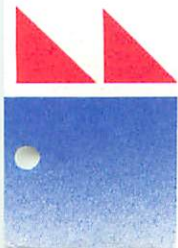


iNfinitE
LIMITATIONS

Hratch Tchilingirian

Here-and-there
Nineteen eighties-Nineteen nineties



INFINITE LIMITATIONS
(a selection)

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Bienvenue

Bienvenue!
Welcome to reality,
A reality of tension
Between the one and the many,
Between love and sacrifice,
Between wanting and letting go,
Between passion and reason,
Between ambition and obligation.

Bienvenue!
Welcome to reality,
A reality whose tenderness
Is as strong as its cruelty,
And its destiny
Only time might justify?

Bienvenue!
Reality welcomes me.
Can I welcome reality?
. . . asking is my only choice.

November 1987

ADAGIO

It's 1:00 am
 Yesterday is dead, today is born
 The music is breaking the silence of my heart,
 It is transforming the haunting darkness of my room
 into a comforting serenity.

The piano is playing hope
 Peace
 Melancholy
 I see the movement of the dancing notes,
 One yet many,
 Each note is giving its best
 A lesson of collective creation,
 A symphony
 A harmony of flying, untamed sounds
 coming together to lift up my soul
 to refresh my life and disappear.

Now, I can touch my feelings
 I am them and they are me,
 Tears, joy,
 Fear, hope,
 Defeat, triumph,
 All summarized in a dazzling tune,
 A comforting hymn slowly sinking deep
 inside my heart.
 Slowly,
 Gently,
 It is extinguishing
 the smoke of yesterday's haste.

It is peaceful,
 Each note is smiling,
 Each is aiming to join the rest to form a rainbow
 over the deluge of my thoughts.

There is life,
 A sweet breeze.
 They are running,
 One by one,
 Side by side,
 Together,
 They are moving in the infinity of my thoughts.

Adagio . . .
 Soon it will end,
 . . . back to reality.

February 1986

GRANDPA TELL ME . . .

-Grandpa tell me what life is in one word?
-Life is NEED.

-Grandpa tell me what life is in two words?
-Life is CONTINUOUS SEARCH.

-Grandpa tell me what life is in three words?
-Life is STRUGGLE FOR TRUTH.

-Grandpa tell me what life is in four words?
-Life is A CHANCE TO BECOME.

-Grandpa show me what life is?
-Open your arms, extend yourself as much as possible,
and tell me if you see a Cross?

January 1987

Candle Life

Wax and wick,
 Husband and wife,
 And "Let there be Light"
 A child is born.

White, innocent wick starts to burn
 A life has begun.
 Slowly a flicker grows to be light,
 Brightening its surrounding,
 And uniting two hopeful hearts into one.

Wax, wick, Light,
 A charming whole,
 A communion,
 Each contributing its share,
 Each securing the others survival.

They have become Candle Life.
 A community of love and result,
 A self giving sacrifice,
 Burning out,
 A life lived for the other.

The candle is burning,
 It is an ever shining light which goes beyond time,
 A light which does not exhaust itself in the present.

Still burning,
 Spring, summer, autumn, winter.
 Wax and wick,
 They are melting,
 Yet the light eagerly continues to go on undisturbed.

Now the light is stronger, warmer, older,
 It is dancing happily, madly, passionately,
 It is more persistent than ever to fight the screaming
 winds of fate.

Once a flicker, now a flame,
 Soon it will melt,
 Soon it will rest and pass the torch,
 The Light,
 to the ages yet to come.
 Candle Life!
 ... still shining in the darkness of its destiny.

March 1986

LIFE CONCERT

Life Concert,
 Live performance,
 A musical without music.
 The lights go down, I close my eyes;
 The curtain goes up, I open my ears.
 A momentary silence . . .
 And a sudden drum calls my attention.
 The instruments are unseen,
 But they are felt.
 There are no instruments,

Strings, veins, cells and notes,
 moving all around my body.

The theater is my body,
 The notes are my cells,
 The violins are my veins.

My heart is giving the tempo,

Tum. . . Tum. . .Tum. . .,
 Sometimes strong, sometimes weak,
 Sometimes tired, sometimes passionate.
 It is holding the whole band together.

My head, the conductor,
 is moving a fine baton, my conscience,
 Left and right, back and forth.
 The music is progressing,
 Building up,
 Circling around.
 White and red, each note
 is intensifying the music.

They are millions and millions,
 Yet, one in achievement, Life Concert.
 Millions of notes singing the same song,
 Blended, mixed, undistinguished.
 The band,
 My Body is playing,
 My Mind is conducting,
 Every moment,
 Day by day,
 year after year,
 And unto death.
 A subtle voice starts the opera,
 "This is just a small, unheard portion of
 a larger, universal suite."
 "Do you realize that you are just a note?"
 And then,
 I understood and actually Heard the rythm

of my life.
I am a note,
There are Organs,
A single note on one of the bars of the
symphony, called CREATION,
Written by the One Who Is.
Viewing the whole score,
I noticed that each note is like me,
Each note is a person,
Each bar is a family, society, a people.
Though with different variations and colors,
They are all part of the transcending beauty
of the author's work.
They are singing and playing the same song,
The same symphony,
Creation,
In Life Concert

1986

Death March

I was placed in the Line,
Without even being asked.

They told me I have to march,
It was too late to refuse.

Death March . . .
I don't know how long?
I don't know how far?
The clock has long been started
On my account . . .
I have to march,
my death march.

They tried to console me,
"You have a long way to go!"
But, how far, how long?

They tried to warn me,
"Be careful, listen and learn . . . "

I attempted to do all the things they said,
But one thing I did . . .
Continue my death march.

They tried to help me.
Now they are walking with me,
In the March,
In our death march.

As I continued to walk,
As birth and death became one,
It was revealed to me that
As long as I march, I am living . . .

I live to welcome death,
I die to be born.

I was born to be dead,
But I live to love, to give, to care,
To BE what birth and death are not.

August 1987

Requiem

I wake up in the morning
To conduct my requiem.
I die everyday,
And relive again,
Only to conduct my requiem
and die again.

People around me . . .
Sad faces,
Shattered dreams,
People crying without tears,
But smiling with anguish.

They are busy finding their dreams,
Busy to find out
That it is more delusions
They are looking for.

Soon,
Others will conduct their requiem,
Perhaps!
If they are not busy?

While sadness prevails on tired faces
I smile and sing . . .
I celebrate my requiem

May 1988

LIFE DISEASE

I am ill,
Terminally ill.
I didn't know,
I was struck with a disease,
From the day I was born.

During the growing stages of
my life,
It didn't show any symptoms.
But gradually it came to
haunt me
With a pain.

Now, I see the symptoms in
the world,
But embodied in me.

I am carrying a disease that
everybody has.
A disease called LIFE
A complicated, subtle and
infectious disease.

I am infected with LIFE
It is treatable by suffering,
It is not deadly,
But it is only cured by death.

Torn between the pain of my
disease
and the unacceptability of
its cure,
I choose to revenge by
creating,
I choose to scream by my
silence.

Oct. 1988

I wish

I wish I could cuddle a violin
Hold it tight against my chest
And play,
...play,
And play
And cry
And play with my tears,
...feeling the rush of blood to the tip of my fingers...

I wish I could cry playing,
I wish I could sing playing.

Singing, crying, playing,
Laughing, loving,
Giving,
Remembering...

9/2/92

SILENCE

My silence has become quite loud...
Sometimes, the best way to express one's thoughts is silence.
A thought in silence is more eloquent than its verbalization...
A dancer moves according to the music
We dance according to the music of life,
In silence.
It is only in silence that we can hear the music of life...

Life is a question not an answer!
Why?
Yes...
Why?
No...
Why?
Be quiet...

In silence we ask,
We debate, we doubt,
We reject, we fight,
We cry, we laugh
We remember
We imagine
We are wordless...

It is only in our wordlessness
that we can understand the meaning of words.

3/26/93

WHAT LANGUAGE

I am listening to French singers
- eventhough I am not understanding the words,
I am living with them...
Perhaps, I don't want to understand the words,
I am looking for the universal, not the particular.

What is the language that speaks to all and for all?
What is the language that makes us human.
Bare human.
Solely human.
Simply human.
A language that is not Armenian or English or French or Chinese,
A language so familiar, yet so difficult to learn;
A language so easy, yet so hard to master;
A language so beautiful, yet so uglified by us?

What is this language?

I don't know,
Yet I was born with it, through it and for it.

3/26/93

My Umbrella Theory of Love

Love is not an umbrella
Love is rain
Love doesn't give
Love allows
Love doesn't take
Love receives...
Love doesn't argue
Love understands
Love doesn't touch
Love carries
Love doesn't fight
Love burns
Love doesn't hurt
Love cries...

T I M E

Time is the pendulum of my heart.
My clock stops when my heart stops.

Time passes,
So does my life.
Every time the pendulum moves,
My heart moves too;
It keeps running and running . . .
I can feel it in my veins.

- What time is it?
It's 10.
- I'm happy.

- What time is it?
It's 20.
- I'm exploring.

- What time is it?
It's 30.
- I'm becoming.

- What time is it?
It's 40.
- I'm still trying.

- What time is it?
It's 50.
- I still have time.

- What time is it?
It's 60.
- I should go.

- What time is it?
It's 70.
- I am being called.

- What time is it?
.....

Bad time
Good time
Hard time
Pass time
War time
Peace time
Sad time
Happy time

Time is common to all.

If I can't control it,
I cope with it

If I can't change it,
I add to it.

If I can't agree with it,
I negotiate with it.

If I can't win it,
I declare peace with it.

If I can't stop it,
I determine to live.

11/20/1986

We look, but we don't see.

We see, but we don't recognize.

We recognize, but we don't remember.

We remember, but we don't care.

We care, but we don't reach.

we reach, but we don't touch.

We touch, but we don't hope.

We hope, but we don't celebrate.

We celebrate, but we don't sense.

We sense, but we don't act.

We act, but we don't understand.

We understand, but we don't look.

We look, only to see something!

December 1995

