

# *The Threshing Floor*

May 2015

**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.

## **Joy Of the Morning**

*By: Barbara Lyon*

I sing, dance  
Wade into seas waves

You choose to curse  
Wail your wrath

With me join this clear morning  
That offers me joy

## **Spend the Day with Matisse, Bonnard and Vuillard**

See their work, listen to their words, delight in their color, and find how their art can enliven your life. There will be time to explore how they do what they do and even try it. With the exciting exhibition from the Scottish Museum at the de Young until May 31st and a significant Bonnard show coming next year, we have a chance to see examples of their best work, and so be sure to go on your own before the seminar.

Lunch is included

Time: Saturday May 16, 2015 at 9:30 – 4:30

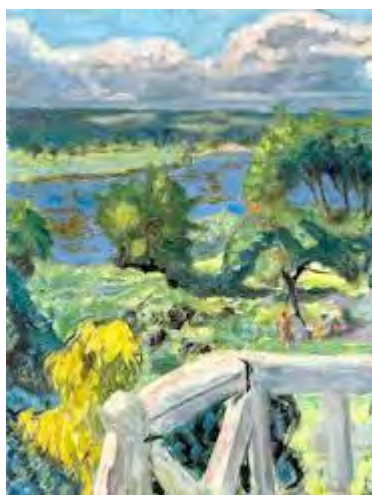
Leader: Sue Renfrew

Place: Sue Renfrew's house in San Francisco

Cost: \$50.00, which includes \$15.00 non-refundable registration fee.



**Matisse**



**Bonnard and Vuillard**

## Solace

By: Janet Boeth Jones

Embracing the forgotten  
Sometimes feels like falling  
Into cool, deep memory.

Long clouds disintegrate  
Into tomorrow's black hole,  
While today's green life,  
Thriving with Spring,  
Shines tall with delight.

Oceans of grass laugh in the sun,  
Covering winter's fallen brown leaves,  
And calling me to float in stillness.

## RESPONSES TO APRIL DIALOGUE

### Lamentations of a Question

By: John Petroni (*Symposiarch*)

I expressed myself in the *Threshing Floor*, April 1, issue. And I was not met; I felt lost in my SELF for lack of response. Was I not clear?

My essence, to once more express it in hope of being taken seriously, is: in the work of the Guild, in the Guild's seminars, does the Records of the Life of Jesus have value?

I presented myself to the Board of the Guild. The Board responds that it shepherds the transformation of the organization. The Board "continuously evaluates the state of the Guild and reflects on its potential." May I ask: how does the Board evaluate the "potential" of Records?

One place of my provenance is the statement by W. Giegerich that in the transformation of the syntax of consciousness "nothing is lost." To state mySELF once more, is the essence of the Records still a dynamic or is it lost?

Hal Childs took the time and effort to respond. He questions (personalistically?) whether "John (is) immune from the penetrating nature of his own questions?" Whether John is immune or not is of no interest to me. John is no longer a leader of Guild seminars.\* He does not help in the formulation of the work of the Guild. I, as question, as soul, need addressing.

John is asked at times, what is the focus of the Guild's work? As recently as the ENDINGS seminar in Seattle, a participant plaintively asked if there would be a Records seminar, since she is eager to experience that.

John does not have a clear answer. Maybe he is the only one without a clear notion.)

If Hal Childs, as a seminar leader, chooses not to answer my urgency, my hope is that other individual leaders might think this through so that I as question may find my SELF.

*\*John did lead a one-day seminar in Seattle. That addressed a specific topic, the ending of the NW committee. He also led a seminar in 2013, but he had no part in formulating the seminar and was invited to participate as leader after the seminar had been formulated.*

### From Seattle

By: Laura Grosvenor

As a member of the NW committee, I was struck by John Petroni's questions about the role of the Records in the last *Threshing Floor*. I believe he may have been referring to some of our conversations of late as I shared with him some of our members' own questions as to Records material and the lack thereof in recent seminars.

While I appreciate and understand the Guild Leadership's response: "*While adhering to the guidelines and to the 'modified Socratic' method of engaging material, particular content is determined by the interests of those who propose projects and those who participate in those studies.*" I need to say that many participants see the de-emphasis on Records material as a loss. I realize that some material lends itself well to inclusion of the Records and some does not, but I have also seen that inclusion, when possible, does lead to increased connection with the material.

I must state here that I was upset with Hal Childs' response to John's questions. I felt that John Petroni was indeed posing the question to the group as a means of opening up the issue for discussion and felt as though Hal Childs was "calling John Petroni out" for daring to post the question without posing an answer first. A more satisfying response would have been for Hal to attempt to answer the question and begin the conversation. I would have been especially interested in his reflections because of his work "*The Myth of the Historical Jesus and the Evolution of Consciousness.*"

I, personally, am not tied to the Records work, but was made more conscious of the value of its inclusion at our most recent seminar. The familiarity of Record examples truly seemed to provide a touchstone for many of the participants and often allowed them a common vocabulary that a more "psychological vocabulary" did not.

## **Comments/Response to the President's Question..."Are we doing it right?"**

*By Maris Leitz*

These are my "two-cents," which I offer in part to reiterate some concerns that John Petroni expressed in the April issue of *The Threshing Floor* about "what has happened to the Records?"

Even before I read his questions/ comments, I realized that this has been on my mind for some time....a couple of years...(not sure how long)....wondering if the Guild has decided to change the focus of the organization from what I thought it to be when I experienced it back in the mid-eighties, when the original foundresses were still living and held influence over the direction of the Guild. It was a satisfying reaction I felt when I read John Petroni's questions, and said to myself..."Heh, I'm not the only one wondering this!" I read what Hal Child's responded to John as though it was "one person's viewpoint," but admitting that J.P.'s opinion has some weight.

As I remember from my experience in San Francisco and at Four Springs for some 5-6 months' training as a Leader, there was a definite "touchstone"/tradition ... preserved and protected by the Guild under the leadership of the original foundresses. I always understood that the growth of the Guild and the adaptation to the current changes in modern society was an "organic" one, with the Records at the "roots" of that organism. And, yes, it was also evident that the Guild passionately held fast as a "protective mother" to that "baby," *i.e.*, that it would grow, but that this new growth would be faithful and true to its original vision and goals.

What I hear John Petroni doing is calling you to this original vision and that which has given the Guild that "special," unique mission all these years. I, too, have experienced a "dissipation of interest and energy" as far as what I lived and experienced at/with the Guild. I would hate to see you deviate too much, probably still doing a good service, but not preserving the heritage and uniqueness that has been so valuable and fruitful for more than half a century! Perhaps there are Guild members who do want to see the organization become something different and/or new, and probably good. I

regret to say that some of us who do think/feel there is a vision and mission with the Records at the center would be dissatisfied and even sad.

A few "notes" on myself...upon returning to my ministry in the New Orleans area for adult religious education and retreats, I led groups and retreats in the tradition and process of the Records for some 5-6 years. The "seeds" planted in my psyche/soul/mind by the Guild have grown and blossomed through the years and are

as vibrant and full of life as ever. People tell me, still, that when I talk about my experience and/or the beauty of Scripture passages that are "unpacked" in the method of the Records.... they sense an enthusiasm and a child-like joy in my person! I tell them that the Guild's influence in my personal and professional life was transforming in very deep and radical ways. I was never the same as a believer, an educator, a minister. I will forever be grateful to the Guild, Four Springs, and those remarkable foundresses of that creative venture /vision called The Guild for Psychological Studies.

## **Has Something Changed?**

*By: Jack Russell Stone*

Yes, the Guild has a more up-to-date worldview now as well as a new structure that is not clear.

The new outlook seems okay to me, but there's something else that doesn't feel right: I wrote a piece for the March issue which was deemed unsuitable by a Board member because I had not noticed that the issue was intended to be used as a sort of marketing tool by the Board. Something had changed. Never mind, I rewrote the piece for the April issue, which was edited by the long-established volunteer TF editors, Sue and Janet. (Remember that Sue long ago originated on her own the Guild "newsletter" known as *An Uncertain Trumpet*.)

In that March issue, John Petroni asked some pertinent and penetrating—albeit rhetorical—questions of the Board that perhaps were meant to inform the readers as much as John. But the questions were not answered, because the Board claimed not to be responsible for such queries, as it does not "own" the Guild's philosophy, according to its president. Three of the five Board members are also three of the five in the Casting Seeds group that leads and proposes seminars. So, whence do we gain answers in such a structure?

Then Hal, declaiming to be responsible, though he is president of the Board and a senior seminar leader, seeming to take personal umbrage with John's questions, asked that John "take a stand" (not normally required when one asks for clarity.) No answers there; Hal: "The Guild is a membership organization." So, answers about the Guild are found . . . within?

To clarify my own interest in this game, I ask: How is it then, that both the Board and Hal (writing as an unofficial person) were able to access John's item before it was published, as in my March-issue experience? I wondered similarly last October when Norman McMullen and two others were responded to in that same issue by Harry Henderson, a Board member who then had the next issue all to himself to continue his response. Is the content of the TF now edited by the Board as well as by the editors named on the back page? Is it now an organ of the Board? Just asking.

## Reflections

*By: Judith Peterson*

I would like to respond to the invitation for feedback about the Guild's work. The question, "Is the work of Giegerich replacing the Records?" has actually been a concern of mine for a long time. I remember when Lynn Ann Forest began to lead a Records training course for aspiring leaders--for which I was so grateful because it was so needed and appreciated. When it "seemed to be" replaced with another course emphasizing Giegerich, I began to feel the concern that this emphasis was dominating the Records and their future. Of course, if people love the new emphasis and want to lead it, they should. It could be very hurtful to dampen their energy which is so needed and important. And, it is very hard for some of us who revere the Records to see something "else" seem to dominate both seminars and the training program. It is a very challenging situation!

What might help at this time? It would help me to validate these differences and acknowledge how difficult the feelings about them can be. To find inclusive, nonviolent language that respects our different points of view would be great. We need the eros that so many of us found in Guild work.

The board has planned a structure for individuals to "carry their own water" and take responsibility for initiating seminars--there is support for this financially and energetically. I needed this help for a special day long seminar with John Lee leading, and it was so supportive and encouraging.

I personally hope very much to see Records work find its way to people's deepest lives. We in the south bay have found that the small group format meeting in a home is very comfortable and powerful. More Fire for Life has been passionately active for over twenty years and is still going strong.

## ENDINGS IN SEATTLE

*By: John Petroni*

On Saturday, April 11th, the seminar ENDINGS was held in Seattle for a group of 12. ENDINGS because the Northwest Committee of the Guild is pondering "closing shop" after more than five decades of work bringing value to so many people in that region. One purpose of the seminar was to honor those who shepherded the work with devotion and enthusiasm. Following are two reflections of those "good and faithful servants" who are now gone. Laura Grosvenor, a loyal member of the committee for decades, wrote the first piece. The author of the second piece chose to remain anonymous.

## 2015 Easter Morning

*"To make an end is to make a beginning.  
The end is where you start from." T.S. Eliot*

About 50 years ago, in Seattle, I sought God in the person of Dr. Howard Eddy. He was introduced to me as "God" by his close friend, the minister who had married us. Dr. Eddy had recently returned from Zurich as a licensed Jungian analyst.

In our first session he spoke the word "synchronicity." when I asked him what the word meant, his framed photo of Carl Jung moved from his desk to the floor. "That is synchronicity," he said. During the following year I attended a Guild for Psychological Studies' seminar led by Luella Sibbald, where she used the word "ego-centricity." Again, I didn't know the word and became quite certain that it didn't apply to me. By the end of the year, I found myself attending a Basic Records seminar at Four Springs. (The church bells just started tolling. Synchronicity!) Thus began a 30-year involvement with the Guild, helping to offer seminars in Four Springs and in Seattle.

A Seattle couple who had been involved in Guild seminars in the L.A. area found the property that became known at Four Springs. Howard Eddy and Marci were among several others from Seattle who attended these seminars; as were Ruth Warnick, Lilian Burns, Priscilla Maynard, Ruth Alura and Donald Dodd, Jane Harries and others whose names have not surfaced.

For many years Sadie Gregory traveled to Seattle to offer Guild seminars, which have continued to this day. She was beloved.

The spirit in the Seattle community has been devoted. Through the years, energy for service and celebration has thrived. Open hospitality, good humor, and earnest engagement are among the qualities that, in part, describe your Seattle brand. Throughout the years, the spark in each member, in part kindled by the Jesus

who came alive in the Basic Records' study, has enlivened the lives of many.

This weekend is an occasion for gratitude and gladness. As you share this transition into the next chapter on your journeys, perhaps it is not so much an ending, rather more a transformation. Nothing is here for tears, rather more for celebration. Well done, good and faithful ones.

### Reminiscences

By: *Laura Grosvenor*

When I first began attending seminars here in the NW, I had just returned from my first seminar at Four Springs. Bill Towner had gone the year before (for the first time) and I was intrigued with the concepts he shared. I was new to the teaching profession and each year my on tract was not renewed due to a reduction in force. The year Bill went I tried following the Synoptic Gospels on my own,

Upon returning from Four Springs, I was welcomed into the NW committee when they had a seminar at camp Brotherhood. The seminar was led by Joan Gibbons, who had also led the Basic Records. Needless to say, I was welcomed wholeheartedly into the fold by Alberta Stone, Jane Harries, Margaret Impet and all. At that time I was told the story of the early years of the Guild. How Alberta used her grocery money to pay for seminar space; how either Elizabeth Howes or Sheila Moon or Sadie Gregory led groups of 40 or more. By the time I arrived, seminars still required two leaders and were usually divided into two groups of about 12-20 each.

Early on, Linda Morgan and I were welcomed into the leadership group, but it was a time of turbulent change. Leadership was aging and the "newbies" tended to object to what we viewed as archaic, often unspoken, rules. Seminars were focused primarily on the "Records" liberally sprinkled with Jung's teachings. The group met monthly and studied the Old Testament with Sadie Gregory's book.

One of the big complaints from Alberta on down is the lack of reference to the Synoptic Gospels, but I prefer an emphasis on world mythology and personal connections to whatever text is being presented. Even as my time began, we began losing leaders to death, illness, moving away. I'm sorry I can no longer recall everyone's names. Eventually, the leadership group dwindled down to Alberta, Jane, Bill, Linda and myself. By then we were choosing to have one group, usually around 20 or so. Linda Morgan moved on to other things. Jane and Alberta were finding it harder to find the energy. Bill decided we needed new members in the leadership group; First, Kate Lynch, then Rob Fletcher and then Mary Ann Lee. (*Laura concludes with further reminiscences.*)

### Candidates for the Board of Directors

By: *Elizabeth Bremer, Secretary of the Board*  
(*Lbremer4@[aol.com](mailto:lbrem4@aol.com)*)

The Guild Board of Directors is recruiting candidates between now and mid-July in preparation for the annual election that will take place in August. We are seeking individuals who are committed to the Guild's mission and to helping the organization succeed. If you are interested in serving on the Board, please contact me or any Board member to talk about board work.

Our organization depends upon the active participation of the Guild community in furthering our work.

The Board provides strategic, policy, program and operations oversight in order to further our mission and vision. We seek to bring forth the Guild's work by supporting the energy of leaders to grow and create programs while maintaining a healthy financial basis through which to fuel future development.

Currently, the board meets approximately every other month, on a Saturday, in the East San Francisco Bay area. Though not preferable, it is sometimes possible for members who cannot travel to a meeting to participate by conference call, and video conferencing may also be considered. Between meetings, communication is usually by group e-mail, and members contribute a few hours to projects individually or with others. The current directors are Elizabeth Bremer, Hal Childs, Harry Henderson, Jennifer Larson, and Rita McGowan. We look forward to hearing from you.

### May Birthdays

Ruth McMullen	May 2
Rosemary Hayes	May 3
Catriona Marcus	May 3
Karen Maki	May 5
Joyce Samati	May 6
Susan Thompson	May 8
Norman McMullen	May 13
Susan Isaac	May 14
John Lee	May 14
Hal Childs	May 17
Fred Davis	May 18
Elizabeth Naegle	May 20
Janet Boeth Jones	May 22
Nadine Hathaway	May 26
Laura Grosvenor	May 28
Sarah Eeles	May 29

Guild for Psychological Studies  
July 11-19, 2015



## *The Inevitable Gravity of Beautiful Trouble*

Is it dangerous and foolhardy to offer a seminar on trouble? Should we beware of what will be stirred up? Who wakes up in the morning assuming trouble is something to look forward to?

We buy insurance; we make plans for disasters; we anticipate worst case scenarios; we learn to put on character armor as children to cope with troubling parents; we become vigilant for psychological trouble. The natural attitude is to keep trouble away.

Still, we must ask, What is the unknown presence that troubles us? What does trouble want? What does trouble need from us?

For Jesus the kingdom of God is trouble. For Jung the individuation impulse is trouble. Yet both these paths are a way to authenticity, to consciousness, to deep beauty.

Let him who seeks, not cease seeking until he finds, and when he finds, he will be troubled, and when he has been troubled, he will marvel and he will reign over the All.

*Gospel of Thomas, logia 2*

The shadow troubles our self-image, and the trickster troubles our best-laid plans. It is said the truth will set you free, but first it will trouble you profoundly. We sleep and our sleep is troubled by dreams. We have a choice: either to be victims of trouble, or to face the challenge of trouble. How might trouble lead us to Beauty and open us to truth?

In this seminar we will seek to face the inevitable gravity of *trouble*, to learn its inner necessity and to know its hidden secrets for making what is beautiful of soul manifest. The wisdom of Jesus, the Greek myth of Odysseus, the soul-centered psychology of Wolfgang Giegerich, and most especially our personal experience will guide our exploration.

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. We utilize meditation, expressive arts, music, body movement and awareness, and silence to deepen our work.

Please include a letter stating why you wish to attend and any pertinent information about prior study and experience around spiritual issues.

**Location:** Four Springs, Middletown CA  
**Leaders:** Hal Childs, PhD, MFT and Patricia Calcagno Stenger, MA, MFT  
**Fee:** \$1,485. Include a non-refundable fee of \$50 with registration.  
Limited scholarships and payment plans are available.  
Contact for more information:  
Hal Childs, 415-573-2469; [halchilds@earthlink.net](mailto:halchilds@earthlink.net)  
Register at [www.guildsf.org/seminar-registration](http://www.guildsf.org/seminar-registration)

This seminar meets the qualifications for 30 hours of continuing education credit for MFT's, 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 aspects of Jungian work on the psychological implications of life's troubles.
- Explore the importance of accessing the unconscious in order to process the buried, complex feelings related to the inevitable suffering of daily life.
- Explore and practice psychological thinking.
- Use art expression, body awareness and imagination as ways to dialogue with energies present in the self and in the world.

## Stay Connected

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

Send your email address to [office@guildsf.org](mailto: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  
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## Guild Website

Visit [www.guildsf.org](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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  
Jennifer Larson, President  
Rita McGowan

