



Re-Imagining Mary

Mariann Burke

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Artists plumb the depths of soul which Jung calls the collective unconscious, the inheritance of our ancestors' psychic responses to life's drama. In this sense the artist is priest, mediating between us and God. The artist introduces us to ourselves by inviting us into the world of image. We may enter this world to contemplate briefly or at length. Some paintings invite us back over and over again and we return, never tiring of them. It is especially these that lead us to the Great Mystery, beyond image. *Re-imagining Mary: A Journey through Art to the Feminine Self* is about meeting the Cosmic Mary in image and imagination, the many facets of the Mary image that mirror both outer reality and inner feminine soul. Jungian analyst Mariann Burke explores symbolic meanings of paintings and sculptures by several famous artists from the renaissance period on up to our modern age including: Fra Angelico, Albrecht Durer, Henry Ossawa Tanner, Nicolas Poussin, Parmigianino, Duccio di Buoninsegna, Salvador Dali, Andy Warhol, and Frederick Franck. Aspects of Mary explored include: Mary not only as Mother of God, a title from the Judeo-Christian tradition, but as Mother God, a title reaching back to an ancient longing for a Female Divinity. In western Christianity this Mary bears the titles and the qualities worshipped for thousands of years in the Female images of God and Goddess. These titles include Mary as Sorrowful One and as Primordial Mother. Recovering Mary both as light and dark Madonna plays a crucial role in humanity's search for a divinity who reflects soul. Also discussed is Mary as the sheltering Great Mother that Piero della Francesca suggests in the *Madonna del Parto* and *Mater Misericordia*. Frederick Franck's *The Original Face* and the *Medieval Vierge Ouvrante* also suggest this motif of Mary as Protector of the mystery of our common Origin. Franck's inspiration for his sculpture of Mary was the Buddhist koan 'What is your original face before you were born?'

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Danica Johnson:

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