

The Threshing Floor

January 2016

Newsletter of the Guild for Psychological Studies

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Guild Vision: The Guild envisions a world in which the significance of each person's truth, authority, and inspired purpose finds fulfillment in life and community.

Guild Mission: Guild seminars offer a way of psychological and spiritual transformation that inspires individuals to live their purpose, expand consciousness, and discover and create meaning in their lives and community.

RECORDS AND EVIL

Response to Sue Renfrew's "Brief Impression"

From John Petroni

Dear Sue:

Thank you for your December *Threshing Floor* "Brief Impression of the Annual Meeting." Your enthusiasm is always refreshing.

Regarding individuals' reflections on their Records experience, such words as "magic," "valuable," "rare," "sudden awareness of change" were used. I long to hear more about "the role of the Records...now." Does Records have a future? If, indeed, Records has a future, what is the nature of its "magic," its "valuable"? What about it is "rare"? What is its essence that brings about "sudden... change"?

I offer some reflections of my own for the sake of dialogue. My experience of the Records was—and still is—of a dynamic that enlivens, that forges a different consciousness. The question is: what is the source of that dynamic? This question about the dynamic is even more urgent today, as I try to orient myself in a world much different from when the "Records" first gripped me.

Here is one example of how "Records" impacts me. Last September I visited Oradour, an empty, devastated village in southwestern France. Charles de Gaulle decreed that the village be left as a memorial to the inhabitants massacred there by the Nazis. In 1944 German troops surrounded the village, thinking that resistance fighters were being sheltered there. The men of the village were ripped from their families, taken to a field and machine-gunned. The women and children were herded into the church and shot. Hand grenades were thrown into the church. Only one woman escaped.

The next day the Nazis returned. Not wanting to leave evidence of the slaughter, they torched the village. All that remains are the stone walls of the homes, schools, and church. The residences and businesses have the names of the people who lived there and their occupations. At the two schools there are pictures, the boys lined up in front of their school, the girls in front of theirs: smiling, fresh, alert. Their lives eternally cut off!

I was pierced by the experience. The realization of the barbarity of humans towards humans continues to hound me, especially when reading about ISIS, Boko Haram, the Christians and Muslims in Africa massacring each other, the almost daily violence in our country, our drones attacking innocent people and destroying a hospital.

The reality of evil shatters my comfort, complacency, ideals, and peace. And the Records challenge me:

"Deliver us from evil." These people are not being delivered.

"Love your enemy." Why love? What does that look like?

"Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." Sufficient for what?

The myth of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. What is this knowledge present "in the beginning"?

The quote from Jung used in seminars: "We lack imagination in evil." Such imagination changes my worldview and my view of what it is to be human.

I read these ancient texts. And there is THAT which comes alive, penetrating, relentless, urgent, wanting expression. It is not the text. It is not the “history” that “Records” represents. It is the THAT “in me.” It dialogues with these texts in search of TRUTH, that reality which is evil.

Thanks for your article, Sue. If you have a response to these thoughts I would appreciate hearing from you. (And, of course, from anyone else who experiences this urgency.)

The Heart Cries

By Judith Sweet

For all those who are in anguish

What will never be because of what is

For the needless pain in the world that grows
Bigger each day

For the lack of tenderness and kindness
In so many lives

For all those who grow hungry
and thirsty each day

For those who are caught
In the catastrophe of war

For all the unlived lives
unlived potential

Reflection and/or Reflecting and Remembering

By Nancy Russell Stone

Almost 40 years ago, on a cold January morning at a time remembered as between 10:30 and 11:00 a.m., a journey began. I had been to the starting gate previously, but never before to be in residence, a sleepover of sorts, for the woman who now I realize was asleep in various parts of her awareness. She hadn't realized just how hungry and thirsty she was; and if she had considered the arid wasteland on which she dwelt, she might not have waited so long to begin a search that would continue throughout the rest of her days, and nights.

On this morning, the one during which I am writing, remembering, and reflecting, I am inside my warm and

cozy home, alone, with only the hum of the clothes dryer to remind me of the wrinkles and creases of life that brought me to the gates of awareness, invited me to enter and absorb what I could of all that was offered.

As far as I know, the gates made of stone still stand atop a slight rise in Sheveland Road, which levels and rises, if one were to walk the roads and trails of the property.

Memories flood, such as the Russian River, a short distance from my home, when it overflows its channel and sometimes inundates the dwellings that stand on its banks. Bank is an interesting word with several definitions. Bank, as used in this writing, is defined as the (sometimes) upslope above a river, creek or stream. Another definition might suggest a given, a promise, as in “you can bank on that.” Then, what often seems to carry a lot of weight around this time of home decoration, gift buying, added pounds of body fat, the result of those delicious special event morsels, loaded with fats, sugar, and white flour . . . Those three ingredients remind of the three white no-nos: flour, sugar, and shortening. Add a bit of salt and vanilla and voila! a plate of cookies or shortbread to soothe the decreasing bank balance.

What might the memories be, the high and low, the Kunkel +100 and -100 memories that surface, that ask to be shared? For many who carry memories of The Guild for Psychological Studies, the Guild House on Divisadero, and the sacred precinct of Four Springs, the words and melody of Auld Lang Syne seem appropriate: “should auld acquaintance be forgot” might be remembered, as December 31 will happen in less than two weeks from the time of this writing.

You, the dear readers, will be reading my words in early January of 2016. This writer will have celebrated her 80th birthday with memories of Year's End-Year's Beginning celebrations at Four Springs. Although some of the rituals that were experienced year after year, often by those who chose to transition from one year to the next in the living room, may have “been forgot,” but auld acquaintance has not.

May we all remember, as we live our days and sleep our nights of the year 2016, the vision of The Guild: “The Guild envisions a world in which the significance of each person's truth, authority, and inspired purpose finds fulfillment in life and community.”

Solitude Told Me:

By Virginia Morgan

solitude told me:

Long ago I was in the bathroom stall
or in the slow lane on the highway
This is no longer my sanctuary,

but a time to coordinate events, map destinations and
catch up with loved ones neglected by time's passing

Today I bathe in moments of silence, my value mistaken
for punishment

Another case of bearing gifts with no one to give them
to just leave them on the stoop

Howls from afar

Sunday Morning

By Nils Peterson

Sunday morning. January. Newspaper filled with
Herodish things,
yet the sun rises above the cold earth. Roots stir.
Somewhere there's music.
I wrote this a few years ago.

How could the angel
who left the immensity
of Always to whisper
in the ear of the girl child
go back to the old chorus
with the other angels?
So he stayed around watching,
living like us in before and after,
now and again humming
a new song to himself.

I've been thinking about this angel, wondering
how he's getting along this year watching us fumble
on our way. It must be hard. But I don't think he'd
change his mind.

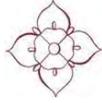
January Birthdays

Nancy Russell Stone	Jan 1
Alyzsa Van Til	Jan 3
Harry Henderson	Jan 5
Daniel Davis	Jan 7
James Preston	Jan 12
Selina Sweet	Jan 13
Kathy Nyhan	Jan 15
Al Braidwood	Jan 17
Pat Wroblewski	Jan 17
Coleen Higa	Jan 19
Robert Fletcher	Jan 25
Alice McHugh	Jan 25
Shirley Sullivan	Jan 26
Shirley Sait-Huneven	Jan 28

Happy New Year



Celebrating 2016 with You!



Guild for Psychological Studies

*From winter depths...
...spring emerges...
tend your rich and wild ground...*

A Day of Exploration through Images and Dialogue: Discover SoulCollage®

Saturday, March 5, 2016
10:00am-4:30pm
Lafayette, CA



Join us and spend a day in playful but profound dialogue with your soul. You will learn the basics of the SoulCollage® method and invite your own imagination and intuition to guide your creativity.

In Guild seminars, creative expression enriches our experience by facilitating access to deeper aspects of personality, experience and meaning, and promotes awareness and integration.

SoulCollage® is a method of personally creating and working with collage-image cards that bring our heart, mind, soul, experience and environment alive for exploration and sharing. The method provides a way of organizing and giving voice to these personal images facilitating on-going connection, integration and transformation.

Creating image cards evokes a sense of play, reduces stress and uses both left and right brain functions. SoulCollage® has both personal and interpersonal applications.

Rooted in Jungian analytic and transpersonal psychology, Gestalt and Pyschosynthesis, SoulCollage® was developed by Seena Frost, MFT. The method has continued its development and grown through worldwide use for nearly 30 years (www.SoulCollage.com).

Our presenter, Mariabruna Sirabella, has practiced and taught SoulCollage® worldwide for nearly 20 years, and trains SoulCollage® facilitators. Mariabruna was introduced to us by a Guild participant who, after attending a SoulCollage® retreat with her, felt it to be an excellent fit for the Guild's work.

Presenter: Mariabruna Sirabella, MS, LMFT, SCT

Location: Elizabeth Bremer's home in Lafayette, CA
(rides can be arranged from Lafayette BART)

Fee: Register by Feb. 5th: \$65 / after Feb. 5th: \$75.

An additional non-refundable registration fee of \$15 is due with all registrations. The workshop fee includes SoulCollage® materials. Limited scholarships and payment plans are available.

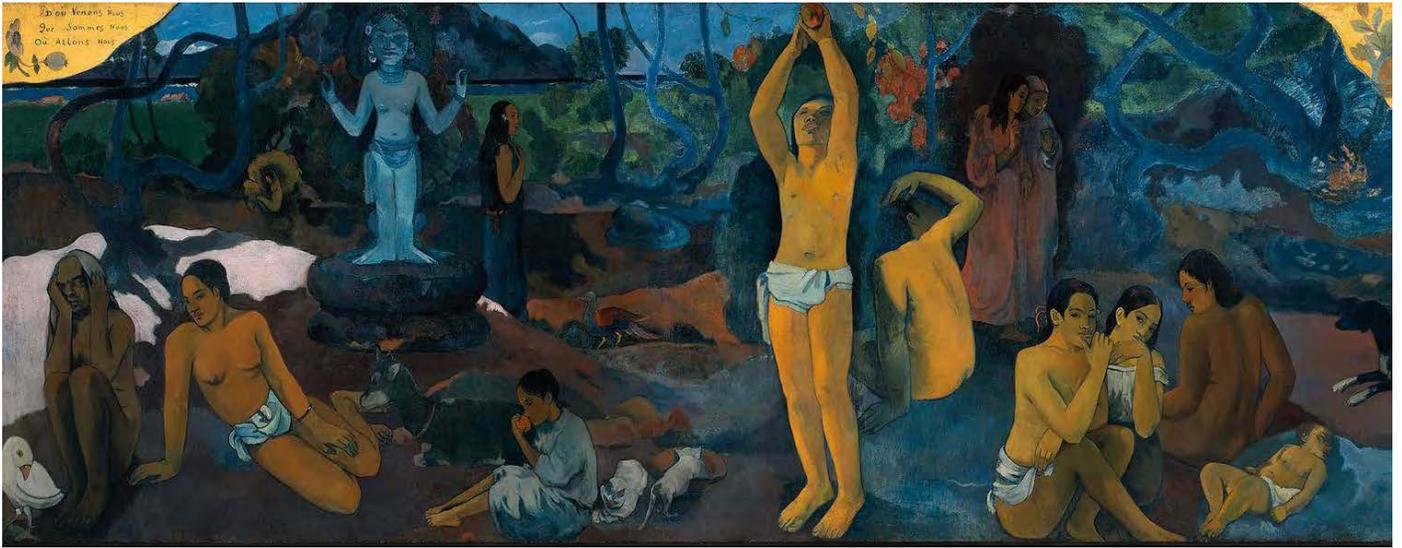
Register at: www.guildsf.org/seminar-registration

This workshop meets the qualifications for 5.5 hours of continuing education credit for LMFTs, LPCCs, LEPs, and/or LCSWs as required by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences. Approved provider #PCE 1829. Please include an additional \$15 for the CEU certificate. Participants will:

- Learn the structure of the SoulCollage® method of inquiry.
- Explore how the SoulCollage® process offers a way to access and integrate information from both the conscious and unconscious mind by engaging both sides of the brain and by offering a way to consciously consult and organize this information.
- Practice using creative expression and imagination as ways to dialogue with energies present in the self and in the world.

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Gauguin: Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?

The Guild for Transformational Studies
2016 Summer Guild Retreat -- July 16–24, 2016
Flame and Flower: Encountering the Living Questions

Join a circle of seekers for a nine-day retreat at Shepherd's Spring in Maryland to explore your living questions and come to a fuller expression of your own truth. Questions, intensely asked and heard, can set the course of a life, drawing us from birth to birth, dissolving and transforming ourselves as the very journey of life. No matter where we are in our life's journey, at the beginning, middle or end, questions work away on us, disturbing complacency and awakening consciousness. What are the burning and urgent questions you are wrestling with? In each inviting question, what is the bud yearning to become a flower? In this seminar we will explore how to live in relation to our living questions. We will seek to know the questions that have been guiding our lives, and to discover the new questions that are emerging right now.

The seminar process uses a modified Socratic method to guide group discussion. We honor the dignity of each individual to express their truth and move at their own pace. Mutual respect will support us in our quest to discover the gifts within our depths. Our work will be enriched by the use of non-verbal approaches: meditation, expressive arts, music, body movement and awareness, drama, and silence. All applicants new to the Guild are asked to accompany their application with a letter stating why they wish to attend and any pertinent information about prior study and experience around spiritual issues.

For a registration form and additional information, please contact Susan Thompson at susanthompson045@yahoo.com. We will keep the circle small, so sign up early!

Partial scholarships are available. Please apply with your request to Susan Thompson.

Date & Time: Saturday, July 16 to Sunday, July 24, 2016.
Leaders: Hal Childs, PhD, M.Div, MFT and Patricia Stenger, MFT
Location: Shepherd's Spring Retreat Center, Sharpsburg, MD
Fee: \$1,800 (this includes ALL expenses for a double room, board, art materials, and leader fees for 9 days) (\$200 per day). Extra fee charged for single room.

Stay Connected

Bob Ridder, Administrative Coordinator, is available for all inquiries by phone at (415) 561-2385, or by email at office@guildsf.org.

Send your email address to office@guildsf.org so that we can keep you connected and up-to-date on Guild events. Also be sure that we have your current mailing address so that we are able to send you this yearly edition of the newsletter. Please keep us updated with your address changes.

Mailing Address

Guild for Psychological Studies
P.O. Box 29385
San Francisco, CA 94129-0385

Guild Website

Visit www.guildsf.org for information about seminars and events, and to register for seminars. The website also has general information about the Guild, past issues of the Threshing Floor, relevant news, and links to resources. If you would like to post information of interest to the Guild community, please email harryhenderson51@gmail.com, our web administrator.

Guild Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/guildsf>, launched in January! If you haven't yet, please "friend" and "like" us!

Newsletter

To receive 12 issues of *The Threshing Floor* a year, please contact the Guild office. There is no charge for an e-mail subscription. For a print subscription, please send a check for \$25 to the Guild office.

Items for inclusion in the Threshing Floor should be mailed to the Guild Office, Attn. Threshing Floor Editor, or emailed to office@guildsf.org. The deadline for each issue is the 20th of the month. Items received after that date will be published the following month.

Production & Layout Editor: Wilene Chang
Content Editors: Janet Boeth Jones, Sue Renfrew
Distribution: Bob Ridder

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this newsletter (by contributors other than staff and directors) are the writers' and not necessarily an official position of the Guild.

Publishing House sales – books and CDs

Order publications on the Guild website, or contact Carina Ravelly at guildpublishing@yahoo.com.

Donations

Many thanks to our donors! Your financial support in any amount helps the Guild with seminars and other events, with the training of leaders, with outreach, and with other new and ongoing efforts. Because the Guild is a registered nonprofit organization, with 501(c)(3) status, your contribution may be tax deductible. Donations should be directed to the Guild office address, or you may donate online using the PayPal link you'll find by selecting the Make a Donation link on the main page of our website.

Volunteers

There are several people who fill necessary volunteer roles in the Guild. If you would like to be a Guild volunteer, please contact the Guild office at office@guildsf.org and let us ~~know particular~~ volunteer roles that appeal to you. Currently volunteers are members of the editorial staff for the Threshing Floor; members of the Board of Directors; serve as continuing education coordinator; train to serve as seminar coordinator, committee person or cook; provide transportation to/from seminars for attendees; help to catalog or research Guild archive materials; write reviews for Guild books and other publications; etc.

Friends and Members

Friends of the Guild are donors and others interested in receiving Guild information who are not Voting Members. Voting membership requires active participation in some form of leadership or committee role, or other volunteer effort, and the payment of annual dues. Voting members may receive a print subscription to the Threshing Floor upon request.

Board of Directors

Elizabeth Bremer, Secretary
Hal Childs, President
Harry Henderson, Treasurer
Denise Dinwiddie
Jennifer Larson, Vice President

