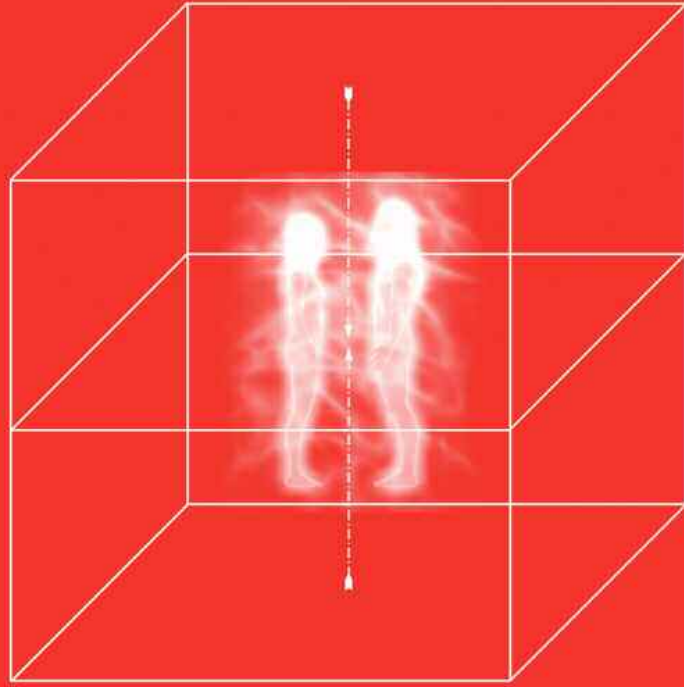




CAVE 3.0

A MULTIDISCIPLINARY OPERA



SAHLAN MOMO ~ EMANUELLA AMICHAI

C O N C E P T

WORK IN PROGRESS

Private & confidential



MMXVII
THE HAGUE

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SPANDA ~ THE HAGUE 2017

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*An endeavour under
Spanda Foundation's Musiké Project auspices.*



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P R E A M B L E

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

*This is a post-conceptual work to be sensed beyond the mental level.
It uses the thinking mind and its intellectual means as a scapegoat
to acknowledge its failure to coherently perceive its content and,
by the recognition of its own limits, it grants access to a deeper
and broader realm beyond the confine of the thinking mind.*

*The artist is an athlete of the soul,
a trainer relentlessly challenging and
overcoming the work's edges;
in this doing,
sparkles of creativity enlighten consciousness.*

*The effectiveness of this methodology is validated by the audience
during the performance, not by the account of its theoretical model.
Imperfections are here to assess their presence in an unperfected sphere.*



CAVE 3.0

Before and beyond ideas, perception and illusion there is a meadow, I'll meet you there.

INTRODUCTION

Cave 3.0 is a multidisciplinary opera integrating live performance and hologram in an innovative theatrical language. It is a production depicting the creation and development of human consciousness as perceived and narrated throughout different epics around the world.

The title borrows from Plato's Allegory of the Cave (*The Republic*, Book VII) exemplifying the development of human consciousness as it appears through various myths and cultures.

The journey unwinds in a sevenfold dimensional paradigm¹ — a numerical archetype that has persisted from antiquity to the present in almost all epochs and cultures throughout the ages — here casted in a three layered cube stage-setting — the Paradigmatic Matrix, the staged Cube³ of figure 1 — on which the operatic action unwraps, typifying the higher, the medial and the lower planes of manifestation, respectively, the esoteric, the mesoteric, and the exoteric consciousness, and other correlated three layered models², embodied in the corresponding vertical planes unfolding the *narrative*.

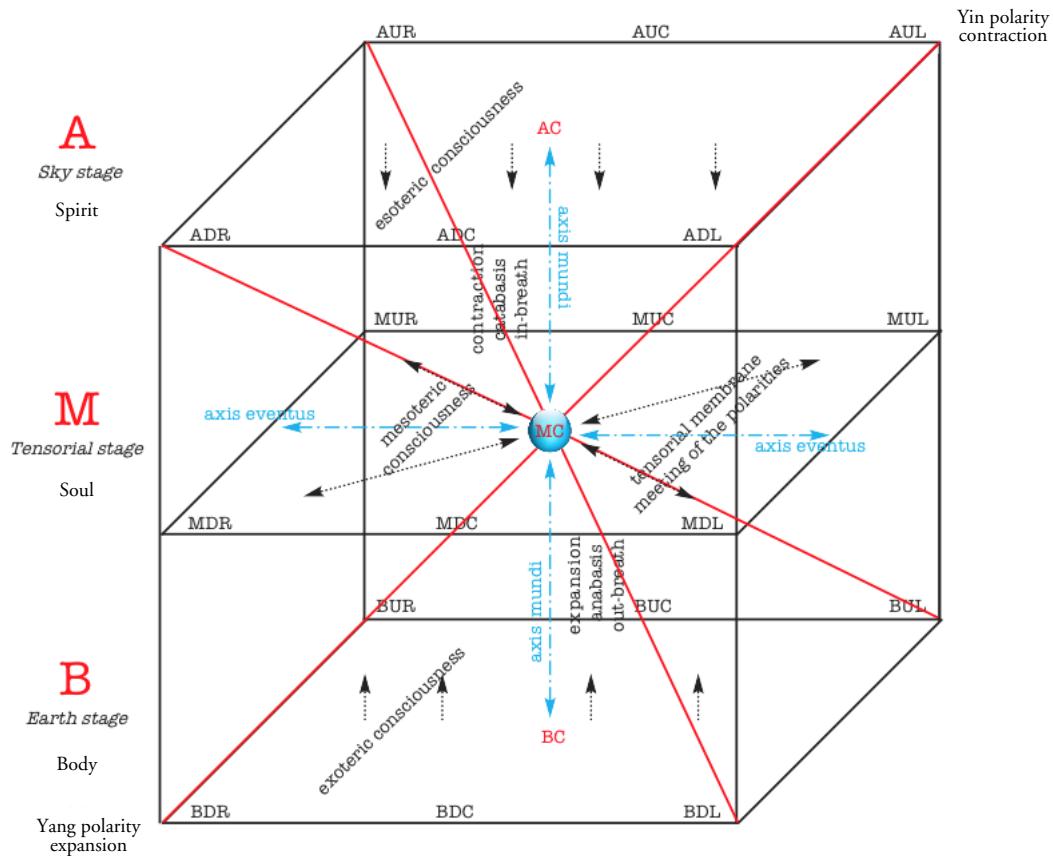


FIG. 1 ~ STAGE SETTING: *THE NARRATIVE PLANE*. The Paradigmatic Matrix rendered in 3 levels stage areas. Above (A), *Sky stage*; Middle (M), *Tensorial stage*; Below (B), *Earth stage*.

The *meta-narrative* unwinds on the three-layered vault of the venue — the 3 highest levels of consciousness in figure 2 — i.e., the 5th, 6th, and 7th tiers of the sevenfold paradigm.

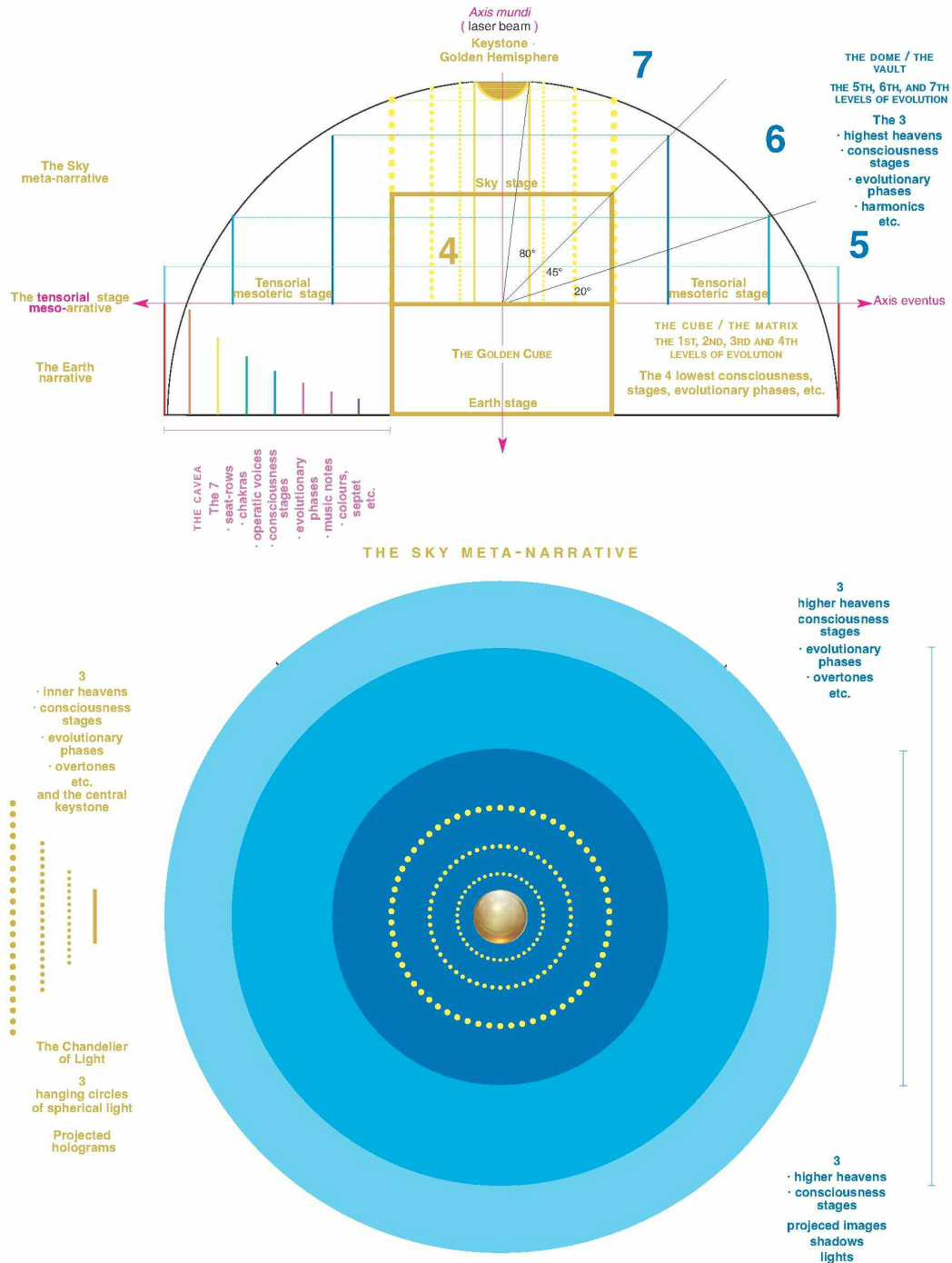


FIG. 2 ~ STAGE SETTING: *THE META-NARRATIVE PLANE*. The Venue/Cave - The Vault.
Section and aerial view.

The evolution of human consciousness, and of civilization, can be set, to the effect of this context, into seven successive stages as outlined below⁴, even though it is never safe to expect an exact parallelism between different paradigms portraying the evolution of human consciousness.

- 1 - Material. *Monodimensional, contracted consciousness*. Archaic; magic era.
- 2 - Vegetal. *Bidimensional, surface consciousness*. Hunter-gatherers; magic-mythic era.
- 3 - Animal. *Depth consciousness*. Agrarian-based civilizations; mythic era.
- 4 - Human - it has a dual nature: a) physical vessel; and b) spiritual content.
 - a) *Dynamic consciousness*. Scientific-industrial modern era.
 - b) *Reflective consciousness*. Communication-technological era.
- 5 - Collective. *Oceanic consciousness*. Post-modern era.
- 6 - Compassionate. *Flow consciousness*. Post-ideological era.
- 7 - Creative. *Integral consciousness*. Post-metaphysical, planetary era.

Each, stage indwells its own signature, or force, whose operative modality consists of specific characteristics. These stages are perceived as a sequence by a *linear* modality, yet in a quantum perspective, and in the human make-up, they are *non-linear*, nonlocal and co-existing, and in a *non-linear* manner they are performed in this work.

In *Cave 3.0*, these 7 stages of consciousness are freely integrated into 7 geo-cultural thematic areas, from which selected primary literary sources and theatrical forms are drawn, eventually to be performed, although not necessarily in the following order:

- South Asia – India: Hinduism, Buddhism, Tantra, kathakali;
- Southeast Asia – Indonesia: Sufism, wayang, silat;
- Eastern Asia – Japan: Zen, Noh, Butoh;
- West Africa – Nigeria: Yoruba, Ifá, Egungun;
- Northeast Africa & Middle East – Israel, Turkey, Syria, Iran: Kabbalah, Hasidism, hora, debka; Sufism, darwish, tatbir, Naqqâli;
- Southeast Europe – Greece: Ancient Greece, mythology, Eleusis, tragedy;
- South Europe – Italy: Fedeli d'amore, Commedia dell' Arte, Opera.

Each area is seen as embedding a sub-narrative of daily concern (poverty, gender issues, love, politics, etc), and depicting the complexity and beauty of human consciousness throughout all the ages, geographical areas, ethnicities, and cultural realms.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Cave 3.0 is a contemporary multidisciplinary opera in 2 acts, Prelude, 7 scenes, and Epilogue. The intermission between the two acts is set between the 4th and the 5th scene, marking a change in the narration tempo.

Cave 3.0 is a unique artistic endeavour in that it integrates live performance and holograms⁵ into a new whole advanced theatricality: the stage project combines live performers, music, singers, and dancers alongside holographic imagery as an integral part of the stage language. The use of holograms, combined with live performances, challenges the definition and the boundaries between film and theatre, between matter and antimatter, between sensory perception and illusion. Holograms appear as scenographic elements, as characters and objects, both concrete and abstract, moveable and still, coming to life and vanishing as deemed necessary by the unfolding narrative. Herein, they are, and represent, the subtle aspect of reality, the “fifth wall” binding the performers to the audience, and the symbol to the symbolized.

The venue of *Cave 3.0* is itself the ‘Cave’ in and around which the opera is performed. Its structure is a 21Ø x 9,5mh self-contained customized geodesic dome — envisioned in the set design of pages 11-12 — sited at the periphery of selected urban areas⁶, with its entrance facing East.

The access to the Cave is paved by a ‘red carpet’, at both sides of which are placed a 3 posts brass-stanchion connected by red twisted ropes⁷. At the top of the poles, a golden Rose⁸ and a Cypress⁹ in alternated sequence, whose succession is reversed in the facing row. At each side of the entrance doors, a blue floating hologram: the two Guardians of the Treshold¹⁰, welcoming and inter-acting with the convened operagoers, extending the space of the operatic action beyond the canonic theatrical stage.

In the internal space of the Cave, in the *cavea*, the seats are arranged in seven¹¹ coloured concentric stepped tiers — the 7 levels of consciousness, the 7 geo-cultural thematic areas, the 7 heavens¹², the 7 chakras fields, the colours, the musical notes, the operatic voices, the septet performing the music, etc. — intersected at their centre by a 4 rayed red corridor (*parodoi*) pattern heading to the 4 cardinal directions of space — also, the 4 elementals, air, water, fire, earth; the 4 seasons, and all the other symbolic numerical association of 4 — a gangway used both by the performers in the course of the action, and by the audience to enter and exit the Cave before and after the performance.

At the centre of the *cavea*, on the violet smallest circle from which the 4 red rays expand and diverge, stands the Paragdimatic Matrix, a three-layered golden Cube of 6m of face, embodying the first 4 levels of consciousness, the Earth, upon and around which humans and hologram perform the *narrative*.

On the vault of the dome — the Heaven — starting at the level of the upper face of the Cube, 3 concentric circles of intensifying blue gradation — the 5th, 6th and 7th levels of consciousness — ascending in space and decreasing in size from the lighter to the darker. At the top of the vault, a golden spheric keystone¹³, from which emanates a vertical red laser beam

— the *axis mundi* connecting the Heaven Earth — and three golden expanding circles of spherical holograms — the highest 3 of the 7 Heavens — in a chandelier fashion.

At definite points of the plot, on each of the three layers of the vault are screened diaphanous sequences relating the cosmic *meta-narrative*, ‘timely’ involving and interrelating with each other actions, and with the human condition unfolding underneath on the Matrix in the *cavea*, on Earth.

Thus, the whole Venue/Cave is a multidimensional theatrical space within and around which the operatic performance takes place.

The libretto spans various planes of references, from daily and ordinary to aulic and symbolic language, gradually taking hold and integrating both the discursive strategy and the narrative trajectories in an intermedial relationship with music and the other semiotic fields. Performers and roles are interchangeable throughout the work, whose internal time of narration unwinds *linearly* from night to day, from void to fullness.

Structural to the libretto pace, a group of 12 Aria/e is articulated along a thematic crescendo towards “Death & Rebirth,” personifying the gradual transmutation from a state of consciousness into the next, heading to Light out of the Cave. They overlap some nodal points at the intersection of the diverse planes of the narrative when transmutations occur, functional to the dramatic structure of the plot. Light is here enacted by Death, Darkness by Life, in antinomic tragic fashion.

Each of the seven scenes of the opera is framed in a geo-cultural thematic area, portraying a distinct tier of the development of consciousness in each chosen culture, at times addressing and referring to archetypes drawn from traditional lore and, occasionally, quoting verses clothed into their respective theatrical forms.

On the sub-narrative, the Soprano and the Tenor voice-parts embody the two main energetic patterns, the polarities, co-protagonists in the narration. The other 5 voices — mezzo, alto, counter-tenor, baritone, and bass — articulate their distinctive frequencies in recitativo. The whole range of the 7 audible human voices makes up a textured pattern in discursive mode within the music field, each correlated to the corresponding 7 tiers of the evolution of consciousness and to their relevant consonant chakra fields¹⁴. The Tenor¹⁵ and Soprano¹⁶ voices are respectively set at the Heart (4th chakra, Act IV) and at the Creative centers (7th chakra), in mimesis, ‘miming’ the kundalini¹⁷ structure.

Recitativo and parlato disclose Comedia: humoristic, irreverent, impertinent and impious; licentious *gopi*¹⁸ in iconic stance; Semar and the *punokawan* in wayang cloths; kyôgen in Noh attire; Commedia masks, and all other homologues prototypes in their traditional theatrical renderings. *Logoi*¹⁹. The Chorus, the third integral part of the telling, intones the Hologram character’s voice in overtone singing, the subtle aspect of reality, responsive, modulating the higher spectrum above the soprano voice.

Here Tragedy and Comedy hinge in needlepoint across their diverse planes of manifestation all through the Matrix and the Vault. As the tragic-comedy narrative of life culminates in reaching its epitome, Cavatina & Cabaletta in fast and slow pace, move the visual-acoustic interaction beyond the established diachronic relations, while, in diegetic-mimetic function, Recitativo & Aria transmute into a bright new whole.

On a different plane of reference, yet as its integral structural formal element, *Cave 3.0* decentralized venue brings the opera house and the performance at the fringe of the urban environment, challenging the social and cultural ‘central’ paradigms by relating and taking

into the process both marginalization and gentrification. The performance will be replicated in each of the selected tour-legs for 7 days running, each day welcoming ca. 350 people only: a way to share subtle food in a safe, friendly, healthy and highlighted sustainable environment.

The multimodal experience of the nonlinear interplay orientation of the narrative and meta-narrative structures embraces myth, symbol and metaphor, and all other axial references in a holistic manner. The multidisciplinary and multimedia qualities of *Cave 3.0* break ground in the formal operatic language, it advances theory & praxis of both stage's aesthetic discourse and its fruition into a fresh noetic-experiential level, by thus creating an innovative operatic language.



EDUCATIONAL & SOCIAL

The *Cave 3.0* venue location, either in urban area or at festivals and international meetings, will be decided ad hoc to suite the environment in which the work will be performed. The performances will be video recorded in HD for an ensuing educational documentary production and, to allow remote participants to share the work in real time, it will be live streamed through the Cave 3.0 Digital Opera House facility at the *Cave3.org* web-platform connected to social media and via other partner organizations with large networks.

While *Cave 3.0* will be streamed and documented, key moments will be formatted for broadcast, advertising, cultural and marketing purposes. All content will be archived, edited and tagged to make it accessible to different time zones and for people heading to the *Cave 3.0* after the live performances.

The *Cave3.org* web platform is a work in progress matching the advancement of the opera all along its making until the last scheduled performance. Afterwards, as part of the documentation of the work, it will be turned into an Open Access educational repository.

In order to reach a broad global audience, the event will be fully advertised through a multimedia communication strategy involving both traditional and advanced technologies.

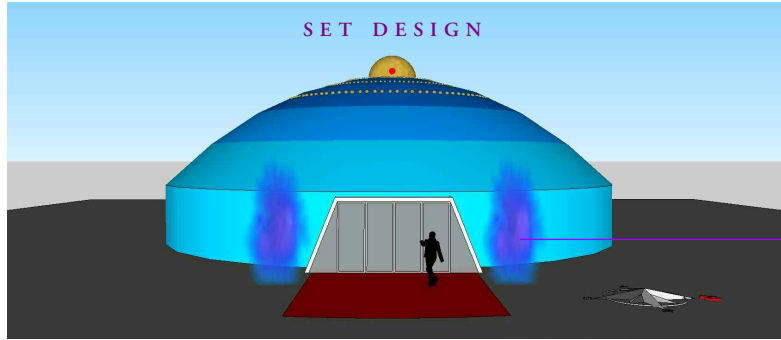
OPTIONAL

The performance could be accompanied by the “Cave 3.0 International Colloquium on Art and New Technologies” convening artists, academia, and innovative tech industries to take inventory of the relevance, contribution, and envisaged future use and directions of new applied technologies in the artistic field.



THE VENUE /CAVE

SET DESIGN



THE 2 GUARDIANS OF THE TRESHOLD

THE VAULT

THE META-NARRATIVE PLANE

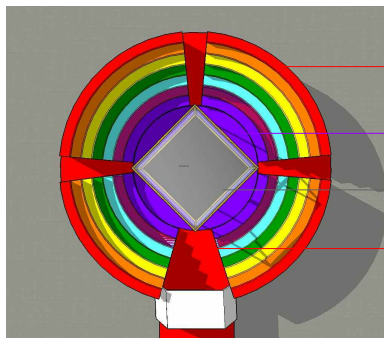
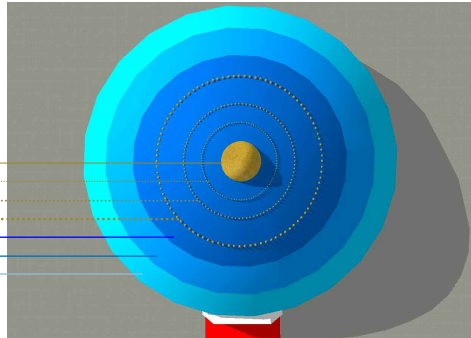
THE 7 HEAVENS

THE 5TH, 6TH AND 7TH LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

THE KEYSTONE/AXIS MUNDI

THE 3 HIGHEST HEAVENS

THE 3 LOWEST HEAVENS



THE CAVEA

THE NARRATIVE PLANE

THE 7 DIMENSIONS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

7 MUSICAL NOTES, 7 OPERATIC VOICES, 7 CHAKRAS, THE SEPTET, ETC.

THE MATRIX/CUBE

THE 4 CORRIDORS

4 ELEMENALS, 4 CARDINAL POINTS, ETC.

THE CAVEA

THE KEYSTONE

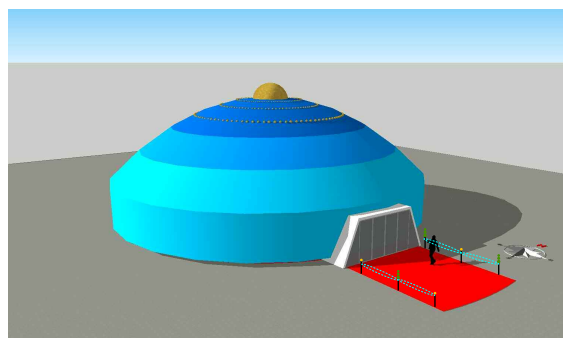
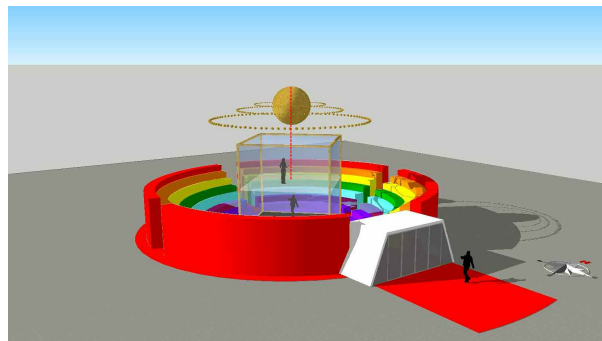
THE 3 HIGHEST HEAVENS

THE AXIS MUNDI

THE MARIX

THE 7 LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

THE RED CARPET



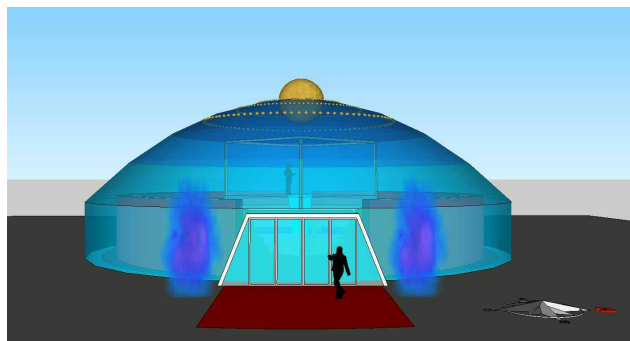
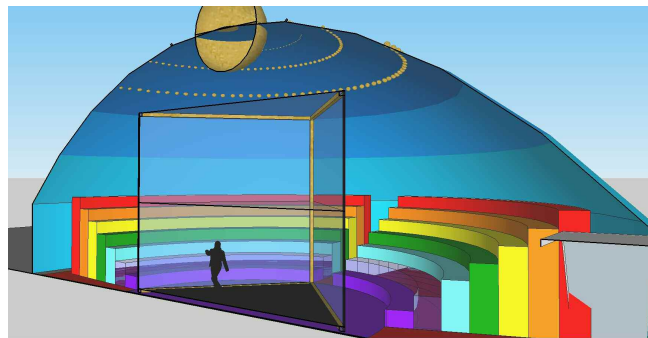
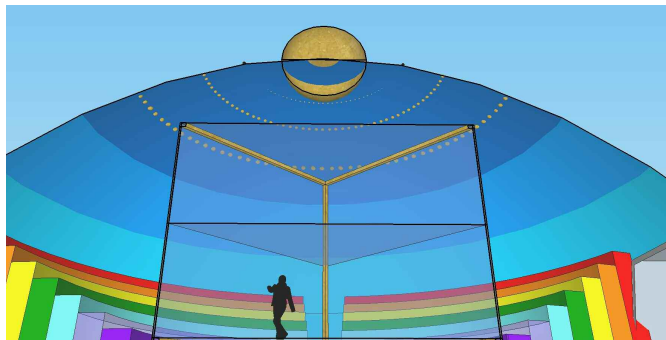
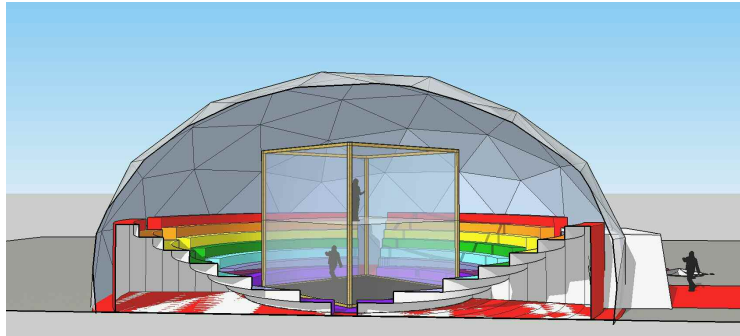
THE RED CARPET

THE 3 STANCHIONS

THE ROSE

THE CYPRESS

THE ROPE



¹ The sevenfold paradigm is a model of reality shared by many traditions and is to be found, among others, in cosmological, philosophical, anthropological, mythical and physical systems. Some of its most familiar correlations are, to name a few, the 7 steps of creation/emanation; the prismatic refraction of white light into 7 colours, the musical scale, the week-span, the charkas system, showing a deep rooted origin, ostensibly reflecting a universal archetypal paradigm in human consciousness.

² The three vertical planes stand respectively for the esoteric, the mesoteric, and the exoteric consciousness, but also for the intellectual-emotional-moving human centres, the spirit-soul-body triad, the thesis-synthesis-antithesis dialectical moments, the Etz haChayim, the Trinity, the Gunas trichotomy, etc., and here also for the visual-musical-textual semiotic fields of the opera, and its aria-chorus-recitativo main formal elements.

³ In this context, the Cube represents a complex symbolic and metaphorical element, it is the Manifestation, the Earthly realm, the corner-stone of any house and structure, the inner space, truth, etichs, perfection, within the limits of human nature.

⁴ Some major features of this archetypal dimensional cosmology, based, among others, on the works of S. Aurobindo, J.G. Bennett, E. Corbin, J. Gebser, G.I. Gurdjieff, A. Maslow, M. S. Sumohadiwidjojo, P. Teilhard de Chardin, and K. Wilber, can be roughly summarised as listed below, taking into account that each stage/phase is a dynamic perceptive-receptive-pattern which permeates and actualises values percolated from the next evolutionary phase, yet latently present in the stage itself; that it broadens its own frame of reference by reconciling previously oppositions, and by shaping up a complex system of evolutionary 'attempts' aiming to forge the most fitting outcome to fulfil the proviso to transmute a quantum leap into its next stage; that there is a distinction to be drawn between consciousness and awareness, as the former arises in partnership with matter and provides the reflective capacity, while the latter is identical with the Life-force of the underlying meta-universe and is characterized by unconditional knowing and wisdom.

1 - MATERIAL STAGE/PHASE. *Monodimensional, contracted consciousness; egocentric. archaic; magic era.*

At individual/identity level, pre-reflexive consciousness, no self-differentiation, the self identifies with external stimuli, and is projected in material objects, unconscious fusion of self and world, lack of ethical discernment and of the faculty of choice, the being relies on instinct; the path to enlightenment is via the illumination of thought; spiritual development can be communicated by spoken words and can be followed.

At social/historic level, roughly 500,000 years ago, the human population consists of unrelated tribal egocentric units, with blood and kinship relations as their major relationship form; cognition is preoperational, imbued with fantasy and magic; when tribes come in contact there is war, and the taking of the other tribe as slaves.

Keywords: sensory world, instinct, sensation, sense of property, power, quantity, insensitiveness, fear, anxiety. Element Earth.

2 - VEGETAL STAGE/PHASE. *Bidimensional, surface consciousness; consciousness of bodily sensations, egocentric. Hunter-gatherers; magic-mythic era.*

At individual/identity level, identity is associated with physical existence; emotional reaction to the environment; no distinct sense of time or causality, immediacy of life experience; the path to enlightenment is via the feelings, emotional illumination.

At social/historic level, roughly 35,000 years ago, humanity reaches a distinct capacity for self-reflective consciousness; perceptions are limited, social organization is on a tribal scale, life is centred on gathering and hunting existence; matrilineal cultures, nature is perceived as intensely alive and filled with mysterious forces, magical rituals.

Keywords: emotions, dualism, pride, selfishness, devotion. Element Water, symbolic of feelings.

3 - ANIMAL STAGE/PHASE. *Depth consciousness; ethnocentric. Agrarian-based civilizations; mythic era.*

At individual/identity level, awareness, not self-awareness; more complex cognitive function, concrete operational; conscious of feelings; sexual differentiation; exclusiveness; the self takes the role of the other, expands its primary identity to a group(s), from egocentric to ethnocentric, based on race, colour, sex, creed, etc. bound by a common belief, a set of rules and laws; religiosity, authority; capacity of imagination, empathy; illumination via the intellect.

At social/historic level, roughly 10,000 years ago human perception expands to include a new sense of time embracing nature's seasons and cycles, emergence of farming consciousness; ritual observance, conformity to the group, magic is transferred from the self to supernatural mythic beings, gods and goddesses and elemental spirits who perform it.

Around 3,500 B.C., development of systematic agriculture, food surplus and formation of great cities; development of basic arts of civilization, writing; great religions, priestly class, patriarchy, division of labour, city-state governments, massive architecture, nations, empires; traditional civilizations, magic-mythic warrior cultures.

Keywords: loyalty, group, cognition, ritual, fighter, challenger, warrior. Element Fire.

4 - HUMAN STAGE/PHASE - dual nature: a) ephemeral physical vessel; *dynamic consciousness. Scientific-industrial modern era;* b) spiritual content; *reflective consciousness. Communication-technological era.*

At individual/identity level, self-centric, thinking-based sense of the self, existential ego, self-conscious; identification with the intellect; resurrection and eternity as article of faith, self-purification, individual dignity; spiritual loyalty displaces that of blood and relinquish family ties, alone wandering; strong feminine element; illuminated mind transcends thought through inner vision.

At social/historic level, emergence of the capacity to take a 3rd-person perspective, primary identity from ethnocentric to worldcentric (all-humans centred), transpersonal consciousness; think in global objective and universal manner, striving to treat all people fairly, regardless of race, colour, sex, or creed. Slavery is outlawed in modern-rational society. Around 1400 AD, culture-wide view – the Renaissance; around 1700 AD nature's mystery and magic are replaced by science and the analysing intellect – the Enlightenment; dynamic sense of time with materialistic view of reality, material progress is primary focus; modern sciences, technical innovation, mass production, extreme division of labour, global free market economy, massive urban centres, rise of strong nation-states.

Keywords: stage of reason, rational, formal operational, positivism, modernity, achievement, accomplishment, merit, creative thought, self-actualisation. Element Air.

5 - COLLECTIVE STAGE/PHASE. *Oceanic consciousness; worldcentric. Post-modern era.*

At individual/identity level, acquisition of the I, self-knowledge, conscious of consciousness, spiritual potentialities, the next world is actualised in the present, access to higher knowledge, detachment, inner vitality, sense of compassion and awareness of unity of human community, deep bonding, renewed connection with nature, identity embraces observer and observed.

At social/historic level, around 1960, decline of the rational/business/scientific materialism, emergence of postmodern, worldcentric morality – all people have intrinsic worth, regardless of race, colour, sex, or creed, each one deserves an equal economic and social opportunity; cross-cultural learning; human rights, integrity of global environment, shared vision and implementation of sustainable development; globalisation; conversation on how to deal with the intertwined system of problems threatening collective future; system thinking; social system allows both ethnocentric and egocentric stages, social Darwinism, local-to-global communication.

Keywords: intuitive mind, self-integration, bodhisattvas, community, bonding, human rights, green movement, civil rights movement, environmental and sustainability movement, personal and professional feminism. Element aether (quintessence/akasha).

6 - COMPASSIONATE STAGE/PHASE. *Flow consciousness; worldcentric. Post-ideological era.*

At individual/identity level, cosmic evolution, transcendence, knowledge of its own evolution, power beyond personal state, new level of human creativity, dynamic creative impulse exteriorized; awareness through all levels of existence, cosmic process experienced as continuously arising, eternal now, experience of the self before the world of forms, aliveness and eternal nature of the being, permanent connection with the source, overmind.

At social/historic level, strong bonding in global community, sustainability of the planet, planetary civilization, balance of creativity and diversity.

Keywords: compassion, sense of Now, present, awareness, unity, mindfulness, sustainability.

7 - CREATIVE STAGE/PHASE. *Integral consciousness; cosmicentric. Post-metaphysical, planetary era.*

At individual/identity level, awareness of the sacred aspect of creation, understanding of the mysteries of genesis; ever present origin, self-organizing, self-remembering identity; wisdom, creativity, and compassion to sustain the future; participation in cosmic scale evolution, one's own being experienced as existing beyond the world of forms and of not being other than the entire world in continual becoming; completion of the process of development and foundation for a new beginning, the human being has completed and attained all that is possible to attain,

At social/historic level, 4th-person perspective, capacity to reflect on, and critically analyse global productions; species-civilization.

Keywords: ultimate realm, awakening; transcendence and immanence a once, being and becoming are one; supermind is one with spirit, foundation of all levels.

⁵ The hologram (Gr. *holos*, whole + *gramma*, that which is written) technology is an emerging craft and technique enacted by means of photographic and video projections to give rise to 3D images. It is influencing human communication and visualization, while already opening up vast possibilities in the artistic field.

⁶ Change always takes off at the margin, the 'centre' is the establishment well rooted in its status quo.

⁷ The rope takes some of its symbolism from the thread or cord, and from the stairs, it is a means of ascent. Although ladders, ropes and wings all appear to be similar as means of ascent, symbolically there is a clear difference. The ones with wings are those who are capable of having spiritual experiences with little difficulty, the mystics, naturally able to 'fly'. Those with ladders and stairs have a slow upward climb involving stages and steps towards enlightenment. The ones using ropes need assistance from above, and occasionally from below, and have to pull themselves up by hard work and perseverance against the 'gravity' of the pull to the Earth – the physical.

The rope denotes that which conjoins, in this acceptance it stands for the *axis mundi*, the immaterial pole uniting Heaven to Earth. According to a Toba Battak myth, in the primordial beginning a rope linked the Earth to the Sky to enable the formation of the Earth and the development of human life and culture. In Mayan mythology, a rope links Sky and Earth as an umbilical cord to regulate the life of the first beings and by providing them with food. Yet the rope was cut — the sunder of the axis of the world — and Earth and Sky were parted, signifying the 'rapture' of the individual from the cosmic consciousness occurred in mythical times, which discontinued the flow of energy at both ends.

In magical and symbolical thinking the following three aspects of ropes are stressed most: i) they provide the means to ascend, enabling humans to reach the highest states of consciousness. In mythic times the ascent had been possible for all beings, now only those with high spiritual power succeed; ii) ropes link things with each other, and all of them with the cosmic consciousness to enable the exchange of energy among all domains. Humans who have knowledge of these ropes are the initiated ones of their culture; iii) ropes have the function of binding and loosening. The very conflicting nature of this function is reflected in many myths and magical rites. The act of binding can mean punishment, enslavement, illness, or death for the bounded one, but it can also tie the individual to the cosmic consciousness, thus integrating the individual in the cosmic order. Analogously, the act of loosening can mean physical and spiritual liberty, health, and life to the loosened one, but also loss of the highest state and the unleashing of chaos. As the act of binding and loosening has such important meaning for the material-spiritual wellbeing of all sentient beings, and for the regulation of the cosmic order, the power of binding and loosening is a quality only of the highest gods (e.g. the Indian god Varuna) or god-like heroes and kings, it is the power of the silver and the golden keys of the pontifex, the bridge builder, or the *solve et coagula* of the alchemical process. In the Old Testament, God illustrates the deep gap between his own power and that of Job by asking him (Job 38, 31): "Do you bind the ties of the Pleiades, or do you loosen the ties of Orion?" An example from the Gospels shows the power of binding and loosening as a means for establishing moral order: when Christ appointed Peter as the head of the church, he told him: "Whatever you shall bind on Earth shall be bound in Heaven" (Matt. 16: 19), remarking how the micro and macrocosm are tied by the *axis mundi*. In the North American sun-snaring myths, a basic motivation was to punish the sun for its bad behaviour, which means that binding and loosening something, whether among human beings or celestial bodies, means also to establishing moral or spiritual order.

In magical thinking, the process of binding and loosening of ropes means transformation of conflict into law and order, of chaos into cosmos.

⁸ Rose fossils 35 million year old have been found in Europe, and petrified rose wreaths have been unearthed from the oldest Egyptian tombs. Within the context of current earthy lore, a rose symbolises immortal love, union through time and death. Its mundane beauty is a promise of Truth and Goodness, a new beginning, of hope; yet, its beauty is contrasted with thorns — to wit, pain, defences, physicality, loss, thoughtlessness, lack of awareness.

The flower bears a complex paradoxical symbology in that it is at once a symbol of purity & passion, of heavenly perfection & earthly desire, virginity & fertility, death & life; and it is the flower of the Goddesses, of Kama, Isis and Venus, nonetheless the blood of Osiris, Adonis, and Christ.

Originally a symbol of joy, later on it stood for secrecy and silence. Numerically, the rose represents the number 5 — the wild rose has five petals, and the total petals on roses are in multiples of 5. Geometrically, it corresponds with the pentagon, while in musicology the pentagram is where all notes are fixed and played. Five represents the Fifth Element, the life force, prana, ether; and the heart, or the kernel, the essence of something. In spirituality, it is the expanding awareness throughout the 5th plane of consciousness.

Six-petaled varieties — the 6th chakra, partaking of and denoting the same numerical paradigm — indicate balance and love; the seven-petaled stands for transformative passion; and the rare eight-petaled roses designate full regeneration, a new cycle, or a transmuted state of consciousness.

The rose is one of the fundamental symbols of alchemy. Rosicrucian texts are called Rosarium (Rosary), all dealing with the relationship between the two archetypal positive and the negative polarities, yang and yin, the King and Queen. Here, the rose is the symbol of the mystical marriage of opposites, the Conjunction, or the regeneration of separated essences-polarities and their transmutation into a new level. In Jung words: “The wholeness which is a combination of ‘I and you’ is part of a transcendent unity whose nature can only be grasped in symbols like the rose or the *coniunctio*” to be experienced by the enlightened soul.

The red rose is masculine, active, expansive, solar (Sulfur), yang; the white rose is feminine, receptive, contractive, lunar (Salt), yin. The combination of white and red roses (spirit and mater, the Sun and the Moon) symbolizes the birth of the Philosopher’s Child, Mercury, Hermes. During Conjunction, the relationship of the red rose to the white rose is that of the Red King and the White Queen, or the Red Sun and White Moon. White roses are linked to the White phase of the work (*albedo*) and to the White stone of Multiplication; the red rose is associated with the Red phase (*rubedo*) and to the Red stone of Projection. The golden rose is the result of a successful marriage of opposites, which produces the Golden Child — *Homo universalis*, *Adam Quadmon*, *Insan-al-kamil*, etc. — the perfected essence of both King and Queen. In alchemical drawings, the rose garden is a sacred space, a meditation space, or a tabernacle, an altar, a sacred place in nature, or the paradise. Any which way, the rose garden is the mystical bridal chamber, the realm of the mystic marriage.

The rose is connected with sexual energy, the ‘warm red’ alchemical tincture purifies, distills or sublimates sexual energy. The rose red color relates to the *aqua permanens* and to the soul, extracted from the *prima materia*. The single red rose represents the mystic center of a person, one’s true nature, his or her heart of hearts; and the purification process of the essence, the inner “pearl beyond price.” Rumi says: “In the driest whitest stretch of pain’s infinite desert, I lost my sanity and found this rose.” As a symbol of the *coniunctio* at personal level, it is the love that transmutes the individual self into the cosmic Self, where the old identity is surrendered for that of the Beloved, or for a higher awareness of the identity of consciousness. In this acceptance, the rose is a symbol of complete surrender and the permanent transmutation into a new state of consciousness.

Because of its association with the heart, the rose symbolizes the secrets of the heart, all things that cannot be spoken, or an oath of silence. In its folded structure the flower seems to be concealing a secret inner core: “Mystery glows in the rose bed, and the secret is hidden in the rose,” says the twelfth-century Persian mystic Attar.

In Christianity, Mary is the model of union with God, Marian Middle Ages iconography depicts her in rose gardens, under a rose arbor, before a tapestry of roses. She holds a rose and not a scepter, for her power comes from divine love; the rose and the rosary are her ciphers, symbols of the union between God and mankind.

In many Indo-European languages, Rose is an anagram for Eros. To perceive the archetypal signature of the rose it is necessary to be open to its presence.

⁹ From anc. Gr. κυπάρισσος (*kupárisσos*), prob. from an unknown Mediterranean pre-Greek language, and prob. from anc. Heb. גפר (*gopher*), cypress, the name of the wood tree used to make the ark (Genesis. vi:14); in gematria letter tuning, גפר, carcass, remain, corpse, cadaver.

The momentous density of the foliage and its solitary aspect draw the cypress beyond the biological realm. A vegetal hermaphrodite carrying both the male and female principle in the same tree, for inverted symbolical analogy associated with the a-gender soul, and to its departing from the human realm with the affliction of separation, longing to unravel the mystery of reunification in death, the final rite of passage.

“Let me be laid in a casket of cypress wood embraced by death while the breath flies away” (*Twelfth Night*, 11:4) echoes Shakespeare’s soul, while the Egyptians and Greeks funerary rituals are burying their dead in cypress coffins, as its resistance to decay reinforces the vision of immortality.

Cyparissus son of Telephus, a handsome young lad of Cos, every day grazed a dearly sacred stag. Apollo followed after him as he accidentally slew the animal with a javelin as it lay resting beneath a tree. Grieved for his unsightful act, he wished to die and, despite Apollo’s protests, wept until his body dried up in transmuting into a cypress tree.

In the Mazdean tradition, Zoroaster brought a shoot of the tree down from heaven to earth where he planted it. In Middle Age Persian miniatures iconography, the cypress stands by the mystic seeking enlightenment; old Japanese lore accounts for tribal people living among a giants species of cypresses named God Tree, the same variety planted in China and on the Himalaya near temples and monasteries, where they live to be as old as two thousand years. Among Buddhists, Shinto and Taoists it is sacred, cultivated near pagodas and temples. The Greeks and Romans held that Cupid’s darts, Jove’s scepter, the club of Hercules, and Boaz and Jachin pillars of Solomon’s temple were all made from cypress wood. Some of the statues of Avalokiteshwara, the Buddha and various Bodhisattvas brought by the Tibetans in India were carved from cypress timber.

As the *Rig Veda* “Hymn to Death” recites: “The Mahayogin Lord Shiva dances amongst the flames of the graveyard, mirrored in the disciple who balances perfectly in consciousness the dual force of life and death, for his eye is fixed upon the realm beyond heaven and earth. His journey along the paths of this world, crosses the boundary of the cypress gate times without number, and he pauses not beneath the bright gaze of Yama [the god of Death], for he has shaped his own will to reflect the Dharmaraja [the cosmic law]. He moves in and out of the realms of Heaven and Earth with the ease of the thread-soul passing

through the eye of a needle. He knits together in his many vestures the worlds above and below, until he stands like a tall and stately witness upon the mountainside, buffeted by wind and feared by men, he is a Master of Life and of Death”.

¹⁰ The two holograms at the entrance of the Venue stand for the two polarities, the Guardians of the Threshold, or the Dwellers on the Treshold, the pillars of the Temple, the right and left sides of the Tree of Life, the Sephirot of compassion and justice, balanced and synthesized in the neutral *axis mundi* which emanates from Kether, the Crown, analogous to the *sushumna nadi* along the kundalini in Hinduism; or the debit and credit book, the Black and White Lodges, and so forth, all polarities that once integrated allow crossing the threshold to access the new dimension of consciousness. In other contexts, the Guardians may be perceived as a single entity in a dualistic function — the not integrated Ego preventing the Self to grow up — as Cerberus at the entrance of Hades, or the Dragon to be killed by the spiritual power of the archangel Michael, or the tempting Snake, the Hobgoblin watching the treasure, or Herod before whose wrath the Self flees to a foreign land, not permitted to return home until the kingdom is cleared of Ambition, Pride, Vanity, Self-righteousness, etc. According to traditional knowledge, The Dweller on the Threshold must be confronted at an early initiatory stage of the evolution of consciousness.

¹¹ The cross-cultural focus on the number 7 corresponds to the 7 classical planets — the only objects in the sky visible to ancient astronomers — that move in predictable fractal patterns against the daily rotation of the fixed stars. Among commentators there are usually two interpretations of the number 7: in one, it simply means “many”, as in Arabic; in the other it is used literally as a numeral.

¹² In mythological cosmology, the seven heavens refer to the 7 subtle divisions of Heaven, the abode of spiritual beings, or the gross expanse containing the Sun, Moon and the stars. This concept dates back to ancient Mesopotamia and can be found in the Abrahamic traditions; a similar concept is also to be found in Hinduism, while Jainism bears also the concept of 7 Earths, or underworlds. It was probably a symbolic concept, as in Sumerian language the words for Heaven (or sky) and Earth are respectively *Anand* and *Ki*. Sumerian incantations of the late second millennium BC make references to seven heavens and seven earths, as in *an-imin-bi ki-imin-bi*, “the heavens are seven, the earths are seven.” In Sumerian mythology heaven is not a place for humans, in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the hero says to his friend Enkidu — a distinct projection of his own self — “Who can go up to heaven, my friend? Only the gods dwell with Shamash forever.”

Along with the notion of 7 heavens, also the idea of 3 heavens was common in ancient Mesopotamia. In Jewish, Christian, and Islamic spiritual cosmology, the Third Heaven is a division of Heaven, a times considered the abode of the Almighty, or the lower level of Paradise, commonly the lowest of the seven.

The notion of 7 heavens may have been derived from the “magical” properties of the number 7. In Islamic sources the concept is presented in metaphorical terms. The Qur’an frequently mentions the existence of 7 *samaawat* (pl. *samaa’a*), customarily translated as ‘heaven’, the term is cognate to the Hebrew *shamayim*. Each of the seven heavens is depicted as being composed of a different material, and the prophets are resident in each. The first heaven, *rafi*, is made of silver and is the home of Adam and Eve, as well as the angels of each star. The second, *qaydum*, is made of gold and is the home of John the Baptist and Jesus. The third, *marum*, is made of pearls or other dazzling stones; Joseph and Azrael are resident there. The fourth, *arfalun*, is made of white gold; Enoch and the Angel of Tears resides there. The fifth, *hay’oun*, is made of silver; Aaron and the Avenging Angel hold court over this heaven. The sixth, *arous*, is composed of garnets and rubies; Moses can be found here. The seventh heaven, *ajma*, which borrows some concepts from its Jewish counterpart, is composed of divine light incomprehensible to the mortal man. Abraham is a resident here. According to a Muhammad traditional saying (*hadiths*), the highest level of Jannah is *firdaws*, — from which the Indo-european term ‘paradise’ derives — while a Lote tree (*Sidrat al-muntaha*) marks the end of the seventh heaven. One interpretation maintains that stars and galaxies are all part of the “first heaven”, beyond which, six still higher/deeper realms are to be found.

¹³ A keystone, or capstone, is the wedge-shaped stone piece at the apex of a masonry arch, or the generally round one at the apex of a vault. It is the final piece placed in construction to lock all the stones into position, thus allowing the arch/vault, to bear weight. Although a masonry arch/vault cannot be self-supporting until the keystone is placed, the keystone experiences the least stress of any of the voussoirs due to its position at the apex.

A related symbology, stemming from the *axisi mundi* notion, is that the imperial parasol common to diverse cultures, in which the canopy stands for the Heaven’s vault, which is supported and sectioned by the assigned values of 8 or more ribs/pillars mounted on a pole, namely, the *axis mundi* uniting Heaven to Earth. Another symbolical analogy is casted in the bow-arch and arrow binomial, in which the archer stands for the acting agent, the actor.

In a rib-vaulted ceiling, the keystone may mark the intersections of two or more arched ribs. Architects of the 16th century often designed arches with enlarged and slightly dropped keystones, numerous examples of which are found in the work of Sebastiano Serlio, the 16th-century Italian Renaissance architect and theoretician author of the *Architettura* (eight books, 1537–75), the first Renaissance work on architecture to devote a section to the theatre. His many treatises included illustrations of the tragic, comic and satyric stages, based on Vitruvius’s concept of the vanishing point. Serlio’s sets are constructed in function of this point, at which parallel lines drawn in perspective converge. He was also the first to employ the term “scenography,” and to make extensive use of the scenic space and lighting to give the impression of depth. With his technical innovations Serlio had a profound impact on the theatrical architecture of his age, on theatrical scene design and stage lighting. An early manuscript of his *Architettura* is preserved in the Avery Architectural Library, at Columbia University.

¹⁴ In Hindustani and Carnatic music notation — equivalent to the Western Ionian mode or major scale — each note (*swear*, Skt: स्वर, from the root sir, “to sound”) stimulates by resonance a specific energetic chakra field located along the spine of the human subtle body. The sounds/notes/*swears* — at times also used in meditation and in healing practices — are related to the 7 corresponding phases/stages of the evolution of consciousness typified as the ascending of the kundalini [see *infra* n.¹⁷] and, to this effect, to the 7 stages of consciousness, civilisations, stage of the Self, to the 7 cultural-thematic areas and to the operatic voices (basso > soprano).

In ascending order, the 7 *swaras*, their related chakras, frequencies, operatic voices, stages of evolutionary consciousness /selves/realms, and the colours of the floor of the venue, starting from the ‘red’ at the entrance to end at ‘violet’ at the centre, with the golden Cube, are:

SA [C/do], <i>shadja</i> (षड्ज), 65.41Hz	1st - <i>Muladhara</i> (root) – yin [-]; red	Bass (male)	Live electronics	Material
RE [D/re], <i>rishabh</i> (ऋषभ), 73.42Hz	2nd - <i>Swadhishtana</i> (pelvis) – yin [-]; orange	Baritone (male)	Percussion	Vegetal
GA [E/mi], <i>gandhar</i> (गन्धार), 82.41Hz	3rd - <i>Manipura</i> (solar plexus) – yang [+]; yellow	Tenor (male)	Strings	Animal
MA [F/fa], <i>madhyam</i> (मध्यम), 87.31Hz	4th - <i>Anahata</i> (heart) – yang [+]; green	Countertenor (male/female)	Brass	Human
PA [G/sol], <i>pancham</i> (पञ्चम), 98.00Hz	5th - <i>Vishuddhi</i> (throat) – yang [+]; blue	Contralto (female)	Winds	Collective
DHA [A/la], <i>dhaivat</i> (धैवत), 110.00Hz	6th - <i>Ajna</i> (third eye). yin [-]; indigo	Mezzo-soprano (female)	Voices	Compassionate
NI [B/si], <i>nished</i> (निषिद), 123.47Hz	7th - <i>Sahasrara</i> (back of head) – yin [-]; violet	Soprano (female)	Overtones	Creative

Within this context, yet out of the scope of these brief notes, a particular attention should be drawn on the deep influence of the overtones upon chakras' functionality.

¹⁵ Human hearing ranges nominally from 20Hz to 20KHz. The base of the American Standard Pitch sets the note A4 at 440Hz as a base, or tuning frequency. In scientific pitch notation, the tenor voice ranges from one octave below middle C to one octave above middle C, (C3-C5; 131-523Hz, with the main tessitura in middle C (C4; 261Hz); and with its low extreme roughly at Bb2, the second B-flat below middle C.

¹⁶ The soprano voice ranges from middle C to high A (C4-A5; 261-880Hz in choral music, and to C6, two octaves above middle C, at 1046Hz, or higher in operatic music. The other voice ranges are: mezzo-soprano A3-A5 (110-880 Hz); contralto: F3-E5 (175-698 Hz); countertenor: contralto or mezzo-soprano range; baritone: F2-F4 (87-349 Hz); bass: F2-E4 (87-330 Hz) with harmonics to 12KHz.

¹⁷ The kundalini (Skt: कुण्डलिनी, “coiled one”) is a form of primal life force energy (shakti, pranic energy, chi, bio-energy) that identifies the arising of consciousness and that has been coiled at the base of the spine since mundane birth. Different spiritual traditions maintain methods of “awakening” kundalini for the purpose of spiritual enlightenment, but it may unravel and arise also due to aesthetic experience (*rasa*), or in response to life events, uncoiling gradually like a snake, or quickly and explosively into the chakras.

¹⁸ *Gopika* (fem. of *gopi*, Skt. गोपी, from *gopala*, a person in charge of a herd of cows) is the most common name used in Hindu Vaishnava theology to refer to the unconditional devotion (*bhakti*) to Krishna of a group of cow herding girls as described in Puranic literatures. One *gopika* known as Radha, holds a place of high reverence and importance in a number of such traditions.

¹⁹ According to Maximus the Confessor's cosmology (c. 580 AD), the *logoi* are the divine acts of Will eternally conceived by Logos, centre of all the *logoi*, but only expressed at the moment of creation, and by which the cosmos is manifested. The *logoi* are the principles behind procession (creation; expansion) and conversion (destruction; contraction), the metaphysical ontological binary structure of created being, especially of rational nature, i.e. humans. The concept is analogous to the cabalistic emanation from Ein Sof of the 22 sacred letters of the Aleph-Bet; it is found in Thales' *Metaphysics* (c. 624 BC), and in both Ibn Sina [Avicenna] (980 AD) and Suhrawardi (1154 AD) angelology, to name a few.



THE CREATORS

SAHLAN MOMO | Librettist, director, set designer.

Sahlan spent his formative years in several European countries and carried out cross-cultural fieldwork in North Africa, the Middle East and the South-East Asia regions deepening their anthropological, spiritual, symbolic and aesthetic aspects. He began his professional career as an artist in 1966 investigating the non-mimetic representation of symbols, developed further into reflections on art and the creative process. He was Associate Professor of Painting and Professor of Photography at the Fine Arts Academy (Rome, 1974-1979).

In 1980 he took an interest in sustainability, the conservation of cultural heritage and the 'book' as an artistic expression; conceived an innovative method of producing sustainable books and, in 1986, founded the Semar publishing house to implement it. In 1989, he founded the international journal *Conservation. Culture & Environment* and remained Editor-in-Chief until 1999.

He was Professor of History of Art at the University "La Sapienza" and of History of Theatre at the European Institute of Design (Rome, 1989-1993) and lectured at several congresses during this period. In 2003 he established the Semar international unit in The Hague.

In 2005, increasingly drawn to sustainability, cross-culture, intercultural and interfaith dialogue, development, ethical business and systemic change, founded the Spanda Foundation. He is founder and Editor-in-Chief of *Musiké. International Journal of Ethnomusicological Studies* (2005-) and of *Spanda Journal* (2007-).

His artistic works are in private and institutional collections (Museum of Contemporary Art, Frankfurt; MoMA, New York; National Gallery of Modern Art, Rome, etc.); has served as Chair and Member of a number of advisory committees for academic, research and scientific institutions; has authored radio broadcasting, books and papers on art theory, spirituality, consciousness, development, and has been the recipient of several national and international awards and honours.

>> *Artistic bio-note.*

EMANUELLA AMICHAJ | Librettist, director.

Emanuella is a director and choreographer living and working in Tel Aviv. Her stage work combines performance, dance and visual art in a unique style characterized by a powerful visuality and a very clear aesthetics emphasizing the physical and visual aspect of the human body and its condition.

Her works, commissioned and granted by dance and theatre institutions such as the BI Arts UK Foundation, the Israeli Culture Institute, the Rabinovich Foundation, the Move Award, the Israel Lottery Council for the Arts, the Jerusalem Culture Season, and the Israel Festival among others, have been widely presented in Israel and abroad.

Her stage works *The Neighbors Grief Is Greener* (2013) and *Lyzistratax* (2014) have been chosen by the European quality label *Move Award* for outstanding visual performance.

Emanuella was a member of the fringe committee and Head Artistic Producer for the Maabada theatre in Jerusalem, where she launched various events. She is teaching acting, dance theatre and performance at the Drama Department of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, and is delivering independent workshops on performance, acting, and movement. She founded and is the artistic director of the creative theatre company *Merchav*, a Jerusalem-based multidisciplinary group involving students and graduates.

>> *Website.*



In the making of this Opera, the Authors are committed to make fair use of natural and human resources in compliance with the UN Global Sustainable Development Goals and human rights.

LOGISTICS & ORGANISATION

* GEOGRAPHIC IMPLEMENTATION	Global
* PROJECT TIMELINE	2016-2020
* PROSPECTED PREMIÈRE	New York, Season 2019-'20
* VENUES	In-site Ø 21m geodesic dome in selected urban locations
* ORGANIC	6 perfor.s/dancers; 4 opera/overtone singers; 6 instrumentalists
* INTERNATIONAL ARTISTIC PARTNERS	
ORIGINAL MUSIC	PENDING
HOLOGRAM TECHNOLOGY	MUSION HOLOGRAM, London musion.com
* DOMESTIC & INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS	
CONSULTING AGENCY	MOMENTUM ARTISTS, New York A multi-disciplinary artist boutique management agency specializing in special projects momentumartists.com
* TARGET	Culturally: medium-high; demographically: 20 onward.
* PROSPECTED FUNDING	Israeli Culture Department; Artis; Israel Culture Lottery; Biarts; Med Culture; Stichting Doen; individual and institutional investors and donors.
* PERFORMANCE ESTIMATED TIMETABLE	
RESEARCH & WRITING	7-10 months
PRE-PRODUCTION	3-4 months
AUDITIONS	The Hague, 2018
REHEARSALS, SHOOTING, COMPOSING, SET DESIGN, ETC.	9-16 months
TOTAL	19-30 months
* ADVOCATING ORGANISATION & KNOWLEDGE PARTNER	SPANDA FOUNDATION spanda.org

Spanda Foundation (Spanda) is a The Hague (NL) based International Civil Society Organization (ICSO) for development to catalyse sustainable long-term systemic change in culture, education, health & environment, economics, and research. Spanda aims to promote creative solutions and strategic resources for the attainment of a higher individual and collective state of consciousness, and to foster social, economic and global development by pursuing initiatives that serve the common good and add social value. The Foundation was established in 2005 under the Dutch law as a legally independent, non-profit, tax-exempt organisation for the common good (ANBI), and is in Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Spanda differentiates itself from other entities by focusing on spiritual and ethical values, treasuring the contribution of all stakeholders in equal measure, and placing “research before implementation”. To this respect, every project is supported by in-depth academic research offering a higher understanding of the underlying issues. Thanks to its extensive network both in academia and among field practitioners, Spanda is able to enhance informed dialogue at individual, social and global level, to foster innovation, nurture collective behaviour and cultural diversity on a wide range of issues.

Since its inception, Spanda’s has been designing and implementing transcultural initiatives – the *Jubilo*, the *Musiké*, and the *Lila* projects among others – shaping a variety of creative languages into well focused tools to impact awareness and knowledge, utilizing culture as one of the most powerful agent of transmutation to mobilize consciousness to a higher plane in pursuit of wisdom.

Cave 3.0 dwells perfectly in Spanda’s *Musiké* project vision, mandate and mission. Accordingly, the Foundation supports under its auspices this initiative to its furthest extent, contributing with first-hand knowledge, theoretical framework, consult, artistry and practical action to the overall definition, structuring, implementation, production and dissemination.

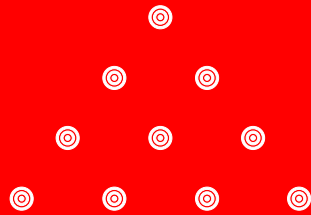
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C O N C E P T

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