

2012, April 13

Friday Night Hard News Call

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BBS: Need \$38 for this week - A Record!

- There is a **Paypal** button here

T & R: • Immediate need to help T & R: \$165

- On the website: www.2013RainbowRoundTable.com There is a **Paypal** button on this site
[Paypal = a 5 day process; US Mail is the same]
- Please notify them if you're sending something: koran999@comcast.net
- Rama's mailing address for cheques, Money orders: Ram D Berkowitz
2442 Cerillos Road, # 385
Santa Fe, NM 87505
- Let MariettaRobert know: stargatemarietta@gmail.com [phone # not good]
- T & R do readings and Mother is a hoot!

Hard News:

- Look on Angelsu's graphic of Mother on her page on 2013 roundtable

R: we are at point of critical mass, now tipping the scales to full disclosure, first contact - this is not a night time/George Noory time; it's happening

- Ed Schulz was on a roll about Trayvon Martin case: possibly next week, Zimmerman's lawyer will ask for bail - might not be a wise thing
- Lucifer's wife took the mike at the NRA meeting; Lucifer
- Watching the soap opera which is coming to an end, and I mean "an end"!

T: has the whole world gone crazy?

R: sees the scene from the matrix when Morpheus opens the door and tells Leo he has to walk through

Randi Rhodes - Guests: Naomi Klein, Naomi Wolf, Jeremy Scahill, Medea Benjamin

- discussing why Obama has not arrested the Clinton - Bush Crime family for war crimes
- Randi was on fire as to this day there is no closure of 9/11, and patriot Acts 1, 2 and 3 are in full force
- this is where Mother comes in and Anonymous: hard to understand
Facebook has been misused, abused right to privacy

Conference Call

Caller: heard the music, but very few words

Angelsu: difficult to understand

Rainbird: got nothing of the Anonymous audio

R: a bad version - he will put it on website and we can play it
discussed with Jeremy Scahill, the Iraqi doctor
on May 1st: Face book will be shut down - Mark Zukerberg joined ??
• It's our children who want to function without changing anything

Caller: saw on another website, as far as arrests go, will be called by earth allies, not galactics

T: there is an interactive force - the Militia totals 20M, with 4 Mil on earth

- We have met another look-alike of Ben Fulford with his Romanov friend - the shaman has a 200 M army of martial artists of all kinds; fully trained, and Putin is a 5th degree don
- it's about knowing the power we have of the input we have right now - there is an interface of forces that are not so anonymous any more - we will not tolerate our right to be anonymous -
- Operation Facebook now initiated; Operation Delete Facebook now initiated; Operation Kill Facebook now initiated. May 1st to the end we will make our presence known. All anonymous can take part.
 - Make your own black screens to upload.
 - Time for Facebook to stop abusing people for their privacy

Reading: **The rich are different from you & me: they pay less taxes** Bill Moyers [SEE BELOW]

R: he sees something going to happen in the world's markets - lots of broken eggs!
[In response to Tara's question about what he sees happening next]

Reading: **Bank of America sues itself in Unusual foreclosure Case** [SEE BELOW]

R: how long can they keep on with playing with fake money and whoever has the real money is stashed away where no one knows about it
• Possible that Marco Rubio may be picked by Romney

Angelsu: Cathy sent an e-mail about Iceland forgiving the debt

- Rama hasn't listened to the video - he thinks that's why Yoko Ono put the peace tower there

Cathy: they refused to be bailed out by IMF, and forgave the debt to get the money moving again

T: and they threw the big banks out - let's start anew and pass the talking stick to higher councils

Reading: **Goldman Dealmaker, Yoel Zaoui, Leaves The Firm After 24 Years** [SEE BELOW]

Music: **Awakenme-musicalpoetry&music-RUMI-esque** www.dervishingpeony.com

Audio: Greg Braden

R: Gregg talks about the frequencies of the heart being so much more powerful than those of the mind - actually see a woman healed of a tumour right in front of your eyes!



[Cure all Illnesses in 3 minutes!!! Spread LOVE not HATE!!! - YouTube](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ufVjdvRw4LM)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ufVjdvRw4LM>

Dec 2010 - 15 min - Uploaded by ParanormalResearchUS

*Cure all Illnesses in 3 minutes!!! Spread LOVE ... Standard YouTube License Gregg Braden (1 of 5)
The ...*

Uploaded by [ParanormalResearchUS](#) on 7 Dec 2010

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all educated by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to be a part of. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

Now if the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? Now eagerly desire the greater gifts.

Audio: Bill Maher - April 13, 2012

Audio: **Children of the Sun Meditation** for this month as a portal of light for April

https://www.childrenofthesun.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=448%3Agrid-transmissions-january-9&catid=39&Itemid=169

Children of the Sun Humanitarian Foundation

I AM Avatar Yoga ~ April, 2012

OPENING AS A PORTAL OF LIGHT, Part 1

Our Collective Initiation into Multidimensionality

- The Amazon Transmissions
- Unity Consciousness and the Christ Harmonic
- Opening the Portals of Light
- Body Elemental Recalibration
- Living Outside the Mind
- Planetary Grid Transmissions, Full Moon April 6

Unity Consciousness through Group Formation

Since the introduction of The Amazon Transmissions, we have been greatly emphasizing that it is our interlocking matrix that is the KEY that unlocks the codes to the new genetic programming. It is this unlocking that fires our collective DNA, allowing us to absorb more light into our physical bodies, and, to be absorbed into the light.

The instantaneous nature in which the Amazon group participants merged into a loving and fluid group harmonic... unlocked within each participant the direct experience of Unity Consciousness. They exemplified the power of the "Christ Harmonic" and what amazing things this field of energy is capable.

Actualizing Divine Harmony through the Program of Conflict

As a race, we are moving off the wheel of karma and on to the spiral of forward evolution by transcending dualities and coming into the consciousness of All That Is.

This evolutionary momentum is greatly assisted through the planetary ray of "Harmony through Conflict". The whole of human history has been conditioned by the planetary program of the dual, conflicted nature. It is this energy which has determined the ring-pass-not barrier within which we must work to bring about right human relations and the growth of the universal spirit of goodwill among all people.

Reading: Beirutopia: could Lebanon's capital become a garden city?

[SEE BELOW]

Closing: Peace Train

[Cat Stevens - Peace Train \(live\) - YouTube](#)



www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sjSHazjrWg 22 Sep 2006 - 4 min - Uploaded by geofront88
Cat Stevens plays *Peace Train* live on his Earth Tour, 1976 requested by Jashar1984. =)
[http://www.lastfm ...](http://www.lastfm...)

2012, April 13 **The Rich Are Different from You and Me – They Pay Less Taxes**

by [Bill Moyers](#) | April 13, 2012 - 9:32am

by Bill Moyers and Michael Winship

Benjamin Franklin, who used his many talents to become a wealthy man, famously said that the only things certain in life are death and taxes. But if you're a corporate CEO in America today, even they can be put on the back burner – death held at bay by the best medical care money can buy and the latest in surgical and life extension techniques, taxes conveniently shunted aside courtesy of loopholes, overseas investment and governments that conveniently look the other way.

In a story headlined, "For Big Companies, Life Is Good," The Wall Street Journal reports that big American companies have emerged from the deepest recession since World War II more profitable than ever: flush with cash, less burdened by debt, and with a greater share of the country's income. But, the paper notes, "Many of the 1.1 million jobs the big companies added since 2007 were outside the U.S. So, too, was much of the \$1.2 trillion added to corporate treasuries."

To add to this embarrassment of riches, the consumer group Citizens for Tax Justice reports that more than two dozen major corporations – including GE, Boeing, Mattel and Verizon -- paid no federal taxes between 2008 and 2011. They got a corporate tax break that was broadly supported by Republicans and Democrats alike.

Corporate taxes today are at a 40-year-low -- even as the executive suites at big corporations have become throne rooms where the crown jewels wind up in the personal vault of the CEO.

Then look at this report in The New York Times: Last year, among the 100 best-paid CEOs, the median income was more than 14 million, compared with the average annual American salary of \$45,230. Combined, this happy hundred executives pulled down more than two billion dollars.

What's more, according to the Times "... these CEO's might seem like pikers. Top hedge fund managers collectively earned \$14.4 billion last year." No wonder some of them are fighting to kill a provision in the recent Dodd-Frank reform law that would require disclosing the ratio of CEO pay to the median pay of their employees. One never wishes to upset the help, you know. It can lead to unrest.

That's Wall Street -- the metaphorical bestiary of the financial universe. But there's nothing metaphorical about the earnings of hedge fund tigers, private equity lions, and the top dogs at those big banks that were bailed out by tax dollars after they helped chase our economy off a cliff.

So what do these big moneyed nabobs have to complain about? Why are they whining about reform? And why are they funneling cash to super PACs aimed at bringing down Barack Obama, who many of them supported four years ago?

Because, writes Alec MacGillis in The New Republic -- the President wants to raise their taxes. That's right -- while ordinary Americans are taxed at a top rate of 35% on their income, Congress allows hedge fund and private equity tycoons to pay only pay 15% of their compensation. The President wants them to pay more; still at a rate below what you might pay, and for that he's being accused of – hold onto your combat helmets -- "class warfare." One Wall Street Midas, once an Obama fan, now his foe, told MacGillis that by making the rich a primary target, Obama is "[expletive deleted] on people who are successful."

And can you believe this? Two years ago, when President Obama first tried to close that gaping

loophole in our tax code, Stephen Schwarzman, who runs the Blackstone Group, the world's largest private equity fund, compared the President's action to Hitler's invasion of Poland.

That's the same Stephen Schwarzman whose agents in 2006 launched a predatory raid on a travel company in Colorado. His fund bought it, laid off 841 employees, and recouped its entire investment in just seven months – one of the quickest returns on capital ever for such a deal.

To celebrate his 60th birthday Mr. Schwarzman rented the Park Avenue Armory here in New York at a cost of \$3 million, including a gospel choir led by Patti LaBelle that serenaded him with "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands." Does he ever -- his net worth is estimated at nearly \$5 billion. Last year alone Schwarzman took home over \$213 million in pay and dividends, a third more than 2010. Now he's fundraising for Mitt Romney, who, like him, made his bundle on leveraged buyouts that left many American workers up the creek.

To add insult to injury, average taxpayers even help subsidize the private jet travel of the rich. On the Times' DealBook blog, mergers and acquisitions expert Steven Davidoff writes, "If an outside security consultant determines that executives need a private jet and other services for their safety, the Internal Revenue Service cuts corporate chieftains a break. In such cases, the chief executive will pay a reduced tax bill or sometimes no tax at all."

Are the CEOs really in danger? No, says Davidoff, "It's a common corporate tax trick."

Talk about your friendly skies. No wonder the people with money and influence don't feel connected to the rest of the population. It's as if they live in a foreign country at the top of the world, like their own private Switzerland, at heights so rarified they can't imagine life down below.

Bill Moyers is managing editor and Michael Winship, senior writing fellow at Demos, is senior writer of the weekly public affairs program, Moyers & Company, airing on public television. Check local airtimes or comment at www.BillMoyers.com.

<http://www.smirkingchimp.com/thread/bill-moyers/42577/the-rich-are-different-from-you-and-me-they-pay-less-taxes>

Posted: 04/10/2012 5:33 pm Updated: 04/10/2012 5:40 pm

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/04/10/bank-of-america-foreclosure-suit_n_1415614.html

THIS IMAGE LICENSE HAS EXPIRED

WASHINGTON -- Bank of America is suing itself for foreclosure.

"It's crazy," housing data analyst Michael Olenick told HuffPost. "They shouldn't be suing themselves."

Over the past two years, the nation's largest banks and the Obama administration have repeatedly vowed to clean up the foreclosure fraud mess. In February, banks agreed to pay \$25 billion and overhaul their foreclosure processes as part of a 50-state investigation into bank wrongdoing, resulting from practices that included [robo-signing](#).

But in Florida's Palm Beach County alone, Bank of America has sued itself for foreclosure 11 times since late March, according to foreclosure fraud activist [Lynn Szymoniak](#), who forwarded one such foreclosure filing, dated March 29, 2012, to The Huffington Post. (A white-collar crime expert, Szymoniak was recently awarded \$18 million for her work helping the government recover \$95 million as a result of bank foreclosure problems in North Carolina.)

In the March 29 filing, Bank of America is seeking to foreclose on a condominium and names the condo owner and Bank of America as defendants in the suit. The company is literally seeking damages from itself in order to foreclose on the condo owner.

"We are servicing the first mortgage on behalf of an investor and we own the second mortgage," Bank of America spokeswoman Jumana Bauwens told HuffPost. "Naming the second-lien holder in the suit is necessary to eliminate the junior interest," Bauwens said.

"This just strikes me as classic robo foreclosure," Professor Alan White of Valparaiso University Law School told HuffPost. White, a predatory lending expert who tracks and analyzes data on loan modifications and foreclosures, said that lawyers for the bank likely performed an electronic title search to see if any other liens on the property existed and simply wrote down the name of whatever bank came up in the search. Lawyers and paralegals who perform these tasks typically fill out dozens of such forms a day, White told HuffPost.

"I'm sure the paralegal who did this did 100 others that day," he said.

Banks have been caught suing themselves before. In 2009, [Dow Jones columnist Al Lewis](#) uncovered a case in which Wells Fargo had sued itself in connection with a foreclosure in Florida's Hillsborough County. The bank owned both the first and second liens on the property and ended up hiring two separate attorneys to deal with the snafu -- one to bring the lawsuit and another to defend itself.

The Bank of America self-suits seems to have emerged from a scenario that investors have complained about for years involving home equity loans. Big banks like Bank of America service mortgages on behalf of other investors. Bank of America processes payments, negotiates with borrowers and operates the foreclosure process but does not actually own the loan. Many properties from the housing bubble had an additional home equity loan, or second lien. Banks could charge higher interest rates on these second liens because they were riskier loans -- the second lien is supposed to eat losses before anything happens to the first lien.

When a bank brings a foreclosure case in court, it has to notify whoever owns the second lien that it is taking action. In this case, Bank of America owns the second lien.

But meticulous attorneys would not ordinarily let their clients sue themselves. "It is a little bit mindless on the part of the lawyer," White said. "They don't need to sue themselves."

2012, Apr 10 Goldman Dealmaker, Yoel Zaoui, Leaves The Firm After 24 Years

The Huffington Post | By [D.M. Levine](#) Posted: 04/10/2012 4:40 pm Updated: 04/10/2012 4:40 pm



Another Goldmanite bites the dust.

Yoel Zaoui, co-head of the firm's global mergers and acquisitions group, is leaving Goldman Sachs after more than two decades at the firm, [according to an internal memo](#) obtained by Reuters.

Zaouie is credited with having advised on a number of major deals during his 24 years at the bank. Among them, [Mittal Steel's hostile 2006 takeover](#) of competitor steel and mining company Arcelor, and a 2004 deal that created the French pharmaceutical giant Sanofi, [Bloomberg notes](#).

Zaouie's departure comes amidst a broader Goldman exodus. Just under a month ago, London-based Goldman executive Greg Smith publicly announced his resignation from the company in a now-infamous [New York Times op-ed](#). In it, Smith lamented the rise of what he described as a "toxic and destructive" culture at the firm.

Smith and Zaouie are far from the only Goldmanites to depart. Last year, a full fifty partners left Goldman Sachs, and two long-standing heads of the firm's securities trading division already left in January, [according to The New York Times](#).

Nor is Goldman alone in suffering defections from its top ranks. In early March, JPMorgan Chase watched its global head of proprietary trading leave to start a hedge fund. That move came as JPMorgan prepared to permanently shutter its proprietary trading operation in response to new restrictions [from the Volker rule](#), which strictly limits the sort of bets a bank can make with its own money.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/04/10/yoel-zaoui-goldman-sachs_n_1415793.html

2012, Ap 11 **Tycoon arrests rock Hong Kong**

Raymond, left, and Thomas Kwok at a press conference on May 23, 2008.

Tycoon arrests rock Hong Kong

March 30, 2012, CNN International

<http://edition.cnn.com/2012/03/30/business/hong-kong-tycoon-arrest-...>

http://www.wanttoknow.info/12/04_billionaires_arrested_animal_cruel...

Brothers at the helm of a company that helped build Hong Kong's skyline and the man who once was the city's number two official were arrested in an investigation of a bribery case [that] has shocked the former British colony. Thomas Kwok

By Kevin Voigt, CNN

March 30, 2012 -- Updated 0846 GMT (1646 HKT)

Lights illuminate the Central district of Hong Kong and the International Finance Centre, built by Sun Hung Kai Properties.

STORY HIGHLIGHTS

- The arrest of two of the city's leading tycoons has shocked Hong Kong
- Also arrested was the former second highest official in the bribery investigations
- Comes as a number of scandals question government and business ties
- Kwoks control the world's second largest property developer by market cap

Hong Kong (CNN) -- Brothers at the helm of a company that helped build Hong Kong's skyline and the man who once was the city's number two official were arrested in an investigation of a bribery case has shocked the former British colony.

Thomas Kwok, 60, and Raymond Kwok, 58, and their families control Sun Hung Kai Properties, which built the city's three tallest skyscrapers. The billionaires were taken into custody by the city's Independent Commission Against Corruption.

Share price Sun Hung Kai, the world's second largest property developer by market capitalization, was down as much as 15% in the first four hours of trading Friday, losing nearly \$6 billion in market value.

Kwok brothers arrested in raid

According to local media, the ICAC also arrested Rafael Hui, 64, who was Hong Kong's Chief Secretary from 2005 to 2007, and a former advisor to Sun Hung Kai. The trio was held for questioning, but has not been charged. The ICAC hasn't released details of the case. Sun Hung Kai confirmed that the Kwok brothers were taken into custody.

Tycoon arrests rock Hong Kong

In a city where property is king, the sight of local royalty being taken into the ICAC headquarters riveted Hong Kong media, and comes at a time where the city's reputation for transparency has been tainted by a number of scandals, most recently accusations against Chief Executive Donald Tsang that he got a

sweetheart deal on an apartment and accepted private jet and yacht trips from businessmen.

The arrest also comes on the heels of Hong Kong's selection of a new Chief Executive last Sunday and protests about process, in which only 1,200 people representing the city's elite -- including the two Kwoks-- are allowed to vote.

The arrests "strengthen the perception that government and business is too close, especially now it involves a former number two Hong Kong (politician)," said David Webb, a corporate governance activist. "It's part of an overall pattern of increasingly suspicious behavior that is deeply upsetting to residents."

Who are the Kwoks?

The Kwok brothers and their family are the 27th richest in the world, with an estimated wealth of \$18.3 billion, according to Forbes magazine. The family has controlling interest of Sun Hung Kai Properties, the world's second largest property developer by market capitalization.

The family wealth has grown as Hong Kong property values, fed by increased investment from mainland China, have skyrocketed. The company has developed properties in Mainland China and Singapore, and interests in telecommunications and bus companies in Hong Kong

The Kwoks have been embroiled in a family dispute since 2008, when they led a fight to oust brother Walter Kwok as chairman and chief executive. Thomas and Raymond became chairman and chief executive, respectively, while Walter Kwok remained a non-voting member of the board.

"I thought (the arrest) is probably a follow-on from the family split in 2008 ... it's notable that Walter has not been arrested," said Webb. According to court documents filed in 2008 during the family's legal battle, Walter Kwok questioned contracts awarded "to a select number of contractors," as well as a land deal in the city's New Territories.

The Kwoks couldn't be reached for comment.

Noah's Ark and a kidnapping

The Kwoks developments include the International Commerce Center, International Finance Center and Central Plaza, which are the tallest buildings in Hong Kong and among the highest skyscrapers in the world.

Besides their property empire, Thomas is known for his evangelical Christian views. The family was instrumental in the building of a theme park with a life-sized [replica of Noah's Ark](#) -- a \$103 million project funded by the Hong Kong government but run by Sun Hung Kai.

The 450-foot long Ark was built to the specifications listed in the Bible, the architect told CNN in 2009, and includes a restaurant, hotel and a coffin -- in which visitors are encouraged to lay down and think upon their life. Sun Hung Kai property Central Plaza also has a church in its 75th floor atrium.

The Kwok family first became Hong Kong tabloid fodder in 1997, when older brother Walter was kidnapped for a week before his family gave a ransom of more than \$77 million.

Hong Kong and corruption

This latest scandal comes just weeks after Hong Kong newspapers reported that outgoing Chief Executive, Donald Tsang, allegedly received a sweetheart deal on a Shenzhen apartment from a mainland businessman, as well as taking private jet and yacht trips with other Chinese tycoons. Tsang has admitted taking some trips, but said he had paid his own way, and he received no break on the Shenzhen apartment.

The arrests of the Tsang's former second in command and the Kwok brothers is "an earthquake" for Hong Kong's business community, said Steve Vickers, a security expert and former head of the Hong Kong police Criminal Intelligence Bureau.

"Hong Kong is undoubtedly far less corrupt than any other city in Asia. It does have a very powerful anti-corruption legislation and it is regularly enforced," Vickers said. "But this particular case is so high profile ...

the issue will be whether charges follow."

According to Transparency International's 2011 Corruptions Perceptions Index, Hong Kong is the 12th least corrupt countries in the world -- the U.S., by comparison, ranked 24th.

The Kwoks will continue to run daily operation of Sun Hung Kai, according to the company board.

2012, Ap 11 **Beirutopia: Could Lebanon's capital become a garden city?**



By George Webster, for CNN
April 10, 2012 -- Updated 0936 GMT (1736 HKT)

Beirut has a chronic lack of green space. In search of a solution, Lebanese architect Wassim Melki has proposed covering the city's rooftops with trees. This computer generated image shows what Beirut's skyline would look like.



GETTY IMAGES

View of Beirut at dusk from the district of Gemmayzeh, taken in June 2009. The World Health Organization recommends 12 sq/m of green space per capita in urban areas. It estimates Beirut has only 0.8 sq/m per person.



COURTESY STUDIO INVISIBLE

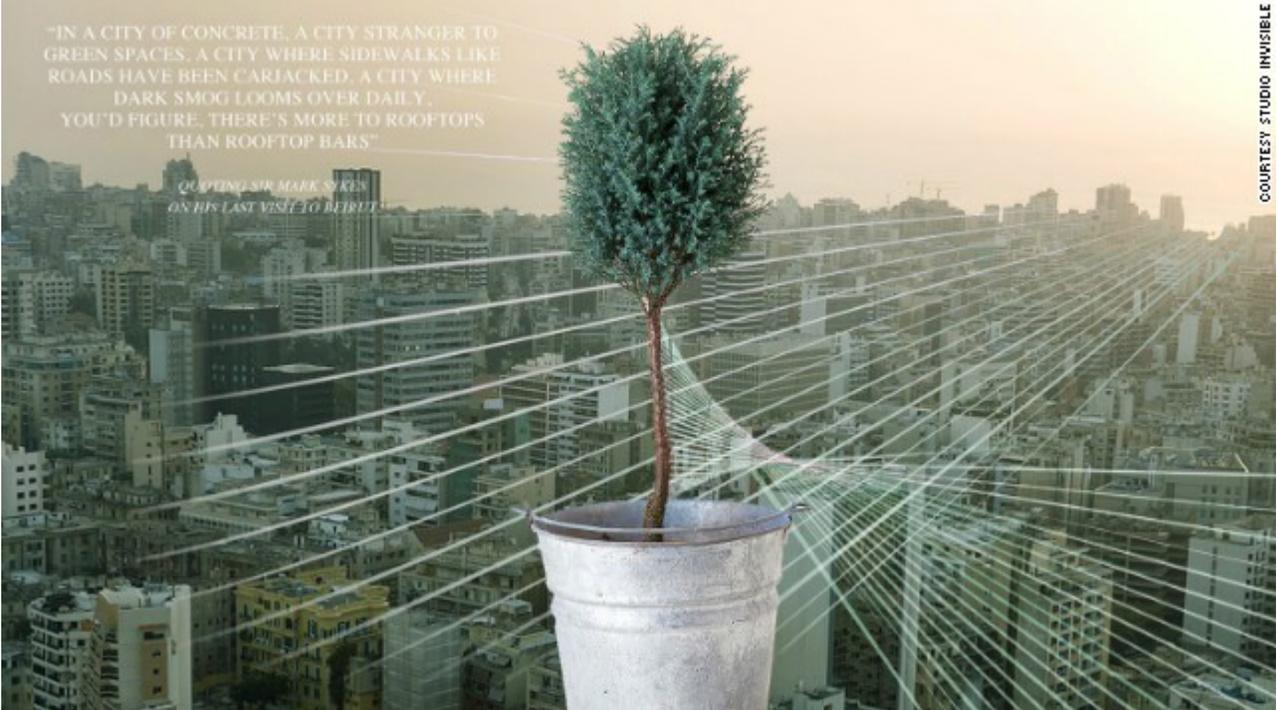
This artist's impression of the "Wonder Forest" shows individual trees planted in pots, sitting on the rooftops in Beirut. Melki says that even with just one tree per rooftop, there would be as many trees as in New York's Central Park.



COURTESY STUDIO INVISIBLE

A

bird's eye view of the projected impact. A recent United Nations Development Program report said that Beirut will add 300,000 new buildings in the next decade, leaving the already crowded city with virtually no public spaces.



"IN A CITY OF CONCRETE, A CITY STRANGER TO GREEN SPACES, A CITY WHERE SIDEWALKS LIKE ROADS HAVE BEEN CARIACKED, A CITY WHERE DARK SMOG LOOMS OVER DAILY, YOU'D FIGURE, THERE'S MORE TO ROOFTOPS THAN ROOFTOP BARS"

QUOTING SIR MARK SPAIN ON HIS LAST VISIT TO BEIRUT

COURTESY STUDIO INVISIBLE

Artist's impression of a sapling Savior tree in a basic tin pot. Melki claims that this simple method will avoid the need for complicated drainage systems.



Aerial view of Beirut today. The largest park, the Horsh al-Sanawbar -- seen in the bottom right of the image -- has been mostly closed to the public since the mid-1990s, according to the Beirut Green Project.



computer generated aerial view of the city after Wonder Forest has been installed. Melki says: "Just imagine: The world's first rooftop garden city."

A

STORY HIGHLIGHTS

Architect's "Wonder Forest" concept would turn Beirut skyline green
The plan involves installing 60,000 potted trees on the city's rooftops
Benefits include improved air quality, reduced CO2 emissions and increased shade

(CNN) -- The legendary Hanging Gardens of Babylon are the inspiration behind an ambitious plan to grow a rooftop forest high above Beirut's crowded streets.

The cityscape is currently overshadowed by concrete highrises, with parkland making up just 3% of Lebanon's capital, according to a study by the American University of Beirut.

The lack of greenery has contributed to poor air quality and trapped heat, among a host of other environmental issues, claims architect Wassim Melki. This led him to the the unconventional idea of greening over the city's rooftops.

"We want to cover the top of nearly every building in the city with trees," said Melki.

Challenging though it sounds, Melki's proposal does not involve complicated drainage systems or engineering.

"We're just talking about planting small to medium-sized trees in relatively large pots and securing them to the roofs," he added.

Aside from the major environmental and social benefits, it would also be incredibly iconic
Wassim Melki, architect

The 28-year-old architect claims there are 15,000 suitable rooftops -- around 80% of those in the city. "Even planting just one on each would result in as many trees as there are in New York's Central Park," he said.

With colleagues at local NGO ReAct, Melki aims to plant 60,000 trees eventually. They say that as well as making a sizable dent in the level of carbon dioxide in the air, the trees would also create a rooftop canopy, casting shadows on the streets and helping to keep the city cool.

Nevertheless, [Wonder Forest](#), if realized, would not be comparable to a public park. "Planting trees in the ground is always preferable, and nothing can replace a wide open space to walk through," said Melki.

Comment: Would you give the scheme your support? Is the Wonder Forest project a feasible and much needed innovation or a pretty but impractical pipe dream? Tell us you thoughts in the comments section below.

Melki estimates the total cost of the project at \$3.5-4 million and is currently lobbying for the Wonder Forest via NGO ReAct and a [Facebook](#) page.

Ultimately though, the success of the idea is in the hands of Beirut's residents -- who would need to tend the gardens, particularly over the hot summer months.

"Even if all the trees and their installation is provided, if the residents don't subsequently get involved, then the plan will fail," said Melki.

There could also be benefits for the green fingered, says Melki, who could turn a profit growing and selling olives and citrus fruits, which thrive in Beirut's Mediterranean climate.

[Read more from Road to Rio: Futuristic farm shop grows food in synthetic veg patch](#)

"Aside from the major environmental and social benefits, it would also be incredibly iconic," he says. "Just imagine: The world's first rooftop garden city."