



***** Christine Downing Dissertation Fellowship ***
Awards Announcement**

A dream come true! I felt deeply honored by the establishment of this Fellowship and so grateful to all those who helped fund it—and am enormously pleased that it is up and running and that our first recipient so beautifully fulfills our vision.

- *Christine Downing, Ph.D.*

Opus Archives and Research Center is thrilled to announce that the winner of the 2013-2014 Christine Downing Dissertation Fellowship is Shannon Sloan-Spice, Mythological Studies doctoral candidate at Pacifica Graduate Institute.

The purpose of the Downing Fellowship is to award an annual scholarship to dissertation students of any accredited graduate level institution in the fields of depth psychology and mythology. The archival collections available for research at Opus include Joseph Campbell, Marija Gimbutas, James Hillman, Jane and Joseph Wheelwright, Christine Downing, Marion Woodman, Adolf Guggenbühl-Craig, and Katie Sanford.

Shannon Sloan-Spice's dissertation was inspired by a visit she paid to Opus archives in 2011 which led her to discover the collection devoted to the work of Jane Hollister Wheelwright. She was particularly taken with Hollister Wheelwright's focus on mother/ daughter relationships and the concepts of sovereignty and feminism, born out of her close relationship to the land. This then led Shannon to make a preliminary dive into materials available in the Gimbutas, Woodman, and Downing collections, and she came to realize how important all these collections would be to her ongoing research for her own project.

Her dissertation, entitled "Sovereignty and Soul-Making: Love Song of the Soror Mystica," explores a particularly feminine understanding of power, very different from how power is understood in predominantly patriarchal cultures, and one desperately needed in the contemporary world. Sovereignty is for her an archetypal force; she is the mythological Goddess of the Land, whose story manifests in many different cultures. She often has a sister/nemesis who is her darker self that brings wisdom and comfort through suffering, whom Shannon calls her *Soror Mystica*. Together, they embody an archetypal energy that is *anima mundi*, the soul of the land itself. Shannon shows how the ancient traditions about Sovereignty can empower contemporary individuating women in a specifically feminine way. She believes that the stories about the two sacred sisters beckon to us, and call us to engage them through our imaginative intelligence. They represent inner guides and are also critical to deepening our engagement with the natural world.

We are delighted that in continuing her work on her dissertation, Shannon will be returning again and again to Opus Archives, particularly to those collections devoted to female scholars. We look forward to how her own work, when completed, will further enrich our understanding of female individuation.

The Christine Downing Dissertation Fellowship is awarded annually. The next cycle will be announced in November. For more information please visit our website and review the application and instructions - www.opusarchives.org.

If you are interested in contributing to this Fellowship, please contact Dr. Shelley Glickstein, Executive Director of Opus Archives and Research Center at (805) 969-5750.

Opus Archives and Research Center is a non-profit research center that houses the archives of Joseph Campbell, Marija Gimbutas, James Hillman, Jane and Joseph Wheelwright, Christine Downing, Marion Woodman, Adolf Guggenbühl-Craig, and Katie Sanford. In addition to safeguarding these important resources, Opus works to foster ongoing research in the fields of depth psychology and mythological studies.