

David Adams – document from Beyond the Object, Beyond the sensation Art conference in Hudson NY 2012.

The document is about Art conference which was held in Hudson Basilica Industria, Upstate New York in 20.-22.7.2012. The whole of the document is 31 pages long. I have chosen the most essential parts that describes the Immanuel performance. The parts chosen describes the collaboration with the musician **MC Matre** from Los Angeles and with German composer **Manfred Bleffert**. Immanuel performances happened in the beginning and in the end of the conference. The film that is mentioned in the document is **In Car Nation** (directed by Sampsa Pirtola).

Among other things in the film, we saw Immanuel with guitar slung over his shoulder along with Matre seemingly wandering by vehicle and on foot through a mountainous southern California wilderness that looked something like Joshua Tree National Park, intercut with scenes of the culminating fire from last year's Burning Man festival in the northern Nevada desert, scenes from an Occupy protest in (I think) Los Angeles, graffiti art in a Los Angeles neighborhood as well as an art gallery with poetic narration by Matre (who spoke of "a ray of light coming



Fig. 1. Immanuel Greeting Participants Entering Portal to Ilandea.

down through dark clouds," "a landscape of expression," and "an oasis of exploding creativity" giving life to even the darkest landscape), and ending with a large gathering (festival? concert?) of mostly young people, who followed Immanuel from a dark building out along a street where they were led to shake hands with him and then walk through a mobile "portal" (like a kind of detached door frame). As the film ended, Immanuel himself – with trademark sunglasses and unusually striped black-and-white shirts – appeared at the doorway holding that very framed portal, and we seventy-plus persons in the audience were all silently invited to arise, shake his hand, and walk through it from the "auditorium" space into the large hall of the Basilica. I came to understand this as Immanuel's friendly invitation to us to join him in the somewhat magical and certainly artistic realm from which he comes, Iland (or Ilandea).



Fig. 3. The Nelson Mandala, Large Hall, Basilica, Hudson, NY, created July 19, 2012

We were then directed (with a bit of interpretive help by Matre) to form a circle of people around a large chalk circle previously marked on the concrete floor of the hall as part of the continuation of this piece of group-participation performance art. Placing the frame over one of the four chairs of the adjoining installation by Manfred Bleffert, Immanuel began to gesture to us and speak in some unknown language (sounding something like Italian with a bit of mixed-in German and English and probably Finnish). Somehow, again with a bit of interpretive aid from Matre, we understood that this small circle was to connect with the larger circle of the cosmos (macrocosm and microcosm). Immanuel then grabbed hold of some invisible vertical force or light ray, struggling to pull it down from the cosmic into the earthly

circle (a difficult task that Matre had to help him with). After that, he wrote the word "Ilandea" in the center of the circle, distributing pieces of chalk and inviting us to also write a word in the circle (during which task he somehow disappeared). It seemed that nearly everyone wrote some word or phrase of inspiration and hope into the circle (sometimes with a bit of accompanying graphic form), a sense for which can be conveyed by

the accompanying photographs ("peace," "listen," "patience," "awaken," "breathe," "trust," "connection," "acceptance," "modesty," "fearless," "nurture," "love," etc.). I came to understand "Ilandea" as a realm of human creative possibility, and it certainly proved its potency at this conference. That day being the birthday of Nelson Mandela, the chalk circle was later titled the *Nelson Mandala* by Sampsa and dedicated to him.



The Closing Event

During the closing event after this in the large hall the whole-group circle formed again around the central space, and Laura invited each person to speak a single characteristic word that had arisen in them during the conference. Some of these that I can recall were inspiration, hope, courage, percolating, process, chairs, and support. It is interesting that almost none of these words were the same as the words first inscribed in chalk into the circle on the opening night on Thursday, suggesting how the participants had been changed by the events of the conference.

Then, as three of us (Manfred, Karen Dare, and I) filled the space with the resonant tones of swinging Bleffert gongs tuned to the four tones of the Tao (figure 83), Immanuel made a surprise reappearance, wielding a large mop and bucket and beginning the task of cleaning up the Basilica floor and clearing out the space (figures 84 and 85). Everyone gradually joined in, and the three musicians then changed to more rousing and “earthy” improvised music on the large Bleffert wooden xylophone until the hall was cleared in a remarkably short time, and people began slowly



Fig. 84. Closing Event: Immanuel enters with mop and bucket.



Fig. 85. Closing Event: Immanuel and Participants Mopping Up



Fig. 86. Closing Event: Nearly Finished

dispersing and saying their farewells (figure 86). The mysterious Tao tones that sounded at the end of our activities pointed toward the future human potentials we had begun to explore. The reappearance of Immanuel for the closing wrapped up the conference as a kind of journey from Ilandea to Tao – two imaginations of human higher potential and creativity that marked the conference. Afterward a small group met to discuss