

J.T.P

In Memory of Aniela Jaffe

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In November 1991, I received a letter from my friend in Kusnacht, with the enclosed clipping:

Neue Zürcher Zeitung

8044 Zürich, 30. Oktober 1991
Voltastrasse 30

Wir haben, wo wir lieben, ja nur dies:
einander lassen; denn dass wir uns halten,
das fällt uns leicht und ist nicht erst zu lernen.
R. M. Rilke für eine
Freundin

Aniela Jaffé
20. 2. 1903 – 30. 10. 1991

*Noomi und Gantert-Hurwitz
Nina, Michael, Ruth
Robert und Lela Hinshaw-Fischli
Frank Herrmann und Luke Herrmann
mit Familien, England
Ihre Freunde, Kollegen, Schüler und Leser*

Wir nehmen Abschied von ihr Montag, 4. November,
15 Uhr auf dem Friedhof Fluntern.

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I gathered my notes from what had been an extraordinary meeting with her, and write the following tribute to a remarkable woman:

During July, 1990, when I was teaching at the C. J. Jung Institute in Zurich, friends there thought that I should meet Aniela Jaffe, personal secretary of Jung and co-author of his autobiography Memories, Dreams, and Reflections. It was too late to schedule an appointment for that year, however, so it waited until July, 1991.

I arrived at her apartment in Zurich the next summer, feeling like a star-struck adolescent. I felt as if she carried the original spirit of Jung, and that the meeting would be powerful. In addition, I knew that she was interested in dance. As a dance therapist and psychologist, I was fascinated to ask her about Jung's relationship with dance.

When I walked into her apartment, I saw a small apartment filled with books and papers. It might, on the one hand, have been the apartment of a graduate student preoccupied with books and learning. It was, on the other hand, an apartment of a woman who committed her life to learning, to a life of psyche, spirit and mind. I saw a woman in her eighties, nearly blind, who had difficulty walking. I saw a woman who was thin and frail, with a luminous and beautiful face, who greeted me energetically and lucidly.

"Come in", she said, decisively pointing me to the living room ("In there"). and motioning me to "Have a seat in the red chair." She took her seat on the chair next to the couch. I had a strong impression of a clear and sharp intelligence, combined with a presence which was strong, direct, and also fragile, vulnerable, and ethereal. Still beautiful, she threw back her head and patted me.

Saying directly: "I'm almost blind, let me look at you", she put on the light peered at my face, and said in German, something like "good image", and released my face with a smile.

"Next", she said, "put yourself in this book." Pulling up an old address book, she asked: "What is your name?" Handing me the book, she said "Here, enter it yourself." The book was aged, with yellowed paper and leather binder. After I signed in the S page, she held up a magnifying glass to the page, peering at the address.

After this, we settled down to the substance of our visit. I asked Aniela Jaffe about Jung's relationship to dance.

She said that the body was more and more important to Jung. Dance was "very good." At the Institute, she said, Jung said "We need to bring in the body," and asked if I were giving individual performances at the Institute. She said "I never saw Jung dance", with a faraway look on her face. Then she brightened, remembering an incident at Eranos: That evening, Jung had drunk quite a bit. She giggled, remembering and demonstrating a "hop-step" he did, shifting weight from one foot to another. She reported that people said that Jung didn't like music, but preferred silence. Aniela Jaffe said that this was not true. Although Jung said that music interrupted his ability to listen to his inner voice, he did like "Negro spirituals." She remembered that one time a famous woman concert pianist came to him, played the piano for him, and then reported that Jung had a most perceptive musical ear. When Aniela Jaffe reported this incident, she giggled girlishly, saying: "Isn't that wonderful?"

Dance, for Jung, was spiritual, uniting body and spirit. Dance without spirit was, in fact, like gymnastics. She directed me to an exhibit in the Asian art museum, saying that the pictures in her apartment of the Dalai Lama were given to her. Jung practiced

yoga, she said, but he stopped practice when the images stopped. He wasn't interested in (German word) what you call "emptiness."

When I told her that I was a student of Tibetan Buddhism, but that sometimes it lacked passion, she said that Jung said that spirituality sometimes was too removed from being human: "What interested him was a unity of spirituality and materialism", and that dance combined the two.

At this point, Aniela Jaffe giggled. She asked: "Guess what I like?" I guessed the waltz, but she said it was Mozart. She liked the quadrille, but did not like "American Indian or Negro music." She then told me that she had danced with a pupil of Mary Wigman (an originator of German expressionist dance), and described how they would dance out emotions such as sadness.

She had worked with children when she was in Berlin, those who couldn't walk. Aniela Jaffe taught them to walk. Although she didn't dance with them, she said that it was very important for their feeling of themselves to walk.

Aniela Jaffe then asked me if I liked sports. She said that she liked swimming, skiing, and tennis, although she admitted that tennis was not very glamorous.

She then asked: "What do you think of hands?" Saying that she thought hands expressed character, she took both of mine. Peering at a palm, she turned it over, talking of the inner and the outer hand. My hand was, she said, very expressive and very strong, a generous and giving woman's hand. I then grasped hers, and she asked me what I felt. To me, her hand was strong and present, but quiet and receptive. When I said this to her, she laughed, and agreed that she was not assertive but receptive.

I then asked her if she minded me sketching her, since that was how my hands registered the images I saw. She readily posed, and during that time, became very relaxed and told me about her own life .

She asked if I were married. She told me that she was divorced, and had been married for six years. I asked her if she thought it necessary for a woman to be married and have family, husband and children. She said "no", that she actually always liked being alone. Alone, she said, but not alone.

When I asked her what it was like not to have children, and she said that it was for her a great tragedy. Then she told me that I had the courage to lead an unconventional life. For a women, she said, that was important. For an artist, it was important to be alone. I told her that sometimes I found it very difficult, that it took a great deal of courage to be alone, and that I didn't often have guides about leading an unconventional life . She said strongly that I had my own guide, and that it was very strong. She told me, compassionately, that she never decided to live as she did, that it just happened. From this, she advised me: ""Keep following one thing after the next." Predicting how much more I'd have lived by the time I was her age, she laughed and made deprecating remarks about her age and her beauty.

Telling me that I had a very rich inner life, she urged me to keep dancing. To dance at the Institute.

When she thanked me for visiting her, I told her that I felt that I had just been blessed. That she blessed me, and blessed a mandate to keep dancing. Aniela Jaffe laughed, and thanked me again for coming to see her.

As I wandered out into the sunshine, I felt a strange mixture of light-headedness and very emotional, as though I had just been blessed by an extraordinary luminous being.

"Call me Aniela", she said, "and send me the sketch."

Now she's gone, and I've not sent her this article or the sketch. But I write this for her memory, sure that it will get back to her in some form.

