

Zohara, Mediumship and Divaldo Franco

> Zohara Meyerhoff Hieronimus

TSM - THIS YEAR, WE CELEBRATE 150 YEARS OF THE PUBLISHING OF THE MEDIUMS' BOOK BY ALLAN KARDEC. TALKING ABOUT MEDIUMSHIP, WOULD YOU SAY YOU ARE A MEDIUM? HOW DO YOU SEE MEDIUMSHIP?

ZM - I have certainly been called a medium, psychic, or intuitive channel in my life. Medium is a good word, for it implies one is both the vehicle for multi-dimensional communication, but also, that the medium itself in which the person operates, is the field of life where transference of knowledge and wisdom takes place. So, I like the double meaning in the English word. Mediumship is the use of the medium of life, for as I like to say, "all of life talks."

Mediumship is assumed to mean that the channel, the person or sometimes group of people receiving information, are unconscious or in a slightly suggestive state or in a deeper hypnotic trance, where they may not remember what they have heard, said, or written. I am, however, like many other practitioners fully conscious, a wide-awake receiver. My eyes are open, I move into this state in a second, processing what I see and hear no differently than one does in normal conversational activity. I am conscious of what is being said, and most of the time, of who or what is speaking, and for whom the information is intended. The capacity for hearing what is being communicated from human



souls no longer in physical bodies, from angels and guardians who seek to guide us, and from animals living or deceased, as well as from nature herself, is a talent every human being is designed to develop. I have made a practice of various arts that rely upon non-local consciousness in some manner all of my life. I think this is why the art of listening to "life talk" is for me a gentle process of seeing, hearing, writing, and speaking.

In esoteric Judaism, it is said that the prophet (Mediums), the person who speaks for and with God, must be humble, have courage. Humility makes it possible to set one's own ego and desire aside, in order to make room for others to contact; and courage, to deliver the message regardless of consequence to oneself, is the final stage of the process.

Of course every human has free will and we are responsible for what we do, or choose not to do. Sometimes a message is for the Medium and no one else, and other times, the information imparted is to assist an individual, a family, a community, or an entire nation. The Medium is responsible for utilizing the knowledge in the most helpful way possible.

To me, mediumship means that a person is able to listen, with a clear heart, a clear mind, and in a state of balance him or herself, in the joy of service. The 'medium-ship' is where all life interconnects and continues outside of the boundaries of time and space,

him on the occasion of his award were, "Ave Maria." And I did.

TSM - REGARDING THE SPIRITIST COMMUNITY, YOU WERE TRULY INSTRUMENTAL IN CONVEYING SPACE FOR THE SPIRITIST SOCIETY OF BALTIMORE IN 2001 TO LAUNCH ITS PIONEERING EFFORTS IN THE DISSEMINATION OF THE SPIRITIST TEACHINGS IN THE USA. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE SPIRITIST COMMUNITY?

ZM - From our very first conversation to our on going relationship, service was and remains the key word we share in common. To me, gifts of the Holy Spirit are for helping others and Dr. Anseloni made it clear from the start that she and the Spiritist fellowship are people who intend on helping the world, and the living dynamic between the living and disincarnate souls who are helping us make good choices. Members of the Society are serious professional men and women who take time in their lives to listen to the spiritual worlds and the guidance being shared with those in need. This is the purpose of all mediumistic talents, to be of service in the world.

TSM - WE HAVE HEARD THAT YOU HAVE A NEW BOOK COMING THIS YEAR. WOULD YOU LIKE TO TALK A LITTLE ABOUT IT?

ZM - It's called Sanctuary of the Divine Presence, Hebraic Rituals in Initiation and Revelation, Inner Traditions, 2011. In 2008 I had momentary vision that showed me how the ancient Hebrews' Tent of Meeting and Tabernacle is a description of our own physical and spiritual anatomy, and how each person can create an inner sanctuary for God's Presence, for the Holy Spirit to rest in. The Divine presence in turn, enables prophecy and peace.

The book is based in classical, Judaic teachings, and uses a multi-layered system of esoteric correspondances that include ten specific Bible Texts sung by the prophets and the ancient Hebrew people. Each song and each

story are a part of our own soulful journey from Adam singing of Sabbaths' delight, to King Solomon's love song at dedication of the First Temple. Also, there are five different stages the person experiences in the Holy Sanctuary of life; initiation, consecration, elevation, illumination and revelation. Each of these stages is also represented in the Tent of Meeting and its parts: the tent, the outer courtyard, the Holy Place, the Holy of Holies, and the Cherubim on the Ark. Each stage and location of development represents different aspects of our bodies, our soul and our natures. For instance we learn that prayer and song are the foundation for our spiritual ascension. They represent the material world of action and invigorate the aspect of the soul that is in our blood. All together, the reader learns how The Tree of Life in Kabbalah, a ten-part cosmo-genesis, and the Tent of Meeting and the Tabernacle, a five-part system, preserve deeper mystery teachings applicable to our own lives today.

Each person is designed to revel in the divine. This book shows how each of us is the holy Tabernacle, a High Priest, who makes their lives an offering, whose work in the world becomes like the rituals. By learning how to ascend the Tree of Life, we refine ourselves so that we can each create a Sanctuary for the divine presence.

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hallway. The hallway referred to, was a long tunnel like connection between the property's two large buildings, which were connected through their basements. When I had first arrived at the retreat center, I had gone through there and said to myself, Boy, this place is haunted. I won't be coming down here again. But then, on the last day of my visit, I heard a voice say, "Come into the hallway." I walked out of class, through the two big doors and instantly was surrounded by 30 monks, 15 on each side of the hall. Of course they were not in the physical world, but clearly present. I don't know Latin but recalled a few words from High School chorus, and said in a sing-song fashion, "Sanctus Benedictus," to which I attached to a few other Latin words, "In Spiritus Nominus". The hallway is cavernous. Arched ceilings with white painted cement walls and floor, I had found the best place to sing or maybe even play harmonica. The monks laughed at my improvisational Latin, but they got the message, that I could hear and see them.

The retreat center is now devoted to many eastern paths of mysticism and disciplines, including yoga. Yoga as taught in the East is a way of life, but it is also a spiritual path of service. In the West, we tend to diminish beautiful holy paths, to personal indulgences. The priests expressed to me, that they felt that their prior lives on the property, before it changed ownership, and the work they did as a devotion to God, was not appreciated by the current practices of the thousands of visitors, who came to the facility each year. In essence, they were asking to be honored for their presence in their work currently at the facility, elevating the prayers of all the men, women and children that come and enjoy the wonderful programming and facilities at the center. It was clear they wanted this to be shared with people who worked there as well. After understanding this, I was about to leave the hall when a 'thirty-something' man who obviously worked there, came through the opposite end of the hallway. He was big, like a former high school tackle, wearing heavy construction work boots, a flannel shirt and jeans. But I was inspired by the timing and a hunch to ask him if he saw the priests in the tunnel. He gasped a little puff of air. Looked straight at me and said, "Yeah. I feel them. Sometimes I feel someone looking over my shoulder. Weird things happen down here all of the time." Not only was he aware of them, but he admitted to being a psychic child whose maternal lineage had the 'gift', who at the age of 17, shut his talents down, as many people do, wanting to have a normal life that others can relate to. As a result of our conversation, he later wrote to me saying that he was going to open up that part of his life for his own son, and that he had looked at the old blue prints of the property. He wrote, "The current underground tunnel and the rooms [which

are now a furnace room, a laundry room and other storage spaces], used to be the priests classrooms." It is only logical that they would have been gathered in the hallway.

There is more to the story but the basic message I had to share was telling everyone present, is that we are here to listen, to talk with life, all of life and that there are so many souls wanting to help us, to speak to the living. They work with us and we work with them, and this is the holy work intuitives, mediums, and sensitive people can do, to help bring earth into divine right order. Also, and just as important, was that my own experience with this young man, was that by talking about the reality I was experiencing, gave him the courage to reconsider using his God given talent, which he said, came from the women on his Mother's side of the family.



The story is connected to my meeting Divaldo Franco, in 2008 and seeing how he has used his gifts for establishing education, health care, spiritual guidance for hundreds of thousands of others. What I was moved to say was "thank you" for motivating me to be public about my own experiences. Meeting Divaldo Franco, and seeing the life he is leading in service, gave me the desire to 'come out of the closet' as a medium. For this I am grateful. In a sense, he did for me, what I did for this young man. We remind each other that many human beings, world wide have these natural God given abilities and are using them for the community's benefit.

In closing, Divaldo Franco is clearly the beloved of the Blessed Mother and the two words I was told to tell

peace is one in balance between their male and female qualities, between giving and receiving.

In the framework of historical time, we are moving into the age of prophecy, which in Kabbalah is said will come primarily through women and children. A woman is designed to make room for new life in her womb. In the same manner, it is easier for a woman to surrender her own needs and ego, than it is for a man. It is this natural surrender, that a vessel designed to receive, (a woman), is made suitable for mediumship and all other levels of prophecy. Mediums and sensitive people in general, can help midwife a shift in collective awareness. So, women in general and people who cultivate their intuitive talents, will be vital in addressing the many challenges we face in our world.

TSM - IN 2008, YOU RECEIVED THE PEACE AND YOU AWARD FROM DIVALDO FRANCO, AMBASSADOR OF PEACE. WOULD YOU KINDLY SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS REGARDING THAT EXPERIENCE?

ZM - In our lives, we go about living them to the best of our ability never knowing the extent to which even the simplest act of kindness to another person will have. When we act with devotion, knowing that our lives are on loan from God, we tend to meet other souls like our own. Meeting Divaldo Franco, and being included as an Ambassador of Peace, was a very deep, heart felt joy for me. Not only was I given the pleasure of sharing the wisdom and teachings of the female prophets of ancient Israel, whose lives I have studied, but being among a few hundred like minded and like hearted men and women, gave me a certain sense of belonging, that I do not often experience among groups of people. The fact that many of us are of different faiths, added another dimension to be thankful for. To be among people who have reverence for divinity, who know we are all here to help in the divine plan, and make room in our lives for devotional service to others, simply reaffirmed the holy teachings of all traditions we each represent. Meeting a man of God,

who has devoted his life to helping those in need, is inspiring. To see the amazing spiritual beings standing beside him, and having an opportunity to speak with Divaldo about these guardians, was also another unique detail in our first introduction. But most of all was the sweet love that emanates from Divaldo Franco, his apparent compassion and desire and practice of helping others. There is a visible shining light in his physical countenance, which is testimony to the spirit of God inhabiting the human heart.

TSM - THIS YEAR, AT THE THIRD PEACE AND YOU EVENT IN COLUMBIA, MD, YOU WERE INVITED TO BE THE SPOKESPERSON AT A SPECIAL CEREMONY IN GRATITUDE TO DIVALDO FRANCO FOR MORE THAN 25 YEARS OF CONTINUING PRESENCE IN THE MD-DC-VA AREA. IT WAS A TRULY MOVING MOMENT FOR YOU AND ALL PRESENT. WOULD YOU SHARE WITH OUR TSM READER YOUR AMAZING THOUGHTS MENTIONED THAT EVENING?

ZM - I was given the opportunity of awarding Divaldo, a lovely plaque made for the occasion by Dr. Vanessa Anseloni and the Spiritist Society of Baltimore, who invited me for this evening event. After a lovely evening of ballet, true life stories by Divaldo, whose translated talks feel more like a song of the heart than a speech, and a presentation by Dr. Mark Baker and Dr. Anseloni, I was asked to come to the podium and give Divaldo an award for his 25 years of helping steward the Spiritist movement in MD. It was the closing moment of the evening and I had so much to share, but knew I had only a few minutes. I had planned on simply reading the words on the plaque out loud, but I was so overcome by emotion and the exceptional situation of having several hundred mediums present, that I asked for permission to tell a brief story. This is the story that I shared.

I had recently been to a retreat center, to learn to play the harmonica. On the final day of the five-day workshop, I heard a voice tell me to come into the



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as we experience them in the mundane world of daily activities. Contacting the 'every where and every when,' as my dowsing teacher, the later Terry Edward Ross would say, is the goal and the gift of human beings. As immortal souls in temporary bodies – kabbalah teaches that all of our senses are faculties of the soul: eyes, ears, nose, mouth and sense of touch. It is for this reason that some mediums hear (clairaudience), some see (clairvoyance), still others smell or even taste things when they are in an active state of reception. Some people are clairscient, getting information by touching something related to the target. Objects, clothing, and the places they have made contact with hold a person's energetic imprint. In the case of missing people, the physical object of that person acts like a honing beacon, and helps the Medium to tune in, to where the person is.

My own style of mediumship is primarily clairaudient and clairvoyant, most of the time they occur in tandem, though on occasion I have been clairscient (through scent), able to smell for instance the perfume of a deceased person, or the smell of their favorite flowers, or even a brand of cigar. After decades of practice I find the easiest way for me to speak with those not in my physical presence, is through a picture of the subject, person or animal, though most of the time, I work with the name of the subject and nothing more. Of course, there are also times when a spirit being will contact me, and I am sure they do not have a picture of me on their heavenly refrigerator, in order to locate where I am.

The reason a medium can work without anything other than the name of a person, place or thing, is that the intention of the medium to listen and/or to speak with that source, is what makes the connection between the receiver and the speaker. The universe listens to what we say, records it and plays it out again, just like an answering machine. When the Medium brings their focus to someone's name, it is not much different than the way we dial up a person directly on the phone to speak with them. We call their number. A person's name or the name of an animal, a place or object is their number.

There are many methods that can be learned and each person will find over time, which works best for them. The fundamental process I use is first to pray for divine guidance and ask that the highest good be revealed. I make clear in my heart that I intend to serve the situation with my full attention and to the best of my ability. I ask permission of the subject to have the conversation and ask if sharing what I learn is allowed. Sometimes what a medium is told or shown, cannot be shared in its entirety, but helps the Medium understand the currents of life behind a present situation they have been called to assist in.

The process itself, whether at a distance or in the presence of the subject, requires a deeper form of listening than we do with the casual hearing of our ears. (I sometimes wonder if my diminished physical hearing, due to decades as a radio broadcaster, has not helped my inner hearing, because there is less noise interfering in my brain.) But most importantly, in any type of mediumship practice, is not to judge or analyze what is being said, but simply to make a record of the communication. I actually type the information as I receive it, as I could never recall it all and if I were to speak into a recording device, my own voice would interfere with what I am hearing and seeing. So this is a long answer to your question. I am a medium, and meeting Divaldo Franco inspired me to say this openly, after a lifetime of keeping it somewhat vague publically.

TSM - IN YOUR BOOK KABBALISTIC TEACHINGS OF THE FEMALE PROPHETS: THE SEVEN HOLY WOMEN OF ISRAEL, INNER TRADITIONS, AND INTL. (2008), YOU DISCUSS THE ROLE OF THE FEMININE IN HUMANITY'S DEVELOPMENT. IN THAT REGARD, WE ALSO NOTE THAT THE MEDIUMS WHO WERE THE INSTRUMENTS FOR THE COMING OF SPIRITISM WERE ALSO WOMEN. WOULD YOU SAY THAT THE FEMININE IS THE KEY ELEMENT FOR THE NEW SPIRITUALITY OF OUR PLANET?

ZM - Every human being is partially male and partially female. The female aspect of our make up is related to our intuition, to understanding, to listening, to knowing what each situation benefits from. Our male aspect is rational, analytic, but also has flashes of wisdom. Together, wisdom and understanding produce knowledge. Women or the mother aspect in human beings, are born with extra 'Binah', the Hebrew word used in Kabbalah that means understanding, making a woman a better vessel in general for the intuitive arts overall. But every human being has spent life times as a man, and others as a female. The work of each person is to achieve self-mastery, which means to combine the male and female, rational and intuitive, giving and receiving aspects of our selves. That our polar nature is made of male and female tells us, that a person at

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