

Italy in Review:

After 10 magical days abroad I am back in America, although again, flying in a plane as I write this, now to Massachusetts and to celebrate my sister's wedding.

Rome was the first destination, and a welcomed one but for the sooty streets plumed with cigarette smoke. The cuisine was exquisite, and we sampled some of it's finest thanks to the recommendations of Andrew Horn, our well-learned traveling companion. Overall, the *Mozzerella Bufola* was my very favorite, and I was joyed to find my system had no aversive reactions to it.

I unveiled Arinesto, my crystal bowl, at the foot of the famed Spanish Steps and there played and sang to many a curious glance. Barry, and Joni Sare, our other traveling companion, joined in the magic-making. They claimed that my sounds filled the entire piazza and climbed up the legendary steps bathing all who rested there with warm healing tones. I garnered many a compliment and coinage and was also the subject of many photographs and even video-footage by one enthralled woman. Pictures of this joyous event will be posted to the web shortly.

We spent a day touring the ruins of ancient Rome, with Andrew acting as the well-versed tour guide that he once was (2 years in Rome quite literally). His insights and added perspective gave context and new life to what appears to be piles of exquisite rubble to the naked eye.

Our first destination was the Coliseum, and there I was moved to go into deep meditation. In doing so, I uncovered a past life where I had been thrown into the arena, a weary captive, only to be quickly hardened into a violent killer, and thus hero of the age, in desperation of defending my own life against my adversaries. I became a great, but brief sensation amongst the crowds, until in combat was slain by yet another rising star. In dying, I gave thanks to my slayer putting an end to my violent prison of self-preservation through slaughter.

My inner vision beheld a great red sphere hovering above the arena as this recall came to an end. The sphere had occasional yellow electric currents discharging around its surface like orbital lightning. I knew this to be the unresolved rage and bloodshed, the unrepented violence I had created during that life. With the help of Luscio, and all my powers of concentration, I called forth the Spheres of Love, Light, Truth, and Manifestation to lift this heavy burden and release it from me and from the land. And so it was, I saw the sphere lifted, and slowly changed to a light-blue color, having all turbulence been pacified. Then it was gone.

Later I looked again at the arena with my inner vision to find another red sphere had appeared. I tuned in and learned this sphere was not for me to address, but for another person to come along and find healing and atonement with. Such is the long and bloody history of the Coliseum. Oddly though, the energy of spectacle holds reign over the areas where onlookers once sat. Perhaps the heavier energies remain about the arena, for I felt

little. I even experienced unbridled joy when walking through one section, a sensation I would have least expected to experience at such a place. I was surprised to be so positively moved by the whole experience of walking through that ancient monument.

The Pantheon, however, was the highlight of the ancient world for me. That, and the obelisk that stands outside its doors. Before entering the structure we all took a break at a café in the piazza, having just walked through the Coliseum and all of the ancient Forum. While in respite I again sank into a meditation. This time, I was called to bring my awareness to the Obelisk, and I had the distinct sensation of a beam of energy shooting down from the sky into the Obelisk and into my head. My eyes began to flutter behind my lids and I knew I was receiving a download of information. This lasted a few minutes and then abruptly ended. No other Obelisks drew my attention like that one, although I tuned in to several others as I came upon them.

Inside the Pantheon I was in awe. I sensed it to be a very active power point for many beings in many dimensions and planes of existence. A grand central station of sorts. Most curious was the “drainage holes” directly below the center of the great Oculus. The two holes stared up like black eyeless sockets within a brass bandit’s bandana. A near perfect echo of Lucifer’s variation of the Flower of Life, the seed of all duality. What would happen if a third hole were fashioned among them? A new world order? My mind mused...

The other striking feature of the Pantheon was the way the builders cut and laid the marble interior. All around the temple were mosaics formed of slices of marble mirroring the natural pattern, like ancient forebearers of the modern ink-blot tests. I somehow knew them to be portals through which very certain beings from very specific dimensions were both accessed and transported. If it weren’t for the unrelenting masses of people flowing in and out of the space I would have stayed longer and experienced the energy deeper. As it was, I gifted myself only a few minutes time laying on the floor gazing up at the exposed heavens above, and this, not without garnering unwanted attention from numerous on-lookers.

The morrow brought us to the Vatican. St. Peter’s provided a completely different reverence. True, the scale was almost too vast for me to fathom, as Andrew pointed out it might. I perceived only flashes of what might have been past lives that brought me through its doors. Bernini’s Eye alone impacted me with great force. I felt it activate within my third Chakra some inner strength I have not yet been aware of, and brushing the bronze toe of Saint Peter I could not resist. In doing so I felt my hand charged with a powerful energy and saw it glow all about. I passed on the energy to both Andrew and Joni through simple touch, and they too felt its warmth spread. In the room delegated for meditation and prayer I found peace and tranquility, offering my thoughts and wishes of peace and healing for Mother Earth and all sentient beings. Outside the entrance I felt a breeze of pride pass through me as if I had walked there before with the airs of someone of stature. A Cardinal perhaps, or visiting Bishop.

For the sake of time, we passed through the Vatican Museum somewhat quickly, with Andrew leading us directly to the most prized “jewels” it housed. His encyclopedic knowledge of the art and history housed within its walls truly astounds me! Apart from the masterpieces we beheld, a most curious incident on the way to the Sistine Chapel occurred. As I exited one of the many muraled rooms leading up to it, I beheld in the corner, a scene of two cherubs holding slightly ajar a big heavy wooden door. Behind that door, in what appeared to be a closet, there were clearly painted two sacred geometries stacked upon one another. It was as if the little scene wanted to say, “we are here, just around the corner, working from behind the scenes. I could scarcely believe my eyes.

And at last we entered the Sistine Chapel. Us, and hundreds of other people. The decree of silence went well unbidden, as the murmur of a hundred voices would not be quelled even by the most forceful of “ssshhhh!!” from the clerics staffed within. My neck found its vertical pivot and my heart and mind found awe. I would have thought to have been more emotionally moved, but I found myself to be releasing jealousy instead. Yes, something deep within me was headlined in passing through those halls. Something unsolicited, yet needing to be resolved. An age-old jealousy locked within my soul from unjustified yearnings for artistic mastery from an unsteady hand. I cannot articulate any better than this, for the healing occurred on such a subtle level and in such a mysterious way that I was only afterwards made aware of it’s occurrence at all.

Our last evening in Rome my coin was cast into the Trevi Fountain in accordance with the custom for a happy return to the Eternal city. A closing ascension up the Spanish Steps in the moonlight sealed up the first leg of the trip. And so it was, Rome, mystical and bewildering.

The Pension Bencista greeted us warmly and graciously from its perch in the Tuscan hills overlooking Florence. It was a scene from a Romance novel, and many romances were sown in my heart for that city. It is the place where my grandfather’s mother lived before venturing to American Soil, and I could feel my blood resonate with the energies of the landscape in excited familiarity.

In the parlor sat a beauty I was gifted to behold, an adoring grand piano built in 1809 and refurbished in all its original splendor. Along with it, some of my favorite pieces in their best editions filled the little shelf of sheet music. Through my asking, a free piano concert was set for the following evening to entertain the guests and staff of the villa. I selected a program of a few favorites from the standard repertoire interspersed with my own compositions, and a “spontaneous music” moment as well. I had no anticipations, only to play as it is my heart’s passion. The unfolding event exceeded even my most imaginative expectations!

The attendance was overflowing, with at least 45 people filling the parlor and spilling into the hallways beyond with standing room only. The concert itself went magnificently well. I played beautifully, and masterfully, having employed to my greatest benefit my newly acquired skills of detaching myself from the audience. In that way only, have I

learned, am I able to completely focus on the creation of the music and the weaving of its energetic tapestry to my highest intentions. This proved most fruitful as the response to my performance was overwhelmingly positive. I was greatly praised by many, and felt I have regained an inner confidence I had long since closed away. Any fear of reproof has been assailed by the applause of strangers who would have no other motive but honesty. Indeed I believe I shed a thickened coat of frosted ego, the fancy dressing I have been heaping upon my music of late for sheer justification of its worth. I say now, let it speak for itself! That it heals is true! That it touches the heart is true! But that I must adorn its presentation with such ornaments is sheer nonsense. Let it speak for itself!

And so I emerge again, whole in the harmony of my own compositional truth.

The owners of the Villa exceeded my expectations further, having organized an outright reception following the concert, complete with champagne and hors-d'oeuvres. Many new doors are now visible on the horizon, including a wonderful new contact in Belgium.

As we stayed on an extra night in Florence, Barry and I were moved to the oldest section of the Villa and slept in a room that was constructed in the 15th Century. It had remarkably clear energy, and was testament enough for me to believe that the Pension Bencista has always been a site of joy and rejuvenation since its original conception.

Milan, the last leg of the trip was in stark contrast to the rest of the journey, but still magical and memorable. The frantic bustle of the train station yanked me out of my peaceful reverie that the Pension had instilled in my soul and plunked me back into the modernized, industrialized, hyper-speed of the 21st Century.

The hotel was an urban ultra-modern building with a posh asian décor. You have to insert your room card into a plug in the wall to activate the room's electricity. I could not have imagined a more extreme contrast to our abode in Florence! Yet, all the modern amenities were welcoming as always...

We wandered around the neighborhood in search of a place to dine for the evening and came across a quaint trattoria complete with a piano! The food was exceptional, and between courses I serenaded the guests with my music. The piano had a small portrait of Schubert on top of it that gave just the right amount of magic to the moment to again feel really blessed for the manifestations that present themselves in my life.

The next day we took the streetcar into the center of the city. The particular car we rode was virtually identical to one of the street cars in San Francisco I frequently utilize, the one that says it is from Milan. Half way around the world, I felt space and time merge into one unit with this odd circumstance.

We walked along Via Dante early enough in the day to be spared the throngs of tourists that were already amassing, armed with credit cards and shopping bags. In the center piazza MTV was setting up a giant stage for an all-day concert event. Another odd

coincidence, indeed. Again, the architectural antiquity encapsulated the modern world in a contrast new to my eyes, yet typical for a city like Milan.

We wandered to La Scala to meet Marc Fruttero, the composer I met on Myspace more than a year ago. It was a joyous occasion having a cyber-friend materialize in the flesh, a reminder that the internet is indeed a grounded place for manifesting our dreams. We talked much about the music industry in both Italy and the USA, and swapped music with each other. All in all, it was a very productive meeting!

As the sun began the last leg of its journey, so too did we say farewell to Marc, and the central district of Milan, as we headed back to our hotel for another fantastic dinner and well received sleep.

The morning came quickly, and passed quickly as we were taxied through the silent and vitually still streets of the pre-dawn city toward the airport. The flight to Heathrow went smoothly, and there, in the terminal, we bade farewell to Joni, our extraordinary and culinarily brilliant traveling companion. She had a connecting flight, and we had a day layover in London.

We took maximum advantage of the layover, and after quickly checking into our hotel we were on the underground heading for Covent Garden to meet another online friend, Sharron.

She greeted us with the warmest of smiles, and took us on a magical tour of many of the esoteric shops tucked into the nooks and crannies of Covent Garden. While passing through the marketplace I recalled the exact location I bought a peculiar hat 12 years ago when I passed through London my first time with the Young People's Symphony.

We had lunch and tea at a very Italian Café, (couldn't seem to move on for the Italian cuisine just yet) and had many a wonderful conversation about crystal healing, spirituality, and what it was like as children with these gifts.

Our meeting with SHarron ended with a stroll through Holden Park, the center of the Masonic World. As I stood at the steps of the main Masonic Temple, I recalled that only days ago I was standing at the altar of St. Peter's, the center of the Christian World. I wondered at the marvel of the journey, the synchronicities that unraveled themselves before my eyes, ushering me through the pages of history, both written and unwritten, as I continue my quest of self-discovery, self-knowing, and reconciliation of all the disparaging parts of myself, and of the entire world. Pagan, Christian, new, ancient, composer, healer, human, cosmic being... All encapsulated into one mind, one body, experiencing everything once and for all, simultaneously, and temporally.

The wind reminded me to move on, as it often does. And move on we did. Barry and I continued our London adventure after saying goodbye to Sharron. We found ourselves at Piccadilly Circle marveling at the giant Neon Advertisements I thought were only privy to Times Square. I guess Circle gets the Square. (What city, then, has the Triangle?) An

absurdist end to our journey was to be had at the Irish Pub overlooking China Town that we chose for our London meal. A poor choice I must admit, but culturally enriching to say the least.

The plane ride back to San Francisco went by incredibly quickly. I fell into a deep sleep that lasted almost the entire flight. The car service we hired to pick us up showed up with a limo, even though we specified not to get one. And so, Barry and I had ample time and space to reflect upon our journeys, spread out in the silent luxury of the near empty limo. I could almost hear the echoes of celebrants and the clinking of champagne glasses in the vacant seats that surrounded us. I closed my eyes and saw with my inner sight our spirit guides lauding our return from our most excellent trip, toasting and cheering us on as we continue our path of love, light, truth, and manifestation.

And so ends the Italy Trip of 2007.