

CobaltSaffron

A FREE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Views from the wings

This month's issue of our newsletter focuses on the behind-the-scenes members of the CobaltSaffron team. Below are some of their perceptions and insights about the newsletter and their participation within it.

As I stumble through my life with all its challenges, lessons and moments of consciousness within a lot of unconsciousness, being part of the *CobaltSaffron* team remains a refreshing joy and privilege. Participating in this process continues to reframe things, open my eyes to new perspectives and keep me connected to something bigger and deeper.

For starters, it is a relief to be part of a team in which each individual is so focused and compelled by the best interest of the project itself that separate ambitions and personality clashes don't even make it into the picture. I often have the experience through our email exchanges that we are each cogs in a bigger movement. One idea is presented which sparks another which sparks another. And when we come to a solution, I look back and see that the solution was built upon the various contributions along the way, even if none of them were quite right on their own.

It is also fascinating to be privy to some of Darrell's process as he conceives and evolves each issue. I am always delighted by the changes in format and unexpected turns as he refuses to limit his creativity in the effort to communicate something beyond the ordinary. I am constantly inspired by the commitment to not just write *about* something, but to actually create an example of what he is writing about within the writing itself. This is a general practice in most of his writing, in subtle or more obvious ways, but issues #11 and #13 are both delightful examples of this.

I've also learned a lot about risk-taking and honing discernment through this work. Given that the newsletters can be wonderfully bold and frank, sometimes we have to discern together as a team which risks have an important and appropriate impact given the purpose of the issue, and which, although refreshingly bold, don't serve the bigger purpose of the subject. We work to keep in mind the range of people who might be reading *CobaltSaffron*, always trying to keep the issues accessible to newcomers and still give those who are familiar with Darrell's work something meaty, layered and intricate to chew on.

The only disappointment I have found in this work with the newsletter is the generally limited response that has been generated. Although there are some avid and generous readers, who have been compelled, curious, and passionate enough to respond to the

newsletters, offer thoughts and contribute intelligent questions, overall, there is not as much response as I had hoped. In a culture where we skim articles, where most of us take little time to really sit down, read and contemplate, is it worth it to invest so much in *CobaltSaffron* for the handful of persons who really dive into the issues, contemplate the ideas, and actively allow it to affect their lives? Is there something we can do to invite more feedback and interaction?

Karen Strassman

Participating in *CobaltSaffron* has been a great opportunity to observe and apply, on the scale of a precise project, many of the ideas one meets and deals with when working with Darrell. It has also been a wonderful way to stay connected with the spirit behind them.

Foremost, it is a challenging exercise of communication at various levels. In the translation process, one has to search for a deeper understanding of what has been written and a fluidity in the exchanges between the persons involved. It's a constant game between the intention of the author and the perceptions and different personal styles of the translators. The approach to the text has to be far deeper than a single reading as many words or ideas of the initial text have to be lifted and considered, like precious stones, then expressed in a different language so as to restore the meaning, impact and harmony of the original. It is a good reminder that everything can be, and has to be, considered with a different focus and from different angles.

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One of my fascinations in the process is to observe the big limitation of human verbal communication. Some words, concepts or effects can never be expressed in a satisfactory way through a different language. Working closer in the details of the text and ideas, through several successive readings, shows that I have never finished understanding what has actually been expressed in the newsletter. How many readings from different angles? Which real effects on my personal life and behavior? How, and how many times, should I read it so that it stays alive in me!? How to communicate—and receive—the spirit and desire for true passionate curiosity through paper and words...

Another side of this experience is the humbling sensation of participating in a “wider evolution.” Ideas and connections of words expressing Darrell’s thoughts and work are unique and have never been expressed in such a way by anyone. Translating them into another language sometimes implies difficult choices, as one can’t find the equivalent elsewhere. In doing so I sometimes have the impression that it is the language itself, the way things are being conceived and expressed, that is being affected and slightly shifted. Choices in using one word or way to express things are never neutral. It seems that the language itself will never be exactly the same because of what has been written... and translated... in each newsletter.

Christian Demeuré-Vallée

Working on *CobaltSaffron* is an interesting opportunity to practice the various ideas that have been presented. One of the notions that I come back to is the value of repetition.

Recently, I was walking along a beautiful black beach with some friends. Rather than the usually imagined volcanic sand, this endless beach was made from crushed, grey stone that looks black when wet. Relentless surf pounds the shore over and over again, turning giant boulders into smaller and smaller stones. Raging storms sometimes erode the beach to almost nothing and, other times, build the beach back up even higher than before.

I like to read the raw drafts of the newsletter as fresh as possible to get a gestalt of the whole. Sometimes things just jump right out, but only if there's not a lot of preconceptions blocking the way.

Fascinating how boringly nice that day felt. A very light haze tinting the distance. A soft breeze helping moderate the heat: a bit hot in the sun, a bit chill in the shade. Mid-tide waves drumming a booming bass and a chorus of millions as the waves rushed the beach.

In particular, I find it really important to go over things at various points in my day. Before bed to let it sink in and percolate while I sleep, first thing in the morning, after working out, etc. I end up noticing distinct pieces and having different ideas.

My mind playing tricks with time and space. The usual cycle but oddly out of order. Or perhaps the soothing background made it easy for my internal discord to be heard clearly. The squishy crunching of our steps along the waterline setting the beat. Slowly, the frothy residue slipped through the stony sand, back to the sea.

John Mitchell

What I find the most moving and inspiring is to participate in a project that is sufficiently valued that the egos remain in the dressing rooms. This makes space for a level of honesty that is at times difficult but essentially refreshing and liberating. It allows for a clean, efficient and productive communication among the team, in substance and in timing.

Working on the translation has given me more than I would have imagined. I discovered that I presume a lot—words, ideas, sentences that I thought I had comprehended. The need to be a faithful messenger obliges me to look closely into details and context. How to translate? How to take something from one side of a bridge, cross the bridge, bring it to the other side such that the content and the impact are the same? “There does exist an essential intuitive value system in each of us,” Darrell wrote in a previous issue of the newsletter; this is what I have in mind while translating... searching for an “equivalence”, the point of balance that carries the most qualities, the most “truth” across the bridge. In many ways, a fascinating exercise.

Helping to produce *CobaltSaffron* has brought me closer to the actuality of creation. I am in proximity to it, and I feel for those who take the risk to create—the faith, strength, solidity, sensitivity, compassion and generosity that creation requires. You

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walk up to the stage, vulnerable, revealing your self and having to be capable to touch someone else's soul. And anybody can comment, judge, and criticize what has been produced without having gone through the journey of diving within oneself and producing something from it. I am realizing the solitude that comes from the process of creation. And the depth of intention required.

It is an honor, a joy, and an opportunity to learn how to apply the qualities we speak of in the newsletter to help produce it. It gives me more clues in realizing the need for and the power of action. On top of that, reading it, I feel nourished, revitalized. Someone is crossing the bridge with food, water and sun for my curiosity.

Isabelle Calkins

Upcoming event:

RETREAT TO THE SOURCE

1 - 8 October, Gascony - France

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