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# ON THE COVER

## *The Faceless* by Jane Zich

*Portions of the following are based on a phone interview with the artist on October 5, 2022.*

Jane Zich, the artist featured on the cover of this issue of *American Psychologist*, is heavily influenced by Carl Jung. She describes the creation of her work as a process informed by a visual dialogue between imagery that arises from the unconscious and her conscious responses to that imagery. As Zich explains, there is an ongoing interactive process throughout the painting session by which she must respond to her art before it can respond back and take further shape. Thus, her final work is not planned in advance but rather reflects an imaginal dialogue, often with spiritual overlays.

*The Faceless* is such a piece, created by the artist using images from the unconscious. In this work, Zich began with silhouettes cut from marbled mulberry paper which are pasted on to the canvas. She stared at the paper and saw the shapes emerge. Then the people in the background were created next, painted with fluid acrylic media. Zich describes the foreground figures as perhaps immigrants and potentially unseen or marginalized people. The background figures are viewers like us. She notes that there is more in the picture than she knew about at the time. She links the figures, for example, to her grandmother and aunt who immigrated from Poland and experienced traumas in the context of war and the German occupation of Poland during World War I. In creating the painting, Zich meditates on the figures and determines where to place them, how to convey their postures and the dynamics among them. For example, the feet of the faceless people could point in any direction. But they point toward us, though their bodies might be facing the background group. With similarly ambiguous orientation, they are both inside and outside of us and our world.

Who are the faceless figures? They are the unacknowledged or unrecognized people in our lives. They prompt us to ask, who are the people that I do not know who are in my life? Who will we get to know and who will we exclude, consciously or unconsciously? Zich hopes that we will ask ourselves these questions and tap into unconscious thoughts in that process. Her goal for the image is to offer the viewer a space of mystery, from which might arise an "aha" moment of recognizing who are the faceless people in our lives. The faceless ones may be people from different social or political groups, or they may be members of one's own community or family. They may be faceless for many different reasons. The painting prompts us to ask ourselves who these people are and how we relate to them.

The use of color in *The Faceless* is highly intentional and draws from Jungian psychology. For example, orange could be a color of transformation, and it is a warm color. It combines yellow, a color signifying intuition, and red, representing feeling. Zich often paints with these colors to combine intuition and feeling. She also finds that warm colors provide viewers with "rest while engaging" with art that may otherwise be disturbing.

Zich is a psychologist who retired from practice in 2020. She is self-trained as an artist, and her journey to her current vocation of artist was not a linear one. Her psychology education was completed at University of Illinois at Champaign–Urbana (undergraduate) and Arizona State University (doctoral). However, she also has a master's in pyschology from the University of Cincinnati and a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Iowa's Writers' Workshop. Her early artwork was pen and ink, including cartoons that were featured in the *APA Monitor* in the 1980s. Zich's background and years of practice as a psychologist culminate in a portfolio of artwork that pushes us to access, with curiosity, the wonder of the unknown in our daily lives.

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*Art Editor*

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