

Soulful Songs and Stories



With a song and your stories, we co-create a soft place for hard conversations and a brave space for personal and spiritual growth.

Hi Soulful Song Lovers and Story Tellers,

Songs and Stories about stories of family history that enrich.

Caution: *Nothing that follows should be construed as encouragement to reveal anything that could put you (or anyone else) at risk of physical harm, homelessness, or job loss, or to anyone you really don't trust, or to anyone who is toxic.*

The Secret History of a Filmmaker's Family,

Crispin Long, New Yorker, Feb 17, 2021

"No Crying at the Dinner Table," Film by Carol Nguyen (15:43)

*To prepare to tell the invented story that she had originally conceived, Nguyen began to interview her parents and sister. She soon realized that asking them questions about their lives so directly produced an unprecedented openness. Although the events they described were familiar, she told me, "I had never heard them confess their emotions this way." She decided to reconceptualize the film as a kind of social experiment: she would interview each family member separately and then gather them at the dinner table to listen to excerpts from the interviews together. The result is the short documentary "No Crying at the Dinner Table," a striking depiction of what families avoid discussing, and what can happen when those taboos dissolve. **Read the article and watch the film here:***

www.j.mp/NoCrying2 (May require free registration)

"Presentiment," Emahoy Tsegué-Maryam Guèbrou

<https://youtu.be/A2kB9ZAJdls> 3:43

The bond that links your true family is not one of blood, but of respect and joy in each other's life. Rarely do members of one family grow up under the same roof. —**Richard Bach, Illusions: The Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah (1977)**

However self-sufficient we may fancy ourselves, we exist only in relation: to our friends, family, and life partners; to those we teach and mentor; to our co-workers, neighbors, strangers; and even to forces we cannot fully conceive of, let alone define. In many ways, we are our relationships.

—**Derrick Bell**, *Ethical Ambition: Living a Life of Meaning and Worth* (2002)

“Gloria,” Mats Eilertsen Trio <https://youtu.be/VXgDDiNCenE> 3:47

Olga Tokarczuk, in her 2019 Nobel lecture, argued that the problem of a world in pieces is a problem of storytelling, of our inability to arrange information and events. She took a view that art and questions about art are essential, because the imagination shapes everything we do, and because how we tell stories affects the way we regard each other, animals, the planet, and crisis itself.

—**Marek Makowski**, *The Yale Review*, ~Mar 1, 2021

<https://yalereview.yale.edu/olga-tokarczuku-radical-tenderness>

“Answer Me,” Keith Jarrett <https://youtu.be/cg5GBH7fR5gn> 4:29

A Shipwrecked Mother Tongue: On Confronting Linguistic Dispossession, Claudio Lomnitz, LitHub, Mar 1, 2021

We live in a dangerous world that is constantly asking us to make decisions, yet we can only face our collective dilemmas by way of encrypted personal stories. Thus peril is at once collective and deeply personal. We are no longer governed by tradition, so we can't simply rely on a collective past. For this reason family history is again relevant. It is no longer an aristocratic incantation of the glories of a lineage, but very simply our precondition: a matrix of past decisions that made us possible. And we stretch back to those decisions in moments of danger, as if we were migratory birds, flying in formation toward the south.

Read the 1500 word article here:

<https://lithub.com/a-shipwrecked-mother-tongue-on-confronting-linguistic-dispossession>

“N”Teri (Friendship),” Habib Koite/Regina Carter attached, 5:56

Coupled with “Kanou” by Boubacar Traoré:

<https://www.npr.org/2010/04/11/125428181/regina-carter-tiny-desk-concert> 12:34

“Set Us Free,” Jamison Ross <https://youtu.be/jCeaBwVmJb8> 5:52

Our false selves are the identities we cultivate in order to function in society with pride and self-possession; our real selves are a deep religious mystery, known entirely only to God. The world cultivates the false self, ignores the real one, and therein lies the great irony of human existence: the more we make of ourselves, the less we actually exist.

—**Robert Inchausti**, *The Pocket Thomas Merton*, 2017, ISBN 1611803764

We are one, working, eating, laughing, singing, storytelling, playing, sharing, and rejoicing, getting to know each other, taking risks, opening up, questioning, seeking, searching, trying to understand, struggling, making mistakes, paying attention, asking questions, listening, living our answers, learning to love our neighbors, learning to love ourselves, apologizing and forgiving with humility, and being forgiven through grace, creating the beloved community together. We are one.

—**Rev Dr. Hope Johnson**, delivered at UUA General Assembly, 2013 (h/t Alia Shinbrough)

“Amazing Grace,” Yohan Kim <https://youtu.be/Gfu3rraZYek> 3:27

Wisdom is not knowing more, but knowing with more of you, knowing deeper. —**Cynthia Bourgeault**, *An Introductory Wisdom School*

I hate Raymond Ledbetter and he’s only nine years old! But some of... some of the children I like too much, and I worry about them all day long. It is an obvious conflict against all professional standards. I didn’t like Raymond Ledbetter so I tried to understand him. And now that I understand him... I hate him!

—Sandra, in **Herb Gardner’s** *A Thousand Clowns*

If Aunt Susan finishes her second margarita at a holiday family dinner, it’s even money that she’ll start spilling the beans about her divorce from Uncle Ted. If she hits the three margarita mark, Aunt Susan will start discussing which cousins she thinks are secretly gay. At four+ margaritas, there’s a 100% chance that she reveals the names of one or two family members who didn’t know that they were adopted.

—**Ross Bullen**, *McSweeney’s*, Oct 23, 2019

“Paubaya,” Moira Dela Torre/SaxSerenade

<https://youtu.be/duWYrUPw7jk> 4:55

I must cultivate in me the fierceness of truth, which is that there is ground under our feet, we can find a way out, as millions of human beings over millennia have done. But we can’t do it by fighting, and we can’t do it by ourselves. We must do it in community, and we must do it with an eye toward choosing life at every step. And if that fierceness is in me, and I equally cultivate the compassion—the love that drives me to want to connect to as many people as possible who are within reach of love and not try to reach those who have in a very determined way put themselves beyond love—when I have work to do in my own life. —**Parker J. Palmer**, in conversation with Krista Tipet, Feb 5, 2021

<https://onbeing.org/programs/living-the-questions-whats-our-communal-equivalent-of-rubbing-each-others-feet>

**“Impromptu No. 3 in G-Flat Major, Op. 90, D. 899”
Franz Schubert/Khatia Buniatishvili**

https://youtu.be/eHWUCnoI_H4 7:46

When someone deeply listens to you, it is like holding out a dented cup you've had since childhood and watching it fill up with cold, fresh water. When it balances on top of the brim, you are understood. When it overflows and touches your skin, you are loved. When someone deeply listens to you, your bare feet are on the earth and a beloved land that seemed distant is now at home within you.

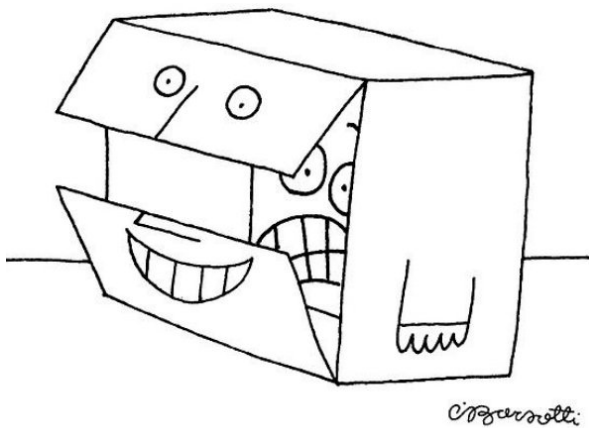
—**John Fox**, “When Someone Deeply Listens To You,” in *Finding What You Didn't Lose*

How do we more fully recognize each other as human in order to be more humane? And how do we shift what we talk about as political questions to ethical questions, which is really where they belong? Some of the shift is through story; some of that, I think, has to be through encounter.

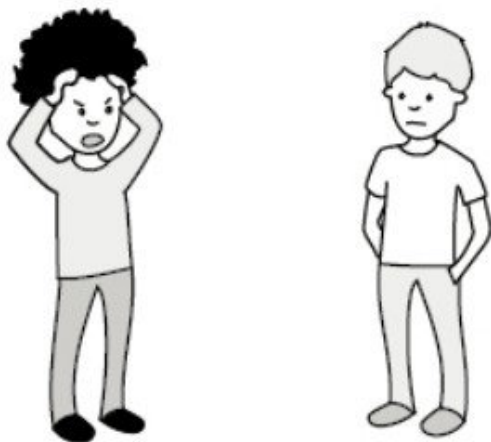
—**Imani Perry**, in conversation with Krista Tippett, Sep 26, 2019

“Redemption Song,” Bob Marley/Kanneh-Mason family

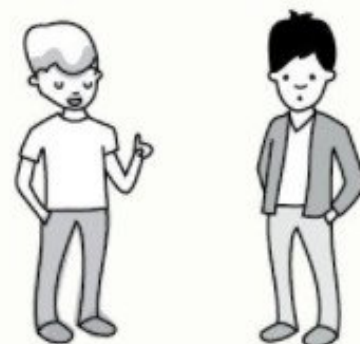
https://youtu.be/k_LmRcr8Mm4 3:51



ARE WE REALLY READY TO BE OPEN
AND SHARE OUR SECRETS?



YOU'RE NOT GETTING A SINGLE
THING I'VE LEFT UNSAID!



DANCE LIKE NOBODY IS WATCHING
SHARE LIKE IT WILL ONE DAY
BE READ IN A DEPOSITION