David Sylvian (b. 1958, Kent/England) first became known in the late seventies as the lead singer, songwriter and composer for the legendary English 'avant-glam' group 'Japan', with which, to his regret, he is to this day still most identified. Since the group disbanded in late 1982, Sylvian has embarked on a series of ground-breaking solo and collaborative albums (with Ryuichi Sakamoto, Robert Fripp, Holger Czukay et al.). He made the solo albums 'Brilliant Trees', 'Gone to Earth', 'Secrets of the Beehive', as well as 'Alchemy - An Index of Possibilities' and recently - twelve years later - brought out 'Dead Bees on a Cake'. Two books of Sylvian's work have been published, 'Perspectives', a selection of Polaroid montages and collages, which have been exhibited in the U.K., Japan and Europe, and 'Trophies - the lyrics of David Sylvian'. In 1984 Sylvian visited Nepal for the first time. In an interview he said: "It appears this experience leaves something of a slow burning fire in me. It certainly stayed with me and was a source of comfort and inspiration for years to come".

For this issue of Janus, David Sylvian has selected poems, not all published, to accompany the photos by Carl De Keyzer.

A Shaman's song

by David Sylvian and Carl De Keyzer

Carl De Keyzer (b. 1958, Kortrijk, Belgium) has published several books of photography, such as 'India' (1987) and the extraordinary 'Homo Sovieticus' (1989) on the Soviet Union (awarded the Prix du Livre as the best photo book of the year) and 'Cod Inc.' (1992). This last book shows scenes of extreme religious experience and mania in the United States. With 'Images of Power: Historical Pictures of the End of the Century', part 1 (1996) he has consciously experimented with colour photography, which further refines his trade marks of using flash in daylight, the panoramic image (wide-angle), and monumental and controlled compositions with dramatic and poetic elements. Carl De Keyzer has for several years been a member of the influential Magnum photographers collective.

Carl De Keyzer's series included here: 'The Seven Oracles of Ladhakh' (1993) follows those specifically gifted and respected men and women, 'oracles', who do healings, exercises and predictions under trance in the villages of Thiksey, Sabu, Choglam, Luh and Shak. These Buddhist rituals take place every morning in the oracles' houses and are attended every day by about twenty people. The patients of the family pay a small sum for their services. These rituals last several hours.
There is a heart-space
Remember?
Inside the heart-place
I wait for you

There is a heart-space
Where all are waiting
Attending your return

The wait is endless
already done
We afford you a glimpse
But your back’s towards us
turn to
face us
remember
All your mothers and fathers
Children and grandchildren
All here
turn

Great
Great grandchildren
Surround you

The once mother
Now child
You walk amongst them

There is a heart-space
I wait without candle
For you know your own way back
When the little one came
A hole was blown open
A partial surrendering in the midst of knowing
And for an instance the constant heart shed its own tears
Wave upon wave carried me over
Beyond the peripheries of hope and fear
Deadering the voice of relentless biography
I stood at the centre and danced at the extremities
Mapping the city as subtle as silence
Then on, outwards, into the darkness

When the crazy one came
She placed her finger on my forehead
And pushed on through
I woke up, face on fire
Spitting out diamonds
Thoroughly lost to logic
Craving her madness
The gold and crimson tulips
Brought forth a goddess
She stood before me
Bees buzzing beneath an evening sky
All time
Here
As the rose reaches the hand
A thousand voices sing the silence
The work of planets unfolding
A glimpse of the map of destiny is mine
My feet burn their imprint in stone
Now it is done

She blows a hole through solid air
Whispers my true name
A calling card from the heart of prayers

She is all mountains
Her black eyes fathomless
Absolute stillness
Silver shooting stars garland her hair
How could this house contain all she is?
She stands neither within nor without
Soothing fire
She’s in the belly, the head, the heart
Her laughter pervades everything
Cleansing fire
Leave not one stone unturned

Queen bee
She pollinates the hearts of all who come
She is all suns

I will learn to walk
I will learn to breathe as I once did
I will learn to sing
And singing I will worship you