

Editor by Chiara Tozzi

The dark emanations from the psyche
Interview with Nancy Swift Furlotti

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Abstract

Interviewed by Chiara Tozzi, Nancy Swift Furlotti narrates her individual existential path interweaving it with that of a Jungian analyst and illustrating her relationship with the “dark emanations of the psyche”: from the individual and collective ghosts to the archetypal images represented by Jung in the *Red Book*, of which Furlotti has curated, together with others for the Philemon Foundation, the scanning and publication. Furlotti illustrates her perspective on the practice of active imagination and the correlation between archetypal and film images, by virtue of her participation in the making of documentaries on Jung and other members of the Jungian community, and of her activity as a member of the Director of the Mercurius Prize.

Key words: *Shadow, Red Book, active imagination, films, Mercurius Prize, archetypal images*

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I would like to start this interview asking you about your special interest in “the dark emanations from the psyche”. When and by virtue of what did this kind of interest arise in your life?

I would like to begin by thanking you, Chiara, for inviting me to discuss my experiences and points of view. Your questions have helped me to articulate what it is I believe and why. That is always important, especially today when so much of what is written may or may not be thoroughly considered. Dark emanations from the psyche, I chose to describe my interest in this way because it allows me to cover what is considered to be shadow and merely unconscious as well as what is indeed dark, repressed, dangerous and evil.

For me it represents what is not seen or discussed but clearly present. This includes a world perceived mostly through intuition, sensed but not seen. I was actually born into such a world. My father was bi-polar with mixed mania – a very dangerous form of the disease, which took his life when I was seven. His reality was one of psychosis on the depressed pole as well as on the manic pole that rapidly shifted from one to the other and many times with both at once. As a child growing up in this matrix of demons let loose upon his world and mine, the veil between reality and unreality was very thin, if it was there at all. I had no choice but to befriend the unconscious and actually found solace there with the Great Mother, in nature.

My own extraverted mother was struggling to survive as best she could and was no help to her four children. Her first son had died as a toddler in her care, through an accident, and remained the ghostly older brother in our family. Life seemed to be unpredictable at best and trauma was the norm. I was sexually abused when I was about 6 years old by a teenage neighbor. I had three friends die before I was 15. Life seemed determined to push me into that unknown realm on the other side of the veil. This is really not so unusual. We are all witnesses to the multiple traumas experienced by so many people everywhere in our families, neighborhoods, countries and throughout the world. For me, though, I can speak about what it meant to me, how I survived it and went on to try to help others.

My early experiences activated certain archetypes in my psyche that I

have been dealing with my entire life that are grounded in my complexes. Thanks to Jungian analysis I was able to become conscious of these, and if not heal myself completely, to live with them. I tend to sense shadow easily and as a result steer away from what feels particularly bad, like the Mormon hypocrisy and patriarchy that I rejected at age twelve. Dark emanations from the psyche were not so much an interest as an imperative to understand for the sake of survival.

Is your interest in symbolism, myths and fairy tales related to Jung's study or does it originate in your life regardless of Analytical Psychology?

I remember my dreams from a very early age and was always captivated by them. They were not nice, friendly dreams but instead were mostly dark and scary, yet interesting dreams that captured my attention. The predominant theme in my childhood dreams was my finding a secret, hidden door in the back of a closet, or an old abandoned house that I entered to find large spaces the size of multilevel warehouses or many rooms filled with old furniture and chests full of things belonging to people long dead. I was compelled to explore all of it. Sometimes I knew there were ghosts present, some very dangerous. These dreams showed me a world beyond the veil – a world of the ancestors that I somehow and over many years had to make sense of. What better way to meet the dynamism of my own psyche than in wicked fairy tales full of dangerous characters and strange places? While I was mostly outdoors playing in the neighborhood, in the trees and green spaces, when I read books my preference was from an encyclopedia of fairy tales that I had. I loved them; they seemed to speak to the same level of danger that I experienced in my life. A movie I saw at around 11 was the scariest thing I had ever seen, called *The Haunting of Hill House*, an old gothic horror movie. It reminded me of my own dreams of old houses, and in this movie it is the house itself that is alive and evil and challenges the character's psyches. Interestingly, I just saw that Netflix has made a third re-make of this movie. It wasn't as good as the original but then I am no longer 11!

As I got older, in my teens, I became interested in Mesoamerican mythology – no surprise. It represents all levels of sacrifice, including human sacrifice. I think my interest arose related to my father's suicide, which I saw as a form of a sacrifice. The blood, the many demons, the raw earthy ritual calendar focused on life and death felt so real to me as an underpinning of our existence. I lived in Mexico when I was 16 and visited the temples there, returning repeatedly to Mexico and to Guatemala over the years. There are so many Hispanics living in Southern California where I grew up, that the shadow underlying our Christian/mostly Protestant culture was the religion/mythology from

these earlier civilizations. They brought a wonderful depth and richness to our American lives, if we recognized its presence and allowed it in. This was all before I found my way to Jung.

What motivated your approach to the psychology of C.G. Jung?

Because of my early experiences and being raised a Mormon, I was deeply interested in spirit – all that was beyond the veil. The gift I received from being a Mormon was to establish a one on one relationship to God. We all prayed directly to God with no intermediary, and we alone were responsible to God. If we transgressed we had to ask for forgiveness ourselves and determine if we had received it. Our goal in life was to become as perfected as Christ had become. He was God's first begotten son and we followed his example, not by imitation but doing the best we could do with our lives. I lived through many "fast and testimony meetings" once a month on Sunday – a meeting that lasted about 4 hours where the elders would stand up and bear their testimony of their experience of the truth of God. Although I hated these meetings, the essence must have sunk in. And interestingly, later I discovered a similar sensibility in Jungian psychology where the Self reflects the God image, and the relationship is individual and personal between us and that greater power.

After having three children and concluding a career as an environmental designer, I decided to pick up my college interest in psychology and pursue that. I was considering getting a graduate degree in Comparative Religions but when I given a copy of *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, around that time, that was it for me. Jung's theories and experiences expressed both the psychology and the spiritual that made me feel like I had finally come home. It was the language of my number two Self! I found a Jungian analyst to work with after working with a Freudian and other eclectic therapists over the years. It was really my dreams that led the way, and thankfully I had the sense to follow.

Does your interest in myths, symbols as well as in the dark emanations from the psyche have a methodological application in your practice?

I would say it definitely does. The patients who came to work with me all seemed to have early traumatic experiences of one kind or another, including suicidal tendencies or past psychotic episodes. While the symbolic understanding of the psyche is imperative for understanding dreams and the archetypal forces prevalent in my patients, it is the day to day consistency of our analytical relationship, trust building and containment

that aids the strengthening of the ego, increased consciousness of shadow and complexes that supports a relationship to develop between ego and Self, ultimately leading to the transformation of the personality. The language of the psyche is symbolic, expressed in the patterns in fairytales, mythology and religions. The dreams help tremendously for me to know what the patients need and for them to see what inner resources and forces are at play within themselves.

According to your clinical experience, what kind of relationship nowadays do patients have towards the dark emanations from the psyche?

My patients currently have a heightened sense of anxiety. Not only is it because of their own personal issues and complexes but there seems to be a greater sense of fear about the future of our country and the world, politically and environmentally. While some feel they are helpless in the face of these global forces and focus on their own lives and families, many feel empowered to work harder for those causes that are of interest to them. It seems we humans have a clever ability to look no further than our own noses. This seems to be the default mode of behavior for our own survival. With the US economy now seemingly stable, one can easily ignore the larger problems on the horizon, and they are potentially so huge that any one individual can't do much to help, really. It requires recognition by the collective, including the governments in charge, to recognize what is needed and to implement change. At this level it is definitely being ignored. It is as if a tsunami is on its way and we are not prepared. I'm sure you see this in Italy, especially with the mass migrations that have taken place there. Many of these have been because of intolerable environmental conditions in Africa. These people have no choice but to leave their countries and find a safer more fertile place to live. The Syrian war began in part because of a draught. People risk their lives migrating, and according to climate change forecasts, it is only going to get worse. The real question is: how are we collectively going to deal with it? With or without a plan, with compassion or with brutality? An Italian supervisee, who is now an Analyst, who lives in Southern Italy told me last year that Italians there no longer eat fish from the Mediterranean because there are so many dead bodies in the water. What a horrible situation, and what an awful image. A United Nations environmental report was just released giving us maybe 10 years before the climate changes become intolerable. We are talking about more migrations, starvation, disease, extinctions, devastation from weather events. How do we get our minds around this? Most people can't, it is too extreme. The veil to the unconscious has been pulled aside, and the horrors have been unleashed. It is one's worst nightmare, the unthinkable – losing

our planet, imagining so much death, loss and destruction. We can easily get lost in anxiety, fear, sadness and depression. So instead we either hang onto our daily routines, focusing on our lives or resort to activism, which one sees now on many fronts, as a way to try to effect change. Everyone responds to our current world situation in a different way but the anxiety is palpable everywhere.

Would you like to tell us about the genesis and development of your participation as a board member of the Philemon Foundation at the scanning of the original Red Book? What kind of emotions did this experience give you? Are there any particular events you could tell us about it?

It all began when Stephen Martin, a Jungian analyst from Pennsylvania, met Sonu Shamdasani in London for the first time to discuss certain Jung Letters of interest to him. During their conversation Sonu said he was running out of the money that the Jung Foundation had given him to work on the *Red Book* and would have to put it aside and get a job as a bartender! Steve was struck by the crazy inspiration to try to help him by setting up a public charity to raise the money to keep Sonu's work going and to also publish other unpublished manuscripts in the Jung archive. Now of course, Steve needed help on his board to pull it off.

I received a call out of the blue in 2004 from Steve. He had gotten my name from Gilda Frantz, a good friend and Jungian analyst in Los Angeles. She was on a fundraising committee I chaired, and when Steve contacted her to ask who would be a good person to consider to participate on the Philemon Board, she recommended me. It was all such a surprise! In my first conversation with Steve, what really inspired me to join him in his endeavor was that I had been very interested in a seminar given by Jung, transcribed and floating around Zurich, called *Children's Dream Seminar*. Steve mentioned that it would be the first book to be published by Philemon. It was a big interest of his, too. What a synchronicity! Of course, I was in, and we did get that published. We also both saw the immense value of *The Red Book* yet knew it would be no easy task to pass the scrutiny of the Jung Family to get permission to publish it. At this point we wanted to insure that Sonu had the funds to allow him to continue his editorial work on this project without financial worries. Philemon was finally legally set up properly as 501c3 charity in Pennsylvania and we began our work in earnest. This is where I came in. I helped raise enough funds to keep Sonu's work going to its completion and to begin other Jung projects with other editors. We, at Philemon, were also able to establish a position for Sonu at University College London that we

funded. This gave him not only a place to work but a lot of credibility. He eventually worked his way up to a Professorship, with our continuing financial support.

It was especially important to Steve and to me to include everyone interested in the Philemon project to feel a part of this incredible moment in history. The size of donations was not as important as their interest, and we had a very large following both within the Jungian community and outside of it, as well. I have to say, though, that nothing is easy, and it certainly was not with the founding of Philemon. The reception in the Jungian hierarchy was less than enthusiastic, and there was an attempt to stop it all together, questioning who should ultimately be responsible for “the future of Jung scholarship” Fortunately, Philemon prevailed. Without Philemon, I doubt these books would be published.

Up to the point of the scanning of *The Red Book*, Sonu was required to keep the material he was working on strictly confidential so none of us on the board knew what was actually in it. He was close to finishing his editorial work, and we needed to find a publisher. The two we contacted wanted to publish a smaller version with four paintings to a page. We said emphatically, no. It had to be a facsimile of the original. It was too important a book, but of course, publishers were thinking about the costs and they didn’t really think they would sell enough copies to make their money back.

Lamenting one day over lunch with a friend about our difficulties finding a publisher who really “gets this project,” my friend suggested I speak with her husband’s publisher. He had recently published a book of his dreams and drawings. I took his name and Steve contacted him, Jim Mairs at W.W. Norton in New York City. He immediately understood the value of the project and agreed to take it on – just what we had hoped for, a facsimile of the original. We couldn’t have been happier, and as it turned out we couldn’t have been in better hands than his.

Jumping to 2008, we were planning on scanning the original *Red Book* in Los Angeles, CA because that was where Digital Fusion was located – the company Jim Mairs selected to do the job. Just before the original *Red Book* was to fly to LA, a fire began raging in the hills above the city, a common occurrence. But Ulrich Hoerni, Jung’s grandson and chair of the Jung Foundation, had a dream and decided it would not go. Instead the “boys” from Digital Fusion would have to bring all their equipment to Zurich – and it was a lot of equipment: computers, lights, scaffolding, a stand for the book to not harm its binding. A photographic studio was rented quite near the Opera House in Zurich for the scanning and we all met there for the week it took to scan the book. *The Red Book* had not been out of its bank vault at UBS on Bahnhofstrasse in years! And because of the fear that something would

happen to it out of its vault, Ulrich Hoerni and his very nice nephew, Felix, spend every night in the studio in sleeping bags on the floor.

The equipment was set up and the scanning began. That was the first time we saw this magnificent book's content. The paint glistened with rich color and gold that sparkled with life. Each page was held down by one of us wearing white cotton gloves, making sure the corners were flat for the scan. It was a truly impressive and unforgettable experience.

The first morning in Zurich I decided to collect everyone's dreams during that week to trace the collective experience. The night after arriving in Zurich I had the following dream:

I was sitting around a large table made up of four tables put together to make a large square, with the group of people in Zurich for the scanning of *The Red Book*. We were sitting on the tables in a casual, friendly way talking. We each held a round glass ball with a round opening at the top. These were vessels that contained strong spirits that we were drinking. The ice cubes were shiny, clear, perfect, and sparkled in the amber liquid. We were talking about killing or being killed, sharing examples calmly as if these acts were a normal part of life. Someone mentioned that they had bought a piece of property in a place like Colorado, a beautiful remote location in the forest, which seemed like the center of the country, undeveloped and rural. We all talked about wanting to go there.

I am including here what I wrote about this dream and my experience at that time: "The dream setting is a large *mandala* made up of four tables forming a square, and all the people present for the scanning are there. We are participating in an event having to do with the Self, represented by the mandala image. The number four represents wholeness, the four functions, four directions, that we strive to integrate. Additionally, each of us is holding a round glass ball, another mandala, out of which we drink a strong spirit that is amber-colored". «Amber represents the psychic line between individual and cosmic energy, the individual soul and the universal soul. It symbolizes solar, spiritual and divine attraction» (Chevalier, p.1994). Amber is a synonym for gold and is related to Apollo, the sun god. In Greek it is related to Electra and to electricity. In the dream we were to drink this substance cooled by ice cubes. A cube is a four-dimensional square. These cubes were shiny, clear, and perfect, and their presence introduced the element of water to the amber and the round glass balls. Water is the *mercurial* water of life, and when it flows it regenerates and heals. Ice cubes are frozen water used here to cool the amber spirit, and in the cooling process to slowly melt and turn again into flowing water. For me, these images were a warning that I needed to cool the spirit getting activated in me by exposure to *The Red Book*, as well as the

extraversion of participating with the group in the scanning. The unheeded warning ended up expressing itself later in the week as a migraine headache – against which, surprisingly, amber is a talisman.

Our mission at the scanning was to release the spirit that had been locked away in Jung's journal. His call to the depths and his struggle to map that terrain led to a system of thought that carries a numinous spirit for all of us. Through Jung's arduous task of becoming conscious, he opened the door to the workings of nature and the psyche. The process for him, as well as for us, is all about killing and being killed on a metaphorical level. Through the individuation process, we are asked to kill off those destructive attitudes and behaviors that no longer serve the deep striving to express our true nature. The act of killing and of being killed is metaphorically described as a necessary process in alchemy. The word *sacrifice* comes from *sacred*, indicating that killing represents the sacrifice that is required for this work.

Sacrifice is the concept lived out in the stage of *mortificatio* and *putrificatio*, the dying and breaking down of the old, so that the new can be reborn. The journey begins with the golden spirit and then moves inward and down, represented here by entering the wild, undeveloped forest. In the dream, the rural area was the center of the country, referring to the wilderness at the center of my being. This part of the Self is the unconscious untamed, wild, instinctual realm: the realm of the Great Mother. From spirit, I am instructed to move into nature, into the land of the feminine. It is here that the work will take place – where I will be faced with unknown aspects of myself to integrate and transform. Those parts of myself will have to be killed for sacrifice before I return renewed to the land of the living. In this first dream of the week, I am with the group, not alone. This signifies my involvement with Philemon and the collective experience at the scanning. While my individual journey begins in a collective way, I have to move onto my own path. Yet, because of the excitement of the event at hand, it was difficult to withdraw from the collective, extraverted and inflated spirit of the moment. In this dream, one can see the impact that participation in this special event had on my psyche. Witnessing the documentation of Jung's own journey into the depths was an experience I will never forget. From the moment I received that phone call from Steve Martin, I felt Jung's presence leading us step by step to get this important piece of work published. It was the right time to be published – the world was ready to accept it" (From a paper I wrote for the journal, *Psychological Perspectives*, 2009, Tracing a Red Thread: Synchronicity and Jung's Red Book).

With us at the scanning was Sara Corbett, who was a writer for the New York Times Magazine Section. She was taking notes at the scanning, on what this book meant, and the whole process of bringing it out to the world.

Another friend of mine had recommended we contact her to write an article about this event. With permission from her editorial board, she wrote a thorough and interesting article that appeared in the New York Times Magazine with a beautiful picture of *The Red Book* on its front cover the day the book was released for sale. Newspapers sold like wildfire, and from then on the book was a raging success far beyond the Jungian community. The book did not receive one critical review, much to the surprise of the Jung family.

Chiara, you will be delighted to hear that after the pages were scanned they were printed in Verona, at one of the best printers in the world! Jim Mairs spared no expense on this book, to the chagrin of his company. The original print run was to be 10,000 copies, and out of concern for recouping costs, they reduced that number to 5,000. Sales quickly blew past the 5,000 and more had to be printed. I believe more than 100,000 copies have sold to date!

Has being in such a direct contact with unpublished drawings and writings contained in The Red Book given you the opportunity to better understand the meaning of Jung's work?

Unfortunately no. It's not that easy. One has to study the text over and over again to understand the meaning of Jung's individuation process and to find the courage to follow one's own process. It is a beautiful template for all of us, but this was Jung's particular journey. The text is much fuller than the paintings even though many find it intimidating and settle for the images. It is worth the plunge. I would say, though, that being so close to the original *Red Book* was like being in the presence of something much greater than myself. With all my anticipation and excitement in seeing it, it was almost numinous – the transference was that great.

What do you think about C. G. Jung's choice in facing the "horror" of certain manifestations of the dark side of the psyche?

Jung's choice of word, "horror" is appropriate for the dark side of the psyche. That side contains everything we are not conscious of as well as the collective shadow. Ultimately, it is the dark side of the Self, the dark side of the God image – the raw, primordial destructive side of life that destroys rather than creates. It is the evil in humanity and in each one of us. This dark evil is un-digestible and un-transformable. It is what we would rather repress, deny, project onto the other, or run from. But I don't believe Jung had a choice at all, he had to descend and explore this part

of himself. I had a dream years ago when I was struggling with the concept of the essence of evil:

I knew evil was somewhere in the dark room with me but I couldn't see it and didn't know where it was. Its presence was unmistakable and terrifying. I slowly edged my way through the dark along a wall into a closet where there was an unlit standing lamp. I turned it on and saw "evil" in the shadow behind the lamp. I knew this was something that just was and could never be transformed.

It was a horror that existed and remains there in its archetypal form having its effect on all of us. An archetype, as we all know, represents a pattern of energy that affects our actual experiences in life. That particular pattern may be made conscious but it will not change in and of itself. Evil exists and is a true horror. An appropriate word for Jung to use.

I taught a seminar in Poland recently and stayed on afterwards to visit Auschwitz. That is a place of true horror and evil. Walking through the gas chambers, the showers, the barracks, the fields where millions of dead human beings were thrown either in body or ash form. Seeing the rooms full of human hair and knowing that it was sent to Berlin to be used in upholstery. Seeing the efficiency with which millions were transported to the death camps and then escorted with kind stories directly to their deaths, or selected out for death by slave-labor. There was no remorse, no guilt, no shame by those who took so many lives – so many it is beyond comprehension. What is this inhumanity? It is the horror of the psyche, the evil side of the Self. We easily forget that it is with us, in us, around us, everywhere. It pushes us to act out, to hate, to rage against our neighbors, to separate children from their parents at the border between the US and Mexico, to ignore the migrants escaping for their lives to the US and Europe. Governments slaughtering racial groups, individuals killing their children, their loved ones, strangers killing out of rage. The US turned away ships filled with Jews during WW11, and they were subsequently sunk and killed by the Nazis. Long before that, the arrival of settlers to what is now the United States caused the death of millions of Indigenous Americans all in our pursuit for land, justified by our belief in our "Manifest Destiny", that we are special and it was our duty and destiny to settle this land.

How can we kill so easily and live with it? That is the horror. That is the destructive side of the psyche, evil actually. In *The Red Book*, Jung had a vision of a small girl lying dead under stones, naked and crushed, covered with wounds and smeared with blood. A true horror! The soul of the child told Jung to cut out her liver and take a bite of it as atonement for his share of guilt as a man, because it was a man who did this to her. He reluctantly ate the sacrificial

flesh. Disgusted, he strongly objected but had to. He had to see what he was capable of in order to see his shadow and to find his soul. We all need to see what we are capable of – the most monstrous things – and then fight not to act on those impulses but to remain close to our humanity. In my dream, evil was present in the shadows, and I could vaguely see it but it remained unchangeable. We need to keep our eyes on it at all times. As Jung says in *The Red Book*, «The evil one cannot make a sacrifice [...] victory is with the one who can sacrifice» (p. 289). That is why sacrifice is a key component of the experience of individuation.

What do you think about the Active Imagination of C.G. Jung? Is it a technique you use in your practice and/or personally?

Active imagination is very important. It was the hallmark of Jung's approach to understanding the various elements of the psyche. I actually co-edited a book on this subject with Erel Shalit, called, *The Dream and Its Amplification*, in which the process of Active Imagination is discussed in detail and examples are given. It is a means of pinning down an unconscious content, bringing it into the form of an image where we can begin to see it, and to speak to it to understand what it has to say. Doing this, opens the way to a very real experience of the nature of that figure to understand why it specifically appeared in the dream. Active imagination allows for a direct dialogue with the unconscious to help bring that particular energy the figure represents into consciousness. The process of active imagination is helpful when used with shadow figures, anima/animus or even the Self, as Jung did with his wise inner man, Philemon. It is very helpful in learning about the hidden terrain of the unconscious and all the figures that make up our inner world, affecting us at every turn.

Do you believe that "ethical confrontation" (that is the fourth phase of Active Imagination) might have been the result of Jung's facing the unconscious in the difficult years following his separation from Freud? Or do you think that an ethical attitude was already present in Jung since his childhood and adolescence?

I see the ethical attitude as innate in the human psyche. It comes from the Self. So I would say it was present in Jung from the beginning, but was understood and developed as he matured. He realized that a deeply ethical attitude is not just what is imposed upon us through our religions and cultures, which of course we need to be able to live together in a cohesive, civilized way. But because the psyche contains everything, all

opposites, including good and bad, there exists an innate morality or ethics in the psyche as well as its opposite destructive tendency. It is up to each of us to hold to the positive side of the Self as opposed to being taken over by the destructive side. When one has developed an ego-Self relationship, the ethical question becomes our responsibility, we can no longer rely solely on the cultural dictates of what is moral or ethical. Erich Neumann writes about this in his book, *Depth Psychology and the New Ethic*.

Jung struggled with this issue from quite a young age. Imagine being the son of a Swiss Reform Pastor and having a dream of God dropping a turd on the cathedral in Basel!! That certainly showed his internal conflict around religion, belief, what was right, and where “right” comes from. He had to find his own answers to these questions, through great struggle that finally emerged in his book, *Answer to Job*, much later in his life. He also had continuing conversations with both Father Victor White and Erich Neumann on this issue of ethics and the issue of evil, which of course is the opposite of having an ethical attitude. And yet this gets very complicated because there may be times when one has to do something evil in order to learn, it is unavoidable as Jung stated, or one perpetrates evil for a higher good, but it could be argued that this was the Nazi’ stance. One has to consider both sides if acting consciously.

I’d like to say something about his break with Freud. Jung was his own person before, during and after his relationship with Freud. The psyche was alive to him in a way it was not for Freud. And when it called to him around 2012 to shift his focus inward, to begin his journey into the unconscious, that had nothing to do with Freud. Jung’s soul was calling him back. At the time, Jung certainly was having issues with Freud, for example, he disagreed with his dogmatic approach to his theories. Jung believed theories were to be tested and would change over time, where Freud was more dogmatic. While Jung learned from Freud as they exchanged ideas and greatly valued their relationship, Jung did not agree with some of Freud’s theories. His experience was quite different from Freud’s and he had to be true to himself. It was a huge loss to lose the relationship they had but inevitable. Jung spoke highly of Freud and tried to help him get out of Austria during WW11 but Freud would have none of it – for him once a colleague went against him, it was over for that person.

And what we see now so many years later? While both contributed so much and still do, Freud’s original theories have not stood the test of time while Jung’s have!! There is now the possibility of a new research project that explores the effects of trauma on the brain through the combination lens of Jung’s complex theory and neuroscience. It is very exciting.

Is your interest in films related to your interest in the symbolic language of fairy tales and myths?

In part this is true, I love a good story that weaves in archetypal material in whatever form. It can be fantasy like Guillermo del Toro's films, or sci-fi like *2001: A Space Odyssey*. They are full of creative imagination. But I am also interested in very well done movies – ones that speak in a profound way to the human condition, taking the viewer into the deeper layers of emotions and interactions, challenging our thinking and perceptions. One example could be David Lynch's noir film, *Blue Velvet*. I grew up watching Lynch's TV series, *Twin Peaks*, when it originally came out and was quite taken by its distortion of reality and the way he played with the characters. It is full of mystery and symbolism and shadow. His movie is a real challenge to watch as it breaks open standard beliefs about relationships and offers a view of reality seen through a distorted, dark, dreamlike and very weird lens. These are like dark fairy tales.

A recent example of a movie I really liked, different from the more overtly dark or bizarre films is one just released called, *The Wife*, which is very powerful. It is an examination of how so many women defer to their husbands and why, and how they suffer for it. One can see the presence of so many layers in such a movie: the personal, the personal collective, and the cultural collective archetypes at work behind the scenes having a profound impact on these characters' lives. We can all relate to this experience in some way. It offers us the ability to see things differently and to reflect on our own lives. In my opinion, that is when a movie is successful. This one shows each character playing out an archetypal pattern, and the struggle to be real and true to oneself. That, too, is the theme of fairy tales and myths.

In your opinion, can films be considered a current collective psychological substitute for what was once represented by fairy tales and myths – as stated by M.L. von Franz in The Way of Dream?

I would agree with her and add that novels are, too. Any means of expressing what is going on in the collective unconscious and commenting on it helps us learn how to better navigate our world by avoiding the dark paths and finding our proverbial "way home." Fairy tales and myths do just that. They show us how to deal with the unknown, the demons and ghosts of the underworld or forests, how to navigate the shadows that are ever present. We see how to deal with evil step-mothers, or tricksters that want to lead us astray, fathers that want to cut off our hands, husbands that want to kill us, sirens that want to seduce us. How do we know how to deal with power, envy, vanity, arrogance, and greed? Religions tell us these things are bad but fairy tales and myths are actually learning tools

for all of us and help us to deal with these kinds of people and situations. They show us how to react in certain situations, what dangers lurk in the shadows, what we can run into and how to deal with those specific “types” of figures exhibiting certain kinds of behaviors. They are dark and full of danger and struggle. The figures are archetypes, and we run into them over and over again in our lives. This is what gets us into trouble. Movies and novels can serve the function of helping us to understand the many forms of the archetypes we will encounter in life and see through film and the literary development of their characters.

You produced and were involved in two films: A matter of heart and The World Within. Do you want to tell us about the development of these projects?

I didn't produce them, but I have been involved for many years with George and Suzanne Wagner who did. I was very interested in the two films and the 30 interviews that they did with first generation Jungian analysts who worked with or knew Jung. These are really priceless interviews, for example, there are two with von Franz that one should not miss seeing.

To go to back the beginning of this endeavor, Suzanne came up with the idea of interviewing the older Jungians after she saw the four-hour documentary called, *The Sorrow and the Pity*, about people living in France during WWII under the Nazi occupation. For Suzanne it was very moving to hear the recollections of their fears and the conflict and power in facing the Nazi takeover. As she and her husband, George, talked about the film she realized they and their generation were in a unique position in relation to Jung's life and work because she and others had worked in Jungian analysis with those who knew him. It occurred to her that there was a lot to be learned from all these people, including their impressions and their experiences of him. George realized what an important idea this was and began to formulate a plan of how to go about making filmed interviews of these people in their own homes or offices. They worked from 1976 through 1980 and filmed over 30 people. They used the same camera and sound-men, Mark and Michael Whitney. Sam Francis, the famous artist, was very supportive and helped with the funding. When the interviews were completed, Suzanne realized that a feature length documentary could be made from this material using excerpts from some of the interviews to give an illuminating description of some of Jung's basic ideas, as well as conveying what he was like on the personal, human level. The music for the film is an original score by the now very famous composer, John Adams. He was young and just starting out then.

They worked for three years on the creation of, *Matter of Heart*. It was

first shown in theaters in 1985 and subsequently has been translated into Spanish, German, Japanese, and most recently into Polish. They also made a second feature length documentary film, *The World Within*, which is also exceptional and sheds more light on Jung and his theories.

I became involved with the Wagners at the Jung Institute of Los Angeles, where I was President and participated on the committee set up to oversee the films and interviews. Suzanne was a Jungian analyst member of the LA Institute while George was for a number of years its executive director. The Institute was an early supporter of the project.

Realizing that the material might be forgotten as memory passed on, the Wagners and I thought it would be a good idea to start a separate non-profit focusing just on the Remembering Jung video series and the two films. It is called, Kairos Film Foundation and its purpose is to:

- *Oversee the Protection* of an original film archive established between 1976 and 2009, from which was produced the films *Matter of Heart*, *The World Within*, and the *Remembering Jung* series of 30 hour-long interviews of people who knew Jung well as an analyst, colleague or mentor.
- *Promote* the produced films through future programs and new distribution venues.
- *Produce* new films focusing on Jungian themes.

We are dedicated to communicating Jung's approach to the psyche through the medium of film. This continuing project requires a broad base of planning and support, calling on the creative leadership of interested people from all over the world.

The original film itself is in the Film Archive at UCLA in Los Angeles.

I recently was asked to permit the film, *Matter of Heart* to be translated into Polish with subtitles and shown there. I attended the first showing and fully expected about 30 maybe 40 people to show up. When I arrived I was shocked to see about 300 people and more trying to fit into the auditorium. There is a request to show it in two more cities. It is quite astonishing to see how thirsty the Poles are for Jung.

Which are in your opinion the film directors able to narrate stories with a symbolic language similar to that of C.G. Jung?

I have already mentioned David Lynch and Guillermo del Toro, especially his movie, *Pan's Labyrinth*. To this list I would add Stanley Kubrick with his movies: *2001: A Space Odyssey*; *Clockwork Orange* and *The Shining*. Ang Lee's movies, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*; *The Life of Pi*. Hayao Miyazaki who started the anime craze and one particularly interesting film is, *Spirited Away*. Of course, I must add George Lukas who had a

relationship with Joseph Campbell and was fascinated by mythology and archetypes, which led to his *Star Wars* series. Joseph Campbell based his understanding of mythology on Jung's theories. Others I like are Pedro Almodovar, *The Skin I live In*; the Cohen Brothers, *No Country for Old Men*, which is the darkest example of cold evil I have ever witnessed; and Fellini's, *Satyricon*, of course! These film-makers all deal with the complicated relationship between the world of reality and the unconscious. Their characters are challenging and challenged by archetypal patterns of one kind or another. Relationships are important and we are able to witness their changes in the course of a movie.

Do you find that some authors of novels and horror films – for instance Stephen King and Wes Craven – are able to depict the dark emanations from the psyche? If you agree, can you give us some further thoughts about it?

I am not a fan of Wes Craven's work because his films are mostly about crazy slasher killings, which is everyone's nightmare – and there doesn't seem to be any redeeming quality in the end. I sit on the edge of my seat waiting for the next slasher to jump out, and that is about it. We are dropped into the psychotic, psychopathic mind in his films with no transformation. Evidently Wes Craven used to make porno films. These are like porno horror films.

Stephen King, on the other hand, has some interesting films. He was fundamentally a writer. He includes more of the supernatural in his horror films so they have much more depth to them, and the story lines are engaging. His movies, *Carrie*, *The Shining*, for example are very interesting and engaging films, while also very scary. *The Shining* is one where once you've seen it you will never forget it! It is interesting how King takes a normal man and slowly transforms him into not just a psychotic state of mind but a possessed state of mind – possessed by the ghosts at the old hotel. For the other characters it's all about sensing what is going on beyond the veil of consciousness and trying to deal with it's scary reality to survive. Invisible evil forces greater than ourselves are unleashed. One wonders why these particular people were its target – yet they had a certain vulnerability. Isn't this true for people we see in our practice? It is the vulnerability that brings them in. In the movie they are really about surviving an onslaught of horror from hell, not so dissimilar from what some of our patients experience.

You are member of the Mercurius Prize EC. What do you think about the meaning of this Jungian Prize? Do you want to tell us about your experience in evaluating films according to criteria derived from the psychology of C.G. Jung and linked to the archetype of Mercurius?

My understanding is that the purpose of this prize is to offer an award to creative filmmakers who focus on psychological themes and who place an emphasis on the psychological transformation and an increase in consciousness in their characters and/or in the collective. We are looking for some sort of change and development. The films may focus on individual relationships or on humanitarian social issues effecting groups. While the change may be evident within the storyline of the film, sometimes the greatest affect and change is in the viewer causing us to see things differently because of the film. We are the ones who become more consciousness.

Mercurius/Hermes is the messenger of the gods, the god of change and of the crossroads. The god of dreams and night, and the guardian of sleep. He appears when change is necessary. He is a thief, a trickster working in the shadows stealing but also the messenger bringing luck, light and good news. Always the clever intriguer, he conducts souls into the underworld or out of it as a *psychopomp*. He is eternal and invisible. His staff is the caduceus, entwined by two snakes and a symbol of healing very much connected to the chthonic realm. Mercurius in alchemy is the snake or waters of transformation. He is the shape-shifter we encounter in our dreams and as we stumble in life causing us to become more conscious of our correct path. He is like the ever-changing quicksilver.

It is easy to see how impossible it is to pin him down – or the archetypal energy he represents, because that is what he is, a multifaceted archetype. So with this God leading us on the Mercurius Prize Committee, one can imagine how much trouble we committee members have trying to decide on a film with the slippery quality of his energy. There are way too many facets to it but we manage and actually do a very good job at selecting a film. There are some astute film aficionados on the committee, including Chiara, who always have interesting and clarifying viewpoints. I am affected by and learn something from many of the films we watch.

You asked how the criterion is derived from the psychology of C. G. Jung. We are looking for that spark of consciousness that leads to some kind of change. That change may not always be evident in the film but it may be there in nascent form or it may be the viewer who is changed through the process of watching the film. Jung never knew where change would come from or in what form it would take—but he did know that it would come. Mercurius always steps in to affect change.

I would also like to say that I think it is very important that there is a film prize that focuses on these Jungian psychological values and encourages young film makers to consider what we represent, to consider these aspects of life and the reality of the psyche.

In your opinion, what kind of relationship does the current collective psyche have with respect to the dark emanations from the psyche? Is this relationship different than in the past?

I believe I have touched upon this question in other answers but will add a bit more here. The darkness in the psyche is always present as the opposite side of the light of consciousness. We throw a shadow no matter what, and one that grows larger with the increase in light we imagine we have or actually have. Jung himself, for example, being such a conscious potent source of light had a huge shadow. While it is the responsibility of each one of us to strive for consciousness and constructive values, it is so easy to be taken over by the group psychology and lose our individual standpoints. Jung worried about the effects of mass man, or large groups of people where the level of consciousness and morality falls to the lowest common dominator. Fear, greed, envy, power take over and fill the space where compassion, trust, freedom used to be. Sorry to say, we have circled back and have found ourselves collectively in this place once again. Jung lived through WWI and II with the rise of nationalism and fascism. We don't seem to learn from history, as the world seems to be rushing headlong once again towards those destructive values. Maybe its not fascism this time but it is autocracy where leaders of many countries take way too much power for themselves – a new form of democratic dictatorship. And the masses follow along, accepting only their groups' values and harshly rejecting anything that is other. We have split into black and white. Without the grey there is no negotiating, no humor, no common ground. It is like armies lining up dressed in red and blue ready to advance and slaughter each other. We have seen this before, millions have died. Yet this time around, our long-term neglect of nature and lack of care for the other, our greed and individualism is catching up with us. Our world could actually be destroyed by our neglect. Millions may die this time because of climate change causing migrations, disease, starvation, and war. We are already living with the anxiety, depression, fear of this looming shadow that is so huge, it is erupting into everyday consciousness – all except for the few, yet an increasing number of leaders, who steadfastly hold onto their power and greed. The psychological phenomenon is not new but the degree of danger is.

When Jung was dying he told Marie-Louise von Franz that he saw large swaths of devastation across the earth. He was pessimistic about humans surviving. Von Franz speaks about this in her *Remembering Jung* interview, and although it appears there was more that Jung said to her, she refused to discuss it. It was too terrifying. Well, he may have been right as he has been about so many things. We can only hope for a miracle and greater consciousness. Mercurius will be welcome if it brings us such a gift.

(Translation by Chiara Tozzi)