

New Foreword by Paula Marvelly

It is possible to maintain a lifelong interest in Advaita and the philosophy of non-duality without ever really being touched by it, without feeling it at a deep level. Through the intellect one can easily arrive at an understanding of the limitations of the intellect but then if one doesn't take the understanding to the feeling level, one remains standing in front of a closed door.

~ Roy Whenary: *'The Texture of Being'*

How to open the door? Therein lies the question. And before anyone retorts, "there is no door!", as Roy explains so exquisitely within the following pages, if we cannot cross over the threshold - albeit ultimately illusory - from theory into feeling, from platitudes into experience, what ultimately is the point?

Many of us arrive at an impasse whereby we understand the principles of Advaitic theory and yet open awareness remains seemingly beyond our reach. The doorway to a deeper apperception of life is secured fast against us and the harder we try to unlatch the hasps, we are left standing rejected on the porch.

A turning point often comes when we decide to tread a very different path to the one we have been following for most of our adult lives, which may have been predominantly devoted to more traditional approaches to non-duality, for example the formal study of Advaita Vedanta or other mystical traditions such as Sufism, Taoism or Zen.

Perhaps a passion for the cultural arts leads us to the discovery that many artists - painters, musicians, poets - have also succeeded in opening the door by transcending the intellect and delving deep into the silence and stillness of their own hearts through the contemplation and practice of their respective crafts.

Indeed, by embracing emotions inspired by beauty in its myriad expressions of colour and sound and locution, creativity can similarly offer an alternative pathway to steeping in universal consciousness. As the German philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer, states in his immortal tract, *The World as Will and Representation*:

... aesthetic pleasure in the beautiful consists, to a large extent, in the fact that, when we enter the state of pure contemplation, we are raised for the moment above all willing, above all desires and cares; we are, so to speak, rid of ourselves.

- Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, Vol. I, § 68

Accomplished composer, photographer, poet, and, not least, dearest friend, Roy Whenary has devoted much of his life to the exploration of beauty, truth and art. His polymathic abilities have opened not only his own heart but also the inner lives of those who engage with his work. Indeed, *The Texture of Being*, is a profound meditation on the nature of open awareness and how it is possible to access the chambers of our innermost self.

More and more, it is realized that teachers and gurus are not the only ones to hold the keys to unlocking reality; the role of the artist in our society is to communicate the very deepest feeling of reality, the profoundest experience of the sublime.

Roy is one of those rare souls who through his aesthetic endeavours inspires within us the courage to open the door.

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