new studies is headed. The medical potential of psychedelic drugs appears enormous, and they are currently being reintegrated into mainstream Western culture. This is truly a cause for celebration, and Neil Goldsmith does a marvelous job explaining this important research and tying it all together.

However, perhaps even more valuable and interesting are Goldsmith’s personal story and insights, which make up a significant portion of this hard-to-put-down volume. Goldsmith’s masterful blend of research summary, practical information, biographical profiles, and personal experience is delightful to read, and the book is filled with psychological and spiritual insights. I highly recommend Psychodelic Healing to anyone interested in the exciting field of psychedelic research and the frontiers of human psychology.

The Psilocybin Solution: The Role of Sacred Mushrooms in the Quest for Meaning

Simon G. Powell
Park Street Press, 2011, paperback, 274 pages, $18.95

I was blown away by musician and filmmaker Simon Powell’s thoughtful book about what he has learned from his visionary experiences with psychoactive mushrooms and his reflections on the biosphere. The Psilocybin Solution presents the best argument that I’ve ever read about the possibility of teleology operations on the biosphere. Powell does a masterful job at translating the grand and mysterious language of Nature into mere English symbols, and artistically articulating the shamanic voice of the Other. I think that anyone who is interested in the evolution of life and consciousness will find this book utterly fascinating.

Some other wonderful books about psychodelics that I’ve read recently, but don’t have the space to review in this Bulletin, are important to mention here: Don Lattin’s The Harvard Psychedelic Club, Richard Doyle’s Darwin’s Pharmacy, Antero Alli’s The Eight Circuit Brain, and Ram Dass and Ralph Metzner’s Birth of a Psychedelic Culture. My reviews of these great books are posted on Amazon.

David Jay Brown is the editor of the annual theme MAPS Bulletins, and author of the forthcoming book Over the Edge of the Mind: Exploring the Interface of Psychedelics, Culture, and Consciousness. The Spring 2012 MAPS Bulletin, which he is currently editing, will be devoted to Psychodelics and the Arts. It will cover how psychodelics have affected music, film, television, painting, dance, and pop culture. If you’re interested in contributing, please contact David at dajbr@well.com.

In Loving Memory of Robert Venosa 1936-2011

By Martina Hoffman

An outstanding master of Visionary Art, transitioned peacefully on Aug. 9, 2011. He will be remembered by an audience of many generations for his unique genius in captur- ing the crystalline, light-filled energy of the source. His long and brave healing journey with cancer was greatly supported by shamanic journeys with ayahuasca in the Amazon regions of South America.

Venosa experienced to hyperacidity of dmt (LSD) for the first time in the 1960s in his Manhattan apartment while surrounded by a group of voyeurs who did not yet have the courage to partake themselves. LSD was still legal, and Robert was not afraid to stretch his mind and pituitary gland to accommodate the synesthetic merging of new concepts and visions. He felt he had become part of a liberating global revolution, the likes of which the world had never before experienced.

These experiential beginnings launched Robert onto a lifelong spiritual and artistic path that cemented his memory of the deeply transformative and healing power of psychodelics.

Throughout his life and in whichever part of the world he happened to reside, Robert felt kinship with the psychodelic community and considered many of its luminaries his friends. Amongst these friends were the archetypal psychodelic artist of the 1960s and 1970s Mat Klarwein, the renowned psychonaut Terence McKenna, the legendary Dr. Albert Hofmann, and the brilliant consciousness pioneers Stan Gof and Ralph Metzner. He had dear friends in the visionary art community, including Alex and Allyson Grey, Pablo Amaringo, and enduring connections with shamans Louis Eduardo Luna and Kestenbetsa, to name just a few.

Awakened by his psychodelic experiences and mentored by Klarwein, Robert embarked on the path of becoming a fine artist. His accom- plished creative and spiritual path has been beautifully recorded in three monographs, Manas Manna (Big O), Noosphere (Pomegranate Artbooks), and most recently Illuminatus (Fine Arts Press). Illuminatus features the Haiku-like poetry of Terence McKenna, probably McK-enna’s last published writing before his own passing in 2000.

Teresa and Robert had a special friendship that was deepened by the complementarity of their work: Venosa skillfully painted what McKenna had seen in the mirror of DMTm, and McKenna used the power of his words to describe the realms that Venosa painted. They spent special times together at each other’s homes, and in 1999 Venosa presented his inspirations and views on vision- ary art at McKenna’s AllChemical Confer- ence in Kona, Hawaii. Here he also met fellow visionary artist Alex Grey.

Referred to by younger members of the vision- ary and psychodelic family as one of their seasoned “elders,” Robert spoke at many conferences and events exploring human con- sciousness, including MindStates; the Proph- ets Conference; Convergences, the Amazonian Shamanism Conference in Iquitos, Peru; the International Conference on Expanded States of Consciousness at the University of Cuenca, Ecuador; as well as at Burning Man’s Entheon Village and Portugal’s Boom Festival. He was known to be extremely approachable, down to earth, and endowed with a great sense of humor.

My husband Robert and I have for many years been regular teachers at the Omega, Esalen, and Skyros Institutes. The exchanges that ensued between us and fellow visionary art- ists about the source of consciousness and its relationship to (as well as inspiration for) art were a kind of alchemy that nourished us both. Robert felt especially strongly about offering budding artists the proper support and techni-
he was immensely inspired by the numinous quality and breath-taking visions of the “mother’s realm,” while his paintings took on a range of color he had never tackled before.

On a spiritual level, he experienced yet another personal revelation. Robert was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2003, and doctors told him he had just three months to live. The ayahuasca vine became one of his great allies in cleansing his body and strengthening his life. His ayahuasca experiences helped him sort his priorities, to see what was most essential at that point in his life. He confronted his spiritual connections, and solidified his faith that there is continuation after death. Contrary to the doctors’ predictions, he enjoyed another very active and full eight and a half years of life.

Thank you, Robert, for showing us all what’s possible when we’re unafraid to hold to truth we believe in most.

“The role of the artist means belonging to a unique, exciting gang of outcasts. It will always be the explorers, artists, poets, curious intellectuals, musicians, and all the other existential samurai who are creatively courageous, who desire to advance their wearings for higher truth, and who will take the leap of faith into the unknown. The art and architecture of every great, or minor, culture, was given its visual power through the artist, and, in fact, culture itself has always been defined through the artist’s creativity. The artist has always been the catalyst for change.”

—Robert Venosa

Our mission is [1] to treat people for which conventional medicine provides limited relief—such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), pain, drug dependence, anxiety and depression associated with end-of-life issues—by developing psychedelics and marijuana into prescription medicines; [2] to cure many thousands of people by building a network of cities where treatments can be provided; and [3] to educate the public honestly about the risks and benefits of psychedelics and marijuana.

If you can even faintly imagine a cultural rejuvenation of the use of psychedelics and the status of mind they engender, please join MAPS in supporting the expansion of scientific knowledge in this area. Progress is possible with the support of those who care enough to take individual and collective action.

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