

Kailash Assembly - Path through the Spiral of Unity

Speech Notes for Susan M. Griffith-Jones

Title: 'The Pyramid Spiral, Dance of the Five Elements', the essential nature of consciousness in relation to sacred geometry

THE SIMULTANEOUS TRUTH OF APPEARING FORMS IS THAT THEY ARE ALSO NOT APPEARING
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My whole work is based on expressing the meaning of this phrase.

What does it mean and how do I strive to embed its meaning into my work?

Why is it important to understand its meaning in the context of our lives?

And, how does Kailash play a part in its significance?

These are questions that I'm going to answer throughout this presentation.

Although I do attempt to explain the meaning of this kind of paradox in words, which somewhat always results in a sense of duality, I also try to demonstrate its meaning in film, art forms and photographic collage art work, because symbols or rather, archetypal shapes are what often speak to us more strongly than words.

We do not necessarily need to consciously 'understand' these shapes, but because they are such harmonious forms automatically recognized by our minds, it may be that we subconsciously absorb their meaning energetically.

At least, that is what I have experienced myself.

I attempt to express these archetypal shapes in my work, because the value of actually seeing them and having therefore even the possibility to understand them in a conscious sense, can enrich our lives tremendously.

So let's come back to the phrase.

THE SIMULTANEOUS TRUTH OF APPEARING FORMS IS THAT THEY ARE ALSO NOT APPEARING.

Basically, this means that in one sense or rather, dimension, forms do appear, but in another, they simultaneously don't.

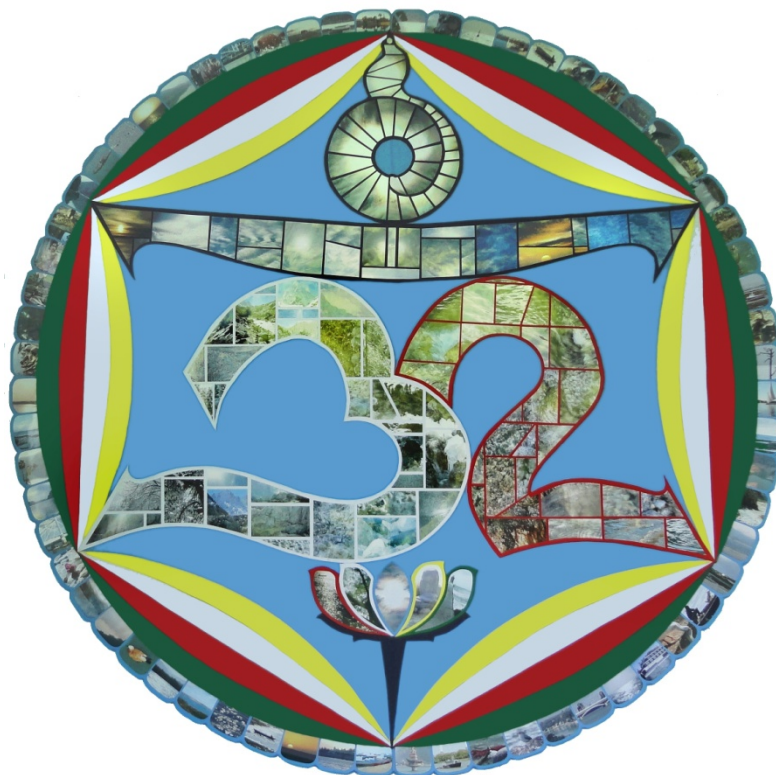
Imagine a Matrioshka doll. There can be infinite numbers of smaller and larger dolls fitting inside and outside of each other, yet they ultimately occupy the same space whilst only making up one outer form.

This is a crude example, but gives the idea of various dimensions existing side by side or rather... within and outside of each other.

We know from science that form is made up of bonded atoms that are themselves mostly space and then inside the nucleus of those atoms is a further dimensional layer where subatomic particles such as quarks etc... exist.

So how can we say that an outer material solid shape of form is its only existing aspect when we know that it is really just a bunch of vibrating atoms with further inner components, holding the bond of material together until the time comes for those bonds to break down?

To take the example further, here's one of the photo collage art pieces I made to demonstrate the existence of different dimensions.



Mirror of Space

In my piece of work, entitled, 'Mirror of Space', this central image is AUM.

AUM is traditionally made up of 3 sanskrit letters – A, U and M with a bindu (a point) above it, making 4 aspects in total.

Here A, representing the world of form looks like a 3, U, its formless undercurrent of components such as sound and light, atoms etc..., looks like a 2 and M, a rested state where the potential for sound and light to arise and hence the world of form to come into being, looks like 1.

And the bindu point, 0, spirals itself into emptiness, taking with it, the entirety of 3,2 and 1.

And just as the numbers 3, 2, 1 and 0 give the impression of each layer becoming more and more refined, so do 0,1,2 and 3 show form coming into being, whereby 3 holds all the other levels within it.

All these layers exist simultaneously and are held together perfectly in the symbol AUM.

Now we come onto the most important aspect here, the union point of these 3 letters, which is the bindu point of zero, representing Awareness, or state of pure, resting consciousness.

It is that which activates the entire process of creation into motion and it is in a later piece of work that I build on this idea.

In each of my photo collage art pieces, I use themes of photos to elucidate various meanings in the picture and here in this picture I have used photos of water in its different aspects, as water is an element that can be simultaneously ice in its solid state, water in its liquid state and cloud in its gaseous state.

Depending on the amount of heat aroused within the element of water, so does it actually appear.

Therefore, “reality” exists in different states simultaneously, according to the value or temperature of consciousness to understand or rather, interpret its nature.

When we become consciously aware of various dimensions occurring at different levels of manifestation, existing one within the other at the same time, simultaneously present within the same space, we can see that the outer manifest world is simply not as solid as it seems to be !

For it is ultimately only our perception of space that actually appears and not the space itself !

If we become consciously aware of this, with time and practice, our consciousness or rather our awareness of our consciousness, ‘lit’ or rather, ‘lightened’ by the fire of understanding, may become the architect of its own reality, because it IS that space.

Heat, or rather, fire, is the master element of transformation and that which causes the wind of consciousness to spiral up and down in terms of refinement of its perceptive capacity to interpret reality.

Here in this picture, AUM sits on a five petal lotus flower of the five elements in their colours and shapes according to traditional highest tantric Buddhist theories and are also shown like curtains opening onto space, within which this AUM figure appears.

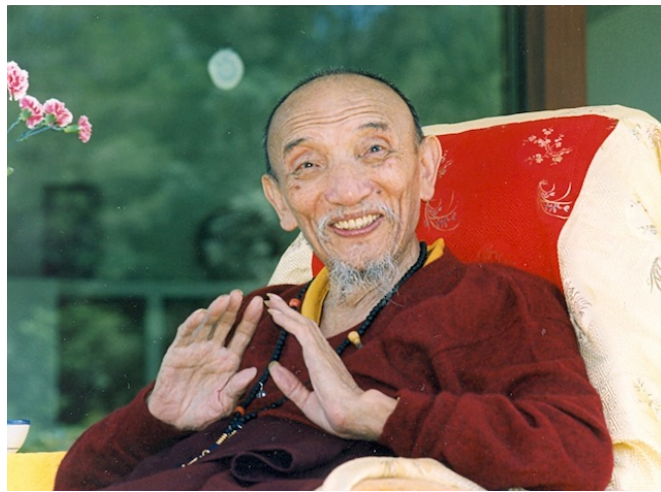
Blue is the space, yellow is the earth, white, water, red, fire, and green, the wind.

But, notice that the overall shape of the picture, not outlined as such, but defined by specific points is the double tetrahedron.

(make sign of double triangles with hands).

We'll see more details about the inner workings of this shape, in a minute.

But before I get deeper into all of this, I want to tell you how this is related to Kailash and how my trip there in 2004 was most probably the start of this process.



Chogye Trichen Rinpoche

My trip to Kailash was both unusual and exciting.

My spiritual teacher, His Eminence Chogye Trichen Rinpoche who was living in Kathmandu at the time (as was I), had advised me that it would be very beneficial for me to travel there from Kathmandu



Map of Himalayan Region

through Northern India, the Swat valley of Northern Pakistan and the high Hunza valley area that would lead me through the Kunjarab Pass into West China, through the high altitude rocky landscape of the Kundun mountains, to Darchen.

One of the reasons for advising this particular route is that a number of the 24 sacred places associated with the Buddhist tantric deities Vajrayogini and Chakrasambhava exist along this route, and these principal of deities are of course, those that Buddhists also associate with Kailash.

This epic journey was then followed by a 10 day retreat in the cave above Dira-puk monastery.



Cave above Dira-puk monastery where I did my retreat

During that time, as I sat gazing out of the entrance to the cave, I watched the baby Indus River trickle past in the valley below and the north face of Kailash as it displayed its various lights of day and night.



View from Cave: Baby Indus River trickling by and Kailash North Face

Vajrayogini and Chakrasambhava in cosmic union.

And for Hindu's, this union is found in Shiva and Parvati who are said to reside at the summit of Kailash in a state of perpetual meditation.

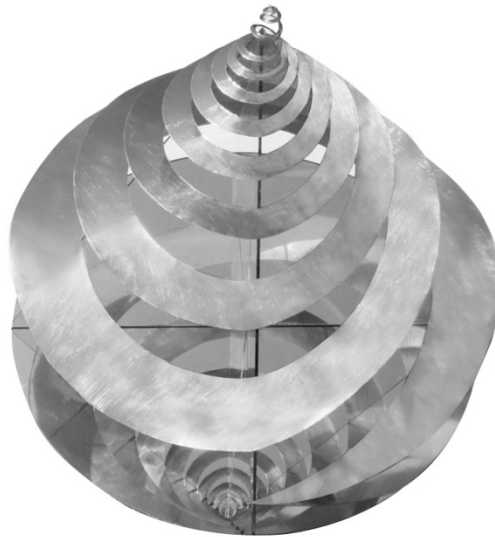
Manifest reality and emptiness united.

This is the ultimate meaning of Kailash, the essential nature of consciousness.

So we come back to the phrase I mentioned at the beginning of this talk,

THE SIMULTANEOUS TRUTH
OF APPEARING FORMS
IS
THAT THEY ARE ALSO NOT APPEARING

Although I didn't see Kailash from an aerial view at that point, it is unsurprising that I came back to Kathmandu after such a trip and not long after, started to assemble an art piece that I eventually called, 'The Circle of Immortality'.



Circle of Immortality – original artwork

First of all, Kailash mountain has the shape of a pyramid and is mentioned in many holy texts of different religions as a pillar of the world, Mount Meru, Shamabhala etc...

Located in a lotus petal of 8 mountain peaks surrounding it, at the heart of a number of mountain ranges encircling it, it is clear that the subconscious effect Kailash had on me by sitting in the cave and absorbing its meaning and subsequently performing koras (or circular motion like spiraling) within its sacred geographical space, would lead me to awaken archetypal shapes and patterns lying dormant within my own mind.

In this sense, as I understand it, because the proportions of this landscape are so-called, “perfect”, they relate to archetypal shapes already present in the subconscious mind – those that exist within a potential state, so that when we sense these shapes, it thus awakens the potential for the inherent knowledge they hold to arise in our consciousness and so they did in mine, in the form of The Circle of Immortality and photo collage art pieces holding symbolic meanings.



Circle of Immortality from top – computer generated artwork

I want to repeat that I did not consciously know that my Circle of Immortality art piece had so many similarities to the geographical layout of Kailash when I made it and it is this very point in itself that reinforces my belief in the power of archetypal shape and form.

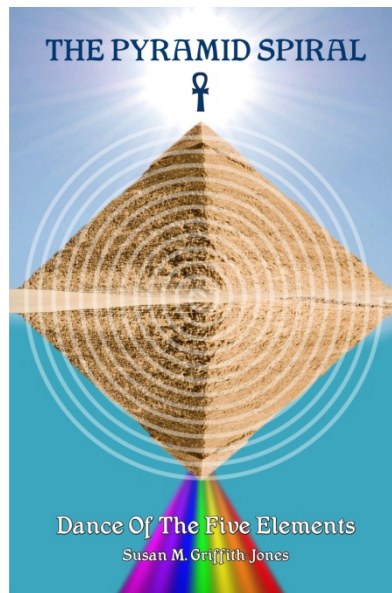
Indeed, this art piece did not start out looking like this, but bit by bit seemingly came together as a result of a concept I was trying to build into a film I had been asked to make at that time, which I also later entitled, ‘The Circle of Immortality’.

I believe we are trying to find a time to show the film during these days and it is relevant to do so, as I built it in the shape of a pyramid according to patterns of time, sound, narration and visuals.

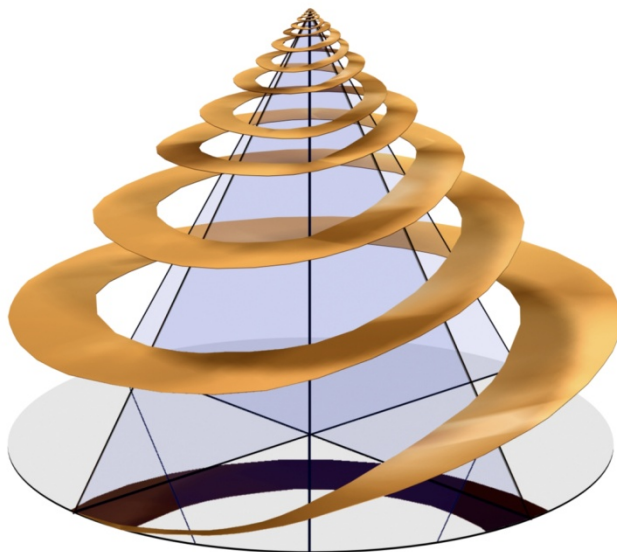
Its power lies in this shape that is embedded into the layout of the film, so that you do not even need to know that it holds the shape of a pyramid, but that aspect of it somehow speaks to you.

In other words, it is an archetypal shape embedded into a vision of reality.

The narration of this film subsequently became the root text of my book, 'The Pyramid Spiral, Dance of the Five Elements,' which is a detailed analysis of the meaning of this art piece, 'The Circle of Immortality'



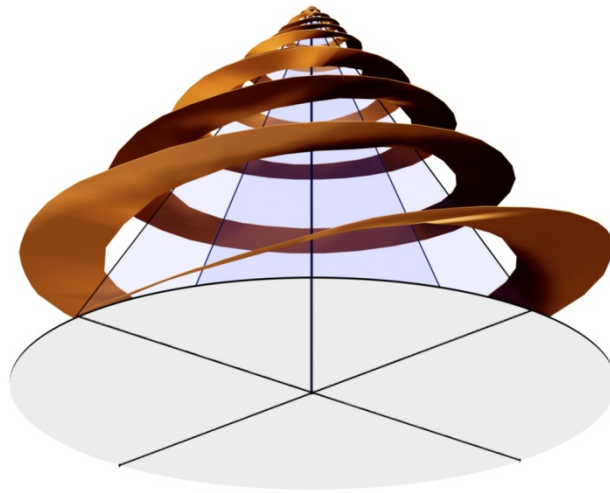
Cover of The Pyramid Spiral book



Circle of Immortality displaying shapes of 5 elements

Here all 5 elements are displayed in their shapes according to Highest Tantric Buddhist Yoga.

Square based earth (in other words, the outlined base of the pyramid), circular shaped water (the base of the whole piece, which is also a mirror), triangular shaped fire, (2 equilateral triangles sitting at right angles to each other), spiral shaped wind (that sits upon the triangles) and the space around and within the mirror that holds manifest form.



Circle of Immortality displaying there is nothing actually inside the mirror!

Yet of course, we know that there is nothing actually present within the mirror, it's just a reflection !

Look at Lake Manosarovar for example; water sits on earth and is like a mirror when stilled, sky (space) is reflected within it, making even the earth seem like space !

Again, the sacred geography of the Kailash region unintentionally fits with my artwork.

Throughout different ancient traditions of the world, four faced pyramids represent immortality.



Traditional mandalas of Tibetan Highest tantric yoga showing pyramids in the centre

And, you will most often find a four sided pyramid shape with different coloured faces representing the 4 elements, in the centre of Tibetan Buddhist mandalas.

BUT, a four faced pyramid actually has 5 faces in total including the base, which is the space within which the four elements may arise.



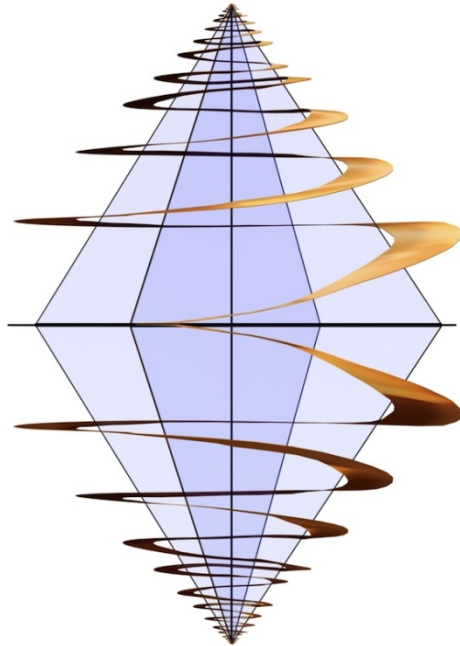
Circle of Immortality

By going beyond the nature of the five elements, one is no longer swept along in a torrent of causes and conditions that seem to manifest in situations outside of one's control, simply because one knows how these situations appearing around one's own form, arise and why they arise.

It's when one becomes the director of that process and learns how to use the five elements to skillfully construct reality that one actually overcomes their nature and enters the realm of immortality.

In other words, one is not fooled by appearing images having a reality of their own.

The mirror I have placed at the base of the structure is not only representing the space of perceptive consciousness within which phenomena arise, but also transforms the shape of a pyramid into that of an octahedron.



Circle of Immortality as an octahedron

Consciousness is like a mirror.

So, what's inside the mirror is all of this around us, our own consciousness interpreting the field of potential as something according to its habitual traits.

But, whilst perceiving it, it is also interpreting it, which causes it to further perceive itself etc...

So, there are 2 things going on here at the same time and it is impossible to divide these 2 aspects, because they are a direct result of each other.

Because... a mirror EXACTLY reflects whatever is placed before it.

Then, it senses what has arisen and interprets that too, which causes it to mutate into its next reflection of itself within itself and so it goes on until the chain is broken through recognition of what is really going on.

So, ultimately we can say that consciousness only arises when it interprets its own rested state of energetic potential as something.

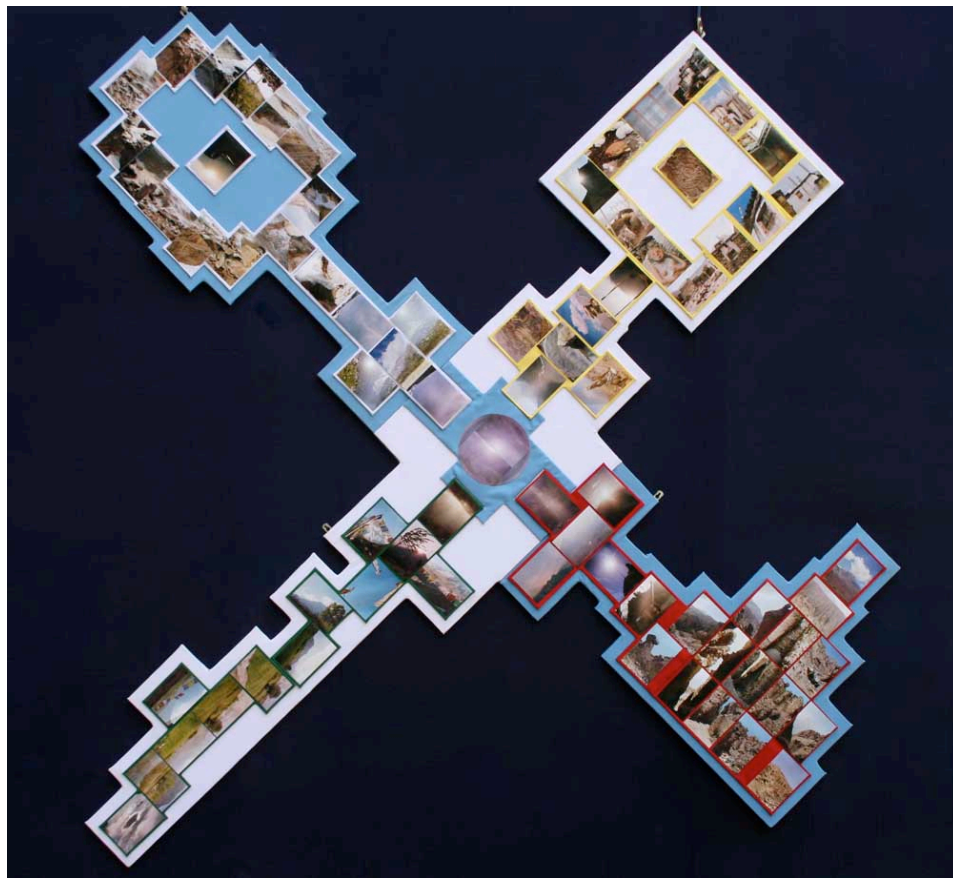
And, it's a two way process.

So does the appearing art piece of The Circle of Immortality reveal itself as a map of existence, as a symbolic analogy of the ultimate process of consciousness.

This means that as we stand at different viewpoints, so does reality appear differently.

In fact, it has been found through various scientific experiments that the reality around us (that which we tend to think of as a solidly existing manifest world), is actually like a quantum space, frozen in time or rather a potential of space where time does not even function yet, because this space requires consciousness to activate it by both perceiving and interpreting it in order for it to come into existence beyond its quantum flux.

So, the very act of consciousness perceiving the field of potential causes the universe to come into being and although as creatures of consciousness, we are multitudes of different perceptions (viewpoints) all analyzing the same potential, we all “perceive it” differently and thus different realms appear.



Two Keys, One Lock

This is my first piece of photo collage art work that began as one piece around the same time that I completed the Circle of Immortality. It has become the cornerstone of each of my other photo collage art pieces, as it relates to the central theme of the five elements, a concept that you have seen arising again and again in my work, not surprisingly as the nature of the elements is so integral to the nature of consciousness.

From space, which can be seen in the centre of this piece, the four manifest elements emerge and are symbolized by their relevant shapes again according to classical buddhist highest tantric yoga. (16.00)

And space as their container, otherwise there would be no place for existence to come into being !

Emerging into gross manifestation and dissolving back into their base nature of potential, this picture shows the dance of the arising and dissolving of creation going on simultaneously and continuously.

There is also a spinning spiral aspect going on here.

Rotating from the center to the left hand corner in an anti clockwise direction there's space, followed by wind, fire, water and earth, the process through which consciousness at its most subtle state becomes grosser and grosser and the other way round, where it dissolves back into itself.

Back to the original phrase.

THE SIMULTANEOUS TRUTH OF APPEARING FORMS IS THAT THEY ARE ALSO NOT APPEARING
--

Again, let's consider the Matrioshka.

So far at the outside most layer, we sense a gross material universe. We know that everything is made up of atoms, and that these atoms, like little universes of their own are mostly made up of space.

Indeed, it has been said that if all the space were taken out of every atom that makes up the material that forms the Empire State Building in New York, then there would be no more than the size of a bag of sugar of gross material substance left behind, with an unbelievably heavy mass.

Then we know that inside the nucleus of each atom is another dimensional layer of space filled with quarks, mesons and other such subatomic particles that randomly appear and disappear according to who is observing the process.

Pure consciousness pervades all these dimensional spaces as it is that space and through the process of the dance of the five elements that exist within consciousness as different types of positive and negative aspects, skillfully manipulates both the subatomic and atomic layers of existence, moulding them into different aspects of reality – solid, liquid and gaseous states, and thus forms the entirety of creation

around the consciousness housed in whichever physical body it is in, so that consciousness may see itself as it is.

This is a key point.

Awareness of this is what dissolves the solidly existing world back into itself, once it is truly seen as it really is.

The Circle of Immortality also demonstrates this, but so does another one of my photo collage art pieces take this point further.



Rainbow Symphony

Here we need to ask the question, what is the base archetypal shape, the building block of reality... that which arises from an unmanifest state of pure potential, that soupy quantum space we've just been talking about where nothing is yet manifest, but where the energy for the whole of existence is stored in its most fundamental state, so that when the causes and conditions for it to arise come into place, it exponentially becomes the whole of manifest reality?

That's a big question !

The name of this piece, 'Rainbow Symphony' is exactly as it says, the union of light (rainbow) and sound (symphony).

Here in this photo collage art piece, I've shown this in pictorial form, but a multi-dimensional structure on a flat page is not easy to display !

In short, this image shows various layers of the archetypal shape, the most basic building block of manifest reality residing as energetic potential within conscious space.

To try and achieve this multi dimensional aspect, I've shown golden spirals going outwards and inwards simultaneously, spirals of consciousness that are those of The Circle of Immortality, cutting across many layers of conscious projection, thus giving the impression of many layers of dimensional existence.



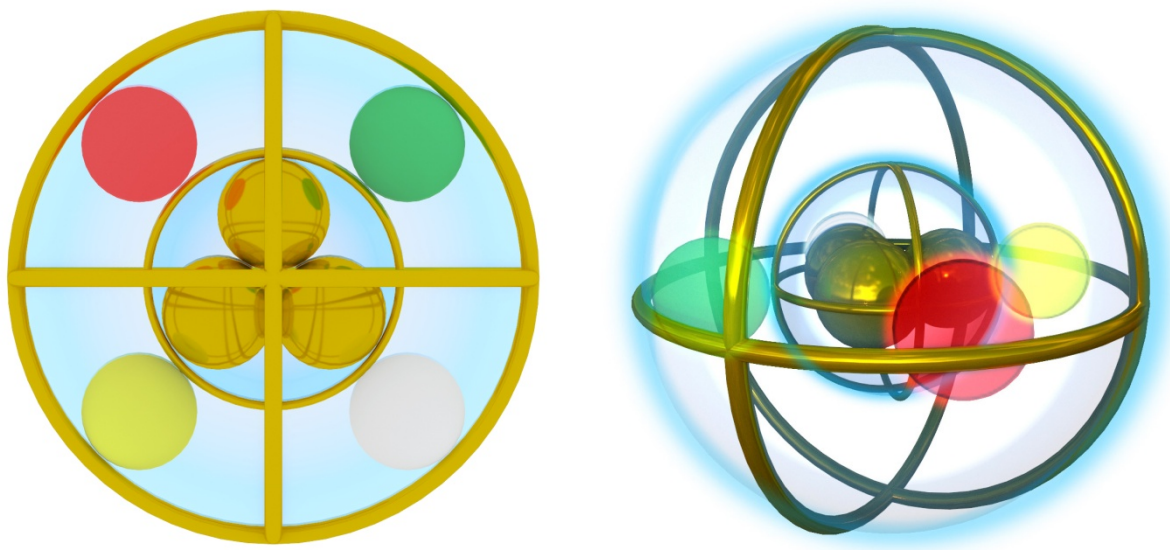
Base of Rainbow Symphony without any photos

Firstly there's the 8 pointed pair of tetrahedrons, one red, one white, making up a fundamental archetypal universal form. We see it everywhere in religious terminology, a shape that spans cultures and religions.

From a point of awareness emerges this 8 shaped form as an energetic expression of that original point of awareness, the BIG BANG of science from which the whole universe comes into manifest appearance.

This basic shape of manifest reality is thus encompassed as 1 unit, 8 emerging points and another to hold it all together, making up 10 aspects to this infamous archetypal shape.

These 10 aspects comprise the fundamental emerging of essential consciousness as an expression of manifest reality.



Centre of Rainbow Symphony

Now we come onto the 3 golden balls at the centre of the picture, the fourth being the space in which they exist, which is Awareness.

Just like the AUM in my picture, Mirror of Space that we discussed earlier.

Awareness holds three aspects; wisdom and compassion and awareness holding perception of these aspects, here represented by the three balls. You could also call them Truth, Love and Wisdom and that which knows them.

As long as these three aspects remain within the space of pure Awareness, then Awareness does not break its symmetry .

Why would it break symmetry? Because its perceptive quality that IS an aspect of itself, but one which has the capacity to experience, wants to know itself.

This is desire and that which causes dualism to emerge as it senses the idea of self and other, and thus does the whole of existence come into being at that moment.

Perceptive awareness then becomes its own space within which manifest appearance comes into being through the dance of the five elements and here we can see the four elements in their traditional colours sitting within space, the fifth, emerging from the space of awareness in the circle surrounding the central one holding the three golden balls.

Whereas, the ring around all these 9 aspects is the process completed, the manifest world come into being making 10 aspects in total – 1 point of awareness, 3 qualities within awareness, the 5 elements and the whole thing.

Now we go into more detail.

Back to The Circle of Immortality.

For this is the motor of consciousness that drives the space of conscious energetic potential into manifest form, spanning this archetypal shape as demonstrated by the golden spirals twisting 13 times in both directions here, representing consciousness both expressing itself and yet simultaneously interpreting that expression.

Embedded into this piece is the octahedron shape of the Circle of Immortality art piece, here shown in pink, the union of red and white.



Rainbow Symphony

Now onto the photos.

Where each point on the spiral touches the next layer, there is a photograph of a flower.

The sixty four triangles encircling the edge of the picture show how the 8 points of the double tetrahedron exponentially become 64 at the next layer of growth, after which each of these 64 points will project exponentially again, becoming 512 etc... until the matrix of the whole universe comes into being.

This happens so fast, the moment when perceptive consciousness breaks the triangular symmetry of Awareness and BOOM, the whole of existence is there, in front of you being both simultaneously expressed and interpreted by consciousness awareness.

Photos of foliage are on the pink octahedron and branches of trees that fit together so that it seems like one long branch, are found on the red and white tetrahedrons.

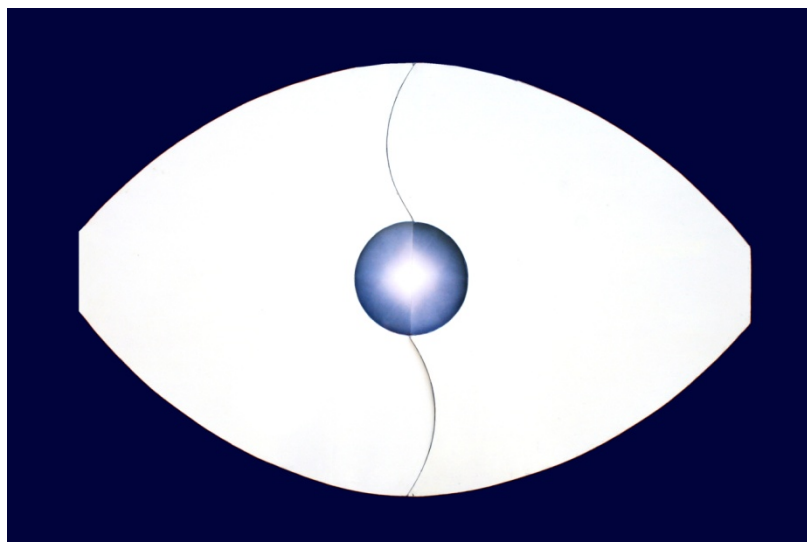
So all the images are of aspects of trees and plants, because THIS IS the tree of life – this is the archetypal shape and motor of consciousness that drives the manifest world into being.

Each point of light that makes up appearance, like building blocks of reality, has exactly the same internal makeup, like a vibratory seed pattern containing all potential within it, ready to burst into any shape, form or expression

We can also talk about the energetic resonance of each of these phases of the emerging of manifest reality from its essential state going on at the same time in varying dimensions, as octaves.

ie. How consciousness energetically vibrates in different octaves of resonance, each octave pertaining to a different dimensional state of existence.

My piece of work that best shows this concept is one that also emerged at the same time as ‘Two Keys, One Lock’.



Pure Vision...

The picture starts as an eye, but when these 2 wings open up to each side, it becomes, PURE VISION...



...TRANSFORMED INTO ORGANISED CONFUSION

Transformed into Organised Confusion.

It started as a simple idea, whereas instead of displaying the 4 elements emerging in 4 directions out of the space element in the centre, all the elements are shown piled on top of each other.

You will see that all the classical shapes of tantric symbology are still there, but in this later expression, I've added another aspect into the equation and that is a three sided downwards pointing triangle that represents consciousness piercing the space, which it is holding in its centre.

The three sides of this downwards triangle are the 3 golden balls we saw in the centre of my last picture, Rainbow Symphony, and AUM.

By adding this downwards pointing triangle, this also turns the image into a double tetrahedron archetypal shape, holding its own multitude of meanings as we already discussed.

One of the major bits of work that I'm doing at the moment is a study of harmonic resonance. This we can find displayed in many aspects of nature and here I've specifically shown it in relation to our DNA.

In total, here there are 2 displays of the double strands of 23 chromosomes that are to be found in the human genome and these may be seen in the strips of photos that surround the central images.

Simplifying this down to basics, of the 23, 20 correspond to protein making, 2 which are stop and start and 1 which defines the sex of the person. So, we are really talking about 22 that are functional.

I have also shown that there are 3 octaves of resonance in each batch of 23 chromosomes. 3 times 8 is 24, and you may be wondering how the maths works, but you will see that it does when you realize that

the last note of the first octave is the same starting note of the second and same for the last note of the second octave being the first of the third etc..., so in total, there are 22 notes in 3 octaves, when you make an octave into 7 clear notes rather than 8... plus the final one.

This is important as 22 over 7 is Pi and Pi is a mathematical perfection found in archetypal symbols.



Chain of images strung together

This picture is just one segment of a chain that in effect goes on and on and on and you will now see how the spinning bliss whorls each containing the 4 elements on the side wings of this piece correspond back to my first piece, Two Keys, One Lock, where the four elements are shown displayed around the fifth of space in the centre.

If we had more time, we could go on to discover how these 3 octaves are actually containing 9 octaves within them, which total 64 notes, 64 being the square of 8, which is also the first level of exponential growth of our archetypal seed form of consciousness that is building the whole of this manifest reality before our eyes.

But I fear we have to stop there and it's with great pleasure that I'd like to ask Sergei Balaev to come up and formally launch my book, 'The Pyramid Spiral, Dance of the Five Elements'. I have only a few copies of this book with me, but if you would be interested to have a look, then you can find them on the table outside.

(also video images to insert, but can't on word file)