

Choosing Earth*

The farm fields mosaic is a gift that came to me through a dream. I spent my childhood riding my bike amidst the wheat, bean, corn and cucumber fields. Three of my uncles were farmers, and both of my parents were raised on farms in the small towns of Hemlock and Merrill, Michigan. One fall, my father had us six kids pick an acre of corn by hand after school. I think it took us nearly a month. So, I've always known I am a child of the earth, that I sprang from the earth, like the corn; like a fountain that connects the sky and the earth. I think my father never wanted his children to forget that.

Today we gather to celebrate this mosaic project and the earth. I have been the conduit for this design to choose me. The mosaic asks us to choose the earth. To remember the need for healthy soils, to care for the milkweed plants that sustain the monarchs and to avoid chemicals that poison the bees and threaten the pollination of our crops. Let us honor the beauty and abundance of healthy food and restore the earth that nourishes and sustains us all.

Back in June, amidst a nine day stretch of glazing handmade tiles, the sun shone in my garden every morning. I would awaken at 5am and be glazing by 6am. The flowers bloomed, the birds sang, the sun shone, and I glazed. I could feel the giant crescendo of light coming with the summer solstice. I dreamt again one early morning of these colorful tile images floating, dancing and exuding light in the air. I felt great joy. When I awoke, I remembered a poem that captured my artistic experience. I will close with this poem.

Last Night as I Was Sleeping

by Antonio Machado

Last night as I was sleeping,
I dreamt---marvelous error! ---
that a spring was breaking
out in my heart.
I said: Along which secret aqueduct,
Oh water, are you coming to me,
water of a new life
that I have never drunk?

Last night as I was sleeping,
I dreamt---marvelous error! ---
that I had a beehive
here inside my heart.
And the golden bees
were making white combs
and sweet honey
from my old failures.

Last night as I was sleeping,
I dreamt---marvelous error! ---
that a fiery sun was giving
light inside my heart.
It was fiery because I felt
warmth as from a hearth,
and sun because it gave light
and brought tears to my eyes.

Last night as I slept,
I dreamt---marvelous error! ---
that it was God I had
here inside my heart.



Darla seized the pandemic shutdown as an opportunity to create her first mosaic. She relished the solitude and meditative focus of the artistic process. Darla lives in San Francisco by the sea with her husband and has raised two daughters, vegetables and flowers and loves her time in nature.

* *Choosing Earth: Humanity's Great Transition to a Mature Planetary Civilization*, Book by Duane Elgin