

The Art of Dressing The Master

It is amazing how many devices a master can create out of the sewing of a simple seam. This comment inspired the title of this new book written by an Osho sannyasin who was his seamstress. In her new book A Seam for The Master, the disciple Prem Veena tells of the twelve years she spent as Osho's tailor, making the robes, hats, and awesome costumes which people are familiar with from seeing him on the podium during discourses or from watching videos and looking at his photographs. This is a humorous, touching, personal story of a Master working with one of his disciples through the medium of sewing, knitting and upholstering. It is probably a unique situation in the history of Master and disciple relationships!! Here is an extract...

The First Step on the Tailor's Path

After Osho had arrived in Poona, a sannyasin woman had sewn for him for a while before returning to the west. There were a few bits of uninspiring cloth left on the shelf which I fingered in some dismay. Nirvano told me that Osho had said I was to make a kind of cloak with a hood very simple! No doubt! But I had no idea of his size and I had by now less than two hours to come up with something! Osho wasn't very tall, actually about the same height as myself, so Nirvano suggested I just use my own self as a model.

With a forehead bathed in sweat not just from the heat, I cleared a table in the library and started to cut. Priya obligingly found me a mirror and I set to work. That was probably the most focused I have ever been in my life! Summoning all my powers of concentration and all my sewing skills, I actually did manage to produce a hood by 11 o'clock.

Nirvano whipped it out of my hands and ran onto Osho's balcony where he and the photographers were waiting.

Totally exhausted, I went back to my room and made another cup of tea to sip. I was just beginning to relax and gather my scattered wits together, when Priya appeared. Again it was, 'Come quickly! Come quickly!'

'Oh my God, what now?' I thought as I hurried back to the house after her. In the kitchen Nirvano this time had an impudent grin on her face which I was soon to learn heralded a new and impossible task for me. With a wicked giggle she told me that he had liked

the hood so much that he wanted me to make another one for another photo session at three that afternoon, after his nap.

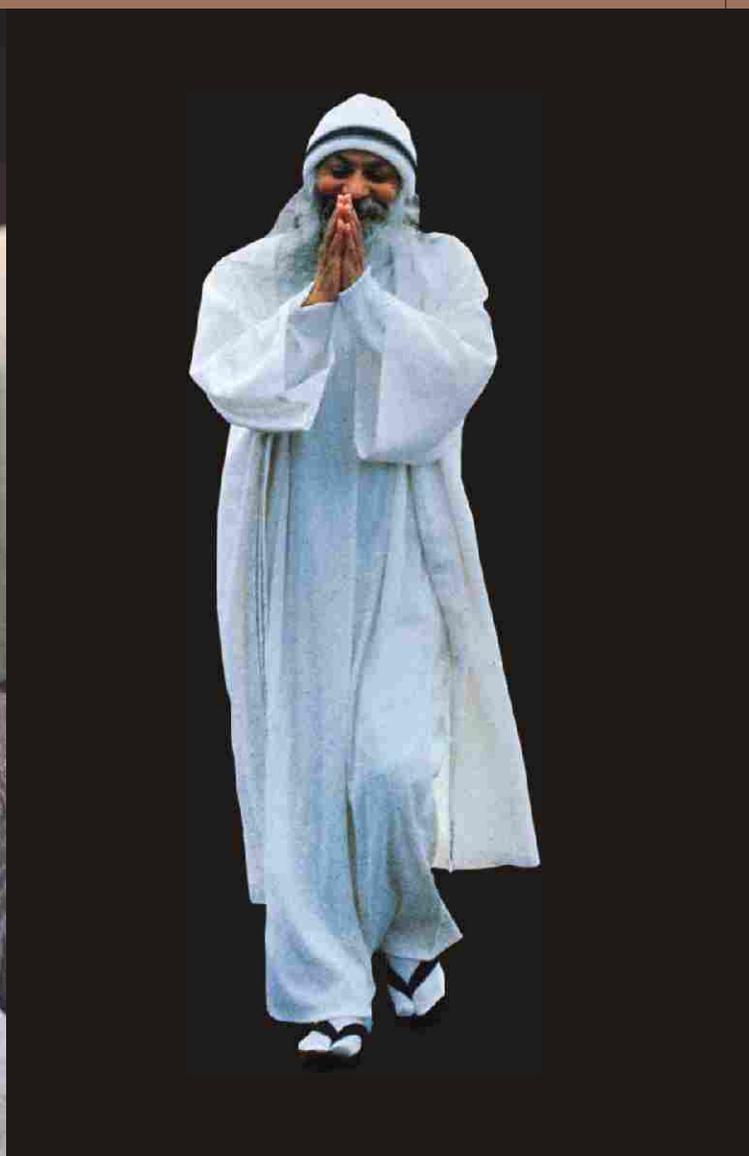
'Whaaaaat?' I had already scraped the bottom of the fabric barrel but it seemed I had to conjure up something else. The positive side was that I had three instead of two hours to do it in! There was no piece of fabric big enough to make a single garment from, but I played around with a bit of velvet and a bit of satin, and saw that if I made the cloak from the velvet and gave the hood a wide border of satin, I could just manage. That went in just before 3 pm and this time I staggered home totally wiped out. I most certainly was not satisfied with my efforts but he seemed quite happy, so what to do. I just hoped that he would give me a bit of warning next time so I could get some interesting fabric and have the time to create something better.

He did! I was told well in advance when the next photo session would be and, as this looked like it was going to be something that might happen more often, I took care to stock up on some fabrics and to even dream up some ideas. On hindsight, I think that the haste of the first session was a kind of test for me to see if I could knuckle down and come up with something with the odds stacked pretty much against me. As our spiritual journeys continued, he was to create many similar 'devices' to help his sannyasins to push through boundaries, find strengths they never knew they had, face and overcome hurdles they never thought they could surmount, and generally trust in the ego-quashing process necessary for the traveller on the path.

From Chapter 5

White Grace

Making hats to fit Osho's head was not easy until a fellow sannyasin measured his head with calipers and made a wooden 'head' on which the hats were styled and fitted. Cotton yarn had to be used for the knitted hats as Osho was allergic to wool.



Colourful Guru

When he went to the USA, Osho started to wear a different style of robe, using different fabrics because of the cold climate. Gradually, colours and patterns were introduced and the all-white robes became a thing of the past.

Sultan of the Universe

A shimmering turban, an intricately embroidered robe, a cup of wine and a charming smile, here is Osho in his sheer majesty looking every inch the Sultan of the Universe.



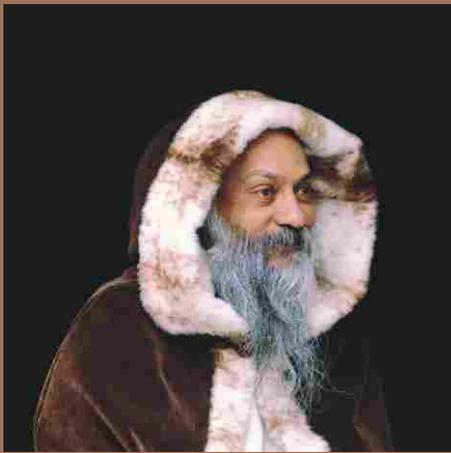
King of Kings

On the Ranch, Osho wore this Sequin Robe on the final day of one of the most memorable celebrations with over 40,000 disciples. When he entered the podium, the lights dramatized the shimmering robe and everyone was bedazzled with the sparkling, flashing sequins. No wonder 'The Rajneesh Times' printed this photo with the heading 'King of Kings'.



Chinese Emperor

On the Ranch, six robes were used for every major celebration but a selection of eight or more robes were made so that Osho could choose which ones he liked best for each day of the festival.

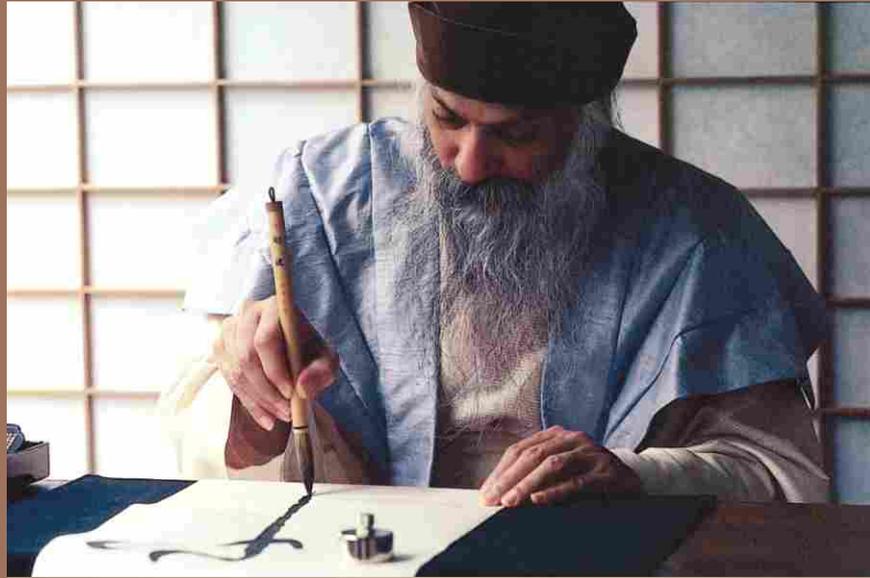


Eskimo Chief

A Canadian fur parka in the heat of India! Only Osho could carry it off! After seeing a photograph in a 'National Geographic' magazine of an Eskimo wearing a fur hood, Osho asked for one to be made for a photographic session. Veena had to import some fake fur from England to make one for him. Later, when he was living in Rajneeshpuram, USA, Osho insisted that this photo be sent to all the Meditation Centres around the world. Why? This is a mystery that has never been solved.

Zen Master

For his books on Zen, Osho requested some photos with a Japanese theme. For the photo session, a Japanese room was created using tatami mats, a calligraphy set belonging to a Japanese disciple and some actual Japanese calligraphy. Osho wore a samurai-style outfit of cream and blue silk. But as samurai never wore hats, Veena had to improvise a hat using a tiny sketch she found in the corner of an old Japanese painting. Unfortunately the photo session was a disaster, writes Veena, because only a few usable photos came out.



Beyond the Pearly Gates

Osho loved pearls and was given some exquisite ones by a Japanese visitor. They were used to decorate this hat. Pearls were also used on the matching robe. He was dressed in this robe and hat for his death celebration, the final finale to his visit to this planet.

Continued from Pg.13 Holiest Moment

clever, cunning, knowledgeable -- to be in the category of the powerful, not in the category of the oppressed and the powerless.

And once the child starts growing in the wrong direction, he goes on moving that way -- his whole life moves in that direction.

Whenever you understand that you have missed life, the first principle to be brought back is innocence. Drop your knowledge, forget your scriptures, forget your religions, your theologies, your philosophies. Be born again, become innocent -- and it is in your hands. Clean your mind of all that is not known by you, of all that is borrowed, all that has come from tradition, convention, all that has been given to you by others -- parents, teachers, universities. Just get rid of it. Once again be simple, once again be a child.

And this miracle is possible by meditation.

Meditation is simply a strange surgical method which cuts you away from all that is not yours and saves only that which is your authentic being. It burns everything else and leaves you standing naked, alone under the sun, in the wind. It is as if you are the first man who has descended onto earth -- who knows nothing, who has to discover everything, who has to be a seeker, who has to go on a pilgrimage.

The second principle is the pilgrimage.

Life must be a seeking -- not a desire, but a search; not an ambition to become this, to become that, a President of a country or a Prime Minister of a country, but a search to find out "Who am I?"

It is very strange that people who don't know who they are, are trying to become somebody. They don't even know who they are right now! They are unacquainted with their being -- but they have a goal of becoming.

Becoming is the disease of the soul. Being is you.

And to discover your being is the beginning of life. Then each moment is a new discovery, each moment brings a new joy; a new mystery opens its doors, a new love starts growing in you, a new compassion that you have never felt before, a new sensitivity about beauty, about goodness.

You become so sensitive that even the smallest blade of grass takes on an immense importance for you. Your sensitivity makes it clear to you that this small blade of grass is as important to existence as the biggest star; without this blade of grass, existence would be less than it is. And this small blade of grass is unique, it is irreplaceable, it has its own individuality.

And this sensitivity will create new friendships for

you -- friendships with trees, with birds, with animals, with mountains, with rivers, with oceans, with stars. Life becomes richer as love grows, as friendliness grows.

In the life of St. Francis, there is a beautiful incident. He is dying, and he has always travelled on a donkey from place to place sharing his experiences. All his disciples are gathered to listen to his last words. The last words of a man are always the most significant that he has ever uttered because they contain the whole experience of his life.

But what the disciples heard, they could not believe....

St. Francis did not address the disciples; he addressed the donkey. He said, "Brother, I am immensely indebted to you. You have been carrying me from one place to another place with never a complaint, never grumbling. Before I leave this world, all that I want is forgiveness from you; I have not been humane to you." These were the last words of St. Francis. A tremendous sensitivity to say to the donkey, "Brother donkey" and ask to be forgiven.

As you become more sensitive, life becomes bigger. It is not a small pond, it becomes oceanic. It is not confined to you and your wife and your children -- it is not confined at all. This whole existence becomes your family, and unless the whole existence is your family you have not known what life is -- because no man is an island, we are all connected.

We are a vast continent, joined in millions of ways. And if our hearts are not full of love for the whole, in the same proportion our life is cut short.

Meditation will bring you sensitivity, a great sense of belonging to the world. It is our world -- the stars are ours, and we are not foreigners here. We belong intrinsically to existence. We are part of it, we are the heart of it.



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Secondly, meditation will bring you a great silence - because all worthless knowledge is gone. Thoughts that are part of the knowledge are gone too... an immense silence, and you are surprised: This silence is the only music there is. All music is an effort to bring thimehow into manifestation.

The seers of the ancient East have been very emphatic about the point that all the great arts -- music, poetry, dance, painting, sculpture -- are all born out of meditation.

They are an effort to in some way bring the unknowable into the world of the known for those who are not ready for the pilgrimage -- just gifts for those who are not prepared to go on the pilgrimage. Perhaps a song may trigger a desire to go in search of the source, perhaps a statue.

The next time you enter a temple of Gautam Buddha or Mahavira just sit silently, watch the statue. Because the statue has

been made in such a way, in such proportions that if you watch it you will fall silent. It is a statue of meditation; it is not concerned with Gautam Buddha or Mahavira.

That's why all those statues look alike -- Mahavira, Gautam Buddha, Neminatha, Adinatha.... Twenty-four tirthankaras of Jainas... in the same temple you will find twenty-four statues all alike, exactly alike.

In my childhood I used to ask my father, "Can you explain to me how it is possible that twenty-four persons are exactly alike? -- the same size, the same nose, the same face, the same body..." And he used to say, "I don't know. I am always puzzled myself that there is not a bit of difference. And it is almost unheard of -- there are not even two persons in the whole world

who are alike, not to mention twenty-four?" But as my meditation blossomed I found the answer -- not from anybody else, I found the answer: that these statues have nothing to do with the people. These statues have something to do with what was happening inside those twenty-four people, and that was exactly the same.

And we have not bothered about the outside; we have insisted that only the inner should be paid attention to. The outer is unimportant. Somebody is young, somebody is old, somebody is black, somebody is white, somebody is man, somebody is woman -- it does not matter; what matters is that inside there is an ocean of silence. In that oceanic state, the body takes a certain posture.

You have observed it yourself, but you have not been alert. When you are angry, have you observed? -- your body takes a certain posture. In anger you cannot keep your hands open; in anger -- the fist. In anger you cannot smile -- or can you? With a certain emotion, the body has to follow a certain posture.

Just small things are deeply related inside. So those statues are made in such a way that if you simply sit silently and watch, and then close your eyes, a negative shadow image enters into your body and you start feeling something you have not felt before.

Those statues and temples were not built for worshipping; they were built for experiencing. They are scientific laboratories. They have nothing to do with religion. A certain secret science has been used for centuries so the coming generations could come in contact with the experiences of the older generations -- not through books, not through words, but through something which goes deeper -- through silence, through meditation, through peace.

As your silence grows; your friendliness, your love grows; your life becomes a moment-to-moment dance, a joy, a celebration. Do you hear the firecrackers outside? Have you ever thought about why, all over the world, in every culture, in every society, there are a few days in the year for celebration? These few days for celebration are just a compensation -- because these societies have taken away all celebration of your life, and if nothing is given to you in compensation your life can become a danger to the culture.

Every culture has to give some compensation to you so that you don't feel completely lost in misery, in sadness. But these compensations are false. These firecrackers outside and these lights outside cannot make you rejoice. They are only for children; for



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you they are just a nuisance. But in your inner world there can be a continuity of lights, songs, joys. Always remember that society compensates you when it feels that the repressed may explode into a dangerous situation if it is not compensated. The society finds some way of allowing you to let out the repressed. But this is not true celebration, and it cannot be true.

True celebration should come from your life, in your life. And true celebration cannot be according to the calendar, that on the first of November you will celebrate. Strange, the whole year you are miserable and on the first of November suddenly you come out of misery, dancing. Either the misery was false or the first of November is false; both cannot be true. And once the first of November is gone, you are back in your dark hole, everybody in his misery, everybody in his anxiety.

Life should be a continuous celebration, a festival of lights the whole year round. Only then you can grow up, you can blossom. Transform small things into celebration.

For example, in Japan they have the tea ceremony. In every Zen monastery and in every person's house who can afford it, they have a small temple for drinking tea. Now, tea is no longer an ordinary, profane thing; they have transformed it into a celebration. The temple for drinking tea is made in a certain way -- in a beautiful garden, with a beautiful pond; swans in the pond, flowers all around... guests come and they have to leave their shoes outside. It is a temple.

And as you enter the temple, you cannot speak; you have to leave your thinking and thoughts and speech outside with your shoes. You sit down in a meditative posture. And the host, the lady who prepares tea for you -- her movements are so graceful, as if she is dancing, moving around preparing tea, putting cups and saucers before you as if you are gods. With such respect... she will bow down, and you will receive it with the same respect.

The tea is prepared in a special samovar which makes beautiful sounds, a music of its own. And it is part of the tea ceremony that everybody should listen first to the music of the tea. So everybody is silent, listening... birds chirping outside in the garden, and the samovar... the tea is creating its own song. A peace surrounds... When the tea is ready and it is poured into everybody's cup, you are not just to drink it the way people are doing everywhere. First you will smell the aroma of the tea. You will sip the tea as if it has come from the beyond, you will take time -- there is no hurry.

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An ordinary thing -- just tea -- and they have made it a beautiful religious festival, and everybody comes out of it nourished, fresh, feeling younger, feeling stimulated. And what can be done with tea can be done with everything -- with your clothes, with your food.

Even if you fall sick and you are lying in bed, you will make those moments of lying in bed moments of beauty and joy, moments of relaxation and rest, moments of meditation, moments of listening to music or to poetry. There is no need to be sad that you are sick. You should be happy that everybody is in the office and you are in your bed like a king, relaxing -- somebody is preparing tea for you, the samovar is singing a song, a friend has offered to come and play the flute for you.... These things are more important than any medicine. When you are sick, call a doctor. But more important, call those who love you because there is no medicine more important than love. Call those who can create beauty, music, poetry around you because there is nothing that heals like a mood of celebration.

Medicine is the lowest kind of treatment. But it seems we have forgotten everything, so we have to depend on medicine and be grumpy and sad -- as if you are missing some great joy that you had in the office! In the office you were miserable -- just one day off, and you cling to misery too; you won't let it go.

Make everything creative, make the best out of the worst -- that's what I call 'the art'. And if a man has lived his whole life making every moment and every phase of it a beauty, a love, a joy, naturally his death is going to be the ultimate peak of his whole life's endeavour. The last touches... his death is not going to be ugly as it ordinarily happens every day to everyone. If death is ugly, that means your whole life has been a waste.

Death should be a peaceful acceptance, a loving entry into the unknown, a joyful goodbye to old friends, to the old world. There should not be any tragedy in it.

-Osho, Beyond Enlightenment, Unless the Whole Existence...

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