

## SHORT STORY

Richard Spencer who recently came to live in Fortis Green with his artist wife, has a very unusual occupation - he is a practising dream analyst. He has broadcast on Greater London Radio and writes for Woman's Realm. Now he is writing regularly for The Archer. Readers are invited to send in their dreams for interpretation or to consult him directly.

# Dream a little dream

We spend nearly one-third of our lives immersed in the oblivion of sleep, during which our minds feast on a rich kaleidoscope of images and scenes, some impressionable and deeply affecting, others long forgotten. Yet, for all the hours we indulge in dreaming, very few of us spare any time in waking life to distil meaning from dreams to stop to think how much benefit could be derived from dream interpretation.

Dreams were once thought of as visitations, bestowed upon us from the Gods, to set men straight and deter them from the path of vice. Philosophers and writers pored over dreams to wrest the meaning and truth from their magic, secret epicentre. And, before the advent of scientific research, all manner of notions were advanced to account for them. What continued was a sense of respect both for the dream and its pre-eminence in the life of man. Ancient Egyptians and Greeks laboured over their dreams, Jung and Freud devoted their life's work to them and sleep researchers wired people up to machines for a more pragmatic approach to understanding the surreal landscape of dreams. Nowadays, alas, only small tribal cultures like the American Indians and the Senoi in Malaysia defer to their dreams, as of old. What they gain, and we lose, is a sense of unparalleled insight and harmony. The Senoi are renowned for having no recorded incidences of neurosis, psychosis or violence, and these facts are not pure coincidences - they are the by-products of remaining in touch with the dream.

Dreams have had such profound effects over cultures and individuals (Hitler, Coleridge, Darwin, Einstein to name but a few) as to have swayed men and their societies into collective change. Many of the greater feats of mankind: from literary masterpieces to the invention of the sewing machine would not have been possible without individuals reading and nurturing their dream-life.

### Sleep: perchance...

Research conducted into dreams in the last fifty years, pioneered by Aserinsky and Kleitman in 1953, has shown that the purpose of sleep is to dream, NOT to rest the mind. Our dreams become the guardian of sleep and, more importantly, they secure our ability to function and grow as human beings. They are, in short, the sine qua non of mental and

psychological vitality.

The dream is far more than just the freewheeling of the mind over daily events. It is a vital, deeply complex activity wherein the mind processes data and information, sifts facts from noise and generally tries to organise thoughts and feelings into a more coherent pattern. Our dreams are the valiant efforts made by the unconscious to regulate and restore psychological equilibrium. Beyond this, they provide a unique tool to understanding and mapping the psyche; they are the very source with which man can best glimpse the hinterland of his past and, potentially, future.

### Lay me down

The dream also reveals our true, core selves, the one often enough buried beneath years of acquired social and emotional defence skeins. The dream peels back the masks we wear and opens us up to full exposure, stripped of behavioural camouflage. If we take note of the contents of our dreams we have the infinite capacity to change, grow and adapt into more self-aware and dynamic human beings. As a piece of commentary from the depths of our innermost being, the dream is an unassailable statement leading us into self-knowledge and personal truth.

Without the dream, we would lose our bearings in life and plunge into chaos. The dream and its riches shield us from the delusions our conscious minds put in our path. Consciousness is the ally of treachery, the dream is befriender of truth. We could do with taking lessons from the quiet wisdom of our dreams, for contained within them is the germinal seed of development: personally and globally. The wise man should read his dreams for self-knowledge and improvement. By doing so mankind is offered chances to heal, grow and fulfil itself on an unprecedented scale.

RICHARD SPENCER IS AVAILABLE ON 883 2436.



Dreams... by artist Zuhul Purla, wife of Richard Spencer.

## ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

## Kathakali - Indian Drama

by Len Willcocks

**Kathakali is an expressive mixture of Indian dance, drama and music which re-enacts Hindu epics, where good dramatically prevails over the forces of evil.**

These performances, transformed into classical art by actors trained in the martial art of

Kalariapagyattu, will be coming to Barnet. The opening night of a national tour will be at the Old Bull Arts Centre, 68 High Street, Barnet on the 19th September at 7:30pm.

It will be a rare opportunity for the public to see the full Kathakali Troupe in this country. The troupe includes

the award-winning actor, Kalamandalam Gopi.

Tickets for this fascinating evening of Eastern culture and tradition are available from the Old Bull Arts Centre on 0181-449 0048.

Ticket prices are £6.00 for adults and £4.00 concessions.

## Risk a verse

**The annual Barnet Open Poetry competition has a new category this year for Comedy to be judged by John Hegley, best-selling hardback poet in recent years. John's poems appear regularly in The Guardian. He asks for poems of 15 lines only, and is seeking "the poetry of wit".**

In the other categories, the limit is 35 lines. General poems will be judged by Elaine Feinstein, poet and novelist; Katherine Gallagher will again judge the 7-12s and 12-16s; and Edward Blishen the over-60s.

The closing date for the competition is 18th October, and there are prizes of over £400. Entrants who are resident in the Borough of Barnet pay half fees.

Entry forms are in Borough libraries, or send an SAE to Barnet Borough Arts Council, c/o All Saints Arts Centre, 122 Oakleigh Road North, London N20 9EZ. Telephone enquiries for the competition to 0181-446 7989.

## Up the wall

Currently on display at the 'Tate' of East Finchley, Chorak, on the High Road, is a selection of paintings by Collin Selley.

The paintings divide into a curious mix between figurative abstraction, quasi-Expressionism and Art-school portraiture. The disparate combination splashes colour and contrast onto the walls of Chorak making for an un-

sual side-serving with your coffee and cake.

Selley lives in South London but works in East Finchley and is fully supportive of the idea of bringing Art into the domain of everyday life, by exhibiting in local shops and cafés.

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