["Our New Mythology"](#) - A Conversation about Archetypes and Sound Myths with [Willi Paul](#) by [Zeljko McMullen](#)

I recently had the pleasure of meeting a very unique individual named Willi Paul when I responded to a public post he made looking for someone to do an audio collage for his sound myths project. Immediately on seeing the post, I knew that this was not going to be an ordinary gig. Before even hearing back from him about my proposal, I had spent a good amount of time digging into his vast world of permaculture, mythology, and multimedia projects on his website. I had to say I was taken aback by many of the things I read. Once I finally heard back from Mr. Paul, our dialog concerning his Sound Myth project was fairly in depth. As we continued a discourse even after the completion of our initial work together, I asked Mr. Paul to have a more formal conversation that we could share, as part of my artistic practice involves in depth conversations with various thinkers and doers. - Z

Recent Archetype and Sound Myth Work by Willi -

["Sound Myth - journey 1"](#)

["Sound Myth - Journey 2"](#)

["SAVANNA - Sound Myth #3" - Video + Sound Storyboard](#)

["Last Song @ Black Hole Lodge - Sound Journey #4" - Sonic-Storyboard & Video](#)

[FAKE MUSIC : "HEX" : PLANETSHIFTER.COM](#)

["mythbrain" self-portrait by willi paul" - dedicated to the joseph campbell foundation](#)

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Z - ARCHETYPE - definition: 1. the original pattern or model from which all things of the same kind are copied or on which they are based; a model or first form; prototype. 2. (in Jungian psychology) a collectively inherited unconscious idea, pattern of thought, image, etc., universally present in individual psyches. Willi, your sound myth series is an interesting take on the concept of archetype, and addresses how our sense of sound is perhaps the least commonly discussed trigger of archetypal memory. What was your original introduction to the concept of "archetype"?

WOX - The only sticky definition for archetypes that I always use is this one:

"According to Jungian approach of psychology, some highly developed elements of the collective unconscious are called 'archetypes'. Carl Jung developed an understanding of archetypes as universal, archaic patterns and images that derive from the collective unconscious and are the psychic counterpart of instinct. They are autonomous and hidden forms which are transformed once they enter consciousness and are given particular expression by individuals and their cultures. Being unconscious, the existence of archetypes can only be deduced indirectly by examining behavior, images, art, myths, religions, or dreams. They are inherited potentials which are actualized when they enter consciousness as images or manifest in behavior on interaction with the outside world."

The key stone work for my exploration of archetypes is this piece:

"Permaculture, Carl Jung and the New Archetypes"

This insight produced later work, including:

"Scenario Mapping for New Myths"- Transitionites / Permaculturists, Survivalists and Technologists

"Geo-Political Archetypes vs. Nature-Sound Archetypes"

My work has often been focused at the what I call the "conscious - unconscious border." See this piece as one example: "Pre-Mythic Symbols and Archetypes" - Biomimicry and the Hunters and Gatherers - Lecture Outline." My gut tells me that fear especially resides here and that real change can occur here. My vision for new archetypes and Permaculture, Transition and the New Mythology lives in this border.

Z - Arthur C Clarke - "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic."

When I think of human renditions of sound myths, I think of chant, mantras, liturgical prayer, etc. Sounds that could be made by one group of people in a given space. One of the stunning new abilities in sound creation is made through the recording. Traveling to far away and distant places to capture the sonic resonance there. Blending different spaces and places together, one can arrive at a new sound myth that wasn't possible before these technologies came into being. Do you think that this new technology is a fulfillment of man attaining semi "magical" or divine powers?

WOX - Not sure that I have either magical or divine powers! My vision isn't technology; my vision is about fear, hope, sacred and survival. There are multiple sources of sound samples to fetch (including Freesound.org and Youtube.com/audiolibrary/soundeffect), some of which can be transformed into sound archetypes with the support of images and the imaginations of the artists and audience. I am intrigued by the idea that myth can be a technology.

Z - That's quite interesting to think of mythology as a technology, I've never considered that before. In your work: "Mythology is Technology: The MythoTechnics Vision" you make a particularly interesting point about language not being a barrier in the creation of modern myths. Your sound myths are a prime example of this, as there is no language necessary in interpreting the sounds used in your audio journey. Almost anyone who listens to these sounds can have a direct emotional response, perhaps even more universally so than music. How would you compare your sound myths to music?

WOX - I am an agitator; a soul screaming thru the darkness of a lost human evolution. There is no music left here just car breaks, sirens and noise.

Z - And curious if you are interested in a response to them where you do not specifically designate them as "audio maps"?

WOX - It could be that your audio maps are my [journey maps](#)?

Z - Are you interested in any comparisons to the canon of avant-garde music - Italian Futurism, Musique concrete, etc. or do you prefer to keep it in the myth / symbolism world. For example: Luigi Russolo in his 1913 manifesto, L'Arte dei Rumori (The Art of Noises) argued that the history of music, from primitive races through to 19th-century harmonic sophistication, was a progression that went naturally from ancient silence to modern noise: "The limited circle of pure sounds must be broken, and the infinite variety of 'noise-sound' conquered." Is this a step in the wrong direction for questioning?

WOX - Can we agree that noise (from Ted Nugent's guitar or a road ragin' Chevy) are not fueled by archetypes. But are you familiar with how "rewilding" works tribal music? The sounds from [Steve Tibbetts](#)? Or the beast that chants inside [John Cage](#)?

Z - When I first became aware of your work, I initially thought of it in comparison to the technique of the cut-up. "Cut-up" is performed by taking a finished and fully linear text and cutting it in pieces with a few or single words on each piece. The resulting pieces are then rearranged into a new text. Are you familiar with Brion Gysin and William S Burroughs's notion of the cut-up? This eventually branched out into sound, photography, video etc. Did you have their work in mind when you conceived of your Sound Myth project? Do you see your project as an extension of that type of work? Perhaps elaborating through more realistic sense experiences than say the bards or traveling poets of yesteryear would travel the land sharing stories and experiences from places that "normal" folks couldn't travel to.

WOX - What you refer to as a "cut-up" doesn't sound like the process or the result of my sound myths. There is little arbitrariness to my process. My charge is to help the listener decipher the story on multiple levels. This is a paradox, yes: I want to challenge and explain at the same time. The sound archetypes (with in the journey map) facilitates this journey nicely.

Z - Indeed the process and result of your work and the "cut-ups" technique is different, but I find similarities in the affect as an experiencer. The paradox between challenging and explaining at the same time allows for each viewer to have their own interpretation or reaction to the work, even within the framed scenario in which you stage it. The saying "the map is not the territory" comes to mind. With your sound myths, you present an image that depicts the sound recordings depicted over time. In this sense you are supplementing the archetype with language, but what about those who may come across them that don't speak the language that these descriptions use? Have you experimented with playing these sound myths to individuals without the description of the sounds involved?

WOX - I think it is more accurate to say that I stitch together sounds and sound archetypes in a journey with an over-arching message or experience. Yes, many early examples of my work with sounds came without text. See: ["Sound Art Research Portfolio" -Articles, Research & Tools | Sound Alchemy & Cartoons | New Sound Symbols & Myths. Willi Paul Studio / Planetshifter. com - 2009 - 2017](#)

Z - By bringing sonic memories from different resonant spaces together, cultural representation can be remixed or exchanged. Do you feel that this is a way to help share different culture's fears about impending dangers resulting from not "living with the land"? (Ways of disseminating meditations on universal struggle)

WOX - No - my goal is to build one universal culture with arguably the same universal set of symbols, environmental archetypes, sound archetypes and new myths. We are in the dividing stage and must move to the uniting stage to survive as a race.

Z - Indeed, now perhaps more than ever, our world seems terribly divided. Even our own country seems to have a great deal of turmoil and disjunction. The people controlling the wealth and resources seem to be utilizing the war tactic of divide and conquer, and it appears to be working unfortunately. The current political climate in the US seems to laugh in the face of global warming and the impending dangers that can and are occurring as a result.

In your myth: ["Bay Area Tsunami @ Doomsday Bay, CA. 2025 A.D."](#)you describe a post-tsunami story in which a person who is living in his attic after his house becomes partially submerged in water. This could very well be a thing that happens, and of course has happened in many parts of the world. Near the end of your myth you state, "This situation is not catastrophic because it was predicted. "I thought perhaps this was a poetic tongue-in-cheek emotion when I first read it, but then I more deeply contemplated the idea. How can we be shocked at the things that are happening to the world, knowing full well how horribly we are treating the planet?! It seems as though the population generally thinks that disasters happen to "3rd world countries" and will never happen to "civilized" nations, although it does, and has happened in the US already.

What is your advice to your audience on how they can help unite and move towards a more sustainable relationship with the land and nature to prevent these disasters?

WOX -

Unplug from corporate media
Organize at the local level
Take the permaculture ethics and principles to City Hall and take over the local government
Make all necessary disaster preparations for family and neighborhood
Grow food
Fertilize and empower your own sense of the sacred

Z - Are your sonic descriptions that you post with the sound myths necessary for the experiencer to "get" the sound archetype? Perhaps listing the sound sources gives a little bit of the magic away, or perhaps there is magic in showing what is behind the curtain so to speak!

WOX - As a teacher I value exploring options and alternative explanations to make a point. Sound archetypes are complex so the titles of the sounds help guide the viewer and support the transmutations. I do not support your view that this type of journey making is magic. I am just empowering a powerful tool that can help illustrate the relationship between the subconscious and the conscious - and the possibility of change in human perception and behavior.

I assigned symbols to Permaculture
Alchemy to Transition
Archetypes to New myths
Sounds to the subconscious
Creation to end of the world

Z - The line "creation to end of the world" does though make me think about the idea of "apocalypse" - it actually means revealing or the "end of the world as we know it", and how you and I know the world in this given incarnation, if you believe in those kinds of ideas, is quite reassuring. I want the world to end in the way in which I know it to exist. Right now, such a small fragment of the population owns all of the resources. Half of the world shits in drinkable water while the other half is thirsty. I've read a bunch of variants about statistics in how things would go if we all shared resources equally, and from the lowest common denominator, at least according to my lifestyle and "havingness" - everyone would have a pretty spectacular, and dare I say it, [Garden of Eden](#) experience of the world if we all shared things equally.

WOX - I am referring in part to the multitude of creation myths and apocalyptic groups boiling up and over from our subconscious to our conscious. That we are in a grey zone between the two, with each vision and energy and manifestation fighting the psyche. We need to get off the "design with Nature" fence because in truth we are manipulating Nature with every swale and Food Forest. Until permaculture adopts a sincere global and spiritual foundation, this movement will likely not speak to our crisis and will have a marginal impact

Z - Perhaps the keystone to understanding your sound archetypes is found within your work, "Sound Archetypes and the Four Seasons". In this work you state, "Archetype and Sound Archetype: a constantly recurring symbol, sound or motif in literature, music, painting, or mythology that works at the dream and sub-conscious - conscious boundary (adapted) that drives fears, joys and imagination. Is it a matter of debate as to whether archetypes can be changed (or added) since pre-historic time." Further, in this work, you say you utilize sound in order to call out the Four Seasons. I believe during our very first communication exchange, I related to you that my understanding of sound archetypes related to the classical four elements of nature; earth - pertaining to tilling the land, water - to irrigating the soil, air - the dispersal of seeds and breathe, and fire - the energy of transformation, keeping warm, and renewing soil. I see your new myths as a way of connecting present day consciousness back to these elemental forces. Can you address your thoughts on that topic?

WOX - In the video prelude notes, I also relayed the following ideas:

I believe that archetypes are malleable forces, often era-centric and their interaction can help support the evolution of human values and our experience together. Archetypes are sound segways and emotive connectors. In the [children's video](#), I combine text, visuals and sound to call-out the archetypes of the Four Seasons. Archetypes, including Sound Archetypes, are critical elements in the creation of new stories, rituals, traditions and global Mythology.

This video piece, and the supporting conjectures above, was posted back in 3/2016. "Good grist for the mill", as my sister often exclaims! My current focus is driven by contemporary archetypes.

Z - Speaking of the disconnect between present day society and primitive consciousness, in your work, "Soul Gate: Symbols and Archetypes in the Chaos Era" you discuss the symbols associated with contemporary digital culture and how they pertain to our collective understanding of what these corporations purport to do for us as a society. (i.e. Apple's logo portraying the forbidden apple that Adam and Eve ate in the Garden of Eden that gave them the knowledge of Good and Evil) - can you tell me your thoughts on these corporate logos / symbols and how they perhaps trick us in the same way that the Serpent tricked Eve?

WOX - The study of values and symbols is a complex affair, even for the mythically-inclined. In this investigation, 12 large organizations (see illustration) are analyzed. Names, logos and slogans can have symbolic power. Ask yourself: does the organization practice what it's symbol preaches? Here each organization, whether for-profit or not-for profit, is scrutinized by 6 data points:

Organization, Focus, Slogan/Motto, Symbol Description, Nature Values, and Sacredness

Symbols lie.

But how do you know?

The main psychological message resulting from the data surrounds the unending fight between the capitalists (exploiters) and the protectors (healers). Lockheed Martin, Shell, Monsanto and John Deere all rank low on sacred and high on materialism. It could be argued that often corporate America is pushing cartoon symbols, sloganeering in peaceful tones, but waging war on humans, the environment, or both. The groups fighting them score high on Nature and sacred values.

This symbolic schism is important as we channel modern archetypes in the next section. When a symbol misrepresents your true mission and values, this information can be transmitted and stored in the subconscious through the conscious mind.

Negative values can create toxic symbols that contribute to negative archetypes. And corrupt mythologies. In compassion to instinct (an individual experience), archetypes come from a power source that connects us to pre-human times and beyond and be expressed through the internal dialogue of an artistic encounter or the enjoyment of Nature. Lost or corrupt archetypes break the connection to our shared unconsciousness and ultimately to our souls. What happens when we misrepresent our symbols and archetypes and promote a corrupt consciousness?

Global chaos.

Z - And not to overkill, but with Apple Computers particular challenge and perhaps deception of our consciousness lies within its use of exotic animals to describe its operating systems. Mountain Lion, Jaguar, Snow Leopard, etc. are all animals that it has invoked to describe their systems. All creatures that primitive man would have been quite keen on avoiding. Yet, in their approach, these animal totems are our friends instead of enemies, that help to send our emails, pay our mortgages, become "more knowledgeable" through google searches etc. In your work "Leopard Noise" you investigate the ramifications of anthropomorphism and personification - which are both quite typical human traits - that is to attribute human qualities to non-human entities and even natural forces. In your mind, is there a way to benefit from these technologies while at the same time escaping the traps of becoming slaves to contemporary digital technology?

WOX - Certainly Apple Corp. is not the NRDC! Maybe the animal monikers are their attempt to raise eco-awareness? No doubt we are slaves to the technology now and forever. In my piece, entitled "" Nature VR and the New Mythology- A Critique", I put forward the following digs:

Is Nature VR all hype, with its gadgets and expensive advertisements - economically marginalized? A passing fad?

Nature VR carries with it the absurd belief in a technology age that it will educate, employ, entertain and save us from our own extinction. "Holodecking it," like on Star Trek, is for sale any moment now. Nature VR is prescribed; man-made. It's not about anything new. TechGear are gimmicks. Playing a war game in a goggle is not a challenging or celebratory act. Not a community event. It's just "spend-tech"; an expensive race track version like from our youth where we sat and watched the cars go around and round - until your slot car stopped cold or flew off the track, and we re-started it again.

VR is most often a private, self-driven affair; an artificially-sourced entertainment. We blast through Nature VR in our basement caves as we lust for better guns and higher scores. Can Nature VR battle junkies become story makers - generators of new universal

myths? The current "story" is rigged, pre-set, coded; you only react and pick track A or track D, joy stick-it and then just sit there! Nature VR is not a substitute for SpiritNature. Like screen wall paper, Nature VR is coded, fake, 3D, flat; unresponsive and non-communicable unless you turn on the system. SpiritNature welcomes the outside world and breathes with you. Nature VR is just stream pixels and that darn upgrade.

Z - Beneath all of this codified language, you have a dream and/ or a hope for humanity. Can you explain this hope and dream to me? And also, can you please give more concrete examples of how people can help manifest this?

WOX - My dreams are diminishing saved to a small degree by my wish to revolt, to start a new sacred, myth-based revolution. My reality each day is that humans are losing touch with Nature and are more and more brainwashed by the corporate capitalist elites and their fake communities, masturbationist technologies and online shopping sites.
Climate change is code for extinction of the human race and much of the plants and animals we once cherished. Deep down, there is nothing to manifest, we have only to prepare for the crash ahead - and the death of the American Way in the dawning Chaos Era.

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+ Willi Paul is the Principal of willi paul studio and planetshifter.com. Willi partners with companies and individuals to provide custom contract media services including articles, interviews, edu-videos, roundtables and eWorkshops. He co-develops and expands each clients' creative vision and excels in delivering content in a captivating and authentic way. His target clients are Start-Ups, B-Corps, Incubators and Non-Profit Organizations.

Planetshifter.com is an online community resource, diverse database and outreach network that launched on Earth Day 2009. The site provides a deep database and wealth of information that includes 225 thought leader interviews with leading mythologists, permaculturists and artists, 1700 articles, 20 workshops, 104 New Myths, 38 eBooks and 173 edu-videos. As a globally-connected writer and activist in the Sustainability, Permaculture, Transition, SpiritNature, and New Mythology sectors, Mr. Paul is a visionary for the new global mythologist. Please find him on YouTube, academia.edu, Facebook, LinkedIn and DepthPsychologyAlliance.com.

willipaul1 at gmail.com

+ Zeljko McMullen is an artist, film-maker, composer, and performer. He has released 9 albums of solo and collaborative music. He has recently completed a feature length experimental film based on rituals invoking the 22 Major Arcana of the Tarot called "We Are Fools". He has performed and/or exhibited his artwork throughout North America, Europe, and Asia. He presently lives in the Hudson Valley of Upstate NY.

zeljko at shinkoyo.com