



The Threshing Floor

April 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.



A Life Wrapped Around a Question

By Harry Henderson

Just this past week, Stephen Hawking passed into the singularity of death at the improbable age of 76. What came to me was that here truly was a man who was gripped by a single question about the universe: “why it is as it is and why it exists at all.” Just as Jung said that his whole life was spent working out the implications of his experience of the reality of the soul, Hawking found the question of the “why” of the universe drawing him deeper and deeper into its gravity, like a black hole. What also strikes me is that Hawking’s “why” question lies on the boundary between physics and metaphysics—science and philosophy. Hawking had little patience with philosophy—like many scientists, he seemed to consider philosophy an obsolete, somewhat quaint leftover from the pre-scientific age.

If, as Hawking suggests, the universe has the capability of creating itself, then that capability itself is in need of explanation as to its origin. In prior ages, of course, God served as sufficient answer. But what is a scientist to offer in its place? Hawking ultimately suggested that the (observable) universe could have been brought into being by gravity. But what is “gravity”? When we speak of scientific “laws” (such as gravity) are we referring to mathematical descriptions that prove able to accurately predict the behavior of matter and energy, or do we mean some kind of inherent logic, some “idea”? With the latter, we find ourselves in the company of Pythagoras, Plato, and the later “idealist” philosophers such as Bishop Berkeley. If we go there, we are saying that ideas, not material objects, are the ultimate reality.

Hawking’s greatest breakthrough was in creating a model that combined relativity and quantum mechanics in order to explain how the universe could emerge from an initial singularity. Along with other important developments (cosmic inflation, string theory, and “membranes”) we certainly understand the observable universe much more comprehensively today. (Although not so much what is “dark” and cannot be observed, not to mention the possibility of multiple universes.)

Hawking seemed to vacillate somewhat in predicting how close we might be to a “theory of everything.” If by that we mean a theory that accounts for the fundamental forces that bind the observable universe together (including that most mysterious one, gravity), that goal may be within reach. But if “everything” includes that original big question that so gripped Hawking, the “why”—I believe we are, and can be, no closer to answering that one.

This is because neither the old metaphysics nor the latest science can keep up with a question that ultimately expresses not an external universe but our ever-changing state of consciousness. Whether in the form of myths, religious

accounts, or scientific theories, consciousness presents itself in the form of explanations. And, as Muriel Rukeyser reminds us in "The Speed of Darkness," "the universe is made of stories, not of atoms."

Resurrection

by Nils Peterson

Easter morning – and I wonder what
death in me has risen. Outside, a rumpus of birds,
yesterday's strong winds and sharp cold, gone.

The day feels mellow, its light a pale gold,
I sit up in my bed, not quite at ease. I can't
remember ever believing in the resurrection

of the body, yet, something now struggles out
of the grave, some love of life, of love, of holiness
and some other thing runs to roll the rock aside.

There Will Come Soft Rains

There will come soft rains and the smell of the ground,
And swallows circling with their shimmering sound;

And frogs in the pools singing at night,
And wild plum trees in tremulous white,

Robins will wear their feathery fire

Whistling their whims on a low fence-wire;

And not one will know of the war, not one
Will care at last when it is done.

Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree
If mankind perished utterly;

And Spring herself, when she woke at dawn,
Would scarcely know that we were gone.

Sara Teasdale, 1884 - 1933
(War Time)

March Birthdays

Sylvia Light	Mar 3
Tricia Schexnaydre	Mar 3
Charles Pfeifer	Mar 4
Rosalie Lambrose	Mar 7
Matthew Black	Mar 8
Andrea English	Mar 11
Laurie Mathers	Mar 15
Isabella DiBari	Mar 17
John Gallagher	Mar 18
Beth Harrison	Mar 18
Sally Pugsley	Mar 18
Carol Gaab	Mar 21
Mary Duvall	Mar 22
Gail Priestley	Mar 25
Mary Louise Metz	Mar 26
Teresa Sylvester	Mar 27
Susanna Singer	Mar 29

Another Truth Entry

from Shirley Sullivan

"Only the hand that erases can write the true thing." Meister Eckhart.



SONGLINES

By Lisa Yount

Your feet are maps.
The maps show every path you've ever
walked.
The lines are on the bottoms of your feet,
where you can't see them,
but they grow up
through your legs, your belly, your neck,
your
head,
into your brain.
The ones that get to your brain
you call memories.
Not all of them make it that far,
but they're all there,
on the bottoms of your feet,
where you can't see.
Every line.
Every step.
All there,
on the maps.

*

And every place is a map
of all the feet that have ever walked on it,
every foot and every paw,
every claw, every wing.
You can't see them either,
but the lines are all there,
crisscrossing endlessly.

*

And all the maps are songs,
singing to themselves and each other,
latitudes and longitudes
humming in complex harmonies.
Your feet sing to all the places
you've ever walked,
and the places sing back.
All the feet and paws and claws and places
sing to each other.
You can hear them if you try.
Listen.

April Birthdays

Barbara Black	Apr 12
Barbara Jeskalian	Apr 12
Carla Gerber	Apr 14
Kay Young	Apr 16
William Dols	Apr 17
Gillian Sands	Apr 18
Marcia Burkart	Apr 20
Mary Moore Gaines	Apr 23
Judith Richardson	Apr 29
Mary M. Freedlund	Apr 30

Spring is like a perhaps hand

[E. E. Cummings, 1894 - 1962](#)

Spring is like a perhaps hand
(which comes carefully out of Nowhere)
arranging a window, into which people look
(while people stare arranging and changing
placing carefully there a strange thing and a
known thing here) and

changing everything carefully

spring is like a perhaps Hand in a window
(carefully to and fro moving New and Old
things, while people stare carefully moving a
perhaps fraction of flower here placing an inch
of air there) and

without breaking anything.



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. **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) and Susan Thompson (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.

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
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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.

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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.

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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.

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