

SEEING RED (/)

Assisi Institute Conference Proposal

Proposed Evening Session (45 minute artistic presentation)

Meadowsounds

Rumi

*We've come again to that knee of seacoast
no ocean can reach.*

*Tie together all human intellects.
They won't stretch to here.*

*The sky bares its neck so beautifully,
but gets no kiss. Only a taste.*

*This is the food that everyone wants,
wandering the wilderness, "Please give us
your manna and quail."*

*We're here again with the beloved.
This air, a shout. These meadowsounds,
an astonishing myth.*

*We've come into the presence of the one
who was never apart from us.*

MeadowSounds

Re-Engaging the Feminine in the Dance of Life

The oppression of women is more than an issue of gender; it reflects a broader alienation of self, a view of masculine as separate from feminine, spirit as separate from matter that is deeply embedded in our cultural consciousness. The “fall of grace” for woman - and disdain for broader aspects of feminine consciousness - has manifested as an unbalanced view of life emphasizing the *rational mind, heavenly spirit high above* to the exclusion of the *intuitive, soulful natural rhythms of earth, deep below*. Trapped in this pervasive cultural myth of our time, we have reached a crucial point: Having forgotten our instinctive tie to the rhythms and patterns of nature, we have lost our sense of the relational or “other,” that being the environment, animals or humans in need, and even our own bodies.

Destruction of our planet, a blatant disregard for the proper use of natural resources, widespread human suffering and accelerating extinction of animal species reflect the escalating crisis, exposing the underlying, repressed aspects of psyche triggering these personal and collective disturbances calling forth to be healed. Our masculine-dominated culture is off-balance, and the problems we face as humanity can be healed only with a strong injection of the alive but hidden, and now slowly re-emerging feminine, uniting with her masculine partner in the dance of life.

In Jung’s 1923 seminar at Polzeath, Cornwall he identified four elements that have undergone most severe repression – physiologically and psychically - in the modern world: Nature; Animals; Creativity, Intuition, Imagination; and, Body Experience. **All of these are repressed aspects of the feminine, now calling us to balance, heal and transform ourselves, and our world.** An archetypal archaeology of the sacred feminine – working consciously with images – brings an expanded understanding of the Feminine Principle, a subtle energy that remains largely untapped within the psyche of both men and women. Moving beyond gender dualities that underlie traditional feminist discourse, the Feminine Principle springs from ancient wisdom when the Great Mother contained all possibilities and sustained all life.

This 45-minute session will demonstrate how an extended immersion in painting led to a deep, personal discovery of unconscious, repressed aspects of the archetypal feminine. Citing works by artists and writers, we will explore symbols and imagery of the archetypal feminine as expressed in primitive cave art, goddess mythology, shamanism, eastern spirituality and fairy tales, interwoven with a discussion of paintings, journal/dream entries and body/movement practices that accompanied my personal three-year journey working with these images. An awakening to the personal and cultural implications of this exploration of the feminine will further illuminate how immersion in the creative process opens us to beautifully experience and embody these primordial, archetypal energies that are reaching for conscious human connection and expression, to heal and transform ourselves and our world.

