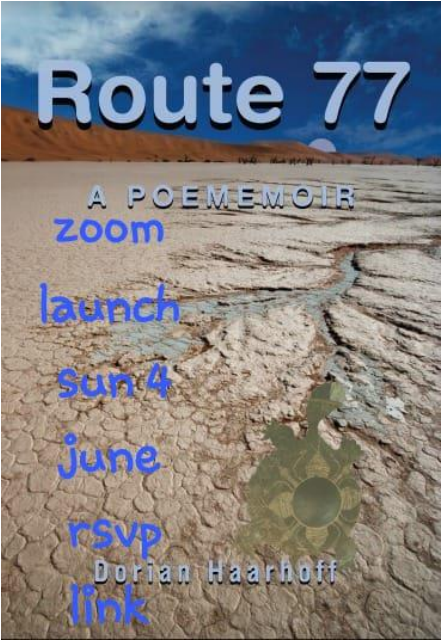




Creative Wordshops
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Writing Letter Dec 2023

re-story, re-create, re-imagine you
 for this letter, a weekly story and ongoing opportunities - dorianhaarhoffblog.co.za



Igno van Niekerk and Tina Konstant (story mates) kindly recorded the zoom launch. Here tis.
https://mega.nz/file/rg9xhDJa#TTfWT8w-HttuLtfFbUGH_in-8_LX18fIBtzE3dDaJiI

Dear writer, storyteller, reader, lover of words, images, silences...
 Thank you for those who have subscribed to the monthly letter (R240 per annum) I cherish your support. You can still do so if you wish. The letter remains open to all.

A Meister Eckhardt Meditation
Become aware of what is in you. Announce it, pronounce it, produce it, and give birth to it.
 (Eckhart)



This month I found for R10 this book (2012). Living in rural Ireland, James Bremner, interested in spirituality, mysticism and philosophy, teaches creative writing. The title plays off Eckhart Tolle's *The Power of Now: A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment* (2004). The shoulders of the giants on which Bremner stands include Thoreau, Dame Julian of Norwich, Jung, Hildegard von Bingen, William Blake, Rumi, Krishnamurthi and Diogenes. (I based a Saturday morning story for 5 Nov on Diogenes. What's app me if you wish to receive the stories)

I began thinking of my giants of the past and Meister Eckhart (c. 1260 - c. 1328) suddenly knocked on my door. This letter is about how I have experienced him, partly filtered through Matthew

Fox's, creation spirituality. Many others have also brought him alive. Both Meister Eckhart and Matthew Fox fell foul of the Catholic Church. One accused of heresy, although it seems he died before trial, and the other excommunicated. This is Eckhart's 3rd person response -*If his accusers charge Eckhart with heresy, then he charges them with stupidity.*



It seems that the 1200s-1300s was quite a period. Marie de France (see illumination) was a multilingual poet and translator, credited with establishing the chivalric literature genre. Meister Eckhart was a boy when Rumi was poeming and an adult when Hafiz was alive. And as Eckhart says, while theologians argue a different language, Mystics talk the same tongue.

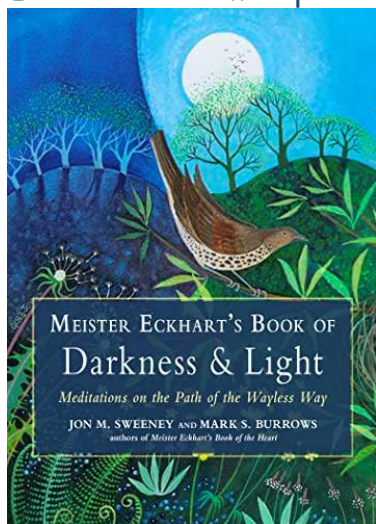
So many poets over the next centuries echo his insights. Here is a sprinkling of Eckhart that sing and speak down the centuries. These quotes wallpaper the body brain and the inside skin to filter and breathe presence into the world and encourage us to see through a particular colouring.

Eckhart contemplates *Isness is God. Every creature is a word of God and is a book about God. Gratitude is king. If the only prayer you ever say in your whole life is "thank you," it will suffice.*

He talks of the aristocracy of the soul which D H. Lawrence echoes - *the only aristocracy is the aristocracy of consciousness.* Eckhart celebrates the imagination *when the soul wants to move she creates an image ahead of itself and steps into the image.* This touches on the life of the imagination. What of the idea of God is the final obstacle to God? His *The eye with which I see God is the same eye with which God sees me,* talks to David Whyte's *When your eyes are tired. The world is tired, too.* Eckhardt might have approved of JC Squire writing during the First World War:

God heard the embattled nations sing and shout
"Gott strafe England" and "God save the King!"
God this, God that, and God the other thing -
"Good God!" said God, "I've got my work cut out!"

Eckhardt talks metaphorically, which perhaps is the only way mystics talk because



this takes us to the edge where language breaks down, and we approach the great silence, of which he often speaks. *One must learn an inner solitude, wherever one may be. I need to be silent for a while. Worlds are forming in my heart.* I love his hinge metaphor. *The outward man is the swinging door; the inner man is the still hinge.*

Like the Sufi Hafiz who hears God laughing, Meister Eckhardt proclaims *My Lord told me a joke. And seeing Him laugh has done more for me than any scripture I will ever read. What of When God laughs at the soul and the soul laughs back at God, the persons of the Trinity are begotten. When the Father laughs at the Son and the Son laughs back at the Father, that laughter gives pleasure, that pleasure gives joy, that joy gives love, and that love is the Holy Spirit.*

Here's another: *God is an underground river that nobody can stop and nobody can dam.* Years ago, in recollecting a childhood question, I responded:

The Grounding of God

in answer to my 'where is..?'"
the priest intoned that
God resides somewhere
above the bright blue.
winds of heaven blow gently.
but where? where was this place,
sans geography and address?

the mystics must have been
in search of landscape
for they embedded God
as an underground river
that no one can dam.

this river flows its tides
through climate change, rain
air bubble and turning earth,
under-breath, under-skin,
bringing God home.

So here's to the giants in our lives, who raise our spiritual IQ. Who dive beneath our skins and flow in our blood streams: *A human being has so many skins inside, covering the depths of the heart. We know so many things, but we don't know ourselves. Why, thirty or forty skins or hides, as thick and hard as an ox's or bear's, cover the soul. Go into your own ground and learn to know yourself there.*

We can, with Meister Eckhart, see beyond the moment in celebrating the present moment: *Time is what keeps the light from reaching us. There is no greater obstacle to God than time.*

I leave you with his affirmation quoted at the beginning: *Become aware of what is in you. Announce it, pronounce it, produce it, and give birth to it.*

Dorian

Writing Retreat Radar Summer 2023/4

detailed flyers on request

1. Wake up to Beginnings 2024 A Collage & Writing Storyshop

Pringle Bay Wed 3 Jan 2023 10.00 - 13.00 R300

I said to the man who stood at the gates of the year "Give me a light that I might step safely into the unknown. (Minnie Haskins)

In this wordshop we search for images to guide us through the coming year.

A collage (story or vision board) is a lamp that sheds light along our path.

2. Magic Carpet Writers (Somerset West)

Our ongoing monthly writeaway

Next sessions: Wed 29 Nov & 31 Jan 6.30-9.30 p.m. R170 per session

Be part of a fun-loving supportive thinking/being group of aspirant writers.

3. the 4th Write away in Pringle Bay

2-4 Feb only 8 places R900

And in between, one-on-one mentoring. You wearing one sandal, I the other.