



4. NOT A SINGLE POINT



A point in geometry is a location. It has no width, no length, and no depth. A point is shown by a dot.

The central teachings of the various **Dharmic** religions (e.g. Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism, etc.) are often illustrated through the metaphor of **"Indra's Net,"** first mentioned in the *Atharva Veda* around 1,000 BCE.

The metaphor describes an infinitely large net of cords, stretching out in every direction, with a multifaceted jewel at each vertex, each jewel reflecting all the other jewels.

Everything that exists, or has ever existed (including every person, place, thought, idea, experience, feeling, and memory) is said to be a single jewel in Indra's Net, reflecting everything else.

The image of Indra's Net is used to communicate the Dharmic teachings of **"Sunyata"** (*emptiness*, or that all phenomena are fundamentally void of any intrinsic existence), and **"Pratityasamutpada"** (*dependent arising*, or that all phenomena only exist in relation to all other phenomena).

Alan Watts offers the more familiar image of a spider web:

Imagine a multidimensional spider's web in the early morning covered with dew drops. And every dew drop contains the reflection of all the other dew drops. And, in each reflected dew drop, the reflections of all the other dew drops in that reflection. And so ad infinitum. That is the Buddhist conception of the universe in an image.

This ritual presents the first stage in the journey as glimpsed through the *Urim and Thummim*: an early attempt to synthesize a sense of wholeness beyond the individual fragments — using the limestones gathered in *Limestone* as a proxy for myself.

At the edge of **Lake Champlain**, I use my grandfather's handheld sledgehammer to pulverize the collection of limestones into a fine stone powder, breaking apart their uniqueness to uncover what they share.

I collect the jewel-like points of powder in my mother's white cotton sheet, laid across the beach like a net.

While hammering away at the limestones, the moon descends behind the lake, and the cedar driftwood fire becomes the only source of light — until it, too, is being hammered away along with the stones, and along with the sound, until tiny points of light are dancing in the darkness, shrinking down to be a single pixel, which is there for just a moment, and then gone.

This brief film begins to work with the plane of perception — linking the gestures of the ritual with the editing style of the image and sound.

Performed in 2015 — Duration 1:18

