

## DIGGING

Digging gives my spirit rest from  
Thinking, feeling's anxious loud drum.  
Sharpen shovel on the grindwheel,  
Test edge's bead with finger's feel.

Push the shovel into earth's earth;  
Resistance shows my body's worth.  
Lever out what's been there eons;  
Lift earth up like countless peons.

Pile it in the wheelbarrow waiting;  
Lift it without hesitating.  
Struggle with the wheelbarrow's handles;  
Think of all life's empty scandals.

Inane rumors, turpitude vain,  
Empty compared to digging's pain.  
Wrestle barrow, dump this dirt there,  
Sweat runs down from dripping hair.

Digging clears the mind from its dirts,  
Makes my heart pump blood 'till it hurts.  
Skyscrapers, tombs, and pyramids—  
All rest on dirt, all lives undid.

*July 2007 excavating for the fountain*

## MEN WORKING

There are few men with whom I've worked  
Who love the challenge, never shirked  
The impulse to create anew,  
Creation that our wills pursue.

Be it tiny— jewelry, drawing,  
Share a vision, languor thawing.  
Often large scale— metal, concrete,  
Timbers, fittings, four-by-eight sheet.

Tools that in their boxes linger  
Come to life because our fingers  
Give them purpose, drive, direction,  
As we wield them with reflection.

Imagine, sketching, measure thrice,  
Construct a jig to be precise  
That does what it's supposed to do:  
Patterns that the world subdue.

Rolled up our sleeves, moved step-by-step,  
Dismissed the fear with thorough prep,  
With humble guidance, mastery, joy,  
Each other's skill, our plans deploy.

We moved ahead, pushed through the doubts,  
Maintained the goal, with jokes and shouts.  
Suggestions offered, tips and nods.  
Creation is the gift of gods.

I oft' recall these men with heart,  
When on a project I depart,  
Their spirits move within my hands  
Although they've gone to distant lands.

Great Spirit, move our minds to make  
The things with which our lives partake.  
These men, so few, so strong, so dear...  
Their work is art in God's rare sphere.

## THE FOUR KINDS OF WORK

There is work to do. Paint fades on the drying wooden beams and must be reapplied, vines shrivel to the first frost and must be gathered and burned, trees pruned and the prunings carried to the fire, floors mopped, toilets cleaned, bedding washed and replaced, windows sparkled clean, food gathered and cooked, dishes washed and counters cleared.

There is always good work to do where there are people.

There is other work to do, the work of the mind, the training in the culture's thought, rule, mistakes, and there is the thinking outside the culture, and the precision of if this is that then that must be this, the embracing of the dissonance that flowers into encompassing understanding, the precision of the wording that leads one into distant lands. The work of the mind is the search for clarity.

There is the hidden work of the spirit, the identification of the symbols, finding the inner referents in those symbols, the creation of the universal language with those symbols, the speaking and listening with the language, the letting go of the language, then the concourse with the ultimate unconscious of the language. The work of the spirit is ascension to wordless center of experience and phenomena.

There is, finally, the deepest work of the feeling world, the I-feel and the You-feel, the acceptance of the We-feel, the paying attention to and the husbanding of the delicate and bold feeling, the moving toward and the following, and the letting go of fear that the feeling world is not a world of work but of illusion, for the cosmos *is* a feeling cosmos. The work of feeling is to plunge deeply into feeling.