



# The Threshing Floor

February 2018

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.

## Nourishing the Soul, March 26 to 29 at Bishop's Ranch, Healdsburg, California

We have been shipwrecked by a strange island, and though we've had to swim our way ashore through stormy seas, when we arrive, we find our clothes are as bright and neat and dry as when we first bought them. A new start, then. The island seems different to each of us. Our own natures make it so. It is full of strange noises, some sweet, some ominous, and full of strange creatures, from monster to mage. Our exploration of this magic place may be like walking around a labyrinth into the mystery that is ourselves.

The *Tempest* was written at the end of Shakespeare's creative life when he was in full command of his creative powers. Its concerns are of beginnings and endings, but its emphasis is on ending and what that might mean. The choice for Prospero is between revenge or redemption. What is the more satisfying ending?

We will explore these mysteries through art, music, poetry, drama, and through the good talk that we have shared all these years.

Date: Monday, March 26, 6:30 pm dinner through  
Thursday, March 29 – 12:30 lunch.

Place: Bishop's Ranch in Healdsburg

Leaders: Maureen Draper, Nils Peterson, and  
Sue Renfrew.

Fees: \$700, which includes \$50.00 registration fee.

To register, contact the Guild for Psychological Studies,  
PO Box 29385, San Francisco CA 94129-0385 Or  
register online with PayPal at <http://guildsf.org/online-seminar-registration/>

## Spirit of Place

By Ruth McMullen

In Fall last year, I went to Iceland on a geology trip. I experienced it as a magnificent, mystical, and exhilarating place. The mythological history permeates everything. It all had a profound effect on me.

Initially, it was easy to imagine the place was the same as so many others, solid, permanent and safe. The glaciers and volcanic peaks seem ancient, solid, and timeless.

Yet this solidity and permanence are an illusion - as it is restless at its fiery heart. The Mid-Atlantic Rift runs through the centre of this small island, now lying on the far edges of the North American plates, which move constantly, whether felt or not.... and, because the crust of the earth is so thin there, it allows the hot anger it so precariously protects to be expressed and released through volcanic ash and lava and scalding geysers. The land wobbles and a fumarole appears overnight. Human lifestyles need to be adaptable and ready to accommodate the stronger influence of the life of the land. There is, inevitably, therefore, an immense respect for The Nature, as it is called there. It is a very alive and changeable place, not static at all - sobering and exciting all at the same time. Full of that holding of the tension .... a real "both and" value to come to terms with daily - and the acceptance of this is the key to the quality of life there.

The effect of living amidst all this on the psyche, lifestyle, and inner values of the people is evident. It rubbed off on me.

I learnt much about myself among the glaciers, lava fields, and fjords and my views and values shifted internally, in sympathy with the shifting land. The personal centre truly has to hold there. The experience has created a process - birthing - epiphany - that I am still working with - slowly beginning to see over the threshold into the new spaces it has opened. And

it came at a pertinent time - as so many important things do, if we follow our instincts and allow ourselves to enter into the unknown and mysterious, even when it feels risky.

A strong gut feeling took me to Iceland, though I'd no idea why..... Yes, I had an exciting and interesting adventure and, yes, I'd hoped to find some creative inspiration ....but I returned with something much bigger and deeper.



Here are two of various poems I wrote whilst there:

1.  
(On meeting a glacier)  
By Ruth McMullen

**Golden light**  
a myriad of  
colours along the  
path to the  
source.  
I approach quietly.  
There is a presence here  
an ancient stillness  
it weighs itself in  
the air and  
drapes me in its  
icy cloak  
It is a cloak of knowing.  
The voice of the  
earth seeps into  
my being  
I run to greet it  
but I feel like  
kneeling.

2.  
By Ruth McMullen

*In me lie all the  
mysteries of the earth.  
I am the earth.*

*In me lie all the  
wonders of the stars.  
I am the stars.*

*In me lie fire, air,  
water and wind.  
I am the elements.*

*I am the flow  
the dance and  
the union.*

## February Birthdays

Rob Gibbons	Feb 2
Hal Milton	Feb 2
Rita McGowan	Feb 9
Carl Sutter	Feb 9
John Roedel	Feb 11
Susan Hice	Feb 12
Nancy Anderson	Feb 14
Linda Davidge	Feb 15
Joanna Bramble	Feb 21
Charles Siegfried	Feb 21
David Dugan	Feb 22
Ann Elsbach	Feb 22
Bob Barram	Feb 27
Joanie Misrack	Feb 28



## The Child Poem

*By R. Timothy Haley*

I've had a visitor from the past  
Though no one notices him but me  
We had a fierce relationship in my youth  
He visits me unreasonably from time to time  
I don't see him but my inner self feels him  
coming from the place he must hide  
He is a wild and unparented child  
How is it that he can return on a whim and  
paralyze my thoughts and actions?  
Like a chronic disease, he is no old friend  
Part bête noire and a tattoo of my unfinishable  
past,  
He has a dark and foreboding demeanor,  
taunting me with our shared irrational fears  
He is not a present person but a believer in what  
has and might miss the mark  
Sent from childhood his unbounded terror clings  
to me  
He makes me remember the hopeless youth I  
once endured  
Though in this life I have succeeded beyond any  
unloving expectation  
I don't know why or for what unnourished  
reason  
Usually he comes to tell me just how fearful the  
future can be

He wakes me in the morning with any manner of  
envisaged danger to face

Or in his innocent way come wailing in the middle  
of the night

Attempting fatherhood, I try to allay his secret  
terrors

He persists though and usually will not listen to any  
rationale

I continue to soothe his dreadful alarm

Usually though he leaves slowly of his own accord  
never satisfied with the consideration I devote to  
him

I am left to contemplate why he came at all and  
from so long ago

Since I comprehend how he secretes himself within  
me, I lovingly try to raise him as my own lonely and  
unloved child

He can stubbornly feel with more heartache than I  
can seal away

That's when I recognize he is my own true child

Journeying through my life's jeopardy and visiting  
as he pleases





**SAVE THE DATE! JULY 7 – 15, 2018**  
**2018 GUILD FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL STUDIES SUMMER SEMINAR:**  
**ANXIETY AND JOY**  
Roslyn Retreat Center  
Richmond, Virginia

Every two years, Hal Childs (PhD, MDiv, MFT) and Patricia Stenger (MFT) from the Guild for Psychological Studies in California, guide a 9-day retreat through St. Mark's Church on Capitol Hill. Between July 7 and July 15, the seminar for 2018 will explore **Anxiety and Joy**. These seminars are spiritual in nature rather than religious, honoring all who want to grow in their truth.

Anxiety steals the breath -- it disorients us in the middle of the night or overwhelms us in the middle of normal daily activities. We may feel powerless in its presence or embarrassed that the experience of anxiety compels us toward unwanted behaviors. How are we to face anxiety and its manifestations? What is anxiety and what does it have to tell us about itself?

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 the new being. What orientation of heart and mind might be needed to explore the creativity that is within anxiety? What might be the relationship between the disturbing symptoms we experience and 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 the many sides of anxiety. Participation in any of these activities is voluntary. There will be ample free time to explore, hike, and gather with other participants.

All applicants new to Guild seminars 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. No prior experience is needed to attend. You are asked only to bring yourself to a circle of seekers to come to a fuller expression of your own truth.

For a registration form and additional information, please contact Susan Thompson at [susanlynnthompson@gmail.com](mailto:susanlynnthompson@gmail.com). **We will accept 18 participants to keep the circle small and early registration ensures you have a spot.** Partial scholarships are available. Please indicate your interest in a scholarship to both Betty Foster ([bettywesfoster@earthlink.net](mailto:bettywesfoster@earthlink.net)) and Susan Thompson ([susanlynnthompson@gmail.com](mailto:susanlynnthompson@gmail.com)).

## 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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San Francisco, CA 94129-0385

## 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.

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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 Ravely 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

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