



The Threshing Floor

December 2016

Newsletter of the Guild for Psychological Studies

Web site: www.guildsf.org

Phone: (415) 561-2385

P.O. Box 29385, San Francisco, California 94129-0385

e-mail: office@guildsf.org

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.

An Experience

by Selina Sweet

I thought I'd share this little bit: I joined Larry Gizinsky's group into the graveyards of celebrators and sorrowers of Los Dias De Los Muertos last night, in Xoxocotlin. I entered the large cemetery and just meandered. No goal in mind. Just wanted to be "in" it. Well, over a full-throated group *cancione*, I heard a lone male voice singing. And, grave by grave - some elaborately adorned with Jesus looking afflicted with indigestion, but colorfully, carefully, lovingly constructed with arena in white, grays, ochres, and black touched with orange for emphasis, and others, simply mounds of plain earth without a single *flor* laid lovingly on it, and anonymous as though the death and interment just happened yesterday and the griever felt too heartbroken to name the body below - I let myself be drawn by that almost crude tenor, at times slightly off key, until I arrived in his proximity, where I stood there, off to the side a bit, simply listening to him singing while he sat there on the bench, head bowed, tenderly singing to the melody he drew from his guitar. After at least a couple of songs, he stopped. And in that pause, I told him how his singing touched me, how *hermosa* it was. He slowly stood, came over to me, looked at me, and slowly chewed out, "*Usted es hermosa* - Can I give you a hug?" I hesitated, then said yes. He hugged me. Then, he asked in a somewhat broken and drawn out cadence, may I give you a kiss? Hmmm. I thought to myself. This guy is *baracho*. What to do? To preserve the harmony alive in the cemetery and, truth be told, feeling an affection for this stranger, I said yes. I

present my right cheek. He kisses me. Then, he asks. Will you give me a kiss? Well. Okay. This has gone as far as I can go. So, chuckling to myself, I say, yes, I will give you a *beso*. And I lean over, aim at his right furry cheek, and give him a kiss. Then, quickly, give excuses about the autobus leaving, turn away and take off. All during that brief but seemingly endless encounter, a younger woman, perhaps his *hermana*, short, at least a couple of inches shorter than I (at 5'1"), stood there close beside us, shining, smiling up at me while the askings were asked and the kisses given and the hugs received. Meanwhile, the long white tapers aglow with their little fires stood tall and slender, all growing out, up, and over the graves everywhere, at times hidden by bodies black moving along the narrow paths to the grave still waiting for its orange chrysanthemum petal adornments, while the tall trees in gray green stood, touching the starlit black heavens, and gently moved their long feathered branches this way then that way above, as though casting showers of grace upon every one of us alive down here and every one of us just bones in the mounds of earth below.

Create Peace

By Barbara Lyon

Mountain, come forth
out of the clouds,
strong and clear,
call to your army of pines
"Trust the shaking aspen!"

The Airborne Toxic Event*

By Hal Childs

(A personal statement and does not speak for the Board or the Guild)

According to an old language, the ideas of *crisis* and *opportunity* are intimately related.

About two thousand five hundred years ago, when the kingdom of Israel was invaded and destroyed by foreign powers, the people exiled to alien cultures, and the existence of their god seriously imperiled—during the deepest crisis the great prophets appeared: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and others. In the midst of a profound historical crisis, the agony and promise of soul created a new vision of itself through the words of remarkable people.

In the United States, it was the framers of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution in the face of British colonial oppression. During the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln emerged. In our recent past, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X gave voice to and galvanized hope and action in the midst of dark crisis.

Gandhi is another example of oppressive social forces giving rise to a new leader when he led the Indian Independence Movement against British colonial imperialism during the first decades of the twentieth century.

When the dark threat of Mordor spread over the land, it was Frodo and Samwise, with a host of helpers, who rose to the occasion, taking on the most dangerous journey to the heart of evil in order to depose its power.

Each of these human (and fictional) persons was the embodiment of the intimate relationship between crisis and opportunity during a time of great tragedy, danger and threat.

We now have a national leader, the newly elected President of the United States, who openly flouts normal decorum and acts out the shadow. Now, perhaps as never before, we have a living embodiment of racism, misogyny, xenophobia, hate, and bullying right in our faces. Despair, fear, disgust, outrage and anger, nausea, disbelief, shock, and denial are all healthy and appropriate responses to what will soon be before us at the highest level of

national government. Now the dark and disgusting shadow is not simply an idea, nor is it simply a private and personal matter. It is out in the open, visible, palpable, terrifying.

Each of us has work to do, each of us our own task. We can choose to turn toward the public face of darkness as best we can while taking care to nurture beauty and goodness, healing, and light, as well as understanding and truth, compassion, and courage. There is an opportunity at the heart of this terrible crisis already gestating. While there is a certain quality of waiting that is called for, and the necessity of the right time, we each, to our own capacity, are free to take our stand for truth in the midst of the spreading darkness and call forth that Voice that is gathering itself to speak through each of us.

*The image of “the airborne toxic event” is from the novel *White Noise* by Don DeLillo.

A Woman from the 1950s

By Maureen Hartmann

Age forty
Anne, mother of five,
held Dominican College secondary credential.
Now she had to entertain for her husband
an executive
in times of the cold war.

She a good Catholic
home manager
did not know
her own feminine depth.
Her times made her end budding quarrel
with adolescent daughter by insisting
“Do not be unhappy about it,
since there is you
can do nothing about it!”
Thus she suffered rifts
in her fifth decade.
Oh, this woman’s loneliness
and void!

A Further Query to Harry Henderson

by John Petroni

Thank you, Harry, for your November 1 (TF) response to my question: How do you propose we learn this different form of thought, that is, in your words, “to get to the inner truth, the “logic of such (current) phenomena”?”

You spell out the attitude the ego must take in this “process, if we really want a phenomenon to be thought.”

You do not make clear what this process is: letting a phenomenon “be thought.” How does the “ego” learn to engage this process? Can you say more or do you want us to wait until the discussion group gathers?

I look forward eagerly to participating in your discussion group. (At some point you hinted that the phenomenon that we would tackle first is this disastrous election result.)

P.S. A further question: Why should having a phenomenon thinking matter to me? But I can hold this question for now.

December Birthdays

John Petroni	Dec 4
Hope Raymond	Dec 11
Dorinda Hawk	Dec 14
Carina Ravelly	Dec 16
Jennifer Larson	Dec 17
Angie Papastefan	Dec 17
Linda Missouri	Dec 19
Elizabeth Chandler	Dec 20
Fran Sheridan	Dec 23
Elizabeth Bremer	Dec 31

Decision

By Harry Henderson

If we are to prevail over old fears,
We must be willing to speak new truths:
No wall can withstand the touch of a cloud.
Your parents' jobs are not coming back.
Robots will soon program themselves
much better than we could ever program them.
Our work is now the service of human care
and the kindling of imagination.

Bequest 2016

The Board is delighted to announce that the Guild received a bequest of \$3,655.17 from the estate of Diane Denman. She is fondly remembered as a seminar participant from many years ago. At the time of her death, December 10, 2015, she was 72 and living in Lowell, Michigan.



*Anxiety and
Joy June 27 - July
2, 2017*

Anxiety is no stranger to many of us. It can steal the breath. It can disorient in the middle of the night or overwhelm in the midst of normal daily activities. We may feel powerless in its presence or embarrassed that it compels us toward unwanted behaviors. What is anxiety and what does it tell us about itself? What is required of us to face it and its multiple manifestations?

Jakob Boehme says, "The Holy Spirit leads us by anxiety to a new birth." What might this mean? Perhaps anxiety itself is the push of something new that wants to come into being. What orientation of heart and mind might be needed to explore the creativity that is hidden within anxiety? How might the disturbing symptoms we experience lead to greater freedom and joy?

In this seminar, we will use discussion, art, play dialogues, movement, music, silence and above all our own experience and self-reflection to explore what Soul/Life/Self has to teach us about

in many sides of anxiety.

Leaders:

Manuel Costa, MA MFT

Jennifer Larson MA

Patricia Calcagno Stenger, MA MFT

Location:

The Angela Center, Santa Rosa CA

Fee:

\$1,100 + \$50.00 registration if application is received before February 27, 2017

\$1,200 + \$50.00 registration if application is received after February 26, 2017

For more information about the seminar please contact
Patricia Stenger at pstenger@comcast.net or 707-537-1511

For information about scholarships, please contact

Manuel Costa at mjmmc46987@aol.com or 408-266-2084

Register at <http://guildsf.org/online-seminar-registration/>

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

