

Welcome to this living treasure, a rich gathering of archetypal symbols. These living presences touch the imagination and relate to the creativity in the depths of all human beings as the basic substance of life. Beyond the threshold, what awaits you moves as a rich web of images and symbols with surprising and sometimes astonishing interconnections. Venturing into this realm, one comes upon unfolding layers of meaning. Exploring these layers involves a certain kind of fluid movement and play that can bring with it elements of humor and wonder.

Inviting Wonder

The journey into the Archive often begins with a dream image, an inspiration, an interest in a motif, a wondering. A beginning image can serve, like Ariadne's thread, as a connection to follow through the myriad entries in the Archive. Many individuals naturally enter the collection from a visual perspective and the images lead deeper and deeper into meanings and understandings. These images are archetypal and do not necessarily relate to things concrete so much as things perceived indirectly. There is a kind of play involved in tracing the archetypal image and its symbolic facets that point beyond the thing itself. There is a play, too, involved in not holding too tightly to a word or image, yet, at the same time, staying with the image and its meanings without identifying oneself with it.

For the purpose of this tutorial, we will work with a particular dream and its symbolic images. A woman shares a dream:

I am walking behind my female friend along a narrow path of stones next to a rolling river. Because it is stormy, the river is rushing and the air is brisk. The mist engulfing us is a light rain. We are next to the shoreline and the water is clear enough that I can see three large salmon swimming with the current. Every ten feet or so, we decide whether or not to dip our feet into holes in the pathway filled with water. It is a ritual or a cleansing process. I follow my friend's lead and we are completely immersed in the exercise. Our walk is rhythmical and fluid, like a graceful dance. We are both wearing long, white, flowing dresses that blow in the wind as we dip then swirl. Water is all around us, at our feet and in the misty air. The

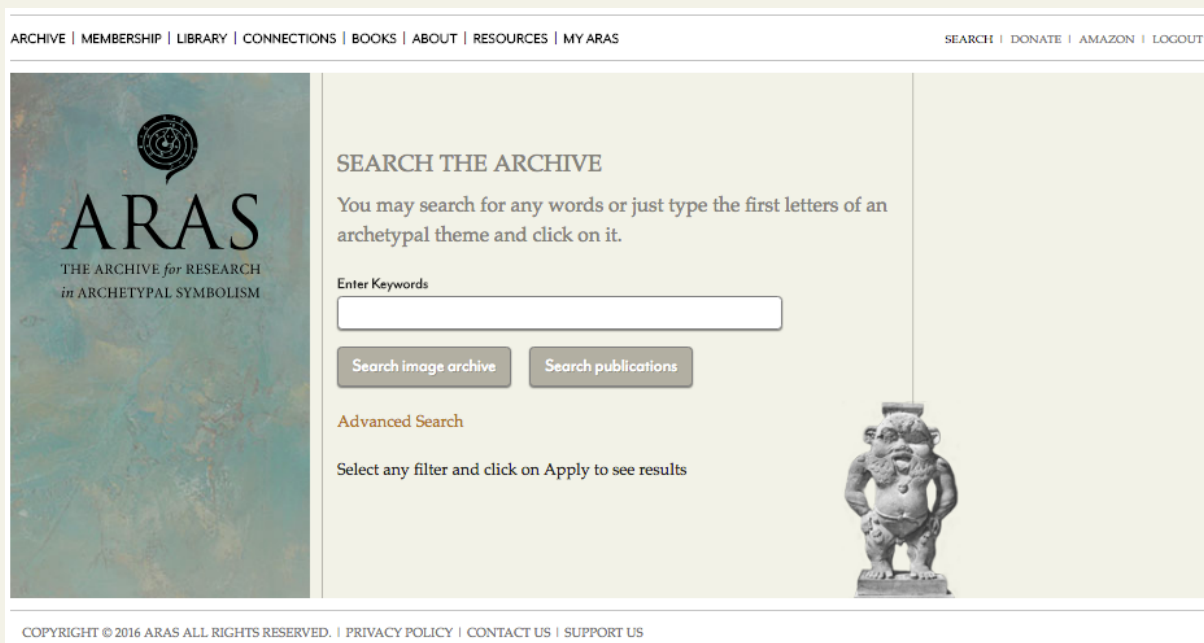


ARAS 7Nm.004
"Kannon Blesses a
Future Child"
by Kano Hogai

sound of moving water is deafening. I am not sure whether it is dawn or dusk and the light is spectacular--a golden glow. We are part and particle of nature, part of the earth around us, part of everything.

The dreamer feels the dream fish call to her as a particularly charged symbol. A first step in engaging the symbol might be to find a basic photograph or to draw a picture actively re-imagining or recalling the qualities of the dream fish. Using the Archive, one may relate with fish by exploring the various record summaries that have associations to fish. The collection contains a wide scope of motifs gathered from a multitude of cultures in many forms including: artistic, mythological, ritualistic, spiritual, philosophical, and religious. Fish touch into each of these realms as they are found in images of art and story across the history of human beings. Existing in the cave paintings of Lascaux, the art of Paul Klee, and the flying imagery of Chagall, fish also fill Neptune's watery realms out of which Aphrodite, the goddess of love, is born.

How to start a basic search

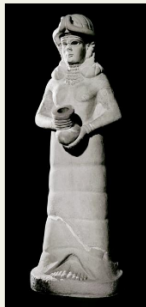


This basic search begins with the general topic of fish to discover if a specific record draws you to view it. Upon typing fish as the keyword in the Search the Archive "Enter Keywords" box and selecting Search image

archive, 667 results for “fish” appear and may be viewed in descriptive, image, cinematic or flow modes. For our purposes, let’s select descriptive view where image and text appear. Then the need to focus on a more specific aspect of fish with the feminine quality of the dream becomes clear and “fish feminine” yields 67 results.

To change text size, go to the view menu at the top of the page and select Zoom In or Out. If you would like to see more details, place the cursor over the thumbnail image or the six-digit record locator number and select.

In listening with the imagination and holding the image gently, one may find, as the dreamer did, that when viewing the results one feels right or sparks an interest or recalls something of the quality of the dream. The “Fountain as Goddess with a vase” image (2Bh.801) has this quality.



2BH.801
 ... The Book of Symbols: Reflections on Archetypal Images 2Bh.801 Unknown As the source of fresh waters, this unidentified ... a pipe connection. Fountain As Goddess with a Vase 2Bh.801 ...

Select 2Bh.801.




IMAGE A ◀ PREV NEXT ▶
🔍

- DESCRIPTION
 As the source of fresh waters, this unidentified fertility-goddess possessed life-giving power. Streams are shown flowing down her skirt and in them swim fish, a symbol of the abundant life she sustains. Once, water poured forth from the vase in her hands. This fountain was placed in the king's courtyard to magically capture the goddess's powers for his domains. Goddess (eyes once inlaid, but now lost) wearing horned headdress, borate jewelry (multiple earrings, necklaces, and bracelets), and garment with

ARAS RECORD 2BH.801
FOUNTAIN AS GODDESS WITH A VASE
 ◀ PREV NEXT ▶

DATE
 Probably during the reign of King Zimri-Lim of Mari (ca. 1779-1761 B.C.)

ARTIST
 Unknown

ORIGIN
 The Ancient World, The Middle East, Old Babylonian Period, Return of Amorites to Babylonia, Mari

SUMMARY
 Goddess wearing horned crown, 6-strand necklace, garment incised with fish and wavy water lines, hair hanging on shoulders, holding vessel in both hands. Manifestation of Ishtar. The vase flowed with "the water of fertility" by means of a pipe connection.

MEDIUM
 Statue: limestone, carved, with red paint

MEASUREMENT
 Height, 55 7/8 in. (1.42 m.)

PROVENANCE
 Syria: Mari, Palace of Zimri-Lim, room 64 and court 106

REPOSITORY OR SITE
 Syria: Aleppo, National Museum of Aleppo, no. 1659

IMAGE SOURCE

To visit additional photographs within a record with more than one image, select the “Previous” and “Next” arrows beneath the lower right corner of the image.

Upon first sight of the record, the dreamer responds to the feminine figure, to the fish, flowing water, and flowing garments that relate to her dream. While reading the main Description, the dreamer also finds things that touch her, hold meaning for her, in relation to her dream. These items are shown in bold italics in the following paragraphs:

As the source of **fresh waters**, this unidentified fertility goddess possessed life-giving power. **Streams** are shown **flowing down her skirt and in them swim fish**, a symbol of the abundant life she sustains. Once, water poured forth from the vase in her hands. [...]

Goddess [...] wearing horned headdress, elaborate jewelry (multiple earrings, necklaces, and bracelets), and **garment with scalloped sleeves and long skirt decorated with ripple pattern up which swim three bands of fishes**; holding in her hands a **vessel** connected to an interior canal, running vertically to her base, through which **water once flowed**.



Click on the area in the folds in the middle of the dress and select the magnifying glass with the + beneath the image. By zooming in on the garment, new detail reveals itself.



detail of fish in
folds of dress

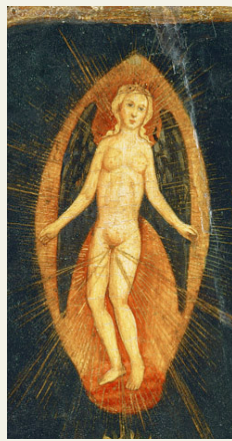
When enlarging an image, the screen will often show a pixelated image or one that appears blurry. Allow a moment and the image will become clearer. To move around in the image, click within the image box and hold the mouse key down or hold thumb down on trackpad while moving the cursor. To reduce the image size, click the button with the magnifying glass and the -.

Fish are part of the fabric of the garment and they originate from the Goddess and from the vessel in her hands. The dreamer has, for some time, had a strong interest in vessels and their symbolic meaning. In her further exploration, she finds how the books in the Jung Institute Library and the images of the Archive complement one another. Buffie Johnson, in her book, *Lady of the Beasts*, describes how the “vessel of the fish,” or *vesica piscis* from Latin, points to the vessel as feminine, as a womb, and to fish as symbolic of generation and rebirth (224). The finned, gilled creatures appear in ceremonies, writings, in the astrological signs of Pisces, and in the outline of the *mandorla*, which means “almond” in Italian.

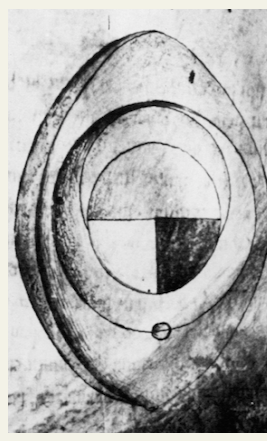
The Mandorla



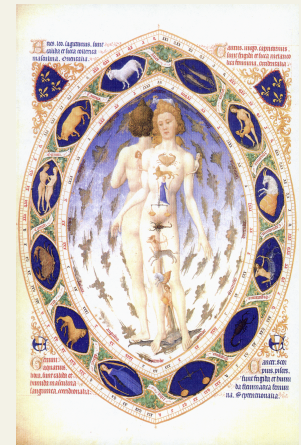
Shakyamuni
with mandorla
ARAS 7Lf.002



Venus in
rayed mandorla
ARAS 5Fb.015



Object with outer
mandorla
ARAS 5Eo.510



Zodiac Man
within mandorla
ARAS 5Fk.042

Almond-shaped fish adorn the garments of the Goddess and the section titled “Cultural Context” includes a description of the vessel she holds as a

source; “an ancient and potent Mesopotamian symbol of life-giving fresh waters, on which the fecundity of plant and animal life depends.”

The search may lead one from the creativity of the Goddess and source of the waters of life into an interest in more images relating to this statue that is also a fountain contained within the walls of the king’s courtyard. The text within Cultural Context also indicates another record from the same geographical location and time period of a wall painting. This painting reveals that the statue is a three-dimensional portrayal of an image in the painting and its record connects to another source of fish and water:



2BH.804

... which plants sprout and streams full of fishes flow. **2Bh.804** Unknown In the center of the larger panel is a double register ... 239) The Investiture of King Zimri-Lim of Mari **2Bh.804** ...



detail of vessel sprouting plants and streams with fish
ARAS 2Bh.804

To download images, select the High Resolution Image Downloads dropdown menu and select from the .Tif images which will download to your

computer where they can be accessed to place into educational brochures or presentations via PowerPoint, Keynote, or other programs.

The Description for 2Bh.804 includes this detail, “Lower register: Two goddesses wearing horned crowns hold vessels from which plants sprout and streams full of fishes flow.”

An alternate way to explore images is to select “Archetypes in this image” on the right side of the page. Select Vessel, Flowing. The image of record 2Bh.329 touches the dreamer with the torso of a figure wearing flowing garments holding a vase pouring forth water. The water and fabric echo one another in pattern and movement. In zooming in, more fish are found swimming in the “living water.” As in the previous image, the fish swim in both directions, to and from the source.

The dreamer feels a connection to this image. She connects more deeply with it when she reads the description. The text reflects words and images that hold a charge for her:

This vessel of two streams was the Mesopotamian symbol of the living water of The Land of the Two Rivers. Contenau describes the figures as two divinities; the Encyclopédie photographique as two figures, each holding vessel by one hand, other hand about companion, at least one of the figures as feminine judging by long hair hanging down back and ruffled and draped costume. The fish at the side of the water instead of in it follows Sumerian art tradition, which places hidden object alongside whatever hides it. Moortgat describes it as two goddesses, and the pendant in b) as a counterpoise for a heavy necklace.

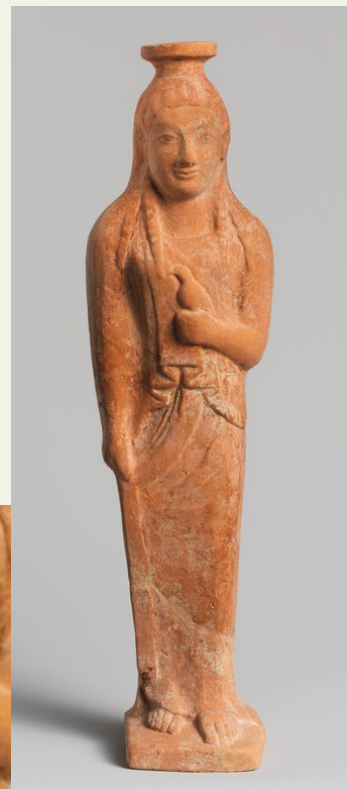
Try selecting the (b) image with the “Next” key, then return to the main screen of two images by selecting “Prev.”

The dreamer finds possibilities to follow from these records as each contains the quality of fluidity with commentary about vessels from which water flows resulting in continuous renewal for the land and waterways abundant with fish. She finds a resonance with the garments or robes and with the feminine, which lead her to again explore “Archetypes in this image” in the column on the right of the page.

This initial search might yield a new sense of the feminine being held in a sacred manner that honors the fluidity of life. The dreamer is touched in her core by a sense of the importance of water and how it means life for human beings. She feels acutely aware of the current situation in the world and the necessity for all beings to have access to clean water. There is an element of concern and a return to the image and the abundance, the over-flowing naturalness of life. The water seems to flow both out from and into the vessel while the fish swim back toward the source. She relates to the water as faith and the vessel as containing the life-giving force, the creative spirit that continually comes forth.

This understanding might lead to a deeper exploration of vases or containers and the feminine. In the Search box type in “Vessel, Feminine.” The image that our dreamer has a resonance with is 3Hd.700 as it incites a feeling for her of connection to dancing in

robes in the dream. Of this image, considered to be the goddess of love, Aphrodite, the record description says, “The gesture of exposure, (...) the arm across the body, a sign of gratitude; the offering of a dove. The latter, held against the torso was particularly popular in the Greek islands and the East.”



Next, search “dancing women” to follow the thread that has a strong impact on the dreamer. The image of “The Hathor Dance” with its white dresses 2Ad.090 touches her deeply.



In this image, women keep the beat while bare-chested girls perform a dance honoring Hathor, goddess of music and dance, love, and joy. The girls reveal a very human quality and unity in the arching of their backs and reaching out in a scene where everyone participates. The dreamer feels a resonance with the text, firstly, under the Description section in this record and, secondly, from the Cultural Context:

On the left of each register appear two standing women who wear short wigs and white diaphanous dresses, beneath which the outline of their bodies can be seen. (...) The dancers stand on their right legs,

with torsos tilted and heads thrown back as they arch their backs in time to the music. In a pose of exaltation, they fully extend their left legs in a high kick while their arms are raised up in a parallel gesture. The artist has produced a visual pun by associating the tassels of the dancers with the hieroglyph for “placenta” (also shown as a white circle).

On Hathor’s feast day, dancers may have begun their procession at the goddess's temple, the “home of intoxication, the place of enjoyment,” and danced through the streets, distributing Hathor's blessings by means of chants and ritualized movements.

The image speaks as another expression of feminine creativity with the symbol of the placenta and the presence of the goddess recalling the *vesica piscis*, the mandorla, and womb. “Compositions of this type were intended to perpetuate the funeral festivities for eternity, magically protecting, nourishing, and entertaining the deceased.” The lyrical collaboration and fluidity of dancers connect the dreamer to the feminine where the moisture and richness of creative joy belongs as a necessary part of life and its cyclical nature of death and rebirth; to the exchange and interchange that conceals, reveals and transforms.

The funerary festivities and dances celebrate life’s joy and bring consciousness to one’s individual source and associations to one’s social connections and cultural heritage. The dreamer’s response to the funerary rites connects her to the recent loss of someone close to her. The dancing and creativity relate to her personal creativity. In the commentary of the image, the dancers’ skirts are referred to as kilts to which the dreamer also responds due to her Celtic heritage. An individual’s particular background roots them in mythological material and spiritual traditions that can be valuable points of reference.

In conjunction with her Celtic background, a return to the fish of the dream and the number three reveals an intertwined symbol of the tripartite

Goddess predating the Christian meaning of the masculine trinity ascribed to it. The triangular image of the triquetra is made of three interwoven *vesica piscis*. Celtic tradition recognized the fish as a feminine symbol of return and renewal and water as a symbol for the flow of the divine feminine principle. The triquetra unites three aspects of the goddess: maiden, mother, and crone. The three parts of the whole are about birth, giving birth, and death and the continuous interplay of the web of life. Fish with their perpetually open eyes invite new perspectives and the three fish together in this image are associated with rebirth and renewal through the water necessary to life.

Fish are considered sacred in many religious traditions. In mythology and fairytales, fish play various roles. In life, salmon born in fresh water return to the saltwater sea of their ancestors and swim upstream, revisiting their freshwater birthplace to spawn new generations. In places around the world, salmon, with their silvery skin and pinkish-red flesh, are prized as a delicious and nourishing food. In relation to the dreamer's background, the ancient Celtic symbol of salmon has associations with inspiration and prophecy, with knowledge and wisdom. Celtic mythology reveals that salmon gained wisdom by consuming the sacred hazelnuts from the well of Segais. The stories tell how one could then gain this deep wisdom by eating this salmon.

The dreamer feels a resonance with the fluid strength of the water, with the dance, the fish in the folds of the gowns, with the triquetra, and the Celtic tale as she enters the third phase of her life for she feels the dream carries an initiatory experience traversing the maiden and mother phases and her movement into her wisdom years. She wears a necklace with a medallion over her heart containing a picture of her grandmother, her ancestress, and feels the need to grow into her nature as a wisdom-keeper. By consciously holding a space for and lovingly tending these images, the dreamer has experienced a transformation within herself and touched us in her sharing.

Reference: Johnson, Buffie. *Lady of the Beasts: Ancient Images of the Goddess and Her Sacred Animals*. San Francisco: Harper and Rowe, 1988.

In gratitude to all those who helped in the creation of this tutorial and to those whose participation in it and exploration of it adds to its depths and wonder especially: Ami Ronnberg, Allison Tuzo, Deborah Wesley, Tom Singer, Baruch Gould, Kathleen Russ, Patricia Sohl, and Richard Hassen.