

Press release

C.G. JUNG: THE RED BOOK

18 December 2010 – 20 March 2011

'The years... when I pursued the inner images, were the most important time of my life. Everything else derived from this. It began at that time, and the later details hardly matter anymore. My entire life consisted in elaborating what had burst forth from the unconscious and flooded me like an enigmatic stream and threatened to break me. That was the stuff and material for more than only one life. Everything later was merely the outer classification, the scientific elaboration, and the integration into life. But the numinous beginning, which contained everything, was then.'

C.G. Jung (1957)

In the middle of his life, the great Swiss analytical psychologist Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961) went through a period of personal and spiritual turmoil. During this difficult time, at the age of 38, C.G. Jung began work on *The Red Book*, in which he recorded his dreams, fantasies, and visions. Out of this crisis emerged his most important and influential theories. Begun in 1914, and taking fourteen years to complete, *The Red Book* is an extraordinary work of self-exploration, which brings together C.G. Jung's most intensely personal notes and drawings, and documents his confrontation with the unconscious and with often terrifying dreams.

The Red Book can truly be called a *gesamtkunstwerk*, a total artwork. Weighing almost seven kilos, bound in red leather, it is composed in strangely solemn German, written in the intricate calligraphy of medieval manuscripts, and lavishly illustrated.

While assembling *The Red Book*, C. G. Jung went on a number of journeys, which included visits to the home of the Pueblo Indians in New Mexico, the oasis towns of North Africa, and the East African savanna.

All of C.G. Jung's psychological work bears testimony to his great interest in non-European cultures. Taoism, Buddhism, and Indian religions are constant references in his writings and help to form the basis of his theories on the dialogue with the unconscious, such as his concept of archetypes. Often in his drawings we can find round diagrams very similar to the mandalas in Tibetan art. This exhibition shows several mandala sketches including his very first work of this kind, 'Sistema mundi totius', a representation of the microcosm which reflected his own mental state. C. G. Jung regarded this work –

together with a series of sketches which he drew during his military service as an army doctor in the First World War – as the most important documents of his psychological and mental development.

After his death, *The Red Book* languished for decades in a bank vault. Last year, this astonishing and mysterious work was finally made accessible to the public. The publication was a great success, and now this book, which is of enormous importance for research into the history of psychology, is being shown in Europe for the first time.

Since *The Red Book*, like the journeys which contributed so much to its creation, is evidence of C. G. Jung's engagement with foreign cultures, symbols, and religions, Museum Rietberg seems like the ideal place for this exhibition. Diaries, paintings, and sculptures by C.G. Jung from family and private collections, dating from the same period as his work on *The Red Book* will also be shown – among them sculptures which have never before been displayed in public.

The exhibition is accompanied by an illustrated, small-format guide (Ger/Fre/Eng)
CHF 4

ORGANISATION

The exhibition was organised in collaboration with the Stiftung der Werke von C.G. Jung, Zurich; the guest curator is Prof. Sonu Shamdasani.

EVENTS

Sunday, 19 December 2010, 11.00
Liber Novus: C.G. Jung and the 'Art' of Psychology
Lecture by Prof. Sonu Shamdasani.

Sunday, 16 January 2011, 11.00
Transformations of the image of God in Jung's *The Red Book*
Looking for trails 'The treasure house of humanity'
Talk in German by Prof Dr. Ingrid Riedel.

Sunday, 13 February 2011, 11.00
The foreign within ourselves – C.G. Jung's encounter with foreign cultures
Talk in German by Linda Briendl.

Thursday, 20 January, 27 January, 3 March, 10 March and 17 March 2011, all at 18.30
Artistic interventions and talks.

Thursday, 3 February, 10 February and 17 February 2011, all at 19.00
'Discussing *The Red Book*' – Jungian analysts in discussion with the public.

GUIDED TOURS

Saturdays, 14.00
Public guided tours of the exhibition with staff of the C.G. Jung Institute and the Institute for Applied Psychology.

Private guided tours, Tel. + 41 (0)44 206 31 11/31

INFORMATION AND CONTACT

Further information and download of photographs on www.rietberg.ch

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Opening hours: Tues – Sun 10 am – 5 pm | Wed and Thu 10 am – 8 pm

Holidays: 25 December, 1 January; 10 am – 5 pm
24 December, 31 December; closed

Admission: adults CHF 16 | reduced CHF 12 | up to the age of 16 free

Access: Tram 7 (direction Wollishofen) to the «Museum Rietberg» stop (4 stops from «Paradeplatz»). No parking; disabled parking available.