

The Hunt for the Green Man: Dialogues written at the Chapel Hill Library during a Sunday Salon sponsored by the C.G. Jung Society - November 18, 2001

By Ann Loomis

The Green Man signifies irrepressible life. Once he has come into your awareness, you will find him speaking to you wherever you go. In his origins, he is much older than the Christian era. He is connected to the Great Goddess and cannot exist without the feminine principle. There is a link between the Great Goddess and the Green Man, and whenever she appears, he is likely to follow. If the Great Goddess has reappeared today as the concept of Gaia, then who is the Green Man in his new incarnation?

As a visual image, he has three main forms. In the first and oldest form, he is a male head formed out of a leaf mask. In the second form, he is a male head disgorging vegetation from his mouth and often from his ears and eyes. In the third form, the head is the fruit or flower of vegetation. The ferocity of the Green Man's facial expression is one of warning against neglect of natural law and the crushing of natural instincts in an unbalanced attempt to maintain control.

With the onset of the Age of Enlightenment, the Green Man went to sleep because of the effects of the rational-scientific attitude and the technology of the Industrial Revolution. His reappearance today in art and as a symbol of the environmental movement has profound significance for humanity. When an image of such great power as the Green Man returns in a new aspect after a long absence, the purpose of his return is not only to revive forgotten memories, but also to present fresh truths and emotions necessary to fulfilling the potentialities of the future.



By Ann Loomis

Me: Green Man, what forgotten memories are you here to revive?

GM: Ah, it's a great mystery, isn't it?



Me: Will you reveal your mysteries to me?

GM: Mysteries are like treasure hunts. See if you can unlock the secrets of my treasures.

Me: Can you at least give me a clue to start?

GM: Hmm, let's see. How about, LEAF.

Me: That's all? Leaf?

GM: Okay, here's another. LIFE.

Me: Leaf, life. A leaf goes through the cycle of life-birth, death, rebirth.

GM: How does a leaf do that?

Me: For one thing, a leaf has to be attached to a tree or a plant to do its thing.

GM: So you're saying that a tree gives life to the leaf. What are you getting at?

Me: Remember the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden? Adam and Eve never ate of the Tree of Life, did they?

GM: No, but maybe you can.

Me: Green Man, are you tempting me? I don't want to get into trouble here.

GM: Don't worry, I was there in the Garden of Eden. I know what went on there.

Me: Where were you in the Garden?

GM: I was up there among the leaves of the trees watching the whole thing. Our “first parents” weren’t ready to eat of The Tree of Life, but human kind is at a different point now.

Me: What will the Tree of Life tell us for our times?

GM: Ah, now that’s further into the mystery. You’ll have to hunt for it.

Me: Any clues?

GM: Look at all the leaves coming from my head. Leaf and head, head and leaf. Therein lie the clues to my mystery, both forgotten and not yet known.

By Betty Lou Chiaka

Me: Green Man, where are you in my life now?

Green Man: I’m hiding waiting for you to find me.

Me: What do I have to do to find you?



GM: You have to come outside and open your senses and your heart. You won’t find me at first. You won’t find me fast. I will elude you until your heart breaks with longing to be touched.

Me: I feel like there’s no time for such things these days and that pains me a lot.

GM: Good, your heart is starting to open. Feel that pain of no-time, no permission, no real reason to come out.

Me: Will you support me to do so?

GM: Yes, I'm just here waiting for you. I AM here.

By Jean White

Me: Green Man, I am wary of asking about what I need to do for the care of the Earth in myself and in the actual world. However, I will take the risk to listen to your response to my statement.



GM: I am aware that you have been searching and watching for evidence of my presence. That consciousness will grow and allow you to experience more evidence of how I am weaving the Earth's air, water, and warmth through the actions and deeds you do. Be mindful and it will enhance your life and that of those who are around.

By Nancy Corson Carter

Me: Green Man – so ferocious yet green, a plant, susceptible to frost, to mowing, to being eaten even by a passing deer – who are you?

GM: “The force that through the green fuse drives the flower . . .” You’ve heard of me; you’ve laughed at me as the Jolly Green Giant, for example, but generally you’ve effeminized and trivialized, even ignored me.

Me: I’m sorry, it’s just that I/we took you for granted, I guess. But no longer is that possible. Now I have a sense that you are deeply needed. What have you come to tell us?

GM: Walt Whitman knew – Leaves of Grass – all the most ordinary of Life – grass, for heaven’s sake! – is mystery and of the deepest universal as well as particular meaning.

Me: Yes, and how do you “marry” with Gaia? What does this mean?

GM: You've been in the Amazon; I saw you there. I've seen you everywhere there is green growing/flowing life on Earth, and you, mostly unbeknownst to yourself, have seen me. It's iconic really as well as direct reality – your eyes, the seeing of Earth, is part of who you are and who I am – seeing – in the deepest sense of knowing, acknowledging, being erotically and every-way-of-loving in relation.

By Rosalie Germano

Me: Green Man, where do you stand when things are falling down?

GM: I stand tall with roots deep in Gaia's soil.

Me: And if you fall?

GM: I grow on my side, receiving my nourishment from Gaia even when I am toppled.

Me: And if your tap root is severed?

GM: I go on in what comes after me in the sprouts that come forth from what was my roots.

Me: I've seen that happen. What can I learn about my life from what you are teaching me?

GM: You can learn to be nourished by Gaia while you can, for as long as ever you can, suck in life knowing that you will be healed either in yourself or in what comes after you.



By Albert Howard Carter, III

Me: Green Man, who are you?

GM: I am your forgotten self.

Me: How can I remember you, re-member me?

GM: Go outside and go inside your self.

Me: If I stretch two ways, won't I break?

GM: No, you will be healed, wholed, haloed.

Me: Were you in the Leonid shower?

GM: Yes, especially the dust from all the meteors and meteorites that helps build and renew the earth, build and renew the imaginations of all who are observant.

Me: Can you guide my creativity?



GM: Sure, I do already; you can't stop me, but you can further enhance my power.

Me: How?

GM: Go outside and go inside yourself.

Me: Isn't that what you said before?

GM: Of course, and for millennia past and to come: corso and ricorso. Hear the wind in my leaves and in your hair.

By Sharon Elizabeth Wood

GM: It isn't hollow. These leaves are the fingers of time.

Me: Is there a story?

GM: It is in the wood. The forest of life; the forest of mind. Gather.

Me: Where is the wood?

GM: Everywhere. Feel my breath. The rough tongue of drought and prosperity. Fish flow through my veins.

Me: Are you with us?

GM: I whisper. Pine.

Me: And Gaia?

GM: I am the shadow of the giant stomach. I ride the wind where Gaia abides.

Me: Will you stay with us?

GM: Look to the acorn and the wild mushroom. Seek the soul of the Earth. Pungent. Pulsing. Alive.

