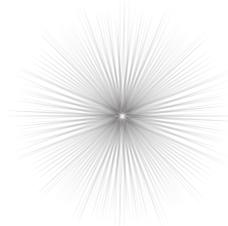


**A Journey Without Form:**  
*or When the Darkness Becomes the Temple*

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Raymond Salvatore Harmon



Published under the authority of  
*Ordo Argentum lux Lucis*

**L**ittle is known of the first ritual performances of mankind. The scant evidence of early shamanistic or interpretively magickal activities can be found in the cave paintings left at a time that predates written language. From these fragments of lost symbols and depiction's it becomes obvious that the first humans to push beyond the realm of the known were most often solitary practitioners attempting to explore their perception of the beyond. Lone explorers who had found a realm to explore that took them both within themselves and out beyond anything we can understand as self.

In the years that evolved from this prehistoric mankind toward the complex civilizations of the ancient world on to modern society the shape of ritual has taken on its own changing path. The model of the classic world settling in on vague memories of how we think things occurred, how we guess man practiced magic in the past. A looking back, to a time and place that we perceive as purer and more directly involved in knowing. But in this often erroneous yearning for the past that never was, even in our fantasies, we overlook the start, we forget the cave.

The practice of solitary exploration and self initiation goes back to those first guess work passes at exploring the mind and the nature of the human condition beyond the perceived world. In the dark these explorers began, by stopping in

their external journeys that took them through the world, and when they stopped and they sat and they thought in the dark, particularly when they burned certain plants, ate certain fungus, danced in certain ways, they left themselves behind and traveled to another place. A beyond they could not capture and bring back except in their art.

Yet somehow the classical form of ritual, the model shaped by the ancient Greeks, held up by the roman's - of circles and groves, of dancing in groups and partaking of theatrical cycles that take the practitioner on a journey of allegory and mental exploration. Somehow this model has become the only model. Self-initiation, sole exploration in the darkness of a cave or in the new moon darkness of an open field, letting the darkness itself become the temple, has been forgotten.

Setting aside a certain predilection that many practitioners have for a romanticized notion of the allegory of ancient magick, the truth remains that a practitioner who is particularly adept at crossing over into the light can accomplish much more exploration if their journey is unencumbered by the trappings of the traditional ritual working. By shedding the needless theatrical aspects of ritual and minimizing the external inputs as singular streams of sensory control (sight, sound, smell, touch) the journeyer can more readily detach themselves from specific self imposed restrictions inherent in the traditional or classical ritual forms.

As much as the traditional model of theatrical interpretation within the ritual has yielded mankind with a decisive tool with which to expand and

explore the active states of knowing, it is a model particularly binding in terms of its expansion beyond forms that we associate with the “real world” and the ‘physical self’. Expansion beyond the self in order to obtain communication with that which is beyond and without the self is often anchored in the perception of 3 dimensional forms and spatial reality reliant on the known perceived world.

By describing the ritual in as few variables as possible with particular detachment from those senses that root us to the physical space (touch, depth perception) and creating within the cinematic form of the ritual a complex abstract landscape that becomes entirely interpretive, much like an animated Rorschach’s test, the modern explorer can delve down and out into Jung’s vast sea, as well as beyond the body and the perception of self identity.

Such a diversion from the traditional model of ritual practice allows the journeyer the flexibility to seek out new ideas about perception beyond the relationship established between the perceptual body/avatar and toward an abstraction of identity into broader and less confining forms. Having shed any sense of “up” or “down” “here” or “there” or of a physical form that we inhabit the journeyer can begin to relate to concepts and experiences that are outside of our mundane existence, that lie beyond the form we perceive as “I” and are part of a much larger and defined architecture of existence.

Thus the practitioner needs only the minimal of ingredients - a laptop, good audio system or headphones, and a dark place. The darkness becomes the temple in which we free ourselves from the

physical form and seek out knowledge in the light. In ones exploration a temple can be as simple as a dark room, with a laptop and headphones and the prepared understanding of the gate and how to proceed. Such shuttered spaces like the walls of a cave, or the darkness of night like a curtain in which we seek to reveal the truest light.

Besides this solitary exploration method and its flexible nature a ritual of transcendental cinema can be an open and crowd oriented affair if the venue (grove, theatre) is able to relate the scale of the work to the crowd effectively. Such large-scale ritual undertakings, though rare, should be seen as a live and inclusive gathering, yet understood to have a purpose for the congregation of journeyers to partake of a similar path at the same time.

Between these two ritual cinematic degrees lies the ability for the aspirant to fully negotiate the path away from self and toward an understanding of the beyond. It is only in the darkness that light can illuminate, let that light in the darkness become the path, the darkness defining the light as the Way.

*Let the Darkness Become the Temple,  
Let the Light Become the Way*

Obviam lux Lucis,  
Raymond Salvatore Harmon

*He who is illuminated with the Brightest Light  
will cast the Darkest Shadow*



*He who is illuminated with the Darkest Shadow  
will shine with the Brightest Light*