Nonkilling Film Docs:

(a) A Bold Peace in Costa Rica

Friend Jan Slakov sent this note about the documentary film, "A Bold Peace" "It tells the story of how Costa Rica became a country without an army and the struggles it has gone through, and how its stance has affected its culture. I found it especially interesting to learn that Costa Rica has had some difficult challenges, and that it is NOT correct to say that it gets by being sheltered under the US military umbrella, as some would suggest. Interesting to see, as Doris Lessing has said, "what a great influence an individual may have." The former general who disbanded Costa Rica's military was José Pepe Figueres, father of Christiana Figueres (who has been, may still be, the UN climate leader.)" For the trailer click on: <http://aboldpeace.com>

For another review of the film, see colleague Bob Koehler's piece:

<http://commonwonders.com/costa-ricas-peace-journey/>

6. Music and Nonkilling

Colleague Mark Shadle pointed to the new doc film, 'Chasin' the Trane', about legendary jazz saxophonist John Coltrane. It shows his composition, "Alabama," for the Civil Rights Movement, and his lifetime of evolution toward world peace and love until his untimely death at 40. Here's a trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMFNuDJmc1Q>

An other thoughtful doc about Coltrane, "The World According to John Coltrane?" which seeks to connect Coltrane's Music and Spirituality. Click on:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BOJj4YXWPLI>

7. Nonkilling Poet -- it takes a poet to stand up in defiance standing in midst of adversity and killing --instead of lament - 'This is Manchester' by TONY WALSH Longfella

The Guardian described "Tony Walsh's poem, "This Is The Place", rapped out by him in fierce lines at Tuesday's vigil in Manchester, did what public poetry should do - found words where there are no words. We say, "I don't know what to say." We say we're lost for words. Words have lost us. The poem gives us back the words we need.

The bombing (in Manchester) was a public event, as well as a heartbreaking series of private losses. At times like this we need to come together to express our collective despair and bewilderment: Manchester as a city; Manchester as proud northerners; Manchester facing the world, but facing the world in tears."

The poem was followed with a musical support for Ariane Grande concert in Manchester which again proved Art's purpose in a time of fear. As a commentator remarked these public gatherings of artists were not agitating for social change, they were making no policy demands on governments, they were to show defiance and solidarity for those who were hurt and pained. A "solidarity art" designed to boost the morale in the face of terrorism than "protest art" aimed at political problems.

For Tony Walsh's poem click on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=josaDi9ZBvE>

TONY WALSH - a note of defiant - so many children involved in that massacre

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2xoCFGTi6w>>

(b) COMMITTING TO THE GLOBAL NONKILLING WAY

by Francisco Gomes de Matos, a Peace linguist, Recife, Brazil. Author of Nurturing Nonkilling: A Poetic plantation. Honolulu: Center for Global Nonkilling

For the victims of urban terrorist attacks let's pray
For their families compassionate words let's say

To help prevent such killings, let's help governments find the way
Let's globalize peaceful/nonviolent/nonkilling education today

As committed agents of peacebuilding/nonviolence/NONKILLING , our roles
let's play

8. Nonkilling Journalism

(a) *A DYING MAN'S GIFT OF AWARENESS* by Robert C. Koehler

"Tell them, I want everybody to know, I want everybody on the train to know, I love them . . ."

These words are also part of the geopolitics of murder - these words of light and hope, alive and pulsing amid the bullet casings, the blood and wreckage, the shattered lives....." For full story, click on:

<http://commonwonders.com/a-dying-mans-gift-of-awareness/>

(b) "Averting the Ticking Time Bomb of Nukes in North Korea" by David Krieger and Richard Falk

Falk and Krieger write: "It is time to abandon coercive diplomacy and develop an approach that can be described as restorative diplomacy. Coercive diplomacy relies on a zero/sum calculus consisting of military threats, sanctions, and a variety of punitive measures. Restorative diplomacy adopts a win/win approach that seeks to find mutual benefits for both sides, restructuring the relationship so as to provide security for the weaker side and stability for the stronger side. The challenge to the political imagination is to find the formula for translating this abstract goal into viable policy options." For complete article, click on:

<https://www.transcend.org/tms/2017/06/averting-the-ticking-time-bomb-of-nukes-in-north-korea/>

(c) Oliver Stone honoured with Press Freedom Award by Robert Parry

Movie Director Oliver Stone in recognition of his brave work in documentary films has been selected as the winner of the 2016 Gary Webb Freedom of the Press Award. Though most people know Oliver Stone as a famous screenwriter and movie director (we mentioned his daring film SNOWDEN in an earlier letter) he has also lent his talents and resources to a number of documentary films that embrace the core journalistic idea that there are usually two sides – if not more – to a story. Robert Parry writes: "Not surprisingly, Stone has faced intense criticism for deviating from mainstream U.S. groupthink, which seek to portray international adversaries as cardboard villains deserving only of American hatred and bombs.

But Stone learned as a decorated young soldier in the Vietnam War how that propaganda process can lead to unspeakable horrors, including the unnecessary deaths of millions of people and the devastation of entire nations and regions.” For full article, click on: <https://www.transcend.org/tms/2017/05/oliver-stone-honored-with-press-freedom-award/>

(d) Women and Nonkilling: Report from Nobel Women’s Initiative Conference: 14-16 May 2017 – Monchengladbech, Germany by Mairead Maguire – TRANSCEND Media Service

Maguire writes: “As feminists and women, we acknowledge the deep suffering of millions of our Sisters and Brothers around the world, through the violence of Rape, Poverty, Sexual abuse, trafficking, slavery, occupation, wars, all injustices and abuse of human rights and civil liberties so rampant in many countries. We as activists, feel deeply the need to both deepen and increase our resistance to such injustices and to protect our right and space to do so, together and in solidarity with our sisters and brothers wherever they suffer domination and repression and abuse of their dignity and rights. Putting our energies and lives into programmes tackling such injustices is the Agenda of the Feminist Movement in partnership with all those working to empower women and men to get a better future.” Full text of her speech, click on:

<https://www.transcend.org/tms/2017/05/nobel-womens-initiative-conference-14-16-may-2017-monchengladbech-germany/>

9. Nonkilling Poem

Hope
by Lisel Mueller

It hovers in dark corners
before the lights are turned on,
it shakes sleep from its eyes
and drops from mushroom gills,
it explodes in the starry heads
of dandelions turned sages,
it sticks to the wings of green angels
that sail from the tops of maples.

It sprouts in each occluded eye
of the many-eyed potato,
it lives in each earthworm segment
surviving cruelty,

it is the motion that runs
from the eyes to the tail of a dog,
it is the mouth that inflates the lungs
of the child that has just been born.

It is the singular gift
we cannot destroy in ourselves,
the argument that refutes death,
the genius that invents the future,
all we know of God.

It is the serum which makes us swear
not to betray one another;
it is in this poem, trying to speak.

"Hope" by Lisel Mueller from *Alive Together*. © Louisiana State University Press, 1996.

10. War Monuments and Nonkilling

Two short articles on thinking behind War Monuments and Peace Memorials

(a) War Monuments Are Killing Us By David Swanson

<http://davidswanson.org/war-monuments-are-killing-us/>

Remarks by David Swanson at Lincoln Memorial, May 30, 2017: "Why shouldn't we have peace monuments? If Russia and the United States were engaged in jointly memorializing the ending of the Cold War in Washington and Moscow, would that not help hold off the new Cold War? If we were building a monument to the prevention, over the last several years, of a U.S. attack on Iran, would a future such attack be more likely or less likely? If there were a monument to the Kellogg-Briand Pact and the Outlawry movement on the Mall, wouldn't some tourists learn of its existence and what it outlawed? Would the Geneva Conventions be dismissed as quaint if the war planners saw the Geneva Conventions Monument out their window?"

Beyond the lack of monuments for peace agreements and disarmament successes, where are the monuments to the rest of human life beyond war? In a sane society, the war memorials would be one small example of many types of public memorials, and where they existed they would mourn, not glorify, and mourn all victims, not a small fraction deemed worthy of our sorrow."

The Swords to Plowshares Memorial Bell Tower is an example of what we should be doing as a society. Veterans For Peace is an example of what we should be doing as a society. Admit our mistakes. Value all lives. Improve our practices. Honor courage when it is combined with morality. And recognize veterans by creating no more veterans going forward.

(b) Death as Proof of converting our fantasies of wars into martyrdom through war memorials: A thoughtful piece from Richard A. Koenisberg, Library of Social Science

**The purpose of warfare lies in what occurs after the war is over:
Testimonials to the reality of our sacred ideals.**

The First World War was the occasion of massive slaughter—with an estimated [9 million dead, 21 million wounded, and 8 million missing in action](#). What was the purpose of this monumental episode of collective self-destruction?

The prominent historian Jay Winter concludes [his video series](#) stating that the Great War “solved no problems.” Its effects were negative, disastrous and economically destructive. It was the outstanding example in European history of “meaningless conflict.”

For four years, men were asked to get out of trenches and run into machine-gun fire and artillery shells. They were treated as cannon fodder; promiscuously sacrificed. Substantially more care was devoted to cemeteries honoring the dead, which were showered with meticulous, loving care.

Memorials testify to the reality of our sacred ideals. Death in warfare proves these ideals are real. If so many human beings have died for some thing, how is it possible that this thing could be a fantasy?

Soldiers are sent to war in order to sacrifice their lives. Memorials honor the dead. Wars are undertaken to persuade us that nations are real.





10. Nonkilling Youtube video: POPE FRANCIS ON TED TALK

Pope Francis recently remarked: The only future worth building must include everyone. A single individual is enough for hope to exist, and that individual can be you, says Pope Francis in this TED Talk delivered from Vatican City. In a hopeful message to people of all faiths, to those who have power as well as those who don't, the spiritual leader provides illuminating commentary on the world as we currently find it and calls for equality, solidarity and tenderness to prevail. "Let us help each other, all together, to remember that the 'other' is not a statistic, or a number," he says. "We all need each other." As I heard recently another political philosopher Ramin Jehanbegaloo say, "We have to respect not only the other, but the otherness of other." For Pope Francis' 14 minute video, click on:

https://www.ted.com/talks/pope_francis_why_the_only_future_worth_building_includes_everyone?language=en

One hopes Pope Francis will bring out soon similar to his Encyclical on Environment, a much needed Encyclical condemning the Christian 'Just War' doctrine .

11. Last word:

"Candle on Earth" a song written and sung by Adiba Alam from Canberra, Australia. A perfect tribute to beloved late Prof. Glenn D. Paige. Her lyrics and voice has serenity, unity and imagination of transforming lament into an inspiration. It was played at CGNK Governing Council meeting at Professor Paige's Memorial Gathering in Honolulu in March. See attachment for MP3 song file. Thank you, Adiba.

Candle on Earth

Today is the day
When we feel lost.
For you have left
Us all.

But we shall overcome.
With the strength
In your memory.

Oh for you,

Showed us the path
Of kindness
A world of peace.

You were a candle
That gave us light
With the warmth of
A thousand suns.

So come
Let us all
Shine bright
Burn bright
Like candles on earth
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My deep gratitude to all who contributed or pointed to the material for the letter.

Looking forward to your contributions, inspirations, and comments as always.

Nonkilling Regards,
Bill

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"Nonkilling art explores the spirit and practice of how to prevent, respond to, and to improve individual, social, and global well-being beyond killing." - Glenn D. Paige

"Nonkilling Culture crosses all the lines." - Glenn D. Paige

== Nonkilling is THE measure of Human progress==