

Red Earth Theatre presents THE GRATITUDE SHOW
Tlaquepaque, Sedona 11/15/2018

TERRA

“Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow”.

Melody Beattie

CONNIE

How Is It - Constance Patrick

I am grateful.

Grateful for the moment
I sit inside my own breath —
sit... with a stillness of
not breathing,
not feeling,
not knowing,
a stillness
full of
knowing,
feeling,
breathing.

This quiet place in me
is everything.

This extraction from ego
moves with the primal flow
of ocean currents and wind drifts.
This extraction from ego —
from me —
this miracle of emptiness,
nothingness,
this stillpoint of everything —
the “empty” of me
overflows my self-imposed boundaries,
making walls of self doubt
fall into blameless piles of dust.

The empty of me “sees“
my own limitations mirrored
when reaching for oneness.

How can it be... I am one of millions —
my cells and molecules
only a drop of existence
on a canvas holding
eons of time and troubles,
millennia of dysfunction and dependencies,
big bang explosions

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scattering so much particulate matter
over endless space.
How can it be
I am one ... of it all?

In this extraction from ego,
how is it I can find
just one stillpoint,
one... breath,
one... feeling,
one... knowing
this quiet place in me,
this zero point place,
this cipher — full of
emptiness and nothingness —
this cipher
is everything.

How is it
in this emptiness
I am so grateful
when I feel *nothing* at all.

DYLAN
Of Gratitude - Dylan Reese Marshall

Ocean's sigh the warm wet rumble
of Eternal Motion and Movement
Whispering open ardor for All

A Kiss
A Breath
A Touch
They sweep across my Smiling Face

Like Clouds against the Sun
FluffyPuffy birds of torrential Promise
Alight
Singing and Gay

Flowers shine their Iridescent Smiles
in a Verdant Green Field
They are Children racing with the Wind
Laughing

Cricket chirps rhythmic
Click, Click
A Click as One
As Legion; A symphony

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A Sultry Moonlight Serenade
Voices rising to worship the bestarred sky
These and This and all of Those
Are the Things
Loving Things
Things
of
Gratitude

RILEY

“Piglet noticed that even though he had a Very Small Heart, it could hold a rather large amount of Gratitude.” — *A.A. Milne, Winnie-the-Pooh*

JANIE

“May the gratitude in my heart kiss all the universe.” — *Hafiz*

TIANA

Yavapai - Tiana Hood

Subtle drips of white paint in the night sky.
Within my eye, swallow words out of respect.
Elders repeat the story as a lyric to history.
Smiling down frustrations,
Yet understand.
The cup is filling with neurons.
Words vibrate in my ear, near a buzzing bee.
Organs sensor the emotions of history.
Focus on the imagination of freedom.
Remember we originate from the sun.
Still breathing.
We live.

LEAH/STEVE

Old folk song from Haiti - "Merci Bon Dieu"

Mèci bon Dié
Gadé tout ça la natu poté pou nous
Mèci bon Dié
Gadé couman la mizè fini pou nous
La pli tombé
Mai poussé
Toute ti moune qui grand gout pralé mangé
An nous dansé Congo
An nous dansé Péto
Papa bon Dié di nan ciel la mizè fini pou nous

English Translation:

Thank you, God

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Look at all that nature has brought us
Thank you, God
Look how misery has ended for us
The rain has fallen
The corn has grown
All the children that were hungry are going to eat
Let's dance the Congo
Let's dance the Petro
God said in Heaven
That misery has ended for us
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=748CEKKr98s&feature=youtu.be>

CATHY

Excerpt **HELP THANKS WOW** by **Ann Lamott**

Recently I was going to meet my great and amazing friends Barbara and Susie for a walk, or rather, a stroll and a roll, as Barbara has Lou Gehrig's disease. As I have pointed out to her, Lou Gehrig's is the one disease you are supposed to actively avoid. But she went ahead and got a full-blown case, which has come to mean she uses a walker, feeding tubes, and a computerized speaking device called Kate that works through her iPad. So Susie drove us to see the Pacific Ocean from above San Francisco's Moraga steps. I had not yet settled down into what is true—that Barbara is pretty sick and getting worse—so I sat in a state of jovial nervousness in the backseat, feeling alone and useless and superficial. When we arrived, the view was socked in with fog. We gamely got out of the the car anyway, and on top of everything—the Lou Gehrig's, the vichyssoise fog, my anxious sorrow—there was one of those mean winds that prick your body and your mind and your very being. Plus, they make your skin look terrible. Just ghastly.

It was hopeless. I had no choice but to pray. This is all a mess, I said to God. I love these two women so much, and I had had such high hopes for connection and joy today: Help.

And I got my divine revelation: We all needed to get back into the car, immediately. This took a while, as there is no immediately when you're with someone who has ALS. But at some point, warmth and golden sun flooded through the car windows, and Susie drove us around the neighborhood, and from inside we took in the brilliant gardens of succulents and crazy bright splashy exotic petals. We found one perfect parking spot at the foot of the steps, where we could spend as much time as we liked looking up directly at the magical mosaic on the tall, steep steps: at the bottom, random plump fish in nursery colors swim against the deep blue of the sea, and then to what is above, to the sky, and birds, and clouds and an exuberant Mexican sun, which curls up into the expansiveness of a starry, starry night.

We all go so happy. We talked about real things for an hour: life, death, families, feeding tubes, faith. I asked Barbara, who does not eat food anymore, "What are you most grateful for these days?" She typed on her iPad, and Kate's mechanical voice spoke for her: The beauty of nature, the birds and flowers, the beauty of friends."

This is called radical gratitude in the face of whatever life throws at you.

I was so glad and so grateful to be there with them that day—euphoric.

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TERRA

Count Your Blessings - Liz Hargrove

Please say "thank you" - Mom said to the little girl.
But Santa didn't bring the beautiful dollhouse she so desperately wanted.
Mom served her brother steak while she got a hot dog.
She didn't like the pink blouse from Auntie. A dollhouse would have been better.
Grateful she wasn't! No Way!

"Count your blessings instead of sheep" - later words heard in her head.
But she didn't want a sick child, an unhappy marriage,
a Cancer diagnosis or her best friend's untimely death.
There was never enough money to retire nor do what she wanted.
Grateful she wasn't! No Way!

As life continued, the laments got worse.

"I'm so lonely. No one has any time for me, and I hate doing things by myself."
"I'd seek out friendships at Church yet I don't like organized religions."
"There's nothing to do. This town is filled with a bunch of old people."
Grateful she wasn't! No Way!

And then there was a shift in attitude, a Miracle!
Through Divine guidance in Spirit Painting, Prayer and Yoga,
She unraveled a lifetime of Abuse and Twisted Thinking,
lunged over the Walls of Hurts and Resentments, landing on the other side.
Thankfully at last – more grateful was she!

There she discovered the Bliss of True Motherly Love -
Giving way to living a Life of Love.
She rose above her past, began to glide on the water like a Swan
Grateful for a New Way as each New Day appeared.
Welcome Awareness! Count Your Blessings!

DAVE

"I was complaining that I had no shoes till I met a man who had no feet." — *Confucius*

JOAN

"If the only prayer you said in your whole life was, "thank you," that would suffice.
- *Meister Eckhart*

SANDI

Butter - Elizabeth Alexander

My mother loves butter more than I do,
more than anyone. She pulls chunks off
the stick and eats it plain, explaining
cream spun around into butter! Growing up
we ate turkey cutlets sauteed in lemon
and butter, butter and cheese on green noodles,
butter melting in small pools in the hearts

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of Yorkshire puddings, butter better
than gravy staining white rice yellow,
butter glazing corn in slipping squares,
butter the lava in white volcanoes
of hominy grits, butter softening
in a white bowl to be creamed with white
sugar, butter disappearing into
whipped sweet potatoes, with pineapple,
butter melted and curdy to pour
over pancakes, butter licked off the plate
with warm Alaga syrup. When I picture
the good old days I am grinning greasy
with my brother, having watched the tiger
chase his tail and turn to butter. We are
Mumbo and Jumbo's children despite
historical revision, despite
our parent's efforts, glowing from the inside
out, one hundred megawatts of butter.

JANIE

Five Star Rating - Janie Rian

It will come, my fateful day.
From this world my tethered soul will fly away.
As I readily depart, reflecting on my dossier,
With exuberant joy and a quiet gratitude in my heart . . .
Gentle lip kisses
Sparkling eyes
That newborn smell
Frosted Christmas cookies
New fallen snow
Puppy breath
Morning coffee
The scent of a Christmas Tree
Wiping away a hurtful tear
Singing softly in a dying loved one's ear
The unforgettable I love yous.
I love you my daughter.
I love you mom.
I love you grandma.
Showtime over.
What an amazing movie!

JEANIE/CARMEN

SONG Gracias a la Vida/ Thanks to life - Chilean songwriter and singer Violeta Parra
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1AX_HFqL7Y

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KATE

Finding Thanksgiving – Kate Hawkes

Newly arrived in the USA
Embedded in my new Texan family
The accents, a BBQ place with a bear at the entrance,
A family of large hearts -
And Thanksgiving.

Turkey in November
(where I came from it's a December bird)
Everything pumpkin - and the pies.
(My first one made directly from the can into the ready-made crust.
My Texan husband laughingly asking where the rest of it was –
The milk, the eggs, the spices?)

Anxious plans for who, where and when and how?
Travelling before the day, on the day, after the day?
How far and for how long?

Bemused by the 'Football'
Endlessly playing on the Television.
Amazed at mountains of food
Endlessly regathered on the tables.

Women in the kitchen, men in the television room
Children straggling from place to place.
Finally, everyone heaving themselves back home –
Or directly to bed from the sofa.

Thanksgiving – Who is the giver?
For what the thanks?
From where the holiday
And for whom?

Years later, freed from the family thanksgiving,
(My daughter with her Dad and the Texan family)
I spend all day in Powells' bookstore
Far from the world, surrounded by books and other Thanksgiving refugees.
We nod briefly and bury ourselves back in a book with a cup of coffee
Against the falling, foggy, Oregon November night.

Or invited by kindly, concerned friends
To sit at food-heavy tables with families.
Football bursting from the television
Careful conversations to avoid controversies.

It's not Christmas but closely related
At least they haven't worked out how to make you buy gifts
– yet.

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Asking again -
Thanksgiving – Who is the giver?
For what the thanks?
From where the holiday
And for whom?

Then, one year
Cautiously, carefully, consciously
Invited
To sit at the table with some new friends.

A quiet gathering arrived.
5 couples with long histories,
A middle-aged man and his young daughter
A man older than all of us
- and myself.

Peaks of energy - everyone in the kitchen.
No television to be seen (or heard).
Laughter at the ‘Peas and Onion’ dish – my version
(Later a sought-after favorite if only to recall the first effort.)

Food on the table, we sit.
The couples side by side, peaceful in their company
The father and his little daughter, holding her Raggedy Annie
The old man at one end
- and myself.

Quiet descends.
We breathe.
Look at the one sitting beside us.
One by one, we name what our gratitude is.

- To the reservation who took me in when I was adrift and alone.
- Gratitude for this child and the chance to be a good Father this time.
- For the patience and kindness you’ve shown.

- For the one who stayed with me through the madness.
- For being here today when so many cannot be.
- For the buddy who saved my life, then lost his.

- Gratitude for laughter after long nights of despair.
- For the stories dug up from the blackness and then given away to the light.
- For all the tears shed that we shared.

- For the children and grand-children I’ve had.
- For the hope that lights from your love.
- Thank you for being my Dad.

I don’t have to ask -

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Who is the giver?
For what the thanks?
From where the holiday
And for whom?

I have been privileged to meet with Gratitude
Sitting right here, at this table.
With people whose experience of gratitude is
Profound, wordless and painful.

Scarred with deep courage
Knowing life's a precarious, finite thread
They rescued this particular holiday
With gratitude for every heart-beat shed.

My gratitude is for
Every heart-told story
Every listener in compassion
Every life expansion
Every hope, and love whispering
Gratitude's confession.

DYLAN

"Let us rise up and be thankful, for if we didn't learn a lot today, at least we learned a little, and if we didn't learn a little, at least we didn't get sick, and if we got sick, at least we didn't die; so, let us all be thankful." - *Buddha*

SANDI

"If you cannot be grateful for what you have received, then be thankful for what you have been spared." - *Yiddish Proverb*

CATHY

"Do not tell the man that is carrying you that he stinks." - *African Proverb*

NANCY

As If to Demonstrate an Eclipse - Billy Collins

I pick an orange from a wicker basket
and place it on the table
to represent the sun.
Then down at the other end
a blue and white marble
becomes the earth
and nearby I lay the little moon of an aspirin.

I get a glass from a cabinet,
open a bottle of wine,
then I sit in a ladder-back chair,
a benevolent god presiding
over a miniature creation myth,

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and I begin to sing
a homemade canticle of thanks
for this perfect little arrangement,
for not making the earth too hot or cold
not making it spin too fast or slow

so that the grove of orange trees
and the owl become possible,
not to mention the rolling wave,
the play of clouds, geese in flight,
and the Z of lightning on a dark lake.

Then I fill my glass again
and give thanks for the trout,
the oak, and the yellow feather,

singing the room full of shadows,
as sun and earth and moon
circle one another in their impeccable orbits
and I get more and more cockeyed with gratitude.

“As If to Demonstrate an Eclipse,” by [Billy Collins](#) from [Nine Horses](#) (Random House).

MURRAY

Dash Of Salt Of Life - Murray Archimedes

I'm scrambling to get this poem out over dinner in a place where
some say how it has been a bad day, others say "pass the salt" and
"I think I'm going crazy"

It softens our lives to be so rogue

To let loose our sanity slipping ever starward.

It crests the healing apex of the sky to say

"Is this a good crazy? Or" bad day- cray cray

Seemingly without contempt we hold our own minds to The
scandalous winds and shake to let the pieces fall what may
forgiveness

For our lack of beauty found.

So many moments squandered by wandering elsewhere in
wonder -ing if this moment could be improved
By dashing it from the record and replacement by another,
sweeter one

In wonderment we grovel

Meant to want this one, Durr...

We wanted to appreciate the moment that we had and fail To
dash it from our minds
That dash became the moment salting sweetness

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And another moment bites the destiny we
Still are in the same
, this one, for-endless moment
Scraping-trying to draw lines and talk
As though our lives once happened elsewhere
Or are yet to come ...pletely missing the point
That we are them happening now!

Yet even as we live our lives together in this space
We lose our place upon the story line.
We shelter our conscience from our truth.
We say instead of pass the salt, that now we are engaged.
And that whatever happens next is real.
It's going to be the moment we are in:

So was it?

DAVE

from The Courage Project - How Gratitude Creates Courage – Hank Fortener

My road to courage was paved with gratitude.
My fear came from that thought I had as a kid, "DON'T LOSE ANYONE or ANYTHING EVER AGAIN". That thought evolved into the socially acceptable form of this idea: scarcity.
I don't want to skydive because I don't want to lose my life or my ability to walk.
I don't want to speak on that stage because I don't want to lose my sense of safety in this room.
I don't want to risk to fall in love because I don't want to get hurt.
I don't want to risk my finances or my relationships because I don't want to lose them.

One moment it struck me.
This is all a gift.
The people.
The legs beneath me as I walk and type this on my phone.
My hands that can divide micromovements into words on this smooth screen.
My frontal cortex which makes sense of the sentences I'm eking out to you right now.
My Hippocampus that is deciding that I'm not in danger and it's okay to reflect on "COURAGE".

It's all a gift.

I found that the more grateful I was every morning...the more courageous I became.
I was more grateful...I became less anxious.
Little by little I grew in my courage.
I was less anxious about taking risks.
I became less anxious about meetings and disappointing people and taking on more.

The more I realized that what I have is a gift from God, the less afraid I am to lose it or give it away.

My fear was not conquered by YouTube mashups of Rocky clips or quote graphics on Instagram about how "I CAN DO IT!"

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My fear is conquered by my willingness to accept the gifts of this life.
My daughters.
My wife.
This day.
This opportunity.
This moment is...all a gift.
The more I'm dialed into that.
The more I began to ask, "What must happen here?"

"How do I survive this moment?" became "what must be done here?"

I've come this far on the generosity of God and other people...
I'm going to be okay.
It's all going to be okay.

I stopped asking, "what could go wrong today" and started asking "what does today need from me?".

This courage led me to finally launch AdoptTogether.org.
To help families afford adoption, we launched a platform that helps them raise funds.
I sat on the idea for a year.
"What if it fails?"
"What if it all goes wrong?"
"What if I get sued?"

None of that mattered.
Moreover, none of that happened.
Today we've helped over 2400 families raise almost 11 Million dollars.
This makes me both grateful...and brave.

The more grateful I became, the more courageous I was.
The more courageous I became, the more my life expanded and gave me more to be grateful for.

That is a cycle I'm happy be caught in.

https://www.thegivingkeys.com/blogs/the-courage-project/how-gratitude-creates-courage?utm_source=Hank%20Fortener&utm_medium=Twitter&utm_campaign=The%20Courage%20Project

JOAN
Fourth Season - Nancy Ruby

Forgive the shadow its length
as the days become less
and the nights are imbued
with joyous reverie
of kindness and gratitude

Embrace the harvest's abundance

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make a home for the heart
baked apples and stew
and enter the darkness with gentle gifting
of kindness and gratitude

Forgive the shadow its length
let sweetness and comfort lead the days
as the Earth's travels bring a new phase
and madrigal choirs usher us toward
the final long night

Bring knowledge of this dark to bear
its eternal depth understood
in order for the day to renew
the joyous reverie
of kindness and gratitude.

CONNIE

“If you look to others for fulfillment, you will never be fulfilled. If your happiness depends on money, you will never be happy with yourself. Be content with what you have; rejoice in the way things are. When you realize there is nothing lacking, the world belongs to you.” - *Lao-Tzu*

JEANIE

“My predominant feeling is one of gratitude. I have loved and been loved. I have been given much and I have given something in return. Above all, I have been a sentient being, a thinking animal, on this beautiful planet, and that in itself has been an enormous privilege and adventure.”
—*Oliver Sacks*

CARMEN/KATE

I Go Bodiless – Blanca Valera

I go bodiless from the sun to the shady
water music of living shadow
through the narrowing vagina
which guides me from blindness to light

under the high echoing dome
in this colossal semblance of a nest
I touch the sea belly with my belly
I inspect my body meticulously
poke at my feelings
I am alive.

(and in Spanish)

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ALL

The Thanksgivings

We return thanks to our mother, the Earth,
which sustains us.

We return thanks to the rivers and streams,
which supply us with water.

We return thanks to all herbs,
which furnish medicines for the cure of our diseases.

We return thanks to the moon and stars,
which have given to us their light when the sun was gone.

We return thanks to the sun,
that has looked upon the earth with a beneficent eye.

Lastly, we return thanks to the Great Spirit,
in Whom is embodied all goodness,
and Who directs all things for the good of Her children.

~ *Iroquois* ~

ALL

FINALE Wonderful World - led by Riley – All - WITH AUDIENCE

I see trees of green / Red roses too
I see them bloom / For me and for you
And I think to myself / What a wonderful world

I see skies of blue / And clouds of white
The bright blessed day / The dark sacred night
And I think to myself / What a wonderful world

The colors of the rainbow / So pretty in the sky
Are also on the faces / Of people going by
I see friends shaking hands / Saying, "How do you do?"
They're really saying / "I love you"

I hear babies cry / I watch them grow
They'll learn much more / Than I'll never know
And I think to myself / What a wonderful world

Yes, I think to myself / What a wonderful world