

In a few short years we will enter a world where massive climate disruption, autonomous military drones, artificial organisms, and irreversible chemical pollution are not only everyday realities, but interacting in complex, unpredictable ways. Sensing our predicament, we clamor for more elaborate problem solving, funneling resources toward technical solutions for the complexities we ourselves are bringing into existence. Yet, a knowledge gap is not responsible for the ecological crisis, potential energy shortage, or economic collapse. The fundamental problem we face runs deeper than scientific knowledge or capital resources. We must come to understand how to live, a challenge that is not technical or economic, but philosophical.

We are a self aware species, what should be the way of our existence? Before the emergence of minds in the natural world, intention played no role in the course of history; now our intention is a central feature of what is, and what will be. Our science gives us unprecedented control over reality, the implications of which only the bravest will accept. Our future will be what we choose to make. Refining our way of existing is the most important work of self awareness, the long walk of a human life. A self aware organism's way of life is its legacy to the cosmos – is it a story of depletion and death or expansiveness and wisdom?

Lucid living is crucial to confronting this challenge, but our time is dominated by commodified experience. Even the clearest minds are quickly muddled with media distractions and consumer items. Yet products are not the problem, intention is. Many of those that sell us things or ideas have a vested interest in drowning divergent explorations, all the better to sell a quick fix or create endless live streams of low content media and targeted marketing. It is unimportant whether or not hypercapitalism is inherently evil, but crucial to apprehend its relentless skewing of dialog towards short term gain. The baseline for analysis becomes monetary, not reflective, a situation which completely deprioritizes the internal work necessary to lead a balanced existence. We are left with towering productivity, but very little wisdom.

Expanding the space for real discourse is crucial. No matter how bad conditions become, even the nihilism of apocalypse cannot save us from the realities we create. The end never really arrives – time only continues. Existence either becomes more exalted, or more terrible. Unlike any other species on Earth, we can engage this choice; the message comes in what we choose to work toward. This will be a long, long walk, and it requires collaboration across centuries. We must meet this challenge with courage and resolve.

Music is a beacon. It calls out to us, and we flow toward its nodal points. Its intentions are crucial. If the root is solid, music becomes a place of joining together and sharing, a discourse not only of new musical ideas, but also towards transformation of real life. Feeding the discernment of what our reality can become is the most significant contribution that music can make. Opening an expansive path of resonant, deep experience, music's potential is to actualize a door to a different world. The point is to clear blockages, discuss possibilities, and nurture a vibrant existence. This is the beacon of a path that can be found.