

WHEN HEAVEN EMBRACES THE EARTH

Rahmana Dziubany

I remember well the Sunday morning when Shlomo entered my life. A dance colleague and friend rang me very excited, saying, "Quick! Switch your TV on; there is a dancing and singing Rabbi!" I did, and there he was! Blessed day! Shlomo Carlebach not only filled my living room with his sweet blessings, his humorous deep Chassidic stories, his loving smile, his incredible music - he made my heart a place of simcha and my soul come back home.

I was born and raised as a "Christian" with no active spiritual practice. I made my way to India, where I fell in love with the Hindu god Shiva. I came back home to Germany, met my Sufi teacher Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan, and later my dance teacher and mentor for the "Dances of Universal Peace," Saadi Neil Douglas-Klotz. Since then I have dedicated my life to sharing these dances in which we honor and celebrate the world's spiritual traditions to bring "Peace through the Arts," by singing, dancing and praying together. I have always loved the Jewish songs and dances in my work, celebrating Shabbos with the people in my seminars, sharing Chassidic stories, singing

niggunim... wondering how a Jewish brother or sister would feel about that?

I had never heard about Shlomo until this very special Sunday morning. I was so deeply moved to see him and still am, watching his video after all these years, like he has always been my teacher. Somewhere in the land of our souls, he had taught me to celebrate Shabbos.

I showed his video to many people here in our German dance training groups. No matter what spiritual path one is on, everybody loves Shlomo. Many people are moved to tears. We love his stories; we sing his songs. My dear friend and colleague Barbara Kung from Switzerland, who is also a well known and inspiring dance teacher and mentor for the "Dances of Universal Peace," is gifted by many dances coming to her and through her, set to Shlomo's melodies. We share them in the German speaking countries and from there we take them to our worldwide dance network.

It had been my greatest wish to meet Shlomo's children, his spiritual family. What a great day when I did! What an inspiring uplifting time! Being so high together, feeling so close: Shlomo was dancing with us! How many more times can heaven embrace the earth, which fills me with this sweet SIMCHA!