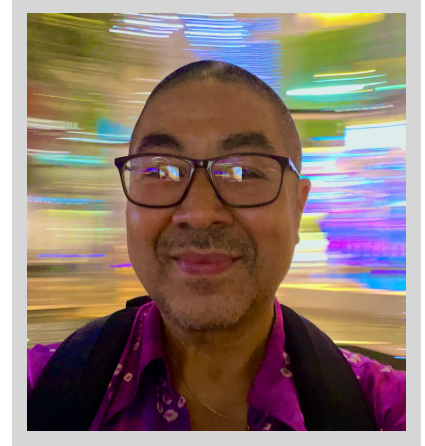


MASSIVE MISSIVE MAXIMUS: PART I

Dear friends, colleagues, supporters, family members, and loved ones,

Introduction

For the sake of jocularly (because we all need more opportunities to smile these days) here is an offering with the deliberately oversized title of **Massive Missive Maximus**. It was supposed to have gone out in December 2023, or at the latest, the middle of January 2024, and by mentioning this, I am perhaps not suggesting that maybe its size is not an excuse for its lateness.



It is hoped that **Massive Missive Maximus** amounts to a fun way to enumerate and share noteworthy creative endeavours of 2023, and to comment on them, and of course, to muse on life in general, in a format that takes its cue from the company e-blast but ends up swollen to an monstrous form and proportion, one that perhaps ends up scaring the reader off for good (“that’s it for me Tribal Crackling Wind!!!...far too voluminous for your own good, for Pete’s sake!!!”)

Admittedly, this is a full-bodied expression of muchness-for-its-own-sake-as-a-work-of-art, with a distinctly second-place intention of hoping to beguile anyone to actually want to read and view everything. A suggestion is that it can perhaps be treated like a big buffet, noted for its volume and variety, but prohibitive as a proposal to consume everything....but who knows?

Now, finally, in mid-March 2024, through many iterations and drafts, I have decided to restrain myself to keeping this information to nearly continuous point-form form, nevertheless, willing to endeavour making this a creative restriction that will possibly yield something expressive, telling, engaging, or even eloquent....let’s see. Also, this Massive Missive Maximus is an early iteration of sections of a new book I am creating about an artist’s late-life musings on the integration of creativity, spirituality and living.

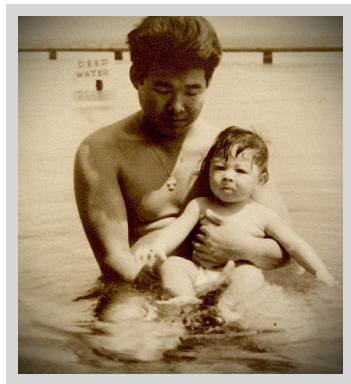
The reason for all of these shifts and a protracted process, is because time and circumstances have thwarted my original, (even more (!)) robust ambition. New imperatives have superseded old ones, and I must respond to the moment and the vibes, or risk missing timely opportunities and signs put before me.



Photo by Rasy Hul

So, this is what I am thinking/feeling now, and the currents which I find myself being carried by:

Like others at my age in life - I am 61 years old - the attention towards my parents and plans for coordinating my life with theirs in a collective and collaborative venture, has moved increasingly into the foreground, from previously being set distinctly in the background. My father has just turned 89! This shift is also emblematic of many other changes in life, and so therefore, the art work is also different than in previous decades.



In my senior years as a professional artist, there seems to be a more hefty 'n hearty wrestling between/amongst these six (and counting) things:

- 1) My world-view as a human being/artist regarding the integration of life and art - the unity of living life and evincing a state of soulful creativity.
- 2) My duties as a publicly funded arts company bound to demonstrate a good business agenda by marketing and deriving capital returns on my creative output.
- 3) My predilection and personal imperative to share widely all of what I have to offer as a creative being, feeling that in these times, and according to why I am here, I must put as much out there as I can, regardless of how big or small the forum, how many souls will come into contact with it, without it necessarily being dictated by its marketability within the current culture and conditions, and without it being overcome or hung-up by a seeming diminishment of agency within a changeful and sometimes capricious societal paradigm based on prevailing taste and values.



Photo by Rasy Hul

4) My sense of a life-consciously-lived, as a work of art, with many artistic artefacts, big and small, grand and intimate, that are dropped in a regular fashion, into this world, detected and undetected, visible and unseen, heard and silent, that collectively contribute to the profuse multitudinousness of the over-arching work of art.

5) The post Covid-19 pandemic phenomenon of how we consume cultural products, and set out to experience art, and seek professional and otherwise forums to showcase and share our creative works to others.

6) Further related to the epoch of the pandemic: its protracted and often solitudinous reflection on life, experienced by many during lockdowns, has engendered a mass turnover of leadership positions in dance organizations in Toronto, and an almost sector-wide shift in an as-yet-formed performance culture ecology, characterized by era-defining institutions going away or going through some kind of deep transformation. This has undeniable implications for me individually and as a leader of a performing arts entity in Toronto, basically in the way that I/we must learn to respond to ways of creating/producing that were previously developed and honed for over 40 years of working within the once familiar, but now former ecology.

Featured Works

Now that I have set this context, please enjoy a 13-minute excerpted video presentation of the premiere of my last major work *trillionth i*.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW](#)





Thoughts about trillionth i

An international work for Canadian, Cambodian and Mexican artists, with a live band of 6 musicians and 9 dancers, which we self-produced at Harbourfront Centre in Toronto. The rare decision for us to self-produce was based on our best option to birth an overdue baby, dictated by the timing and vicissitudes of the pandemic.

A milestone for me in 2 important ways:

1) A culmination of my work creating real ritual performance (not a representation of ritual) the journey which began in my first year of visual arts training at York University in 1980, when I was shown Margaret Mead's film 'Trance and Dance in Bali' (filmed in the late 1930's), and so, the subsequent 44 years have borne out how this seminal event has influenced my trajectory as an artist. For trillionth i, I was gratified to receive this ripening opportunity of asking the artists to truly channel their special states in performance in order to energetically bring about something better for themselves, for the audience, for all, explicitly as part of their work and as deeply as possible, as ritual specialists, beyond their training and experiences as western art performance interpreters. For this reason, a large proportion of the cast were senior artists whose maturity facilitated this mission, and the Cambodian artists, though younger, were able to approach it based on the spiritual components of their classical training in sacred Khmer dance and music.

2) This was my last large-scale stage work for an international cast and live musicians. I brought to a close my decades-long efforts with this form and scale because frankly it is too much exertion for me now, with multi-tasking as composer, choreographer, director, designer, administrator, travel agent etc. Importantly, I don't feel like I am missing out on anything by this relinquishment, and the inner-potency of the work in general can continue to be contained in the most intimate or small-scale forces of future work. Another reason is the low feasibility of these large scale works I create, in terms of finding presenters and establishing touring etc. It appears that the work might be outside of the parameters of the mandates and desires of the market domestically and internationally.

For the premiere, because it was the beginning of summer with many people out of town, and also pride weekend in Toronto, we did not get to share our performances with as many people as we had hoped. To memorialize the extraordinary energy in the house with artists and audience, and once more to celebrate this personal milestone for me, of which I am immensely proud, I take this opportunity to ask for your indulgence, as I share a collection of unsolicited (except for two) reactions to the performances.

"Last night in Toronto I attended this entirely mesmerizing, deeply beautiful, uncanny in the way ritual is uncanny, dark and tender in the way ritual is dark and tender, dance and music performance, a new large work by choreographer / composer Peter Chin...Highly recommended!"
- Gary Barwin

"I was so happy to have seen your exquisite work, which I think is a real oeuvre, a masterpiece. I could not believe how musicians and dancers created such a tapestry together and wrapped me up in a transformative journey. I didn't have enough eyes to see it all!! It is a performance to remember."
- Cylla von Tiedemann

"So glad I could be there! It was amazing!!! congratulations to all!" - Joyce Zeamans

"Congrats on a mesmerizing performance and sound. Beauty all around." - Santee Smith

"The show was deeply moving... An all-star cast of revered artists being together, being with us, moving through, working through, moving and working us through the visible and invisible... Cathy [Gordon] and I talked about how much we loved the way you opened the show: the musical way you combine speech, silence, gesture, and stillness in this exquisite performance of arrival and presence. You were opening up portals for us to enter. Preparing us for transmission. Seeing Katherine on stage absorbing or receiving the transmission too was extraordinary. Such an interesting choice. Subtle and deep offerings. Thank you for the wisdoms and gifts you've shared." - Helen Yung

"Thank you again for your beautiful masterpiece on Saturday! I felt again what I told you once, that you made a living mandala that included us all (made a mandala out of our lives is how I said it before.)" - Kevin Loffree

"You all made magic. Congratulations." - Kenny Pearl

I felt very lucky to be there at trillionth i. The show was very magical and transporting for me and it was amazing to get to see it. -
Henry Mak

*"A masterpiece.
The composition and musicians are the heart of
trillionth i
The meditator sitting on her chair, the soul of
trillionth i
The dancers, electric in movement and voice, the
nervous system of trillionth i"*
- Joanna McIntyre

"Carolyn and I, and our friend Elspeth, all enthusiastically agreed that trillionth i was brilliant. Music, movement, everything. Nice! Thanks!"
- Alan Davis

"Peter, it's the most beautiful thing I have ever seen..." -

Linda Cimini-Baker

"I saw your show last Friday and it was amazing! Those musicians were stunning! Loved it! I thought it was the best show I've seen in a very long time. It was magical. I found it so mesmerizing." - Annette Mangaard

"In the lobby, I was saying how embodied you were, giving the opening speech. How appropriate it was for you to do that! How considered and theatrical it was! Ok... let me gather myself & write something... Peter, I wanted to tell you how the work has stayed with me. Starting with your introduction, which set the tone, demonstrated your incredible embodiment of gesture and meaning; how this meaning continued to be felt throughout the piece with the brilliant integration of the musicians (yourself being one) with the dancers, creating an authentic dialogue between music and dance. As an audience member, I could feel the deep listening occurring, as the leaders changed from one moment/movement to the next, evoking a profound experience of the cause/effect that every being in our universe has on one another. The decades of care & dedication to your craft was felt. This is mastery.....I'm so happy to share that with you, and let the world know it!!" - Cathy Gordon

"This was truly a one-of-a-kind ritual performance, made special by the refined skills and commitment of all 14 artists concerned. It was a highlight of my half century + of performing in public. Will we ever be challenged and rise to it collectively like this again?" - Andrew Timar

*What a magical piece and marvellous cast of dancers and musicians. Some I've known for 40 years; others are new to me — each performer revealing hidden depths, stirring up new mysteries. I continue to feel nourished and happy when I think of this beautiful work. Thank you.
Thank you. - Holly Small*

"It was good to experience your extraordinary creation! How many superlatives one could line up in an attempt to describe the experience! I have a lot of words at my disposal but I fear they would fall short." - Grant Jahnke

"Tribal Crackling Wind, Peter Chin A.D.'s powerful multi-generational, multinational trillionth i is billed as Peter Chin's "last major work." It explores "our essential oneness" and our search for "a better world." It is just as thoughtful, beautiful and deep as Peter's work has always been these past 30 years. Kudos to the amazing international combo of dancers and musicians likely never to be seen together on the same stage again. It was such a treat to see performers Marina Acevedo, Jennifer Dahl, Katherine Duncanson, Bonnie Kim, Carlos Rivera Martínez, Andrea Nann and Heidi Strauss all in the same piece as I have publicized or worked with each of them in some show or another over the years; all were looking so fine! And the musicians were just as special - 4 Cambodians along with Peter Chin and Andrew Timar." - Diane Wienrib



And now two works from our past which have had a re-engagement, a revitalization, a renewal in 2023-2024 for three reasons (among others):

We are certainly not a repertory dance company in the old-school western sense! But the idea of repertory, which allows an artist to revisit past work is something that holds intrigue and value for me. The value, I think, is in the investigation of the potential continuum of vision, thematic predilection, and world-view that might be found in works that are from the past, that are discovered to be still relevant to the creator now, and still relevant to the spirit of the present times in general. Yes, I think this might be reassuring, even edifying for an individual creator, but the point is more that it helps me to really focus on what is core, what is essential, what it is I really want to emanate out into the world.

As a creator of ephemera, as in performances that evaporate in the passage of time, with only memory, and documentation left behind, it is a satisfying pleasure to bring back old work for a second reconsideration, and to allow that work to live again in the present moment, although altered and re-fashioned somehow so that it can connect with the here and now.

The endeavour of building up layers of meaning over time, upon an original work, so that the new treatments and creative impositions make new meaning with the older layers to speak of something new, with the possibility of something pleasingly unanticipated; this creation of palimpsest is something that I find very rewarding.





Two Jamaicans Sit Outside

I have written a poem inspired by this image below from our 2016 film which examined the state of being Jamaican in an expansive and transcendent way. Identity, cultural and beyond, has been a constant theme that has engaged me and my work, and because I am a Jamaican, much of my focus has been on what that means. Veerle Poupeye at the time of this image was the Executive Director of the National Gallery of Jamaica. She is an esteemed authority on Caribbean art and a published author on the subject. She is also a naturalized Jamaican.



Photo still from the film 'Jamaican' (2016) by Peter Chin and Jeremy Mimmagh. Featured are Veerle Poupeye and Peter Chin, Pegasus Hotel parking lot, Kingston Jamaica.

Two Jamaicans Sit Outside

By Peter Chin, January 2024

two Jamaicans sit outside
in the parking lot
in tacit dialogue with each other
perhaps about their difference
differences from each other yes
but mostly as distinct from the kind of Jamaican
established on the inside

they are parked there for the time being
while the inside and the outside
work out what the meaning of inside and outside is
with the evolutionary probability
hanging in the ether
that what they are really searching for
is a continuum between two points
called inside
and inside
which despite logic
is not pointless
since these two insides do not cancel-out each other

nevertheless, at the moment
these two Jamaicans' disposition
sitting outside
in the parking lot
is sometimes imposed from outside of themselves
by the estab/linside/shment
implicitly and at times
explicitly
though that restrictiveness ends up being
a small matter
so
for the time being
there they sit
grounded
eyes open
in the glare of prosaic noon
in this plain parking lot

the scene seems static
but vibrates with
inner movement of muted momentousness
even festooned
by a low slung chain
almost completely ineffectual
suggesting a more ceremonial role
of symbolic separation
inviting a ritual of transgressive gesticulation
by stepping over it
either way
to connect with these two
Jamaicans sitting outside
in the parking lot
is a feat feasibly fraught
yet again hindered
by a speed bump
another erected barrier
painted in alarming and alternating
yellow
and
white
stripes
underlining
in a low grade way
that this is a zone
of perhaps...
uncertainty...but
certainly! careful consideration

yet in the light of ongoing investigation
of what is true
of what is truth
and what is real
and what is really true
of what is Jamaican
and
what is Jamaican and
what is Jamaican
and what is Jamaican
and all points
in
between
for these two Jamaicans sitting outside
this is sometimes their
preferred parking positions providing pan perspectives
for manoeuvring
between
auto-placing themselves
on the so-determined inside
then roving
to the so-called outside
of other domains
or safe harbours
of cultural touchstones
they still claim or maintain
and all points in-between
since being Jamaican does not cancel out
the other

the macro-marvellous view
of this parking lot
(in Jamaica)
is seen (known)
from a supra-elevated locus
through the slowly
advancing
in-exorable and
sooooo smoooooooooth goooogle map zooom-in
from the imagined
(in-trinsically known)
limitlessness of
outer
s p a c e

a long (the) way
breath-taking
in
the yawning vista
of space
to see such array
the detail!

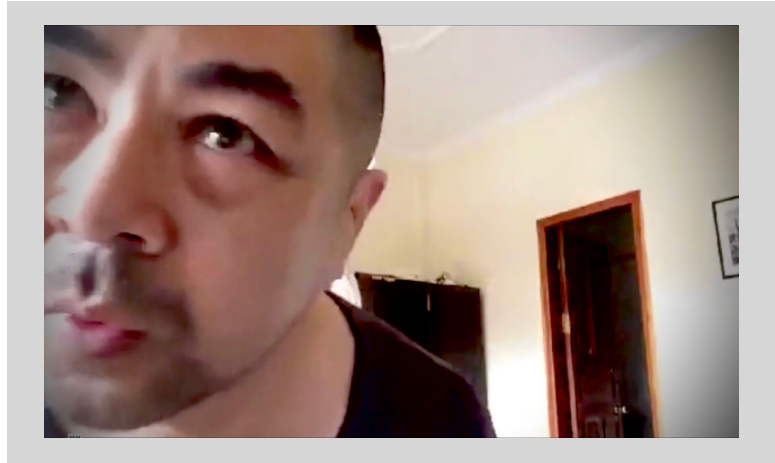
such difference of all
distinctiveness in all
diversity to all
is everything yet unified
in this exhilarating approach
in this sensation of astral - p r o j e c t i o n
over vast areas of all kinds of things
in-ner
and outer
now honing
in
to a point
to which
ALL and absolutely everything
in
the landing
is pulled down from the heavens
like a colossal spinning funnel
in-to
this dot
this parking lot
now the sacred site
of an oscillating synthesis
of the extraordinary
and the mundane
a shimmering mixture
of flatness
and transcendence
and all degrees in-between
for this potentially omnipresent prospect
of two Jamaicans sitting outside
in a parking lot



Photo by Rasy Hul

Flickering Fame Re-dux

In 2015 in a hotel room, I spontaneously shot this dance and did a quick edit of the sequences purely for fun, and to make hay while the the sun of my restless energy, inner Jerry Lewis/Muppets/ wanna-be western contemporary dance maven shone. There was no consideration given to posterity. However, last year, there was resonance and recognition in response to the original video, so in November I was inspired to do a re-edit and new treatment of it. I certainly don't move like that anymore, but the mischievous cadences, disjointed phrasing, and inner goofiness of that way of being in the world, still spoke to me and my inner-life.



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW](#)

Wishing you all everything that is good and limitless blessings and love.

Please look out for Massive Missive Maximus Part II soon!

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Rasy Hul'.