

Encountering the Shadow Bringer of the Light



February 22
7:30 pm

"The 'ugliest man' (Nietzsche) comes up from the sewers, hunchbacked and wretched. His face mirrors the sadness of a being which has never been loved, for we have turned away from our unconscious soul. But in folklore, a hunchback is a bringer of luck; he carries a lamp, a chance to bring light into the darkness of our modern world."

Marie-Louise von Franz's commentary on Peter Birkhäuser's painting entitled "Coming Up" in *"Windows on Eternity, the Paintings of Peter Birkhäuser"*, Einsiedeln: Daimon Verlag, 2009.

One of C.G. Jung's most foundational psychological concepts concerns the reality of the shadow, both at the personal as well as the deeper, collective level. He held that to encounter and accept our shadow, "the thing we have no wish to be" (*CW 16*, §470), is fundamental to the process of individuation, to becoming whole.

If our shadow, personal or collective, is not recognized and accepted, it then acts out behind our back, so to speak; that despised quality that we reject as our own is unconsciously, and often destructively, projected onto the other. But if we risk the encounter we may find that the shadow is not just negative, but holds hidden creative potential for human growth.

In this lecture we will explore the concept of the shadow as bringer of the light. We will follow a young woman's struggle to come to terms with a striking shadow figure that followed her throughout her two-year analysis. Through an exploration of her dreams, her artwork and the analytical process, we witness the healing and opening to new creative life bestowed upon her, in part through her courageous encounter with the shadow.



Judith Dowling is a Zurich trained Jungian analyst with a private practice in Victoria, B.C. She has lectured in Canada and Europe, and is currently the president of the Jung Society of Victoria. Judith's article: *Lost Voices of the Feminine: The Song of Miriam Arises* is published in the Spring, 2018 edition of the *Jung Journal*, Culture and Psyche. Her website is: www.victoriajungiananalysis.com

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