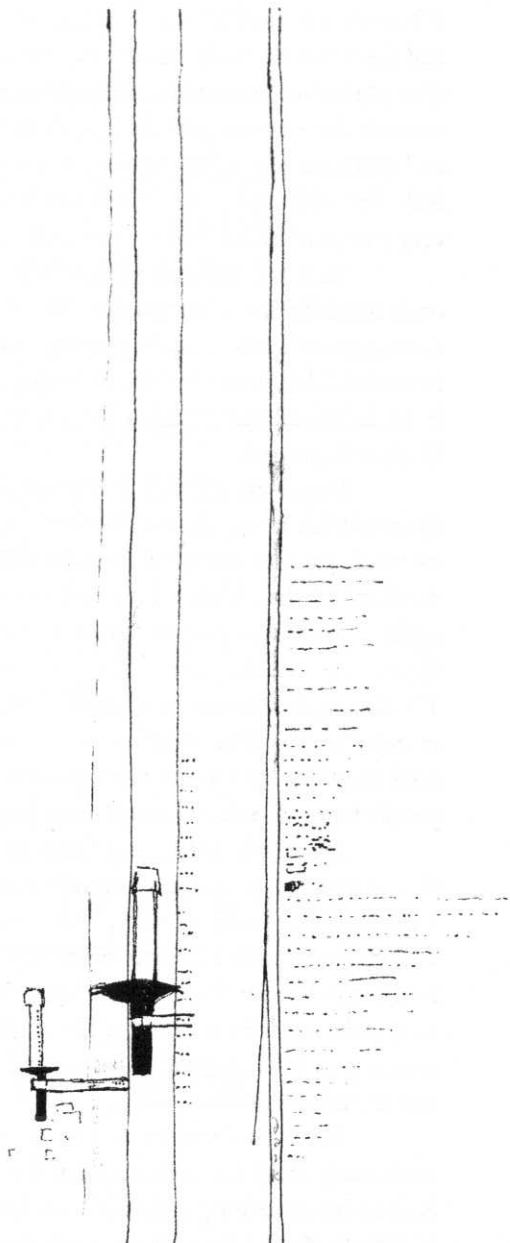


Louisville 2001

Fragments
of a
Journal



We arrived at Gethsemani in 7 bus loads on a blazing hot afternoon and there were already hundreds, seemingly, of cars in the Car Park. Out of the bus and with a rather disarming lack of direction we went towards the entrance and the chapel. The chapel is very tall and narrow and spare, largely white-washed brick, and it gave me a Wittgenstein feel. The coloured glass in the windows was cool greys light blues, very pale, and bit of dullest yellow-orange.

Tall, tall internal girder-style pillars round the sanctuary. I took a seat in the front and just sketched all the way through Larry Cunningham's talk. A cello playing welcomed us in, and it was very beautiful. I felt it was for me. I seemed to be the only person there, so it abolished all our lumpish humanity, and I was in another world. Cool, tall, purged.

Part 2 was the walk to the hermitage. Piping hot. Very bright. Quite a brisk ant-trail, past the ponds, up, left, right, a fairly well worn car track, but no tarmac, thank God! People were everywhere but I didn't mind that. They all wanted to be there as much as me, and so again I sketched, not to huge effect, but it gave me that extra dimension to the visit. The hermitage reminded me a bit of T.E.Lawrence's house at Clouds Hill, although this was only one storey. I'm glad there were piles of logs around still and some orange lilies growing up on the veranda side. It was good that I was with people from all over the world who were enjoying being there.

Most left before me, and so it was quiet walking back. I picked up a few stones and thought pretty vapid thoughts in the heat. I did think not very grandly, 'this is the track that Thomas Merton walked along', but that was about the level of it. The grave I could hardly see for people, except to notice that a large wreath had been wrapped round the iron cross. There was such a huge bunch of flowers on the grave that I gave it a miss, but I discovered that for some this was the most emotional thing ... 'the body ... the bones'.

So, what I was most moved by was the chapel and the quiet track away from the hermitage, and if it was to be a poem, it would have to be something which included these two, but it would sound a bit like *Little Gidding*. "If you came this way... etc".

David Scott

Who today is "shining like the sun"?
A man with a golf umbrella,
a couple of secretaries having a smoke
outside the office, one who looks like
a young Muhammed Ali of boxing fame
and of the street's changed name from Walnut.

The tall rooms of the hotel
stand on each other's shoulders.
There is space here and no rush,
a mother with her child
carried spread-eagled on her chest.

Who today is "shining like the sun"?
Some are black, some white,
all the usual people,
nothing special, nothing shining.
Did I come all the way for this?

But, see, there is a bride pulling both
dress and veil over her head
making a scattering halo,
and the trees have earrings
swinging against their green cheeks.

David Scott

BAXTER STREET, LOUISVILLE

Aquafina: the first thing I buy
is in latin,
like a catholic area here
lots of convents
Passionist, Carmelite,
with a lovely statue of a sister.
Chryslers.
Liquor store.
8.50 am, simply no pedestrians.
Glass factory.
Houses like Toronto but a bit more space around.
Sultry weather, street map going soggy.
Huge magnolia trees
Frontier classical seats on the verandah
My first Cadillac is a cream one.
Ford truck.
\$60 for Ahava body cream.
Language, words,
some to the point, 'Alice's Diner'
some all the way round
'A Woman's Choice Resource Centre'
So far it's been Health, Food, & Death.
Health is all looking very private and very expensive
passed 3 cemeteries
& not yet eaten.

David Scott

FATHER LOUIS' GRAVE

The fireflies danced
around your grave
when I came at last
to sit at your feet.

A stranger pilgrim
unknown unconceived
seeking your spirit
not amongst the dead.

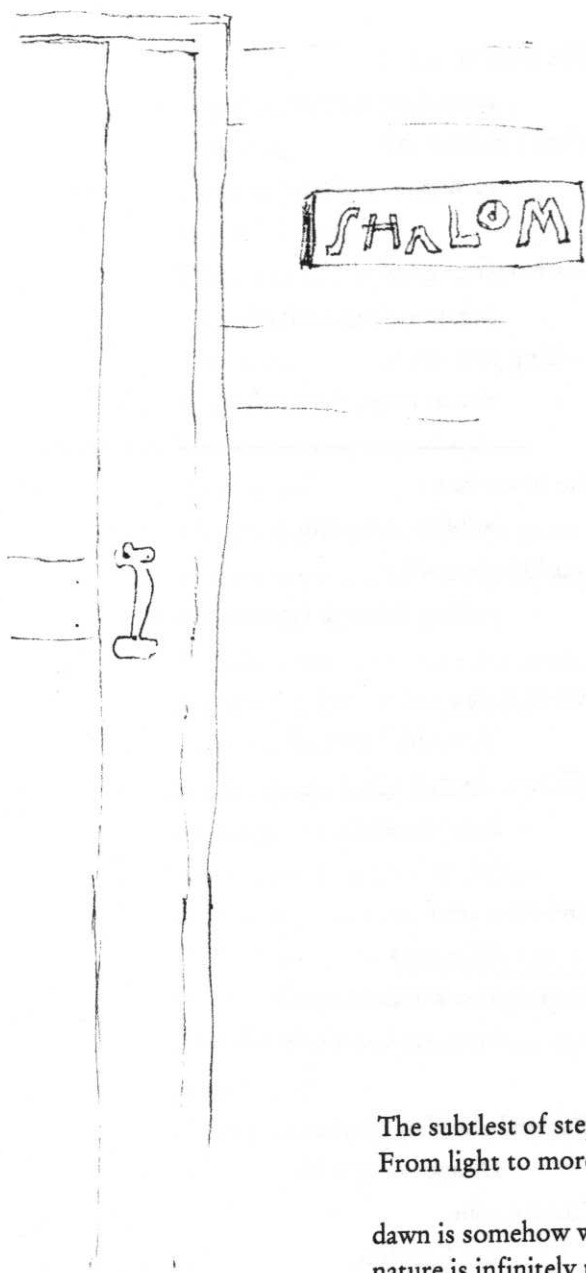
But in the heart
of life overflowing
sunshine fecundity
pulsing through Kentucky heat.

'Be what you are'
You said. You said,
Wisdom draws forth
heart question

And what am I ?
Who am I ?
Walking this wilderness path
open-eyed to vision behold.

Illusion beholding illusion
Disappearing trick
You are gone
and I am too.

Angus Stuart



The subtlest of steps
From light to more light

dawn is somehow what we do
nature is infinitely more variable