

To a Man of Imagination— Nature is Imagination Itself

Jules Cashford

My Dear Thomas,
I just wanted to tell you that last week I was teaching at the Schumacher College at Dartington on “Gaia as the New Cosmology,” and I introduced it by saying I was going to read from two poets—Coleridge and Blake—and one philosopher—you—who were all articulating a wondrous vision of the Whole. I ended by reading your “Rights for the Earth.” Then every one of the students came up and asked where they could read more, who were you, could they meet you, what else had you written, and so on. How moved and excited your work made them, as though they were discovering someone who spoke aloud the thoughts they kept close in their hearts and had not realized till then that these thoughts were of the essence of how the new cosmology comes into being—was, in fact, the new cosmology coming into being through your words.

Whereas I was thinking to myself: Well, this is also the man who can drink anyone under the table with a Tequila Sunrise! Who throws his head back and laughs so joyously that the leaves shake in their trees, and who walks at such a pace that I can hardly keep up with him, quoting with delight the poetry of Tu Fu—“with dried eyes”—and the Upanishads, and Walt Whitman, and Shelley—“Poets are the true legislators of mankind”—and so many others, all tumbling out of your heart with passion and gratitude. And then, one day in England we all stood round you in a circle and you whispered, in your deep gravelly voice, your own poem to the Children of the Earth—all the children, of course not only the human children—and at the end we all raised our hands together to the sky, and you said “Oh my, Oh my!”

As you know, Blake has this lovely saying, “To a Man of Imagination, Nature is Imagination itself.” For me, you are that Man of Imagination, and you have shown all of us who are privileged to look through your eyes and see that Nature is Imagination itself. We can never thank you enough.

Love,
Jules

Jules Cashford is a writer and lecturer whose books include *The Moon: Myth and Image*, 2003; a translation of *The Homeric Hymns*, 2003, and *The Myth of the Goddess: Evolution of an Image* with co-author Anne Baring, 1993. She has also written two books for children: *The Myth of Isis and Osiris* and *Theseus and the Minotaur*, 1992 and 1994.

