Images as Gates to Meaning:
Art Therapy and Emerging Adults' Search for their Calling,
a Theoretical Inquiry

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A Research Paper
in
The Department
of
Creative Arts Therapies

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Arts (Creative Arts Therapies)
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

March, 2007

Canada

ABSTRACT

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If the question of finding one's *calling*, or one's most meaningful path in life is

considered central in existential psychology, it seems particularly relevant for this

segment of the population which developmental psychology calls emerging adults, who

are faced with the challenging task of defining their priorities and making life decisions

engaging their future. In our times of increased possibilities and decreased models to

guide one's choices, new structures are needed to support emerging adults in this critical

life transition and allow their search for their place in the world to be framed as a

conscious and purposeful process, toward personal development.

Art therapy has shown art-making to be a privileged avenue toward self-

knowledge and meaning-making. In this study, I propose to lay the theoretical

foundations for the implementation of a future art-based exploratory program designed to

assist young people in their search for calling.

Defining meaning as encounter, I draw on existential and archetypal literature to

explore how the artistic process, as phenomenological and imaginal engagement with

images, can facilitate the emergence and deepening of personal meaning, hence

contributing to one's psychological unfolding. Emphasising the aesthetic dimension of the art experience, I examine how the creative process as aesthetic practice can allow emerging adults to develop aesthetic sensitivity and creative competences which can be used in their daily lives to help them find their way in the world.

By trying to integrate the active ingredients of art therapy into an educational format of intervention, I hope to bring the benefits of our therapeutic practice beyond its traditional treatment mandate, to serve the more educative and cultural purpose of fostering young adults' development toward a more responsible participation in the world's unfolding.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work is dedicated to all the seekers, friends, clients, fellow travellers, past and future, who, by sharing their path with me, give its *raison d'être* to my quest for meaning.

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Introduction

Existential Questions

"What should I do in life?" Who am I to become?" "What is my calling?" These are questions many people ask themselves at some point in their lives, particularly in their young adult years, when they have to make crucial decisions concerning their future. This research, born from the desire to help people answer these questions, is an attempt to articulate how the practice of art, as an avenue to self-knowledge and meaning, can assist young adults in their quest for a personally meaningful life.

The need in our society for endeavours supporting people in their search for direction is evidenced by the abundant amount of literature published on the subject in the last two decades (Adrienne, 1998; Bogart, 1995; Bridges, 1980; Cameron, 1992; Hillman, 1996; Levoy, 1996; Montbourquette, 1999; Seligman, 2002a). In the field of psychology, two current movements converge to confirm the importance of this question: first, the increasing recognition given in developmental psychology to the new concept of *"emerging adulthood"* as a distinct developmental stage in the life of young adults devoted to identity exploration (Arnett, 2000, 2001, 2006; Côté; 2006; Labouvie-Vief, 2006; Luyckx, Goossens & Soenens, 2006; Tanner, 2006); and second, the increasing attention that the search for *personal meaning* is receiving in existential theory and empirical research (Blatner, 2000; Das, 1998; Fabry, 1998; Längle, 2005; Vittitow, 2002; Wong, 1998, 2000).

In order to set the context for my research project, I will first briefly present the elements of both developmental and existential literature relevant to my study, as well as introduce the notion of *calling,* a construct which may bridge the two perspectives.

Emerging Adulthood

If the question of "how to lead one's life in the most personally meaningful way" is gaining salience in post-industrial societies, it appears most particularly relevant for young people in search of their place in the world. In the field of developmental psychology, the construct of "emerging adulthood", which we owe to Arnett (2000), designates a distinct developmental period of adult life, which incorporates psychological, sociological and cultural features (Tanner, 2006). Described by Arnett (2000) and others as a "psychological moratorium" (Erikson, 1968), it is typical of young adults in post-industrialised societies as a "prolonged adolescence" extending from people's late teens to their late twenties. No longer focussed on settling into traditional adult roles, these years are increasingly dedicated to the pursuit of higher education, self-exploration, and shaping a future that best fit personal goals and desires (Arnett, 2006).

As noted by Schwartz, Côté, and Arnett (2005), "individualization [is] the primary task of emerging adulthood" (p. 203). In our times of increased opportunities and decreased models to guide individual choices, this task of identity development is becoming an increasingly personal project. Underlining the unstructured nature of emerging adulthood, Schwartz et al. (2005) note the potential difficulty of this task of prolonged identity formation, which requires a strong sense of personal agency in order to be an active and positive developmental process. Similarly, Côté (2006) notes that the "absence of guiding structures and norms" (p. 92) in our post-modern times can make personality development more difficult because it requires of individuals a bigger

"repertoire of personal resources" (p. 91) to compensate for the fragmentation of the institutional context.

In the field of cognitive development, Labouvie-Vief (2006) presents data showing that emerging adulthood is also a critical stage in the maturation of cognitive processes. Describing the mature adult structure of thought as an increased capacity to integrate rational and non-rational processes and to coordinate multiple perspectives, she shows the importance of these developments, which affect people's sense of self and their capacity for self-reflection. Also stressing the contextual nature of these developments, she underlines the necessity for this potential maturation to meet supportive conditions if it is to be actualised.

Meaning in Life

The transitional nature of emerging adulthood, with its search for identity and values, seems to reflect the more general transition that our culture as a whole is going through (Tarnas, 2001). As psychology increasingly turns its attention to "positive prevention" and helping people live more fulfilling lives (Seligman, 2002b) the construct of *meaning in life* is gaining increasing interest in the "affluent democracies of the West" (Fabry, 1998, p. 296). Many authors (Das, 1998; Fabry, 1998; Wong, 1998) recognise Frankl's writings (1959, 1978, 1985) as seminal in this movement, which today brings together existential and positive psychology, constructivist philosophy and phenomenological methodology (Wong, 1998). Frankl (1969) believed the quest for meaning to be humans' most central striving, a primary motivational force in life, and a healthy spiritual need, which frustration could lead to diverse forms of existential pathologies.

Based on the premise that *meaning in life* is positively associated with

psychological *well-being* (Das, 1998; Moomal, 1999; Scannel & Monash, 2002; Wong,

1998), an increasing amount of research is being dedicated to the question of *personal*

meaning (Blatner, 2000; Vittitow, 2002). Various research tools have been developed to

facilitate the scientific study of personal meaning, to measure its presence in people's

lives (Debats, 1998, 1999) and to better understand its dimensions in terms of its

dynamics (Little, 1998; Riff & Singer, 1998), its *structural components* (how it is

experienced), its *contents* (sources), its *breadth* (diversity), and its *depth* (quality)

(Halama, 2000).

Empirical studies (Debats, 1998) with young adults have demonstrated that the

sense of well-being (happiness, self-esteem) is more strongly associated with the

experiential-subjective dimension of meaning (*fulfilment*) than with its conceptual

dimension (*framework*). Although, as Debats (1999) remarks, the question of *how*

meaning develops has only been marginally addressed in theoretical existential literature

and relatively neglected in research, studies combining qualitative and quantitative

methods confirm what existential theorists and clinicians (Frankl, 1985; Yalom, 1980)

have said all along: Meaning is to be found in *engagement*, or *commitment*, defined as

investment of energy into some activity or persons (Debats, 1999). Links are also

increasingly being established between *spirituality* and *meaning in life* (Elkins,

Hedstrom, Hugues, Leaf & Saunders, 1988); *motivation* and *cognition* (Emmons, 1999,

2000); and *emotional well-being* (Hodges, 2002).

While studies on emerging adults show the importance of supporting their

cognitive maturation toward more systemic, contextual and inclusive processes as an

integral part of their personality development, the research on personal meaning confirm the value of finding ways to involve the various dimensions of meaning -experiential, emotional, spiritual- in the search for sources of personal fulfilment.

Calling

Reminding us of the significant role that personal meaning has in defining one's sense of self and identity, Baumeister (1991, as cited by Das, 1998) underlines that the "dilemmas of identity formation -identity crisis, finding oneself, and realizing one's potential- are often tied to finding a meaningful life" (p. 204). Similarly, McLean & Pratt (2006) show the centrality of meaning-making elaborations in the processes of emerging adults' identity formation.

Resonating with Arnett's (2001) definition of identity as the "conception of one's values, abilities, and hopes for the future" (p. 370), the construct of *calling* allows one to bridge the notions of personal meaning and identity. Historically, as noted by Kovan and Dirkx (2003), *calling*, like *vocation*, meant "to be addressed by a voice" (p. 100). Calling implies that there is something that life is asking of us, to which we must answer for our life to be most meaningful. This resonates with Frankl's view that "life challenges individuals with demands to which they have to respond if they are to live a fulfilled life" (Fabry, 1998, p. 295).

Besides addressing the dimension of ultimate meanings, or *ultimate concerns*, as existential authors call them (Emmons, 1999), the notion of calling also covers all three major sources of meaning to be found in everyday living as described by Frankl (1959) and his followers (Das, 1998; Wong, 1998) -the creative, the experiential, and the

spiritual, thus allowing us to consider emerging adults' search for their place in the world as an existential quest for meaning.

As Cohen (2003) notes, the existential perspective supposes that "humans are motivated toward authentic existence", which connotes "a striving toward one's potential" (p. 201). Relating the fulfillment of one's destiny to the actualisation of one's potential, Cohen presents the notion of *calling* as expressing the sense that there is a profound mutual relationship between "what we do in life" and the fundamental questions of "who we are and we are to become" (p. 201). In this context, work can be considered as a privileged *medium* -in the threefold sense of *environment, means,* and *materials,* allowing one to express, reveal and realise oneself.

As noted by Kovan and Dirkx (2003), "recent scholarship on vocation and calling confirm this deep interconnection between the meaningfulness of our lives and the meaningfulness of the work we do" (p. 100). But if *calling* includes the notion of vocation, it is also wider and more ambiguous than vocation in the sense of a specific life-task (Bogart, 1996) or life-plan (Dalton, 2001). For the notion of calling to be most useful, we need a definition which applies to everyone, not only to the "lucky few" who have a spiritual revelation of their vocation.

Lukas (1998), Frankl's protégée, says that "there is a most meaningful path for every person" (p. 309). This echoes Hillman's (1996) view of calling as the realization of our unique potential, which is revealed in the unique ways we live our lives. The search for calling can thus be described as the search for the most meaningful ways to lead our lives. Here the emphasis is not so much on career choices (Cochran, 1987; Cohen, 2003)

or mission (Montbourquette, 1999) as on the process of unfolding of one's personal destiny (Bogart, 1993; Persaud, 2002).

As noted by Dalton (2001), college students, with the idealism and optimism characteristic of youth (see Erikson, 1968), have a strong sense of "personal destiny", believing that "they are meant to do something special with their lives, if they can just discover the personal path that leads through the apparent maze of alternatives and possibilities" (Dalton, p. 20). Underlining with Shaffer (2000) the spiritual dimension of the students' fundamental questioning about their life direction and purpose, he presses counsellors to provide means of exploring this sense of personal calling when helping students make decisions about their future.

A Need for Structures

As many have recognised (Fabry, 1998; Frankl, 1992; Tarnas, 2001), traditional structures and institutions no longer provide the guiding form, values, or purpose by which to live one's life. As May (1969) puts it: "The old myths and symbols by which we oriented ourselves are gone" (p. 13). As noted by Schwartz et al. (2005), in the absence of strong societal structures, the task of identity development is increasingly left to individuals and preference based.

If, as Bogart (1993) remarks, many people undergo psychotherapy in the hope of finding their life calling, in order to allow for most young people to benefit from this challenging transition period, Côté (2006) suggests that society provide young people with what Erikson (1968) called "institutionalized moratoria", i.e. structured contexts for "working through identity confusion and crisis" (Côté, p. 85). Echoing this view, Tanner (2006) proposes that colleges and universities, as natural contexts of emergence, also act

as buttressing structures for emerging adults' development, by "providing support and challenges" to facilitate "active identity exploration and soul-searching" (p. 48) at this critical point of their life.

While Bogart (1993) reminds us that initiation into life's calling was a primary task of traditional rites of passage, many authors underline the crucial importance of rites of passage in facilitating the transition to adulthood (Carus-Mahdi, 1987). But although a few programs have been developed and implemented to provide contemporary initiation rites to high schools students (Copen & Lebwohl, 1984; Foster & Little, 1987; Kessler, 1999), I am not aware of equivalent endeavours for college or university students.

A Project

In this context, I would like to propose a program designed to assist emergent adults in search of their calling, defining calling as the "most meaningful path for each person". This program would take the form of a semester-long exploratory course offered weekly to students and non-students through existing colleges and universities. Neither therapy nor vocational counseling, its format would be educational, focussing on helping students explore, recognise and cultivate sources of meaning in their lives. As emerging adulthood is also the highest risk period of the life course for the appearance of psychopathology (Schulenberg & Zarrett, 2006) and substance use (Arnett, 2005), this course might also provide an opportunity to detect potential psychological difficulties and refer students requiring additional help to the proper services.

Modality and Approach

Today, the techniques of exploration used in "meaning-centered" therapies (Wong, 1998, 2000) rely mostly on verbal inquiry. Whether "Socratic dialogue" for

logotherapy (Frankl, 1985), open questions in existential therapies (Blatner, 2000; Vittitow, 2002; Wong, 2000) or constructivist assessment techniques (Cochran, 1987; Neimeyer, 1993) in career counseling, these approaches capitalize on the clients' capacity for self-objectivation (Das, 1998) and rely heavily on their higher cognitive processes. As underlined by Viney (1993) and Brown (2001), this can be considered a serious limitation of these models: If we are to really contact clients' "intrinsic motivations" we need to access the whole spectrum of their psyche, not only the higher realm of their "philosophies of life" (Cochran, 1987), but also the lower, deeper, and more instinctual realm of their "bodily" make-up.

If meaning is to be found in engagement in the world, art-making appears as a natural modality for its exploration: As an active mode of inquiry requiring engagement with the art media, it allows not only to *explore* sources of meaning, but also to *practice* meaning-making; as a means of externalization (Sayers, 2004), art is a tool for "out-sight" (in-sight through the outside) allowing to recognize, form, and assess one's worldview through one's projections (Riley, 1997); also, as a contained –and containing-experience, it allows one to witness and cultivate an awareness of one's inner life.

If emerging adults' explorations are turned toward the world and its potentialities, they also need to be grounded in subjective reality in order to acquire deep personal significance. So, beside the Apollonian movement efforts of *Logos* therapies which look for answers up (in the cognitive, moral, ideal), and forward (in the future, toward purpose and integration), we will also follow the Dionysian movement of archetypal psychology, down (toward the unconscious, daimonic/the instincts and the elemental), and back (to memories and archetypes) into the valleys of "soul-making" (Hillman, 1975, 1976, 1989,

1996). Beside the existential approach of art-making as engagement with the outer world, the archetypal approach, with its emphasis on aesthetic imagination as the royal road to meaning-making and psychic unfolding, will also be the guide of our "image-centered" explorations toward calling.

Research Methodology and Outline

My initial intention for this study was to present my proposed program in details, following a research construction model. However, given the limited frame of a Masters Research, I have revised my ambitions and limited my inquiry to laying the theoretical foundations for such a program. In this context, the following study, then, will consist of a theoretical inquiry around the question of how art therapy can assist emerging adults in their search for meaning and calling.

This research paper will develop in four main parts: In the first chapter, I will draw links between developmental, existential and archetypal psychology to present emerging adults' search for their place in the world as an existential transition in the lifelong quest for individualisation. In the second chapter, I will explore personal meaning as a phenomenological encounter from the existential, archetypal, and aesthetic perspectives. In the third chapter, drawing on those three approaches, I will examine how the process of art-making and art-viewing -as aesthetic, existential and imaginal practice, can facilitate the emergence of calling by contributing to self-knowledge, meaning-making and the acquisition of creative competences. Finally, I will end with a brief presentation of the main structural components of my proposed program, an art-based course designed to facilitate emerging adults' exploration of meaning and calling, underlining in conclusion the educational vocation of my project.

Chapter I: Emerging Adults, Existential Meaning and Archetypal Calling

Emerging Adulthood

Characteristics of Emerging Adulthood

In post-industrial societies, as noted by Schwartz et al. (2005), people are increasingly required "to 'individualize' their life in general and their identity in particular" (p. 203). If current developmental theories converge to consider psychological development as a lifetime evolutionary process (Tanner, 2006; Wortley, 1982), recent research is also converging to recognise "emerging adulthood" as a distinct developmental period in life, with its own characteristics and tasks (Arnett, 2000, 2001, 2006; Côté, 2006; Labouvie-Vief, 2006; Swartz et al., 2005; Tanner, 2006). As noted earlier, "emerging adulthood" describes this "critical turning point in the life span" (Tanner, 2006, p. 48) which young people go through between their late teens and twenties. Set between adolescence and adulthood, this period appears as an extension of adolescence's identity formation processes (see Erikson, 1968).

The lessening of social pressures –in terms of cultural roles, family control and obligations- and the increased opportunities for choosing one's way of life –through education, family planning etc.- affords the young people of our societies a relative freedom to explore possible life directions without the responsibility of long term commitments. These years of emerging adulthood, particularly for the increasing number of those attending college and universities -who have been the main focus of research conducted so far- are not primarily focussed on preparing for adult roles anymore, but are increasingly dedicated to personal explorations of self and the world.

Defining identity as the "conception of one's values, abilities, and hopes for the future", Arnett (2001, p. 370) shows that the identity explorations of emerging adults cover three main areas: work, relationships, and worldview, which confirms recent views of personality development as embedded in contextual systems frameworks (Luyckx, Goossens & Soenens, 2006; Tanner, 2006). Underlining the dynamic and fluid quality of the period in terms of its demographics and psychological features, Arnett (2006) describes emerging adulthood as characterized by *instability* -as a period of multiple changes in terms of status (educational and professional), relationships, and residence-; *self-focus* -as a time where relative freedom from parental control, family obligations, or career responsibilities allows one's energies to be spent on oneself; *"in-between"* -as a period of identity transition between adolescence and full adulthood; and *possibility* -as a time of hope, idealism, and general optimism concerning one's future.

Individualization: The task of Emerging Adults

As Arnett (2000) has shown, the cultural perception of what it means to be an adult is changing. According to a variety of studies, the two top criteria describing the transition to adulthood have to do with *"accepting responsibility for oneself"* and *"making independent decisions"* (Arnett, 2002, p. 473). Schwartz et al. (2005) have proposed the term "individualization" to describe this primary task of emerging adults. With data consistently indicating progress toward independence -whether material, moral, or mental self-sufficiency- as the main criteria for adulthood, Tanner (2006) presents this task of individualisation as a kind of "second separation-individuation" (p. 30). She describes this process as involving ego development and a shift of power, agency, and responsibility, from parental dependency and "other-regulated behaviour" (p.

22) to system commitments and self-regulated behaviours (p. 22). Calling this task "recentering" (p. 22) to emphasise the integrative nature of the process, Tanner also highlights the relational dimension of this development: If emerging adults need to separate (cognitively, emotionally, financially) from their family of origin in order to develop a sense of personal autonomy, this autonomy, to be healthy and viable requires the acknowledgement of the interconnectedness between emerging adults and their context.

Focussing on the cognitive developments of emerging adulthood, Labouvie-Vief (2006) considers this period as a *crisis* in Eriksonian terms, involving crucial changes in people's sense of self and capacity for self-reflection. She describes the heart of these changes as the need for emerging adults to expand their thought structures and construct a personal worldview able to integrate both the objective, contextual reality and the subjective aspects of self and emotion.

This developmental conception of emerging adulthood is in line with the lifespan adult development model developed by Wortley's in 1982, in which he describes the task of personal self-development for people in their twenties as the task of "establishing oneself as an adult" (p. 480). According to Wortley, this task involves the following: developing personal *autonomy*; gaining self-knowledge; establishing a sense of *identity*; and establishing a personal *worldview* -which includes organizing one's perception of how the world works; envisioning future possibilities and developing personal values, beliefs, priorities and goals able to generate productive energy.

These views of individualization converge with Fowler's (1981) seven-stage model of psychological development in relation to the human lifelong quest for meaning.

According to Fowler, young adults ideally go through what he calls the "individuative-reflective stage of faith". The fourth stage out of seven, this stage is characterized by the emergence of an executive ego (*identity*) and outlook (*worldview*) no longer defined by one's roles or meanings to others, as well as a relocation of one's authority within oneself through a critical distancing from previous assumptive value systems. For the young adult in this transition, tensions to be faced are many: individuality vs. group definition; subjectivity and affirmation of one's feelings vs. objectivity and adaptation to external constraints; self-fulfilment and self-actualisation vs. other-focus; and commitment to particulars vs. absolute, are among the polarities that young adults must integrate if they are to move toward responsible adulthood.

Emerging Adulthood as Existential Transition

The developmental definitions of adulthood resonate with the existential perception of human life as characterized by a need to take one's responsibility for one's own life (Branden, 1996), to exist and develop as a unique, autonomous person, and to give meaning and shape to our future through our activities (Längle, 2005). Even though the explorations of emerging adults are not explicitly termed as a "search for meaning" in the developmental literature, it seems clear that they have to do with the existential search for one's place in the world. The three main directions of identity explorations (*work, relationships, worldview*) as presented by Arnett (2000, 2006) resonate with Frankl's (1985) description of three main sources of existential meaning: the creative dimension of our deeds (*work*), the psychological dimension of our social and emotional experiences (*relationships*), and the spiritual-attitudinal dimension of our stance toward the world (*worldview*).

They also strongly relate with the four fundamental motivations which Längle (2005) has defined as the necessary conditions for a fulfilling existence: the need for a sense of *place in the world* through a supportive context; the need for emotional involvement and values through *relationships*; the need for a sense of separate *identity*; and the need for a sense of purpose, which presupposes a field of activity (*work*), a structural context, and values to be realized (*worldview*).

In this sense, emerging adulthood can be seen as an existential transition, corresponding to what May (1981) calls the "moment of decision" toward becoming a "creative" adult. For May, the creative adult is the authentic person, who, rather than seeking refuge in conformity and past values, has the courage to accept one's destiny and engage creatively with the world.

The Call of Individuation

The Existential and Archetypal Call to Engage the World

In existential psychology, the goal of life is to answer "life's calls", to actualise life's potential meaning. As Frankl (1969) underlines, self-actualisation can only be achieved as the by-product of our dedication to actualise meaning in the world, which involves our active engagement with this world (Debats, 1999; Yalom, 1980). This view resonates with the archetypal efforts to bring meaning –or life- back to the world through our psychological engagement with it (Hillman, 1983, 1989,1992). Although existential and archetypal psychologies diverge in their emphasis, with the former emphasising "spirit" (Logos) and the *spiritual* self-transcending dimension of meaning (Frankl, 1985; Längle, 2005), and the latter "soul" (Psyche) and the *psychological* dimension of

meaning (Hillman, 1975), the two approaches converge in considering engagement in the world as the source of the "meaningful life".

Traditional psychological approaches have tended to put the emphasis on either the subjective (psychological reality) or the real world (objective reality). Depending on whether they locate meaning in intrapsychic experience or in the relationship with the outer world, the quest for a meaningful life has been on interpreted either as "exploring the inner world" in depth psychology, or "finding self-transcending goals" in vocational and existential counseling.

As underlined by Hillman (1989), depth psychology, having its basis in a subjective notion of therapy, tends to undermine the "reality" of the relationship between world and person in profit of the intrasubjective. If today, the "intersubjective" dimension of relationship between self and others is increasingly recognised as a potent reality in clinical psychology (Benjamin, 2006), the mutuality of the relationship between self and environment still seems an abstraction. As developmental system frameworks (Luyckx et al., 2006; Tanner, 2006) are increasingly showing, we cannot develop without a context, and this context involves not only people but also the physical, tangible world. In a culture that keeps separating psychological (inner) work from (outer) work in the "real" world (Hillman & Ventura, 1992), Hillman (1989, 1997) keeps emphasizing the urgency of bringing psychology -and its depth- back to the world, and the world back in the therapy session. For him, as for the tenants of ecopsychology (Roszak, 1993; Roszak, Gomez & Kanner, 1995; Winter, 1996) there can be no psychological "healing" without a healing of the world. For psychotherapy to truly be a *Care of the Soul* (Moore, 1992), it

must be extended to the world and its things, considering that they too have soul

(Hillman, 1997).

Archetypal Individuation

Whereas in existential thought, what calls us is meaning, in archetypal

psychology, what calls us is soul. As underlined by Drob (1999), the ultimate

psychological value for Hillman, who is recognised as the beacon of archetypal

psychology, is the realisation and deepening of the "soul" as the carrier of all psychic life.

By soul, Hillman (1989) does not mean a substance but a perspective, "a viewpoint

toward things rather than a thing", "a way of being in the world" (p. 20). His notion of

soul refers to "the imaginative possibility of our nature" (p. 21) as our most inner, vital

sense of meaning (Drob, p. 58). With soul being considered as "the archetype of

meaning" (Hollis, 2006, p. 253), or the "place that is the source of meaning and identity",

as Moore (1992, p. 181), puts it, the goal in archetypal psychology is not precisely

meaning-making, but rather "psychic reality-making", or "soul-making".

In the context of our work with emerging adults, the relevance of the archetypal

approach lies in its view of individuation as the striving toward the individual realisation

of one's full personality, a definition which has much in common with the developmental

notion of individualization. Although Jung (1934/1991) defined individuation as the call

toward *wholeness*, for Hillman (1996), this wholeness is not to be taken in the sense of

achieving inner *unity* but in the sense of realising one's *unique* individuality as wholly

and as completely as possible at any given moment. With him, the emphasis is on the

"particularization of the soul" (2000b, p. 48) rather than on the integration of the

personality.

Although Hillman openly declares himself to be "anti-developmental", his view of life, as explained by Samuels (1997, as cited by Shaffer, 2000), still has a developmental component. Far from denying the existence of a teleological movement, his model, if not of the linear progressive kind, resonates with the quantum physics descriptions of emergent processes, in which growth is "construed as the development of something into itself" (Shaffer, 2000, p. 34).

In the same line, Fordham (as cited by Gordon, 1986) considers the process of individuation as a lifelong complex and comprehensive dialectic development involving two movements: one of integration (movement toward unity) and the other of "de-integration" (a breaking into parts). In this view, the two tasks of ego development (adaptation to the world) and search for meaning, which traditional Jungian psychology assigned to respectively the first and second halves of life (see Hollis, 2003) are not separate but operate as complementary processes which take place together via symbolization, play, and imagination.

As underlined by Moraglia (1994), the strictly dualistic model of individuation which separates "initiation into outward reality" and "initiation into inner reality" (Politsky, 1995, p. 11) as two periods of life might not apply anymore in a society where the definitions of adult roles and expectations are increasingly flexible and less defined. With Moraglia, we can propose that the question of meaning be viewed more as a reflection of the "totality of the individual engagement with reality" (p. 70) rather than of his age. And with Hillman (1989), we can take the metaphor of the first and second halves of life (Hollis, 2003, 2006), as a spatial rather than temporal image, viewing those "halves" as two complementary dimensions of life, or levels of consciousness: outer vs.

inner, or *horizontal* ("ego-collective" relationship) vs. *vertical* ("ego-self axis" in Jungian parlance).

In working toward psychological unfolding, Hillman's (2000b) emphasis of the complex, polytheist and multiple nature of the psyche, seeks to compensate for the tendency of our culture to focus primarily on unity and integration. In a world that may be dying from its rationalist and positivist "minimization of images and myths", as Durand (2000, p. 53) puts it, Hillman's defense of the psyche and its imagination reminds us to make room for the necessary processes of de-integration on the path toward personality integration.

In this perspective, there is tight overlapping between individuation and the existential call to meaning. With Persaud (2000), we can integrate the existential and archetypal notions of calling and describe the realisation of life's calling as a "lifelong existential project" and "psycho-spiritual process" equivalent to Homan's (1986, as cited by Persaud, 2000) "quest for authentic existence" (p. II). In this process, as underlined by Persaud, meaning attributed to self and work are tightly interwoven, informing and forming each other in a perpetual spiralling movement of re-creation. Shaffer (2000) describes calling as the "soul's work of growth" (p. 189), arising from "attunement to the liminal space between matter and spirit" (p. 75). This process, by which one is "being called more fully into oneself" (Brewer, 2001, p. 84) is not, as underlined by Hollis (2006), in service of the ego, but in service of what wishes to live through us.

Archetypal Calling

In Hillman's (1996) approach, the call to individuate is the call to *realise* the blueprint of our unique inner nature, thus fulfilling our deepest motivation. For him,

calling is a developmental imperative, not reserved to an elite, but everyone's potential birthright as the "unfolding of the true nature of the individual soul" (Shaffer, 2000, p. 76), or the "unfolding of a patterned personal destiny" (Bogart, 1995, p. 23).

The search for one's calling is the striving to establish one's unique identity, the search for one's special form. This form, though, is not to be looked for in the heights of our ideals, but inside and below, in the seminal images which carry our soul's spark. In archetypal psychology, our purpose is not to be found above and forward, but in the calls of our instincts, our passions, or even our obsessions, which, as Hillman (1996) says, are the voice of the "genius", or the "daimon" in us. The call of individuation is not so much a movement of growing up as a "growing down" toward the realisation of the soul's genius. "Growing down" here means bringing the inner gifts into life, the potential into incarnation, giving back what we were given "by means of gestures that declare your full attachment to this world (Hillman, 1996, p. 62). Our task is to find a place in the world for our specific calling, to express the life we were "born with" in the life we were "born into" (p. 13).

In this context, honouring our calling is not about finding a unifying ideal or mission, but about finding what longs to be given form through us. A psychological approach to calling entails a trust in the inner images -of our childhood longings, of our dreams and fantasies- as our primary sources of information. As Hillman (1983) writes, archetypal self-knowledge, grounded in "daimonic knowing" is at once self-revelation and self-realisation (p. 62). Here, knowing ourselves does not consist in knowing where we want to go, but in discovering of what stuff we are made and finding ways (media) to allow for its manifestation.

This view resonates with May's (1969) description of true self-knowledge as entailing a confrontation with the "daimonic" in us. As "the fundamental, archetypal function of human experience", the daimonic describes for May the biological basis of our motivations. Representing "the power of nature in us" (p. 123), it encompasses the entire system of our motives and needs, from our "highest" inspirations (or "angels") to our "lowest" urges (or "demons"), and as such, demands to be consciously acknowledged, integrated and honoured if we are to access our full vitality.

If we are to "reanimate life" (Hillman, 1989), we must revitalize both our inner and outer worlds. This entails re-engaging the life of the "puer", as Hillman calls it, and its "erotic" approach of the world. These pulsions, these appetites, if not acknowledged, will manifest themselves through resistance and other symptoms of rebellion. Knowing that, we will need to befriend and learn from them instead of trying to master them. So in seeking our calling, methods to find our true motivations will not be about clarifying our "philosophy of life" (Cochran, 1987) or defining self-transcending goals and purposes, so much as consulting our sensuous or aesthetic responses to the world: our likes and dislikes, our physical reactions to places, our affinities for specific materials, our love for certain movies, our attraction for particular gestures, in short, all the things and activities that move us or resonate in us.

As Arnheim (1980) reminds us, "pleasure is usually signalling that some need of the organism is being fulfilled" (p. 248). This shows the pragmatics of an "aesthetic morality" (Maclagan, 2001a) as a way to reunite the "pleasure principle" and the "reality principle", toward living the full spectrum of our lives.

The Call to Realise: The Artist as our Model

The Artistic Stance

This emphasis on aesthetics as the avenue to deep self-knowledge is very much in line with Hillman's (1983) proposition that we use artists as our models, and "imagine ourselves engaged as artists in life" (p. 62). To him, the archetypal artist is the child marvelling at the world and fascinated by its beauty, always discovering and learning, and whose responses are seeped in "polymorphous sensuality" (1989, p. 233). The metaphor of the artist also carries with it the notion of creativity. Here, more than the productive dimension of creativity, what matters is one's attitude of curiosity and gratitude for whatever is given. As Hillman says, the artist accepts the daily "mess"; he likes it, he even needs it (Hillman, 1983). He is not afraid of the "real" because he is confident that he can deal with it. He knows he can befriend it, play with it, use it. Reality is not an opaque constraint, but rather an opportunity. This view resonates with May's (1975) description of the creative person as one who has the courage (the "heart") to deal with the reality of the world.

To the artist, the world is all together a *medium*, source of inspiration, canvas, support, recipient and mirror; mother, teacher and child; and a sacred place to take care of and be taken care by. Far from believing that he projects meaning to the world, the archetypal artist treats the world as a mysterious alive being, which has its own intentions, to be discovered through the artist's "aesthetic inquiries" (Dewey, 1934/2005). In this context, adopting an "artistic stance" means developing an ability to see, to be inspired, to relate and to act in the world through our aesthetic senses.

The Artist's Call to Realise

As Rank (1968) notes, the artist has "a hundred-per-cent vocational psychology" (p. 371): His/her work is dedicated to the realisation of his/her calling. And this calling itself has to do with *Realising* in the sense of *making real*, bringing the intangible into the tangible world. In essence, the work of the artist is a metaphor of the existential quest for *actualisation* as Längle (2005) means it, in the sense of actualising a potential reality into the world. As Frankl (1969) underlines, in this quest, *self*-actualisation is only a by-product of the self-transcendent search for meaning through one's engagement with the world.

As underlined by Des Cotes (2002), "every search for meaning will lead to the arts" as an effort to "make true", to bring the un-manifested into the manifested. Heidegger (1975, as quoted by Shinebourne, 2005), the father of phenomenology, described art as the process of *"bringing forth present beings out of concealedness into the unconcealedness of their appearance"* (p. 52). Peat (2004) compares the artist's engagement to the alchemist's striving to assist nature in its unfolding. Describing the artist's quest as an inquiry into the essence of the world, an effort to "understand matter at a level beyond the purely descriptive and rational" (p. 61), he underlines the spiritual dimension of this attempt to bridge the gap between matter and spirit.

For May (1975), at the base of genuine creativity, is what he calls the "passion for form" (p. 161). As the artist's "way of trying to find and constitute meaning in life", the creative process is the expression of this quest for the meaningful forms which will allow life's deepest and most vital expression. In the same vein, Arnheim (1980) sees art as resulting from an inquiry into structure -or form, having for purpose the discovery of

universal truths rather than the personal expression of the artist. As Gordon (1975) notes, this dimension of the self-transcendent search for meaning in artistic expression has been rather overlooked in the art literature, which tends to focus mostly on the catharsistic component of the creative process.

As underlined by Binderman (1998), many great artists, including Klee and Picasso, saw themselves as channels through which a greater reality could be manifested and their work as lending their bodies -eyes and hands- to the greater process of life unfolding. Here the artist is not a heroic creator, but a "servant of the soul" (Hillman, 1989) engaged in the archetypal-existential process of "embodying" (Gordon, 1975) in the sense of *giving body* to what wants to be realised, whether it is called "being", "truth", "logos", "spirit", or "soul".

This view of the artist as an intermediary between sky and earth, actively involved in the descent of spirit into matter, resonates with Hillman's (1996) view of individuation as a process of "growing down" into life (p. 41). In this context, art-making can be seen as a practice in "existential soul-making", and the dedication of the artist to his/her calling as an inspiration for our own lives.

Chapter II: Meaning as Existential, imaginal, and Aesthetic Encounter

Existential Meaning

"Meaning" can mean many things: Its definition in the Oxford English Dictionary point toward three main directions: meaning as *signification*, interpretation, sense; meaning as *significance*, or subjective value; and also meaning as *intention* (as in the expression "I mean to…"). As shown by Mackay's (2003), different psychological approaches emphasise different dimensions of meaning, depending on whether they focus on the subjective or the objective dimension of reality, and on the cognitive (symbolic) or the experiential components of meaning processes.

Meaning as Encounter

With phenomenology, Längle (2005) defines existential meaning as a phenomenon, i.e. something that emerges in the encounter of the person with the world. A "*Gestalt* [form] emerging from the midst of both inner and outer reality" (p. 3), meaning takes place at the very intersection between the objective "demands of the situation", and the subjective "understanding of oneself". For him, living meaningfully entails finding "inner consent", which can only be achieved through a continuously renewed double sided dialogue, directed both toward the inside -"contacting the deepest feelings which arise in a situation"- and toward the outside: "What appeals to me? What attracts, challenges me? Where am I needed" (p. 5)?

With Frankl, Längle insists that existential meaning is not *constructed* but *found*: "We do not just attach and attribute meaning to things, but rather find them; we do not invent them, we detect them" (Frankl, 1985, as quoted by Längle, 2005, p. 3). Meaning is not an *a posteriori* construction attributed to our experience but an emergence. This focus

on the experiential component of meaning as *salience* or "value" is confirmed by the interchangeable use of the terms "value" and "meaning" in the existential literature (see, for example Das, 1998; Wong, 1998).

If meaning is an emergent process in relation to a context, in our work toward calling, *meaning-making* can be indeed very close to Frankl's notion of existential meaning as *meaning-finding*, and our search for meaning akin to the existential search for *sources* of meaning. Cultivating meaning-making capacities is then equivalent to developing competences for a meaningful encounter with the world.

Meaning-Making

A Dynamic Dialectical Process. Greenberg (2004) defines personal meaning as emerging from the process of "making sense of one's emotional experience" (p. 4) through symbolization. According to Greenberg and Pascual-Leone (2001), meaning construction is an on-going circular dialectical synthesis between two major "meaning systems" or "information processing systems", one based on symbolic and conceptual language (the cognitive dimension of meaning), the other on sensory-motor affective language (the experiential, or "salience" dimension of meaning).

In this meaning-making process, emotional experiences are primary, as they occur independently and often prior to the conscious cognitive operations. As "biologically based reactions resulting from an appraisal of the situation" (Greenberg, 2004, p. 3), emotions, which communicate intentions and regulate interactions with the outside world, can provide precious information on one's intrinsic motivations, needs, values, goals, and priorities, making them a central ingredient in personal meaning work.

In parallel to emotions, the importance of integrating bodily processes in meaning-making endeavours has been noted by many, including Blatner (2000) and Resnick and Warmoth (2001). As Rizzuto (2001) explains, our experience of the world is mediated by our bodies' "affectively valued" perceptions (p. 535). Helping people find meaning, then, involves working in two main directions: the first, toward an increased validation of their emotional and bodily experience of the world, the second toward bringing those emotional and bodily experiences in contact with reflexive processes in order to facilitate their symbolic integration.

The mediation of metaphor, imagery and imagination. Kirmayer (1993) presents metaphor as "occupying an intermediate realm linking narrative, and bodily-given experience" (p. 161). Metaphorical thinking, which "conjoins sensory, affective and motivational levels of representation" allows abstract conceptualizations to be "grounded in sensory-affective imagery and bodily action" (Kirmayer, 2004, p. 37). According to him, it is those processes which account for the efficacy of healing models of interventions based on rituals and other symbolic actions. This view resonates with Gendlin's (1978) meaning-making technique, which he calls "focusing", and in which metaphors are used as a way to get a "handle" on one's feelings and emotions. For him, the most important tool we can teach people to help them access and "make-sense" of their experiences is the capacity to consciously focus on the inner experience and find the metaphors best fitting their feelings. In this process, metaphors are the keys to inner validation and meaning-making.

Similarly, Barros (2000) shows the centrality of mental "imagery" –thinking in images- in symbolization processes. Because of its inherent capacity to connect various

interpenetrating levels of meaning, imagery can be used as a central ingredient in the revelation, creation, and working through of new meaning in psychological work.

In parallel to this increased acknowledgement given to metaphoric thinking and imagery in psychology (Barros, 2000; Rizzuto, 2001) and medicine (Kirmayer, 1993, 2004; Menzies & Taylor, 2004), the fields of cognitive sciences (Singer, 1999) and education (Dirkx, 2001; Jannone, 2001) are also increasingly recognising the centrality of imagination in meaning-making processes. As mentioned earlier, according to Labouvie-Vief (2006), integration of these non-rational processes is an intrinsic part of the developmental task of emerging adults toward cognitive maturation.

Deepening and Unfolding: Two movements, Three Competences

Besides inner processes of symbolization, as underlined by existential authors (see Längle, 2005), meaning also involves the dimension of our active response to the world. If inner consent arises out of a sense of harmony between our inner experience and the outer world, it involves *acting* to meet the demands of the situation and realise the possibilities which reach us through our experience. This perspective echoes Vittitow's (2002) existential description of personal meaning as an active self-creative emerging process. Defining personal meaning as the experience of an alignment "between what our innermost self requires and what we actually do in the world" (p. 1), he describes efforts toward personal meaning as involving two primary movements, which he calls "deepening" and "unfolding" (p. 11), which both involve action. If "deepening" has to do with deepening our knowledge of self and the world through "acting in ways that resonate with, awaken, and excite our core aspects"(p. 12), "unfolding", as the movement toward the emergence and growth of one's uniqueness, has to do with fully manifesting

one's own particular talents and potential in the world. Hence personal meaning efforts involve finding ways to not only to perceive, but also to actively engage with the world.

In this context, meaning-making efforts entail the cultivation of three main competences: (a) a capacity to perceive the outer world, (b) a capacity to connect with and observe the inner world; and (c) a capacity to engage in meaningful action. Art-making addresses those three aspects of meaning-making through the relationship with its images. Keeping in mind that these aspects of meaning-making processes are not actually separated but operate together, I will explore in the following sections how the artistic experience can help cultivate those three dimensions of meaning-making. While chapter III will focus on art as a practice in active engagement with both inner and outer worlds, I propose in the next two sections to present the two approaches, imaginal and aesthetic, which respectively address the processes of (a) contacting the inner world through imagination; and (b) contacting the outer world through the aesthetic experience.

The Mediation of Images: Meaning as Imaginal Encounter

Meaning and Archetypal Reconnection

Hillman's (1975) re-visioning of psychology centers around the rehabilitation of psychic reality and of imagination as its primary avenue. In archetypal psychology, meaning-making is "soul-making". This soul-making corresponds to what Hillman (1975) considers the central task of depth psychology, which is to deepen our experience of life. If, as Jung (1934/1991) thought, the meaningful life is the archetypal life, in a world that suffers from "uprooted consciousness" (Politsky, 1995, p. 11), our work consists in trying to root ourselves and our daily lives in archetypal reality. The possibility of this reconnection between archetypal realm and daily experience relies on

the premise of an existing connection between them. Jung (1947/1960) himself formulated the hypothesis that psyche and matter might in fact be two different aspects of one and the same thing. As demonstrated by Van Eenwyk (1997), this continuity between psyche and matter can be viewed as the psychological counterpart to the energy-matter continuum formulated by Einstein and adopted in quantum physics (Lazlo, 2004, 2006; Sheldrake & Fox, 1997).

For Jung (1947/1960; 1980), who reintroduced the notion in modern psychology, archetypes describe the *"deepest patterns of our psychic functioning"* (Hillman, 1989, p. 23), which lie, for the most part unconsciously, at the very base of our being. As underlined by Hillman, archetypes are by nature elusive: Although "governing the perspectives we have of ourselves and the world", archetypes "can never be pointed to, accounted for, or even adequately circumscribed" (p. 23). Rather than things, they are kinds of fundamental metaphors: We can only get a sense of them through symbols; we can only speak of them through metaphors.

In this context, reconnecting with the archetypal realm entails speaking the language of images. As Woodman and Dickson (1996) remind us, metaphor means "transformer; a crossing over from one state to another" (p. 171). Metaphors are the language of the soul, which, having no means of communication but the transitional body, "speaks in imagery, the only way it can communicates eternal truths to beings who are both eternal and temporal" (p. 186).

If we are to re-animate soul, not only do we have to be able to speak its "imaginal" language (Corbin, 2000) –which is emotional, dramatic, sensuous, fantastic and animistic in nature, but we have to access its specific images, which Hillman (1989)

calls "fantasy-images" (p. 23). According to Hillman, every idea, perception, sensation, feeling that we have "occurs as a psychic event by first forming a fantasy-image" (p. 22). Like Jung, Hillman considers these inner images, "the stuff" of our day-dreams and night-dreams, to be the psyche's "primary data" and "basic given" (p. 22), at once its raw material and finished product. This makes working with fantasy-images the primary avenue to "soul-making" as the process of revelation and realisation of psychic life.

The Symbolic Function of Images

The concept of a continuum psyche-matter allows one to understand the relationship between archetypes and images as inscribed in a continuum, from the least manifested and most elusive forms of archetypal fields to the most concrete and finite forms of the tangible world. In this view, images –"inner" fantasy-images and "outer" tangible images- occupy an intermediary position between the invisible world of archetypes and the visible world of matter. Generated by the psyche, they facilitate communication among its various dimensions. As interfaces between conscious and unconscious realms, they participate in both, taking on the mediating function of symbols as described by Van Eenwyk (1997). It is through them that the influence of archetypes can be manifested, "drawing our attention to those things in life that can help us develop in new way" (p. 23). As "strange attractors", charged with emotional energy, images can change the course of our lives, not only *informing* but also *forming* us through their morphogenetic power (Skar, 2004).

On this continuum Archetypes - Symbols - Fantasy-images - Tangible Images - Matter, tangible images are one step closer to matter than fantasy-images. For Moore (1996), these images, and in particular art images, are mirrors of the soul, not only giving

meaning but also *substance* to our inner life: The psyche, which is "always searching for itself, (…) takes great pleasure when it finds itself mirrored in the material world" (p. 198). Because they "sustain the emotions the soul feeds on and retain the complexity of meaning that is proper to its realm", art images bring us into contact with the source of our feelings and thoughts.

Although in this passage Moore (1996) focuses on art, the notion of "outer image" can be extended to any actual object or scene that is being contemplated -painting, photography, sculpture, rock, or landscape, whether crafted or natural; whether it has been made or only encountered by the viewer: As we inquire into the dynamics involved in the relationship between outer and inner images, we are not focussing on the process of their actual birth, but on the moment of their psychic "emergence", or recognition by the viewer, the moment they are symbolically "found/created" as personally meaningful in Winnicott's (1971) sense. And this can take place whether the image "appears" under one's fingers, or in front of one -in an art gallery, in the street, in a magazine. This ambiguous quality of the "outer" images as belonging to both the subjective and objective realms gives them the status of *transitional phenomena* in Winnicott's terms.

Because of their in-between location, those "emerging images" can be used as bridges or gates to the inner world, both as sources of information and as ways to expand and deepen the dialogue between conscious and unconscious toward soul-making and psychic integration. In the world of art therapy, this symbolic (from *sym-bolen*: throwing together) function of visual images has been known and applied as a central active ingredient in the healing process (see Wallace, 2001).

Emerging Images as Portals to the Soul

In this context, art-making can be seen as a process of actively inviting the inner images to present themselves. Jung (1961) himself, in his autobiography, describes how he used art (mandala-making, rock arranging, etc.) as a way to plunge and access the archetypal energy that would heal him.

In her inquiry on the process of painting, Egger (1988) describes images as portals to the inner world. Borrowing the notion of "contact" from Gestalt psychology, she focuses on the "moment of contact" with the inner images as the exact point in time when the inner image "appears" in the outer world to reach the painter through the painting. This experience, which she compares to the apparition of a hole in the surface of an opaque wall, acts as an opening and a reconnection between the external world and the internal world of feelings, sensations and fantasies. Accompanied by surprise and a sense of rightness, it results in a (healing) flow of connections in the person's existence.

In a more Jungian language, Moran (2001) describes the images emerging in paintings as the portals through which invisible universal archetypal templates manifest, Arising out of the landscape of the unconscious, those images expand the vision we hold of ourselves, "engaging us, holding us hostage, and ultimately setting us free" (p. 7). Preparing us for the "Conjuctio", or "healing union of mind, body and spirit" (p. 4), they can be trusted to guide us toward psychic wholeness.

This view is very close to Hillman's unconditional trust in the psyche's ability to know what it needs and to heal itself through its images. In the same line, McNiff (1994a, 2004) has total confidence in the emerging images of art-making, which he calls "angels", and whose intention, he assures us, is to reconnect us with soul.

Personally, the metaphor which, for me, best gives a sense of this work with emerging images, is the metaphor of images as *wells* to the our inner world: Combining the reflective quality of the water, the darkness of the unknown, the verticality of the descent, and the act of drawing from the depths of underground water, this metaphor of the well resonates with the archetypal approach to images as a connection to the unconscious realm, both personal and collective. In Wilhelm's (1973) *Yi King*, the hexagram No. 48 of *The Well* (p. 220) speaks of a movement down toward a central source, and of establishing contact with a universal force, which is at once the ultimate, eternal, limitless treasure and the intimate foundation of the self.

Art and Soul-Making

The centrality of images in art allows one to work at "soul-making", or psychological unfolding, by providing access to our inner world, which Maclagan (2001b) describes as consisting of "scenes, objects and figures" (p. 39) to be accessed and revealed. Whether we emphasise its horizontal (inner vs. outer world) or its vertical (surface vs. depth) direction, this process has to do with the emergence of psychic reality as happening in the space of our encounter with images. Here, images appear as the manifestation of another level of reality, which seems to be calling us from -and to- a deeper place. As Washburn (1990, as cited by Shaffer, 2000) explains, because the soul cannot be encompassed by the ego, its emergence is experienced by the ego as something "other", an "autonomously acting" force.

In this section, I have focussed on the imaginal dimension of meaning-making, considering the involvement with image as a form of archetypal grounding. In the following section, I will focus on the aesthetic dimension of meaning-making, and

consider the engagement with the image as a bodily experience allowing one to reconnect with the world and its meaning through the senses.

The Mediation of the Senses: Meaning as Aesthetic Encounter

The Aesthetic Dimension of Experience: Meaning as Transaction.

As noted earlier, meaning-making involves not only contact with the inner world, but also contact with the outer world. And this connection happens through the senses as mediating our experience of the world. As noted by Maclagan (2001a), the phenomenological perspective is dedicated to understanding the world in terms of all the "complex transactions [occurring] between the subjective and objective facets of life" (p. 34). In the context of a work directed toward the emergence of meaning, a phenomenological approach of images seems appropriate. The seminal work of Arnheim (1954, 1992, 1994) on visual perception, Merleau-Ponty (1964) on the phenomenology of art, and Dewey (1934/2005) on the aesthetic experience, with their emphasis on the aesthetic dimension of experience, give us a basis to justify an aesthetic stance toward images. This stance, as Levine (1994) remarks, does not contradict the more process oriented approach traditionally emphasised in art therapy (see), but rather, complements and enriches it.

For Arnheim, "perceptual imagery" (1994, p. 256) is the root of all cognitions: "Seeing is a form of knowing", and "eyesight is insight" (as quoted in Levine, 1994, p. 271). Whereas Arnheim's foundational *Art and visual perception* (1954) focuses on the primacy of perceptual imagery over verbal language in structuring the world of experience, as underlined by Maclagan (2001a), Merleau-Ponty's view of perception adds a bodily depth to the process. If Arnheim poetically describes vision as an

"encounter between the gentle fire pouring forth through the pupil of the eye and the counter-fire emanating from the object to be perceived" (as cited by McNiff, 1989, p. 20), Merleau-Ponty does not consider the aesthetic experience as limited to the visual or "retinal" level, but as a "feeling out through looking" (Maclagan, 2001a, p. 35).

Because "the visible is carved out of the tangible", there is an overlapping "between the tangible and the visible" and "between the toucher and what is touched" (Merleau-Ponty, 1964, as quoted and translated by Maclagan, 2001, p. 35): Our experience of the visible world is not just a matter of passively registering impressions. It involves "the mobilization of a whole range of psychological effects –feelings, memories, imaginative constructions" (p. 35). Because there is a deep resonance between the outer world and our inner workings, the aesthetic qualities of things -light, colours, shapes, textures- awaken echoes in us on the physical, "carnal" level. Even though many of these processes might stay subliminal, we may become aware of their effect in us through our bodily reactions.

This "stirring" of the organism is what, in Dewey's (1934/2005) view, marks the presence of an "aesthetic experience". For him, there is an aesthetic dimension to all true perception and the "aesthetic experience" is an intrinsic part of any genuine realisation of meaning. Since every moment of awareness has an aesthetic component, the notion of aesthetic experience is not reserved to the relationship with art but a potential element in all experience. As Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) show, Dewey considers meaning to be a transaction rather than a mere subjective projection into something that would, of itself, be meaningless. "An aesthetic experience involves something more than the projection of meaning from the person to the environment. It involves a realization of

meaning through interaction with the inherent qualities of the object" (p. 179). For

anything genuinely new to arise in experience, the viewer has to open himself to *perceive*

the object's "intrinsic qualities" (p. 177), and let them affect him/her.

How Images Affect Us

In the phenomenological view, images not only *inform* us but they also *form* and

transform us. For Arnheim (1992, 1994), whose view is influenced by Gestalt

psychology, the principal means by which images affect us is their *form*. Since, for him,

perception has to do primarily with the "discovery of structure" (1980, p. 248), in the

encounter with art, image is seen as structural. A "structuring form" for what is missing

in the viewers' world, the image allows the viewers to make contact with their own inner

"true form". According to Arnheim (1992), the effectiveness of this whole process relies

on the Gestalt principle of "isomorphism", which observes a structural similarity between

the psychological forces ruling the mind and the physical forces observed in the body.

This phenomenon, according to Arnheim, explains why images are the most efficient

means of communication between mind and body.

For an increasing number of authors, this power of the image to work on the

viewer is more directly energetic. As Woodman and Dickson (1996) note, "Whether we

are conscious of it or not, we experience things at a cellular level", through what they call

our "subtle body connections" (p. 197). Similarly, St-Arnold (2002) sees images as

having the power of morphogenetic fields -those resonance patterns described by quantic

physics- to form and inform reality. As she remarks, our experience of images "is

connected to consciousness, matter, and energy at a vibrational level" (p. 95). Images

then, through the energy of their components can be considered as energetic media

reconnecting us with our subtle physicality, or elemental reality, their meaning located in the places of the body where their presence is felt as energetic resonance, and their significance proportionate to their capacity to reach our inner making through the senses.

This "energetic reading" brings in mind the work of Bachelard (1983, 1987), who, as Tanguay (1991) explains, explores the power of images to act as imaginal medicine, affecting us through our "material imagination". Whereas Bachelard was working mainly with poetic images, our work with tangible images allows us to bring our awareness of how they affect us to a more embodied level, approaching them not only through their influence on our imagination, as he did, but also through their influence on our bodily imagination, as "perceptual medicine" (McNiff, 1994b, p. 251).

In "Artistic auras and their medicine", McNiff (2004), focusses on the physical effect of colours and shapes of images, as acting directly on our sensibility, and being "the principal carriers of emotions and feelings" in the art studio (p. 128). Beyond the bio-psychological effect of particular colours, which has been studied and applied in organizational and clinical environments, he is addressing the physical power of the image to *work* on us. Reminding us that transformation of energy is at the source of both artistic expression and healing, he urges us to pay more attention to colours as a practical and effective feature of any work where the transformation of energy is paramount.

An Aesthetic Stance

Aesthetic Response. In his phenomenological approach influenced by Hillman, Knill (1995) presses us to step beyond both formal aesthetics with their emphasis on form, and the popular notion that "beauty lies in the eye of the beholder" (p. 1), and to focus instead on the "effective reality" of the encounter with the art: Beyond the art itself

and beyond the viewer, he concentrates on what he calls the "aesthetic response" as the key experience preceding any shift in awareness. This experience corresponds to the "felt sense" of being moved by a "quite right image" (p. 2), matching and resonating with our internal psychic condition. A phenomenon of "bodily origin", it is associated with the perception of beauty, which he defines, in Heidegger's (1977, as quoted by Knill, 1995) words as "one way in which truth essentially occurs as unconcealedness" (p. 4).

Reminding us that *aisthesis* in Greek relates originally to *sensation*, he urges us to come out of our an-aesthesia and to re-own an aesthetic sensitivity dulled by too much environmental "sensory abuse": Whether the experience is highly pleasurable or painful, it signals the significance of the *emerging* and as such should be cultivated as a tool to help reach greater depth and reveal essential meaning.

Aesthetic sensibility. As Hillman (1989) reminds us, *Aisthesis* cannot be understood without taking into account the Greek root of the word -a perception through sensing, a "breathing in of the world" (p. 303), the Greek goddess of the senses - Aphrodite, or the Greek organ of sensation -the heart:

> If beauty is not given full place in our work with psyche, then the soul's essential realization cannot occur. And a psychology that does not start in aesthetics (...) cannot claim to be truly psychology since it omits this essential trait of the soul's nature. We are led already to see that a full depth psychology expressing the nature of Psyche must also be a depth aesthetics. Further, if we would recuperate the lost soul, which is after all the main aim of depth psychologies, we must recover our lost aesthetic reactions, our sense of beauty.... By beauty, we do not mean beautifying, adornments, decorations. We do not mean aesthetics as a minor branch of philosophy concerned with taste, form, and art criticism. (p. 300)

"Aesthetic" here, is neither to be reduced to aestheticism, nor to be relegated to aesthetic events (beautiful objects), which belong to the dominion of Apollo, the Greek god of form. In this context, beauty is not seen as mere pleasantness, relief, or beautification but as epistemological "necessity of form" (p. 302), the way for soul to be manifested. As Hillman reminds us, beauty, because it is "inherent and essential to soul (…) appears whenever soul appears" (p. 302). More than an attribute, beauty is a verb, a phenomenon, "the way the gods touch our senses, reach the heart and attract us into life" (p. 302).

St-Arnold (2002), who shares this view of beauty as a form of "knowing", explores the pragmatic applications of the healing power of beauty in diverse traditions of "omorphotherapies", therapies which use "experiential beauty" as their core healing ingredient. According to her, what many omorphotherapies share with the arts is the desire "to bridge the workings of ordinary life and step into the realm of that which is mysterious, otherworldly and sacred" (p. 53). To her, beauty is the vehicle or gate to meaning *par excellence*, the means by which our soul is touched and made whole.

As we can see, all of these authors, whether they focus on "aesthetic experience" (Dewey, 1934/2005), "visual encounter" (Arnheim, 1954), "carnal resonance" (Merleau-Ponty, 1964), "aesthetic response" (Knill, 1995), or "energetic workings" (McNiff, 2004), consider the aesthetic dimension as a central ingredient in the process of meaning-making. Each time, the significance of the relationship with image seems to involve an element of beauty. Whether they call it, "presence", "Aphrodite", "omorphia", "order" or "truth", all these authors speak of a rehabilitation of beauty as an avenue to knowledge and meaningfulness, when it is not an end in itself.

Aesthetic resensitization. For Hillman (1997), what is therapeutic is the recovery

of beauty, or, more precisely, the recovery of the repressed aesthetic need to experience

beauty (Maclagan, 2001a). In this context, if there is teaching being done, as Hillman

(1989) says, it is not on content or form, but an education of the sensitivity, of the senses

and of the material imagination. To be more alive is to come out of our an-aesthesia: To

engage with, to be touched by the world on a deeper, more encompassing and

"embodied" level (Maclagan, 2001b), which does not separate the senses and the mind.

To become more responsive means to respond more fully -with more of ourselves- to

more of the world. As Hillman (1983) says, more aware is more sensitive, more

intelligent but also more hurt. And as Moore (1996) adds, one privileged avenue to being

re-sensitized is the frequentation and the practice of art, which -contrary to painkillers-

brings us back in our emotions and our body.

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The Creative Process in Service of Meaning

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Art as Existential Meaning-Making

A Dialectical process: Energy and Form. The previous two sections have

focussed on the imaginal and aesthetic approaches as allowing to understand the

experiential, or salient dimension of meaning involved in the relationship with images. If

meaning-*finding* entails receptivity to the world -inner and outer, existential meaning-

making also involves a dimension of active engagement with these worlds.

This existential definition of meaning-making as an active encounter is indeed

very close to May's (1975) description of creativity which, he says, "occurs in an act of

encounter and is to be understood with this encounter at its center" (p. 87). This

encounter, which takes place "between the artist and his [or her] world" -a world May

defines as "the pattern of meaningful relations in which a person exists and in the design of which he or she participates" (p. 50), can neither be reduced to an objective or to a subjective phenomenon. It is an active dialectical process between two opposed and complementary principles: the "Dionysian" principle of "surging vitality" (p. 47), intensity, ecstasy, and abandon; and the "Apollonian" principle of form, rational order and beauty. While, as May notes, the Dionysian dimension of art making is usually acknowledged as its unconscious, emotional and instinctive component, the Apollonian effort toward integration and form and beauty is often denied recognition. Since according to him, consciousness and meaning arise out of the play between vitality and form, for a creative process to truly be in service of meaning, it must honour this dimension of the striving for form as intrinsic to the process of art-making.

Form and formlessness. In our post-modern thirst for expressive freedom, and our distrust of formalism, which we feel is stifling, it is difficult to speak of a need for form and beauty as Henley (1992) advocates. And yet, form, says May (1975), can be an "aid to finding new meaning" (p.142). For Arnheim also, far from being "accidental and extrinsic to the meaning of the work" (Levine, 1994, p. 271), form is the vehicle that carries the meaning, a way for meaning to appear through "the language of the senses" (Arnheim, 1994, p. 246); "not a hedonistic pacifier but the necessary means for the conveyance of an effective statement" (Arnheim, 1980, p. 248).

If, following Robbins, we define beauty, not in terms of imposed form but as "aliveness of the expression", then "the plastic form of art (...) taking on a life of its own [can offer] meaning and psychic existence to the viewer" (Robbins, 1992, p. 177). As

athreshold between two states of existence, form becomes the transitional structure allowing the new meaning to emerge.

As noted by Levine (1994), Arnheim's constant affirmation of the human need for order, structure, and beauty might direct art-therapists to consider the aesthetic dimension in their work as at least as important as the current emphasis on self-expression and process. And if, with Prinzhorn (1984), we believe that the need for "Gestaltung" [giving form, shaping] is an instinctive drive, we can consider that the experience of playful "formlessness" which an exploratory and/or therapeutic space must provide (see Levine, 1994) cannot take place without its counterpart experience of *giving form*: transient and renewable form, but necessary form. As Gordon (1986) reminds us, the process of psychological unfolding involve the dialectical interaction of integration *and* de-integration. Thus, in order to facilitate the emergence of meaning, both experiences have to be facilitated. This could justify the reintroduction of an aesthetic dimension in our exploratory work with emerging adults, which would encompass the whole spectrum of relationships between form and formlessness, and with them the awareness of dynamics involved in the passage from one to other, which corresponds to what Robbins (1992) describes as the process of "psychoaesthetics".

The Creative Process as Archetypal Co-Creation

Meaning and creation. If meaning-making has to do with *creation,* archetypal psychology, with its emphasis on soul-making, reminds us that true (psychological) creation is not primarily in service of the ego, but in service of psychic life. With Mackay (2003), Hillman (1983) contests the post-modern view which defines meaning-making as an entirely human creation –whether individual or social construction. If he believes

meaning to be a co-creation, to him, this co-creation is not only an affair between people, but a partnership with the world: If meaning is in the encounter, the world exists without us, and prior to us. We do not "make" it alive by projecting meaning to it. Rather, we bring its life out, we reveal it, we "re-member" it (1983). This perspective frees us from having to carry responsibility for *creating* life: The main thing we are responsible for, then, is to pay attention, to follow the energy where it leads us, to take care of what *is*.

Celebration vs. heroic creation. As artists, our creative task then becomes the task of opening ourselves to Creation; not to give life, but to midwife it. As Hillman (1983) says: we work on the structure and hope that our attitude is receptive enough to attract something living. If we try to capture life, it will elude us. So we invite it; we build forms to receive it: "We make the space (…) and wait" (Woodman, 1982, p. 188).

The artist here is not identified with the archetype of godly Creator, standing above his creation, but part of Creation, revealed and realised through it. His work is about honouring, and attending, a labour of love and reverence. This entails a more feminine form of participation in the creative unfolding of the world than the classic heroic position of mastery. As Hillman, echoing Peck (1986) puts it, the real hero is the one who serves life, not the one who controls it. Our work is to give voice to what has not yet manifested. Giving form then is really bringing out, and "creation" only a revelation of what fundamentally *is*.

Chapter III: Art in Service of Emergence and Psychological Unfolding

An Exploratory Process

Emergence vs. Mastery

The deep analogies existing between the formative processes of psychic formation and artistic creation noted by Korff-Sausse (2005) have been recognised by many (Anzieu, 1981; Kris, 1952; Rose, 1980). With its emphasis on ego strengthening, most of the traditional psychoanalytical literature concerning the artistic process –with the exception of Erhenzweig's (1967) work, is based on the idea of art being "in service of the ego": Whether emphasising reparation of the object, (Klein, 1979; Segal, 1979), repair of personal structure and auto-support (Anzieu, 1979), or mastery of trauma, (Rose, 1987), most authors present the artistic process as an attempt to build ego strength by gaining mastery over experience.

The model of chaos theory and self-organizing systems (Lazlo, 2004, 2006; Rubik, 2002) is being increasingly adopted in psychology to inform our understanding of dynamic processes such as psychological self-organisation (Skar, 2004), meaning formation (Hermans, Kempen & Harry, 1993), and artistic creation (McNiff, 2004). As a result, our definition of psychological health and ego strength is also changing, with the traditional emphasis on the capacity to *master* shifting toward the more trusting stance of a capacity to *withstand* temporary feelings of fragmentation as signs of internal self-reorganisation toward increased complexity (McNiff, 2004). As Johnson (1998) says, in line with Hillman (1975, 1989) true health might lie more in the capacity to be alive, to feel, to be hurt, to be open and learn from experience, than in the capacity to master it.

In the context of working toward revelation of meaning and calling, the emphasis is on art as a means toward psychological unfolding. More than an exercise in mastery, art-making is seen primarily as a "soul-making discipline" (McNiff, 2004; Moon, 1992, 1996), a process of exploration, recognition, validation, and realisation of psychic reality. More than ego-centered, it is meaning-centered, or possibly even, soul-centered. In the service of the emergent and the potential, it can be seen as a practice in "soul invocation", as McNiff (1992) says, underlining the similarity between this approach of art-making and the sacred function of shamanic rituals and performances.

Exploration vs. Production

In this exploratory frame, since the purpose is soul-making, the emphasis will be on the *process* of art-making, rather than on its *product*. Even though, as I have underlined in the introduction, there is an educational dimension to the work proposed here, it is not about developing professional artistry skills, but about practicing and acquiring tools to better know oneself. Since the aim is to *learn* from the process of producing rather than to *produce*, art is used primarily as a means of self-discovery rather than skill development or art per se.

Art here being an affair primarily between artist and soul rather than between artist and public, if there is a message, it is not from the artist to the world, but from the art to the artist. As underlined by May (1975), much of the anxiety of professional artistic production is related to the struggles involved in trying to make the medium *re-present* a vision or concept pre-formed in the mind, together with an expectation of mastery over the medium. Hence, in order to facilitate exploration, play and spontaneity, the emphasis will be on art as a process of *presentation* rather than *representation*, on form unfolding

and receptivity to the unknown, rather than on the conscious efforts to mold a pre-conceived content into form.

Although here our ambition is not primarily spiritual but psychological work (Hillman, 1976), the intrinsic spiritual dimension of art can be an a powerful ingredient of the work toward psychological unfolding, as many art-therapists have noted (Allen, 2001; McNiff, 2004; B. L. Moon, 1997), and most particularly, the tenants of the spiritual and transpersonal approach (Brown, 2001; Farelly-Hansen, 2001; Lovell, 2001; Marek 2001; C. Moon, 2001). Hence, the model will not be the conceptual artist addressing an audience, but rather the practitioner of Zen (Lieberman, n.d.) or Dharma art (Trungpa, 1996), with an emphasis on cultivating a "beginner's mind" (Suzuki, 1975), curiosity and openness to the process.

The Process: Moments, Movements, and Dimensions

Gosselin, Potvin, Gingras and Murphy (1998) describe the artistic process as following a complex spiralling development, which involves the dynamic interaction of two dimensions: *moments,* or stages (1/ opening receptivity; 2/ production; 3/ reflection) and *movements* (1/ inspiration; 2/ elaboration; 3/ distanciation). Insisting on the fluidity of the whole process, Gosselin et al. (1998) underline the fact that each of the three stages can present all three movements. Apart from their emphasis on conscious intention, purposiveness, and control in their *moment 2* (production) and *movement 2* (elaboration) which, being based on a "production" model, does not fit with our proposed exploratory frame, their description resonates with my experience of the creative process.

As underlined by Marek (2001), a most relevant metaphor to describe dynamic processes is the most basis process of life -breathing: two movements (in-taking and out-

giving), and more or less short pauses between them. Using this metaphor, the "non-heroic", or "non-egoic" creative process can be described as follow: Breathing in (inspiration: we are receptive, we take in). Pause (we choose what to follow). Breathing out (expression: we move, we act). Pause (we step back). Breathing in again... Here, Gosselin et al.'s *movement 1* (inspiration) corresponds to "breathing in"; *movement 2* (elaboration), to the first "pause" and "breathing out"; *movement 3* (distancing) to the second "pause" and "breathing in" again, but this time being receptive to the art image.

Marek suggests that the healthy process is one where there is no pause, no separation between the movements, but a constant flow. Receiving (being informed) and expressing (forming) are flowing into each other, with the two principles of receptivity and activity being tightly knit together. As Dewey (1934/2005) says, art is a process of "doing and undergoing, outgoing and incoming energy" (p. 48), a constant consulting process between the artist and his/her art: listening, following, looking, moving again, etc. In line with Hillman's (1983) values, we can view art-making as a practice in aesthetic responsivity and "response-ability" with an emphasis on both *active receptivity* and *receptive activity*.

Here the art space is at once: (a) a place of practice in looking and listening more deeply, as a form of (re-)training of the senses; (b) a place of practice in meaningful action and choice-making through the engagement with the art media; and (c) a place of revelation of the inner world through the encounter with its images. Even though I am distinguishing three dimensions, I consider this creative process as primarily composed of two main *moments*: first, the encounter with the art materials —(a) opening receptivity and (b) active engagement, and second (c) the encounter with the art images created.

Although I consider the two dimensions of (a) the encounter with art materials and (b) elaboration as inseparable aspects of the engagement with the art materials, for the purpose of clarity, I will present them in separate sections. Hence, keeping in mind that this is a fluid and spiralling process, in which the status of the art images -as *found* material/*created* product- is for the least ambiguous and in constant movement, I will distinguish three dimensions in the process: (a) the *aesthetic* experience of the encounter with art materials; (b) the *artistic* experience of the elaboration process; and (c) the *imaginal* experience of the encounter with the images.

The Encounter with Art Materials

The Otherness of Art Materials: A Practice in Active Receptivity

In visual arts, one of the most potent ingredients of the process is the encounter with the art materials. Dewey (1934/2005) has shown that in order for this encounter to take place, the artist must cultivate an attitude of receptivity. But, as he underlines, this receptivity is active: If the "undergoing" phase of the experience involves a "yielding of the self" (p. 55), it is not a passive surrender. As he says, "Perception is an act of the going-out of energy in order to receive, not a withholding of energy" (p. 55). As Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) explain, Dewey views true perception as a transaction between person and object, in which the perceiver's reality is modified by the encounter with the object's unique intrinsic qualities.

In Piagetian terminology, the emergence of the "new" happens when we change our mental schemas to accommodate new information. As Johnson (1998) explains, "accommodation is the altering of one's own previous schemas in accordance with the qualities of the external object" (p. 89). Fantasy and play, like imagination and creativity,

as outward expressions of our inner state, rely on assimilation as "the application of already existing schemas (...) to external objects or activities" (p. 88), a process in which the internal world has primacy over the external. Johnson shows that for psychological development to occur, the optimal environment must provide opportunities to experiment with both assimilation and accommodation: space and "stuff" to *play* with (assimilation), but also limits to *learn* from (accommodation). If the outer reality has to be sufficiently attuned to our inner reality for us to take it in (i.e. assimilate), it also has to be sufficiently mis-attuned for us to give in, to be challenged and grow (i.e. accommodate).

Because of their autonomous nature, the art media produce stimuli that are beyond the artist's projections, providing what May (1975) calls the "objective pole necessary for calling forth the subjective processes of consciousness" (p. 129). The properties inherent in the materials themselves present the artist with realities (colours, textures, constraints) that are foreign, or discrepant. In this process, as Johnson (1998) and Sayers (2004) explain, it is this very "otherness", of the art materials as separate which allows the eruption of something new, their "outwardness" being the condition for the emergence of the unknown, as a result of the encounter.

The Materiality of Art Media: Alchemical Opus

Art-making brings the world and its things into the exploration space. As tangible pieces of the world, the art media introduce the material dimension of the universe in the process, adding thickness to the work. If, as McNiff says "all art is existential" (as quoted by B. L. Moon, 1995, p. xiii), it is in the sense of grounding the process of exploration in the reality of life, in its grit and texture. With art-making, we don't escape dealing with the weight, the darkness, the shadow, the resistance of matter, but we learn to befriend

them as inherent to life's complexity. Allowing us to cultivate familiarity and intimacy with its things, art-making dissolves the opacity of the world and shows us its friendliness.

As an interface between imaginal and concrete, structure and energy, form and content, art also allows one to practice moving more freely on the continuum Psyche-Matter. Giving the imaginal realm substance, art allows it to be manifested, validated, confronted and used. As Woodman and Dickson (1996) say, our work is to reanimate matter and embody spirit. In this sense, the artist's engagement with concrete substances can be seen as a participation to the spiritual task of bringing spirit into matter.

As we practice moving through this vertical axis of manifestation, our psychological repertoire –or "intelligence"- gets enriched; our fluency in shifting between different modes of relating with reality –from material and literal to energetic, poetic and symbolic, is increased. In this sense also, art-making is *alchemical opus*, a way of harmonizing ourselves with the world through our own transformation.

In an alchemical perspective, the art materials are not only the tools we work with, but are also considered for their specific physical properties, as substances. As May (1975) notes, it is often the sensuous encounter with "the brilliant colours on the palette", or "the rough whiteness of the canvas" (p. 91) which sparks the artist's creativity. Similarly, Astrid Lagounaris (1986), drawing on Anzieu's (1981) notion of the "saisissement createur" -which could be translated as "creative rapture", shows that it is often the artist's sensuous attraction to a specific medium that initiates the creative process. Underlining the importance of this intimate rapport with the art media, she

encourages art educators to pay more attention to this phenomenon if they are to help facilitate others' processes.

The importance of acknowledging the medium's substance as the primary trigger in the artistic process is also underlined by Elkins (2000) and Jacquette (2006). For Elkins, the main reason a painter paints is his/her love for the substance of paint. More than any desire to express, it is the pleasure of manipulating the coloured paste and witnessing its alchemical transformations that brings him/her to the canvas.

This view is quite close to Bachelard's (1983, 1987) imaginal explorations around water, fire, earth and air. In his "material reveries", Bachelard proposes to approach the elements through their influence on our imagination, as a form of "elemental medicine" grounding us in our "material imagination". As Moore (1996) shows, the "primordial images" of archetypes –as the "fundamental building blocks of human life" (p.193), might actually not be so far from the concrete elements and patterns found in nature, and all the basic materials out of which a person's world is made. Here, the active encounter with art media's substance can be seen as a way to re-animate our "elemental imagination", access our inner substance, and ground ourselves in archetypal reality.

Art materials not only bring the sensuousness and imagination of their substance, but also, as Kent and Steward (1992) underline, the reality of the media's physical resistance. This dimension, which calls for our physical involvement with the material, allows us to practice the active side of our responsivity. Engaging the "lower" chakras (Woodman & Dickson, 1996), or "lower" functions of the body (feeling, sensing and acting), as opposed to the "higher" functions of the mind (intuition, thinking, and even imagination), helps us get anchored in our bodily reality. This physical encounter allows

us to get re-acquainted with the wisdom of our bodies, and to experiment with trusting that our instincts know what they are doing (Hillman, 1983). Like Jung (1961), who also believed that because of its affinity with matter, the body could communicate with matter directly, we can learn to let our hands find solutions to problems that our mind cannot solve.

The Limits of Art Materials: A Practice in Incarnation

Last, but not least, the art materials act as limits. Their concrete reality gives them a structuring function in the process of exploration. As May (1975) notes, there is no life in our world without a support, or a form; there is no life without limits. Limits are not only unavoidable but also valuable: They focus and energize us. As May says, creativity requires limits: Just as consciousness arises out of the "dialectical tension between possibilities and limitation" (p. 136), "the creative act arises out of the struggle of human behaviour with and against that which limits them" (p. 134).

By their very reality, their localization in time and space, art materials offer the containment of their limits. Brown (2001) has shown the universal power of certain forms such as circles to act as containers for psychic unfolding by focussing the energy and channelling it toward deep psychic transformation. Art therapy has been using this principle in various forms to facilitate the creative process by proposing modalities which have a containing quality to help reduce the anxiety associated with liminal processes (M. D. Cole, 1990). Whether viewed as literal or symbolic *transitional spaces*, the media act as inviting structures for the emergence of meaning to take place.

Because of their tangibility, the art materials also give the physical support to witness our process. As traces inscribed in the real world, they provide "objective"

feedback of our actions. The art materials being pieces of the "real world", our engagement with them allows us to practice seeing the constraints of "reality" as creative opportunities, and changing our relationship with reality from power struggle to friendship, dynamic collaboration and mutual revelation. For Winnicott (1971), this "capacity to use" and "play" are the basis of one's "creative stance in life".

Gordon (1975) describes the activity of art-making as an "urge to make form, to "incarnate", "to make flesh" (p. 5). As she underlines, the work toward integration of form and content in this embodiment process, which by nature imposes limits and limitations, always involves an element of sacrifice: the sacrifice of the limitless possibilities which are lost in the descent into a particular form. If what characterises us as human is the existential knowledge of our finitude, using the metaphor of life as a creative process, we can, as Gordon suggests, consider art-making as an existential training in incarnation: a practice in accepting our separation from the Infinite, and our passage from unlimited potentiality to finite actuality.

The Elaboration Process

In Service of Life

In working toward the revelation of one's calling, the goal of art-making is to assist life in its process of unfolding: through art, to bring potential meaning into reality. We try to create art-images that are alive and meaningful so that they can show us where the meaning of our life is. As Ehrenzweig (1967), among others, has noted, the "life" of the art-work is a result of the quality of the transaction between the artist and his/her art. For May (1975), the more genuine, deeper or "basic" the encounter, the more significant the art-work, and the stronger its power to affect the viewer.

Knowing the potential (healing) impact that a beautiful image can have on its viewers –and its maker in particular (McNiff, 2004), we cannot ignore the issue of the art-work's aesthetic quality. In emphasising *process* vs. product, we consider the art-product as primarily an expression of process unfolding. As a trace of the exploratory process, its power is related to the quality of the artist's engagement in the work. From Dharma art (Trungpa, 1996) and Zen artistic disciplines (Liebermann, n.d.), we know that presence, integrity, and genuineness in art do not come from formal work, but as an expression of the artist's full presence to the task at hand (Durkheim, 1974). Similarly, McNiff (1992) notes that it is the quality of "interplay between the artists' feelings and their materials" that can make the difference between an "energized" picture and a "wooden one" (p. 133).

A Discipline of Wu Wei (No Mind)

For art to be in service of life and its emergence, it requires, as May (1975) says, that we align our conscious intention and deeper intentionality in service of the event about to take place. In order to "be the vehicle of whatever vision may emerge", the artist must hold him/herself "alive and open to hear what being may speak" (p. 91). In this context, art is a discipline in sensitivity and responsivity, similar in that sense to the cultivation of *Wu Wei* (no mind), or "beginner's mind" in Zen practice, an attitude of openness, spontaneity and active receptivity (Van Dusen, 1975).

As McNiff (1992) points out, stuckness in art comes from relying exclusively on the conscious mind. So when faced with a problem, we learn to trust the path of least resistance (Hillman, 1983; Liebermann, n.d.) and follow the guidance of the senses. Like Allen (2001), we stop asking what we want of the art and instead ask the art what it

wants. As Kent and Steward (1992) say, objects and media, by their intrinsic properties, teach us how to handle them: clay, the strict discipline of its plasticity; wood, the direction of its grain; paint, its fluidity, etc. (see Lusebrink, 1990). As in Eastern artistic disciplines –whether Tea ceremony (Koren, 1994), Ikebana, Calligraphy, Mandala-making (Trungpa, 1996), or Painting (Cheng, 1990), which all emphasise awareness of the process and humility toward the media (Lieberman, n.d.), we try to stay as transparent as possible, as non-intervening as possible (Sawada, 1989). As Hillman (1983) says, we try to stay out of the way and to let the colours in the painting, the branches in the pot, the words in the poem, work by themselves.

For Hillman (1983), one aim of therapy is to bring people to "unreflected ways of working", a view very close to what Csikszentmihalyi (1990, 1996) describes as the ability to experience "flow". Re-animating our instinctual responsiveness means, for Hillman, trusting the intelligence of our hands, eyes, body, heart, and even of our mind, and, as for the art materials, letting them work by themselves. As he reminds us, the hands like to work, the body to be exerted. Indeed, whether mixing colours in the tray, covering smooth paper with thick paint, kneading and rolling clay, drawing precise figures with a compass, or selecting images for a collage, there can be profound -and healing- satisfaction in the manual handling of materials.

So when talking about making artistic choices, we do not emphasize mental planning or wilful projection in the future, but more the willingness to move in the direction of preferences, attractions, affinities. Here the main decision is to follow, or to respond. If psychology defines the core of ego's strength as the capacity to make choices, in an indirect way we are reinforcing the ego, but in terms of its ability to *respond* to

what presents itself. If we are thus strengthening the capacity to deal with "reality", it is in a relationship of care, and it includes the reality of our inner impulses in the equation, thus restoring ego to its function, which is to mediate between inner and outer realities, rather than to control them.

An Aesthetic of Movement and Aliveness

According to May (1975), the artistic discipline is about is "right" action. As a trace of the process, the art-work is constantly consulted to provide us with feedback in terms of what our next move needs to be. As May has shown, the criteria for recognising the "right", or "meaningful" move is not conceptual, but felt, as a sense of rightness, of something clicking into place. This "intuitive" sense is a form of aesthetic judgement. As May remarks, in psychotherapy, insights emerge "not because they are "rationally true or even helpful", but because they are beautiful (p. 74), and in mathematics the most enduring or "true" combinations are precisely the most elegant. Hence, there can be deep pragmatic wisdom in trusting our intuitive aesthetic senses to show us the most meaningful path.

When a creative endeavour is "successful", says May (1975), it is "because imagination infuses form with its own vitality" (p. 144). Hence, as he underlines, it is not *form* itself that we need to throw away but conformism, which lacks spontaneity and organic inner vitality (p. 142); not form, but formalism and formality as obstacles to integrity and honesty of style. So when we speak of beauty, it is not in the sense of "surface nicety", which is an attempt to cover up the mess -or the emptiness- by imposing an ego-willed harmony over the work. This "beautifying" is a defense against chaos and stems from a lack of trust in the process. Rather, "beauty" here refers to the beauty

inherent in the product if the process is truthful, faithful to its organic development through conflict, chaos, and transformation. As Maclagan (1995) underlines, there is deep interdependence between the form of an image and the process by which it is realised. Hence, our aesthetic criteria could be inspired by the notion of "authentic movement" developed in Dance Movement Therapy, as indicative of "quality, imagination, and depth" (McNiff, 2004, p. 133).

What we want to bring out and protect here is the "life" in the image, its "soul" (Hillman, 1989; McNiff, 1992), which manifests as a sense of aliveness, a sense of potential, a movement, something breathing. The goal is not to create a finished object, smoothed and polished for public presentation, but to call life forth. Valuing life, we learn to value work that is unfinished, flawed, a vulnerable and human piece of work, which can speak to us and inspire us forward. In this context, our work calls for a language of sketches, collages, bricolage, raw edges and unfinished business; an aesthetic of *shibusa* (Sawada, 1990) and *wabi-sabi* (Koren, 1994) which both value imperfection, impermanence and incompleteness as genuine expressions of life.

The Encounter with Art Images

Letting Go of Producing: Allowing the Image its Own Life

After elaboration, comes the time for contemplation and reflection. As Gosselin et al. (1998) underline, this involves a movement of distanciation from the art-work. If we are to witness the emergence of new meaning, we need to leave room for the unknown, allowing a living space of possibility between the image and us. As intersubjective theory shows, separation is the condition for relationship (Benjamin, n.d.). To the extent that it is placed outside, the image can be related to. So the movement here is of a willingness to

see content outside of ourselves, to release our possessive grip over the art image and let

it have a life of its own, knowing that our psychic child will differ from our fantasy of it.

Johnson (1998) says: "The moment one lets go of *producing* the art work, as if it were a

thing under our control, and instead *receives* it, opening oneself to another realm, is the

moment of transformation" (p. 91). As we tried to be receptive to the art materials during

the art-making process, so we try to open ourselves for the encounter with the art image

when time has come to stop working on it.

As Johnson (1998) explains, if the encounter begins when we recognise ourselves

in the art, it is only truly achieved when we "confront the Other revealed to [us] in the

liminal space" (p. 91). Reminding us that many forms of rituals and magic utilize this

process of "calling forth the Other" (p. 91), Johnson underlines that it is this "autonomy

of the image" as independent from its maker which allows the creative encounter to take

place.

Phenomenological Stance: Locating Meaning in Appearance

In meeting the image, as Hillman (1989) says, we engage with it not through a

complex interpretive system but simply, naively, phenomenologically. As underlined by

Byrne (1995) and Watkins (2000), this is quite different from the stance adopted by

traditional (non-artist) psychoanalysts who assume that the meaning of an image is to be

discovered, or uncovered behind or underneath it, as if there was a meaning existing

independently of the image. In a phenomenological perspective, there is no covert or

disguised meaning to the image: "Image and meaning are identical", as Jung (1947/1960,

p. 204) says. Images, being themselves the "carriers of expression", do not have to "refer

to something hidden behind them" (McNiff, 1994b, p. 252): In the way they appear lies their meaningfulness.

As phenomenal presentation, images have depth, complexity, memory, a history, and a face, as Hillman says (1983): They do not need to *make* sense, they *are* sense itself (Hillman, 2000a). So as viewers, we try, like Hillman, to develop an aesthetic appreciation of how things present themselves and of how they affect us. Following with him the imaginal method of "Ta'wil" described by Corbin (as cited by Hillman, 1989, p. 59), we try to bring tangible forms back to their imaginative form and their archetypal origin through the *"via aesthetica"* (2000a, p. 185).

When speaking of aesthetic appreciation, as Maclagan (1995) notes, we do not mean technical accomplishment, or formal beauty, but the full range of "psychoaesthetic" qualities of the art's facture. "Aesthetic" here is not confined to beautiful forms or balanced composition, but includes the awkward, the ugly, the disturbing and the weak. As Maclagan says, aesthetic qualities, in the sense of specific formal features -texture, pressure of line, tone or weight of color, direction of movement, use of space, energy, style, compositional coherence or incoherence, etc.- "apply to the most rudimentary of images" (p. 214). The link between "formal (aesthetic) and symbolic (psychological) features" being inextricable, as noted by Maclagan (2001a, p. 27), not only do these aesthetic qualities make a crucial contribution to the feel of an image, but they also carry with them complex psychological resonances.

Here, Hillman, Maclagan and McNiff's emphasis on an aesthetic response to images helps shift the traditional Jungian emphasis from *symbolic* meaning (signification) toward phenomenological *resonance* and *significance*. This way of relating to the image,

locating meaning in its *appearance* comes closest to "the fulfilment of the task that Heidegger assigned to phenomenology", which, as Betensky (1987, quoting Heidegger) says, consists in revealing the "concealed dimension of being" (p. 154).

Imaginal Stance: Personifying

In order to benefit most from all the dimensions of the image's work on us -as carrier of meaning, order, energy and feeling, McNiff (2004), also inspired by Corbin (2000), encourages us to meditate on it as an imaginal *presence* who has come to reconnect us to soul. Far from considering that "the perceiver is the one who gives life to the thing perceived" (McNiff, 1994b, p. 253), which assumes that all meaning is projected, and in the same movement cancels all possibility for encounter, he calls the image an "angel", assuring us that however dark or wounded it may appear (2004), its intention is not harmful. And indeed, treating the image as a well-intentioned messenger allows one to be more receptive to its message, energy, or purpose in our lives.

With phenomenology, we could say that this imaginal way of meeting the image as an "apparition", a figure which has something to tell or show us, is a way of keeping the phenomenon of our encounter with the image alive, a form of "intersubjective engagement" (Shinebourne, 2005) echoing Maclagan's (2001) view of true *seeing* as involving "a kind of dialogue with what is being looked at" (p. 38).

This movement of making the image a subject is what Hillman (1989) calls "personifying". By placing the subjective experience "out there", and considering it as an autonomous being having a life, a will, and feelings of its own, personifying allows us to cultivate a relationship with it. "Imagining things in a personal form", Hillman says, helps us "find access to them with our hearts" (p. 46) by awakening our "aesthetic eye"

or "eye of the heart" (1997). This is the base of what Knill (1995), inspired by Hillman, calls our "aesthetic responsibility" toward images in general, and art images in particular: As Knill writes, whether we are their authors or their viewers only, our attitude toward the images should be of "loving affection" (p. 2), an expression he credits to Arnheim.

Imaginal Response: Active Imagination

In the encounter with the images, we let our fantasy guide our explorations of their potential significance and meaning (Maclagan, 1999, 2001a), using the language of metaphor to relate to them in their own terms, to amplify their resonance, and "release their fecundity" (Hillman, 1989, p. 60). As Hillman reminds us, although they might long to be understood, no living beings like to be "interpreted". So rather than talking *about* the images, we try to talk *to, with* and *from* them, with the desire to be informed by them (McNiff, 1994a). In his own quest for psychical integration, Jung (1961) developed the technique of *active imagination* to enter in dialogue with his inner images and benefit from their wisdom. Following him, we can ask our images questions, like Brown (2001) asks of his mandalas "what have you come to teach me at this point in my life" (p. 115)? Not *why*, but *what, how, who*, and *where*.

We try to develop our imaginal sensitivity so as to relate as fully and deeply as possible to the multiple levels of the image. Our efforts, as Hillman (2000a) says, aim at "hearing and seeing more sense" (p. 181). Attending the image, our work, like in narrative therapy (White, 1990), consists in "thickening" its story; amplifying, intensifying, enlarging and complexifying its perspective through imagination; not finding an enlightening concept to explain it, but trying to make connections, to locate it in a vaster tapestry, and to give it depth of field, so that it can live more fully.

Art-making is an effort to *engender*, i.e. to give birth to new meaning, to a living being (Jager, 2002). So if we ask what an image *means*, it is the sense of what it *intends*, what it says, what it wants. We focus not on its cause but on its motives, movements, (McNiff, 1992), and purpose —its teleology, says Hillman (1989). For our images to speak to us of our future, we must let them precede us and lead the way.

In the following section, I will discuss how this practice of the creative process in the art-space can help one develop competences for finding meaning and direction in the everyday world toward the unfolding of one's calling.

An Artistic Practice toward Finding One's Place in the World

An Aesthetic Education

The metaphor of life as an ongoing creative process allows us to transfer the abilities gained in the art studio for life in the world. Considering the artistic process as an avenue toward developing (imaginal, aesthetic and artistic) sensitivity, responsivity and responsibility towards our lives, our work with images can then be viewed as a form of aesthetic training allowing the development of certain "aesthetic senses" or competences. When we increase our capacity (a) to appreciate the things of the world, (b) to validate our senses, (c) to value our subjective experience, and (d) to choose directions that support life, not only do we develop "aesthetic competences" —which I will call respectively (a) "aesthetic appreciation"; (b) "Aphrodite consciousness"; (c) "imaginal faith"; and (d) "aesthetic discrimination", but we also move toward an increased sense of personal meaning. In this context, we can consider the artistic process as a practice toward finding one's calling and place in the world.

As aesthetic education, our proposed work can be seen as a form of existential training toward fulfilling what Längle (2005) has defined as the four fundamental conditions for a meaningful life: (a) a *sense of place* and *trust in the world*; (b) a *sense of value, or love of life*; (c) a *sense of personal identity*; and (d) a *sense of purpose/meaning* in life through the possibility of realising one's personal values. These fundamental motivations, which resonate with Maslow's (1968) hierarchy of needs -(a) belonging, (b) love, (c) self-esteem, and (d) self-actualisation- also correspond to the four main themes of emerging adults' quest for identity as described in developmental psychology (Arnett, 2000, 2006): (a) construing a meaningful –and contextual- *worldview*; (b) engaging in meaningful *relationship*s; (c) building healthy *autonomy*; and (d) finding meaningful *work*, i.e. finding structures allowing one's full personal development.

With the exception of the second of these "aesthetic competences" –Aphrodite consciousness, which corresponds more to Längle's general *sense of love of life* than to the more specific *relationship* theme of emerging adulthood, links can be drawn between the competences gained through the practice of art and emerging adults' developmental tasks. In the following paragraphs, I will try to show these links, as well as how these "aesthetic senses" or "intelligences" can contribute to emerging adults' cognitive maturation.

Four Aesthetic Senses

Aesthetic appreciation as a way to find one's place in the world.

As underlined in the art education literature (Broudy, 1972; Carr, 2004; Gruenewald, 2003), one of the goals of aesthetic education is to allow the development of an ecopsychological or an ecosophical (Sawada, 1990) approach of world. The terms

"ecopsychology" -from *oikos*: home, *Psyche*: soul, and *logos*: meaning (Moore, 1996, p. 41-42), and the term "ecosophy" -from *oikos* and *Sophia*: wisdom, both carry the sense of our deep emotional need to feel "at home in the world", a feeling which Hill (1996) describes as a central ingredient of the meaningful life.

Drawing on Dewey's work, Petts (2000) reminds us that there can be no inner harmony without outer harmony. Describing the aesthetic experience as an "an adaptive felt response of humans to their environment (p. 69) grounded in biological needs, he underlines the importance of this experience, which, by revealing the value that we attribute to things, can contribute to our integration in our environment, hence to our inner sense of harmony. In the same line, Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) show that the things we cherish, because they are charged with personal meaning, reflect what is significant for us, and can thus be precious sources of information concerning our deepest values and motivations.

Working with art materials allows one to develop a sense of closeness and bodily connection with the material reality of the world, helping us locate ourselves, and giving meaning –and substance- back to our sense of inhabiting the world. According to Seed (1994) and Roberts (1998), by cultivating our attachment to the world, we increase our sense of belonging to it, a sense which might be our deepest longing at a time when our modern life style alienates us from our natural environment. By strengthening our emotional connection and identification with the world, aesthetic education can contribute to increasing our sense of responsibility towards it (Maloeuvre, 2005), and lead to what Broudy (1972) has called an attitude of "enlightened cherishing". Beside facilitating the development of a more grounded and contextual worldview (Conn, 1998),

this aesthetic stance toward our environment might also allow us to find specific places, milieus, media, themes, or causes to which we feel drawn, thus helping us discern directions and projects in which to invest our energies.

Aphrodite consciousness as a way to cultivate values and love for life.
Our reconnection with the world takes place through the reawakening of our senses. For Hillman (2000a), the *via aesthetica,* which brings together concrete sensations, psychic images and spiritual meaning, is the royal road to the revelation of our values, hence to the meaningful life. Aesthetic education in this sense, allows the cultivation of what Bollen (1984) calls "Aphrodite consciousness", or what Hillman (1997) calls the "aesthetic eye", a capacity to see potential and beauty and to bring them forth.

Paying attention to the intimations of our senses, we recover what Hillman (1997) calls our repressed need to experience beauty, and like St-Arnold (2002), learn to honour this need in our daily lives. Whether feeling a visceral craving for a particular colour (St-Arnold), a desire to go for a walk by the railway or to light some candles, or a need to put some order around us, we can trust our bodily imagination to guide us in our daily moves. Trusting that the little rituals we engage in have a meaningful purpose, we can let them show us the way to a deeper, more archetypal participation in life. As Moran (2001) puts it, our work then consists in attending the emerging images, letting their beauty be the criteria that gives them value and meaning.

As shown by Hillman (1989), our love for the world is mediated by our love for its imaginal dimension, a love he says, which is vegetal, mineral, and animal, more than Apollonian. Meaning comes in the form of images, whether found in dreams, in fantasy, or in the tangible environment. These images can show us the face of our "dreams" and

lead us toward them. Beside contributing to emerging adults' cognitive maturation toward the integration of right brain processes (metaphorical thinking, imagination, and intuition), this practice in trusting the imaginal senses can also facilitate the revelation of their personal "dream" or "vision" for their life, which is something that Levinson (as cited by Wortley, 1982) considered an important feature of young adult years.

Imaginal faith as a way to develop one's identity.

As Hillman (1996) notes, for individuation to truly be the realisation of one's "genius", it must be rooted in the recognition and validation of our imaginal consciousness and "daimonic" energies. If the psyche keeps returning to images for nourishment and healing, it is because they are deeply grounding, connecting us not only to the outer world but also our inner world.

Beside expanding and deepening our self-knowledge through the revelation of our psyche's particular contents, imaginal work allows one to cultivate faith in our subjective experience as a form of "inner grounding". In learning to consult and validate our inner promptings and images, we develop what Woodman and Dickson (1996) call "soul ears" (p. 187), a subtle capacity to listen to our inner resonance and recognise when something "rings home", or "rings true". This contributes to giving more substance to our "sense of self", which Winnicott (1960) describes as resulting from the validation of our organismic experience. Through the validation of its images, our inner world gains in reality, substance, life, humanity and interiority. Filled with the life of our images (scenes, people, animals, landscapes), it becomes a more habitable place, increasing our feeling of being at home within ourselves.

This "imaginal faith" (Hillman, 1975, p. 87) allows one to develop an increased sense of *identity* in the sense of acknowledging the uniqueness of our individuality and accepting our difference. Beside enhancing our self-definition through the discovery of personal characteristics such as tastes, talents and fantasies, valuing our idiosyncratic responses to the world also increases our self-reliance in the sense of relying on our felt experience as an internal gauge in our search of meaning. This dimension of our work echoes Fowler's (1981) description of the "individuative-reflexive stage of faith", in which one needs to develop a separate sense of self independent from external sources of authority. It also resonates with Tanner's (2006) description of the "re-centering" task of emerging adults, which includes ego development and emancipation from parental dependency toward healthy autonomy and self-regulation.

Aesthetic discrimination as a way to honour one's call.

The practice of consulting what feels true, right, or good as an internal gauge for artistic choices in the creative process also has practical utility in making small and big decisions in life. The quest for one's calling is often formulated as a search for "what one should do in life". Underlying this question is the sense that there is something *right* for that person to do; not only in the moral/social sense of doing *good*, but in the deeper sense of what is *true* for him or her. Much like when judging the value of an art-work, the underlying – although often unconscious- criteria has to do with evaluating the *integrity* of the work, an integrity which is often felt as a sense of deep congruence between form and content. In the search for their calling also, what emerging adults are looking for is the most meaningful ways –the most pertinent forms- to serve, channel, and express their particular kind of energies.

As Längle (2005) writes, for a sense of meaning and purpose to be found in life, "three things are needed: a structural context, a field of activity, and (...) value[s] to be realized" (p. 11). The exercise of aesthetic judgement in the creative process allows the cultivation, not only of one's personal taste –including a taste for integrity, but also the development of aesthetic criteria for judging of the pertinence of a medium in terms of its adequation to its purpose. Listening to what the images "want to be", we can develop sensitivity toward the potential life in us. Listening to what the art materials "want to do", we can develop discrimination toward the media, which can then be transferred to the bigger structures of our lives. Knowing that the renewal of life is happening in the encounter between form and energy (May, 1975), we can ask ourselves: Are the structures in our lives supporting the expression of our essence, or constricting and deadening it? Is there a possibility for fruitful dialogue, mutual enrichment and meaningful emergence between the frame and our contents, or are we trying to fit incompatible realities together? Is there a power struggle or collaboration between the two? Asking those questions helps discriminate which forms -whether *found* or *created*- to choose or to avoid, to support or even to fight.

As underlined by Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981), the aesthetic experience, usually considered subjective, can actually be a way to cultivate *objectivity* as the capacity to *perceive* the actual qualities of our environment (p. 178). By developing our sensitivity toward -and respect for- both the objective and subjective dimensions of reality, aesthetic education supports not only the strengthening of our capacity for informed choice, but also the emergence of mature cognitive structures of thought. As underlined by Labouvie-Vief (2006), one of the challenges of emerging adults is to

develop a capacity to hold the tension between the subjective and objective worlds, hence developing a form of "contextual intelligence" in decision-making processes. If Labouvie-Vief presents this process as a cognitive development, she also mentions the increasing recognition given in cognitive science to the crucial role of non-rational processes (imagination, emotions, etc.) in supporting decision-making. As we reawaken the intelligence of our senses, our capacity for discrimination no longer needs to rely solely on rational processes but can be more body- and image-centered, as Hillman (1989, 2000a) advocates.

Artistic Stance

In this last section, I have emphasised mostly the aesthetic dimension of the creative process. As Dewey (1934/2005) notes, while the term "aesthetic" refers to the undergoing part of the process, the term "artistic" refers to its active component, as the process of giving form. As underlined by existential authors (Frankl, 1985; Das, 1998; Längle, 2005; Wong, 1998), finding meaning in life not only involves the *psychological* dimension of how we experience things, and the *spiritual/attitudinal* dimension of how we stand toward what we cannot change, but also the *creative* dimension of what we *do* in the world. If the aesthetic experience allows the development of an "aesthetic stance", our work, through the active engagement with art materials, also hopefully gives an increased capacity for meaningful action. The capacity of the art process to draw on all three dimensions of meaning (psychological, spiritual/attitudinal, and creative) makes it a privileged avenue for cultivating not only meaning-*finding,* but also meaning-*making* competences.

For me, the expression "artistic stance", with its double active/attitudinal connotation, encapsulates the essence of what we are trying to gain through the artistic practice: not only the feeling that there is a place for us in the world to play and develop – which is Winnicott's (1971) definition of the "creative stance", but also that we can, as true artists do, contribute to its unfolding.

Both Existential and Archetypal psychology, agreeing with various traditional teachings –among which Native Indian wisdom (Lovell, 2001; Plaskow & Christ, 1989; Schenk, 1988) and Buddhist philosophy (Marek, 2001; Trungpa, 1996), suggest that living with inner consent involves harmonizing our inner and outer worlds. In that aim, Moore (1996) proposes that we follow Ficino's alchemical approach, making "an art of daily life by diagnosing what the soul needs and determining how everyday activities could satisfy those needs" (p. 206). Expanding our imaginal soul-making practice from the studio to the world, we can contribute to the revelation and realisation of soul in the world. Art-making then becomes an education toward the *Re-enchantment of Every-day Life* (Moore) and the re-ensoulment of our world.

Chapter IV: The Proposed Program

A Need for Structures

According to developmental psychology, on the path toward individualization, emerging adults have to develop a contextual worldview, personal values, self-sufficiency and increased responsibility toward their lives (Arnett, 2000, 2001, 2006; Schwartz et al., 2005; Tanner, 2006). These tasks resonate with the existential themes of finding a sense of one's place in the world, a sense of value and appreciation for life, a sense of separate identity and a sense of meaningful purpose to be realised in the world (Längle, 2005). These elements allow us to consider emerging adults' search for their place in the world as an existential quest for personal meaning.

As underlined by developmental psychology, in a society characterized by increased freedom of choice and diminished societal guidance, the critical life transition of emerging adulthood requires strong guiding structures in order to be an active developmental process (Côté, 2006; Labouvie-Vief, 2006; Schwartz & al., 2005; Tanner, 2006). For the potentiality of true personality development to be actualised and not to remain a "prerogative of the few" (Moraglia, 1994, p. 68), supporting conditions are needed, which can help relieve the anxiety often accompanying times of uncertainty (Côté, 2006; May, 1969b), and, by reframing the search as an active and conscious personal project, make it a more purposeful and integrative experience.

Existential psychology shows that finding meaning entails finding personally meaningful ways of contributing to the realisation of life's potential. This involves finding media, places, or causes that will allow one to engage as wholly and fully as possible with one's world; not only (a) to perceive the world's reality –and potentiality-

and (b) to act creatively, but also (c) to engage one's most basic energies in the encounter. On the path toward the realisation of their personal destiny (Dalton, 2001; Hillman, 1996), emerging adults also need to contact their deepest motivations, which both archetypal and existential authors Hillman (1996) and May (1969) call the "daimonic", considering its integration crucial for the realisation of one's calling.

An artistic process "in service of emergence", as I have described it, addresses these three dimensions of personal meaning: (a) As aesthetic practice, it enhances one's sensitivity and capacity to perceive the world; (b) as creative process, it allows one to exercise choice making and meaningful action; (c) as imaginal work, it increases one's daimonic self-knowledge through the encounter with one's images. In this sense, the art experience is not only a place of *practice* and *exploration* but also a place of *initiation* (Sullivan, 1996) into the depths of psychological individuation.

An Art Space in Service of Psychological Unfolding

In order to provide emerging adults with an art-based experience allowing them to explore meaning-making through the creative process, a structure is needed which could be easily integrated into existing the educational system. This structure could take the form of an elective semester course proposed in colleges and universities to both students and non-students interested in self-exploration. Consisting of a dozen three hour weekly sessions, it would be tailored to fit the institution's requirements and the needs of the specific students.

Paulson (2001) and Bogart (1996) have shown the usefulness of reframing transitional periods as *rites of passage* or personal *vision quests* to help provide orientation and meaning to the experience. Since emerging adulthood, with its "betwixt

and between" (Turner, 1981) quality, its sense of possibilities, its search for identity, has in itself many of the *liminal* (Turner, p. 3) characteristics of a *rite of passage* (Carus-Mahdi, 1987; Van Gennep, 1981), I propose to call this course "Images as Gates to Meaning", in reference to the universal symbolic function of gates as transitional and initiatory devices in rites of passage, mythology and architecture (see Chevalier & Gheerbrandt, 1965).

Knowing that the detailed content of this course will vary according to the context of its implementation, I propose in the next paragraphs, to articulate its basic structural components.

In working with people in critical life transitions, Skar (2004) reminds us that rather than trying to "make" the emergent happen, we try to provide "the right environment for the system to organize in the direction of its own individuation" (p. 259). In psychological work, the goal is to create a space that will invite and "assist the unfolding of archetypal processes", as Byrne (1995) says. In the context of working with emerging adults, what I want to provide is a space for their potential to manifest, and their meaningful experience to take place. According to Johnson (1998), in order to facilitate safe and creative exploration, the optimal environment must provide conditions conducive to both play (assimilation) and learning (accommodation). This involves three elements: a) a holding, containing quality to provide a sense of security; b) "stuff to play with", for nourishment; and c) a sense of space, of yet unachieved potential, to spur the movement toward growth.

If the art experience itself, with its materials to play with, its possibilities, and its imaginal character, can provide the active ingredients of the exploration, the liminality of

the experience requires also the protection of a chrysalis (Brown, 2001; M. D. Cole, 1990; De Vries, 2000). For true psychological unfolding to take place, the art-space must present the safety of a sacred ritual space (V. L. Cole, 2003; Turner, 1981; Van Gennep, 1981). Hence it must be framed on the therapeutic model of the "playspace" (Johnson, 1998), which rules of respect (of people, art-work, psychic material, and confidentiality) serve to facilitate the members' trust in the process. In this sense, this art experience, even though it is presented as exploratory and educational, because it involves deep psychological processes, must be lead according to the ethical values of therapeutic work as they are observed in group art therapy practice.

<div align="center">*Program Outline*</div>

The Overall Program

For short-term formats of intervention such as this program, Steenbarger (1992) and Muehlenkamp (2002) have shown that the most effective way for accelerating and deepening the process is the directive approach of providing group tasks. As Liebmann (1986) explains, providing a theme or a specific activity alleviates members' anxiety and allows them to focus on the work at hand. This course, then, will be structured on the model referred to as the "theme centered approach" in the art therapy literature (Case & Dalley, 1992; Skaiffe & Huet, 1998; Waller, 1993), in which, as in traditional art education practice, the art-therapist/teacher takes responsibility for providing directives in terms of art activities, "procedural rituals" (Moon, 1995) as well as group focus (Rutan & Stone, 1993).

As underlined by Brown (2001), in structured interventions designed to facilitate psychological unfolding, the process must follow the archetypal template of initiatory

journeys as described in Campbell's (1968) accounts of the hero's quest: (1) separation (*preparation*); (2) initiation (*exploration*); and (3) return (*integration*). In this program then, if the weekly activities will be tailored to respond to the specifics of the group –in terms of "group stage" (Rutan & Stone, 1993) and psychic material emerging in the sessions (Waller, 1993), they will also follow a more general line of development corresponding to the three main phases of archetypal processes: (1) As an introduction to imaginal work, the first weeks activities will be chosen for their capacity to invite fantasy, playfulness, and explorations in breadth -collages, collections, playing with colours; (2) the middle weeks activities will be geared toward deepening individual exploration through encounter with archetypal figures and themes -inner animal, child, soul, shadow, sacred corner; and (3) the closing weeks activities will aim at facilitating integration of personal experience into the context of the group -through collective activities, with the last session in particular adding an element of group ceremony to bring closure to the whole process (see Appendix B for an example of program outline).

The Sessions

This general template of (1) *preparation*, (2) *exploration*, and (3) *integration*, will also be followed in the unfolding rituals of the weekly sessions themselves. This model, which corresponds to Case & Dalley's (1992) description of group art therapy practice – (1) exposition; (2) development; (3) recapitulation- also resonates with the three moments of the artistic process as described by Gosselin et al. (1998): (1) opening receptivity; (2) production; (3) reflection.

As St Arnold (2002) notes, in order to intensify the potential power and meaning of events and activities lived in the session, a form of sacralized frame has to be

established, which requires that active ingredients of ritual and ceremony be integrated in a non-threatening manner. Here the action of sitting in a circle at the beginning and end of each session (V. L. Cole, 2003) will provide the symbolic gesture marking the boundaries of the liminal space (Van Gennep, 1981) and the passage from literal and ordinary to symbolic and imaginal consciousness.

Taking all these elements into account, the sessions could unfold as follows: (1) *Preparation*: *welcome circle* (short exchange); presentation of activity (including short guided meditation or other various focusing techniques); (2) *Exploration*: main *art activity* (sometimes preceded by a *warm-up* activity, as in Liebmann's (1986) model); (3) *Integration*: *individual processing* (through active imagination, free-association, image response, drawing etc. and "witness writing", as in Allen's (2001) model); *group processing*; *closing circle*.

Because the aim is not primarily social adaptation but psychological unfolding (Colli, 1994), the focus will be on the intrapsychic rather than on the interpersonal dimension of group dynamics (Rutan & Stone, 1993). If there is a dimension of intersubjectivity (Benjamin, 2006) in this work, it concerns primarily the relationship between art and artist (Shinebourne, 2005) rather than the relationship between persons. As in Marek's (2001) approach, the group serves the unfolding of the individuals' experience by creating the holding environment of a Temenos (St-Arnold, 2002), and embodying what Franklin (as quoted by Allen, 2001) calls "witness consciousness".

The Activities

Since, as May (1975) explains, emergence takes place in the dialectical interplay between form and energy, the art activities, in order to facilitate safe and creative

exploration, need to provide both containment and stimulation. Hence activities will be designed so as to both stir the imagination and contain the process, whether through the concrete containment of boxes (Farelly-Kirk, 2001) or sand trays (Castellana & Donfrancesco, 2005), the boundaries of pre-drawn forms -circle (Brown, 2001; Hagood Slegelis, 1987) or body outline (Steinhardt, 1985), the limits of small size supports, or the safety of tangible objects (C. Moon, 2001; Farelly-Hansen, 2001; Lovell, 2001) and pre-existing images (Henderson, 1999; Landgarten, 1993; Weiser, 2004) (see Appendix C). Moreover, since we are trying to access the deeper levels of archetypal contents, both art media and theme proposed will have an archetypal resonance (see Appendix D). Furthermore, because I consider the aesthetic dimension as a central ingredient of the process, the art media will also be chosen for their inherent capacity to allow for a rich aesthetic experience, in terms both of process and product.

In parallel to the art activities conducted in the weekly group sessions, as in Silverman's (2004) teachings of the creative process, students will be encouraged to keep an on-going journal of their experience as a means to deepen their exploration in a relatively contained manner, through writing, drawing, collecting images, recording dreams, etc. In addition to journaling, students will also be given a weekly one-hour assignment, either a directed task in preparation for the following week, for example gathering images or objects, or an activity of their choice to nourish their "inner artist" - what Cameron (1992) calls an "artist date". The aim of these "transitional" practices is not only to create continuity and intensify the overall process, but also to provide personal tools for exploring and deepening meaning. As they take place outside the group

sessions, those activities can be continued after the course as practices in self/soul care, thus supporting the development of the students' self-sufficiency and autonomy.

The Function of the Art-Therapist

In the context of assisting young people's search for their calling, the function of the art-therapist is to provide the conditions conducive to the emergence of adulthood. Acting as a structuring presence, he/she provides guidance, accompanying, inspiring, spurring and sustaining the students' processes. The model here being the feminist notion of "interdependent leadership" (Cornwell, 1993, p.10), the art-therapist's authority to guide is based not on power but primarily on his/her personal experience of the artistic process as a modality for psychic unfolding.

Here, the art-therapist's task is many-fold: (a) "gate-building"; (b) initiating; (c) assisting; (d) "soul-keeping"; and (e) mentoring. (a) As group leader, the art-therapist takes responsibility for structuring the space of emergence, providing working frame, boundaries, and focus (B. L. Moon, 1990). This task, which Yalom (1970) refers to as "gate- keeping", is threefold: First, it involves establishing the concrete conditions for the existence of the group work, what Yalom calls "group creation and maintenance". Second, it involves providing the psychological conditions to facilitate trust and exploration, what Yalom calls "culture building". And last, it involves providing the conditions to accelerate and deepen, or intensify the process (Steenbarger, 1992), a task Yalom calls "group focussing".

(b) As initiator of the process of exploration, the art-therapist proposes activities and modalities (art-materials, themes) which stir the students' imagination and call forth the emergence of images. (c) As witness, the art-therapist attends to and assists the

students' creative and psychological process through his/her supportive attitude and sensitive interventions. (d) As "attendant of the soul" (Hillman, 1989, p. 73), the art-therapist facilitates and protects psychic emergence by establishing the sacredness of the ritual "playspace" and by insuring the imaginal –non-literal- character of the work with emergent images.

If those four functions correspond to the traditional roles of the leader in group art-therapy as described in the literature (Case & Dalley, 1992; Liebmann, 1986; Moon, 1990; Waller, 1993), in the context of our work with emerging adults, the art-therapist also assumes an educational role as mentor. As noted by Fromm (1956/2000) "education" comes from *e-ducere*: to *lead forth* -outside oneself-, or to *bring out* something which is potentially present" (p. 115). As underlined by Labouvie-Vief (2006), one of the most important values of adult education lies in its capacity to facilitate the development of emerging adults toward the actualization of their full cognitive potential. By modelling attitudes, offering tools and transmitting values for life in the world, the art-therapist supports the emergence of adulthood, towards self-sufficiency and healthy autonomy.

First, by his/her own acceptance and curiosity toward emergent contents and processes, the art-therapist models a supportive attitude which hopefully can be integrated by emerging adults as a self-supportive stance toward their own psychic processes, hence reinforcing their trust in themselves as well as their mental and emotional self-sufficiency.

Second, by providing tools and facilitating the practice of artistic and psychological competences which can be used outside the studio, the art-therapist supports the development of emerging adults' cognitive and emotional autonomy, which,

according to developmental psychology (Arnett, 2001; Tanner, 2006) are central tasks of emerging adulthood. By modelling more complex thought processes, through his/her own processes, and by proposing new avenues to meaning-making, he/she facilitates the opening of new cognitive pathways (Hunt, 1972) and the bridging of different cognitive functions (mental, emotional, kinesthetic), thus facilitating the maturation of emerging adults thought structures toward a more integrated and complex organisation (Labouvie-Vief, 2006). This corresponds to Shaffer's (2000) definition of mentorship as consisting in helping students "develop an integrated perspective on their life" (p. 140).

Furthermore, through the development of his own "aesthetic eye" (Hillman, 1997; Thomas & Schlutsmeyer, 2004) and his/her own love for potential and emergence, the art-therapist may contribute to bringing out the potential "genius" of some of his/her "pupils". The experience of "being seen" by an other can be truly initiatory, opening a whole new sense of possibility and giving the courage to follow one's call. Hence, as Hillman (1996) shows, this revelatory dimension of the mentor's function, with its potential to provide the spark of an entire destiny, is not to be underestimated.

Last but not least, the art-therapist acts as educator in the sense of transmitting values, and knowledge. Here, in the context of work with emerging adults, the main value that I would like to transmit, has to do with what Knill (1995), inspired by Hillman, calls a sense of "aesthetic responsibility" toward one's life, whether one's psychic inner life or one's outer life in the world.

Conclusion

An Educational Mandate

In this study, I have tried to articulate how an aesthetic approach to art-making can support emerging adults in their search for calling and assist them in their process of individualization. In proposing artistic modalities toward meaning-making and self-knowledge as a form of aesthetic education, my project can be considered both an existential and an archetypal endeavour: An effort to offer tools for the deepening and unfolding of personal meaning, it answers the existential call to engage as fully and as creatively as possible in the actualisation of life's potential (Frankl, 1985; May, 1975; Wong, 1998); an effort to foster imaginal and aesthetic sensitivity, it fits in with the archetypal project of bringing psychology back to the world and the world back in the psychological space (Hillman, 1989).

Moreover, as an attempt to integrate the potential active ingredients of art therapy into an educational format of intervention, this project is in line with psychology's current efforts at expanding its therapeutic contribution from a traditional treatment mandate to a more "positive", preventative and social mandate (Seligman, 2002b). If the purpose of our educational system is to foster young people's maturation toward the realisation of their full potential (Labouvie-Vief, 2006), in order to truly fulfil this purpose, it has to also address the psychological dimension of its students' personal development (Tanner, 2006). As Seligman underlines, helping people thrive and nurturing their genius might be the most sensible way to ensure the quality of their contribution to society. As Côté (2006) proposes, providing structures –"institutionalized moratoria" (Erikson, 1968)- to support emerging adults' search for identity and meaning

as part of the educational curriculum, might be a sensible strategy to ensure the health of our future society.

In this sense, by proposing aesthetic tools to more fully relate to –and inhabit- the world, I am not only trying to help emerging adults find their personal place in the world, but I am also hoping to contribute to the emergence of a more ensouled culture and the creation of a more habitable world. As inspired art educators (Broudy, 1972; Carr, 2004; Mehrmohammadi, 2006) and tenants of ecopsychology (Roszak, Gomez & Kanner, 1995; Seed, 1994; Winter, 1996) have shown, a deeper felt appreciation for our environment is the basis for a more sensitive and responsible behaviour towards it. Advocating an aesthetic approach to meaning is my way, as artist and therapist, of participating in this movement toward the *Reenchantment of the World* (Berman, 1981).

Finally, using art as an avenue toward the revitalization (McNiff, 1981) and reensoulment of our lives (Moore, 1992, 1996) is also a way to reconnect with aboriginal wisdom by restoring art to its shamanic function (Lovell, 2001; McNiff, 1992), which is to bring soul back in our world, through the practice of "making sacred" (Dissanayake, 1988, 1992). If, as Hillman (1989) says, what is sacred is what *we care for*, but also what *cares for us*, our caring for the world might be a way to ensure that it will take care of us.

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Appendix A

Meaning and Calling in Existential and Archetypal Psychology

	Existential psychology	*Archetypal Psychology*
Aim of life	Realisation of meaning, i.e. actualisation of life's potential. - The meaningful life is self-transcendent (self-actualisation a by-product of self-transcending quest for meaning)	Unfolding/realisation of individual potential (genius, daimon) in the world - The meaningful life is symbolic, archetypal, mythical
Calling	Answering life's calls, actualising meaning through self-transcendence *Logos* is calling us (spiritual value)	Answering (life's archetypal) call to individual unfolding *Soul* is calling us (psychological values)
Meaning-fulness	Harmony between inner experience and outer action	Harmony between outer life and imaginal (inner) reality
Meaning	A phenomenon: Encounter between man and world - Mediated by Human *Spirit* (Frankl's Noetic potential)	A phenomenon: Imaginal resonance between man and world - Mediated by *Psyche* and its images (aesthetic imagination)
Meaning sources	2 main sources: ultimate values (art, philosophy, religion) and everyday engagement in the world (3 avenues)	Source: Archetypal realm, Soul (human soul and world's soul)
Meaning-making	Realising life's possibilities through active engagement with the world. - 3 avenues: psychological experience; creative deeds; spiritual attitude	Soul-making: Realising psychic reality through imaginal reconnection between archetypal/psychological reality and world - 1 avenue: *via aesthetica*
Self-knowledge	Experiential actualisation: Through active engagement with the world (May adds encounter with daimonic)	Daimonic revelation/realisation: Through imaginal engagement with fantasy-images and aesthetic engagement with the world.
The world	Existential field waiting to be realised	Mirror of psyche, living being, Cosmos
Art	- Practice in existential encounter with the world's (and daimonic) reality - Active realisation of meaning	- Reconnection with archetypal reality through images - Active soul-making

Appendix B

Example of Possible Program Outline

Week 1: THE PLACE OF MY DREAMS, SANCTUARY (Collage)

Art media	Various size coloured paper; 4 boxes of magazine images (*People, Animals, Places, Miscellaneous*); scissors; glue.
Directives	Choose images that attract or inspire you to make a collage of a dream place/ sanctuary.
Processing	Story telling about the place (scenes, activities, inhabitants, etc.), with a focus on what makes the dream place safe and exciting, staying in the imaginary/fantasy realm, and avoiding "realistic" questions/interpretations. For further individual exploration, free association with images in journal as a base for poetry writing (Wadeson, 1981).
Purpose	To allow members to introduce themselves in a non-threatening manner. To initiate members to imaginal work, using "imaging" (Cameron, 1992) and "projections" into existing images as a way to access and reveal one's inner world, dreams and fantasies. To help identify environments, places, activities that are sources of inspiration, wonder and spirit of adventure in the safety of a protected psychic place. To re-awaken the "enchanted child" (Moore, 1996) and learn to value one's imagination as valuable source of information on one's deep values and motivations and as inspiration for creativity. To help "locate" oneself –Hillman's (1989) remedy for times of transition and disorientation- and foster internal grounding by substantiating one's inner world through images.
References	- Fantasy places as sources of inspiration and healing: Chaffee (1996).
	- Imagination of one's ideal life as inquiry into personal meaning: Wong's (2000).
	- Activity inspired by Landgarten's (1993) work, but used as self-discovery rather than diagnostic tool, and proposing *Places* and *Animals* in addition to *People* and *Miscellaneous*.

Weekly Assignment: (Journaling) *URBAN TREASURE HUNT*

Look in the street for small discarded objects that speak to you and bring them in a recycled shoe box.

Week 2: THE TREASURE BOX (Mix media)

Art media	Members' found objects; shoe boxes; material for collage, decoration, craft and painting.
Directives	Decorate your box, inside and outside, choosing what you put in, on and out.
Processing	Stories projected on found objects. Reflecting on function of the box (containing, protecting, holding, etc) and individual experiences of public/private, inside/outside, expressing/hiding.
Purpose	To (re-)awaken one's "skilful witness" (Farelly-Hansen, 2001), one's childlike curiosity about the world, and the creative imagination that projects a story on its things (C. Moon, 2001) as a source of guidance. To help identify what calls one's attention, feelings and attachments, as information on personal values and motivations. To practice caring for disowned emotional contents through rehabilitation (rescue) of discarded objects. To reconnect with the aesthetic instincts of "making special" (Dissanayake, 1992), and experience the satisfaction of crafting (McNiff, 2004) and decorating (Prinzhorn, 1984).
References	- Working with discarded objects: C. Moon (2001).
	- Working in a box as a transitional safe space for transitional times, providing the protection of a container while one's new identity is in gestation: Farelly-Kirk (2001).

Weekly Assignment: (Journaling) *VISION QUEST (Photography)*

Take photographs of scenes that inspire you: light, colours, textures, shapes (disposable cameras available).

Week 3: INNER COLOURS (Painting)

	FIRST PHASE: I LIKE/I DON'T LIKE - 2 COLOURS
Art media	Oil and dry pastels, A4 paper.
Directives	Choose 2 colours: one that you really like and one that you don't. Have them dialogue together on the paper. If words come to you, write them down on a separate paper.
Purpose	To help identify inner conflicts. To learn the techniques of active imagination/dialogue.
	SECOND PHASE: INNER LANDSCAPES - 4 FEELINGS
Art media	Small size (1'x 1'and 1'x 1 ½') rigid painting supports; paint (thick acrylic or finger paint), palettes, brushes of all sizes, wood knifes, combs for texturing; (oil and dry pastels).
Directives	On 4 separate supports, explore "playing with colours" evoking the feelings/states of *Joy,*

Anger, Sadness, and *Peace.*

Processing   Putting all members' paintings together, contemplate universality vs. uniqueness of colour symbolism. Reflect on most/least appreciated personal process and product.

Purpose   To get familiar with one's personal colour symbolism. To extend one's emotional vocabulary through mixing and discovery of new colours. To re-awaken one's instinctive/intuitive relationship with colours as "carrier of emotions and feelings" (McNiff, 2004): Although most people have private, often visceral, relationships with colours -likes and dislikes, most adults lack confidence in their tastes and are shy in actively exploring/engaging with them. Framed as non-figurative exploration, this activity aims at inviting one's inner artist/child to get re-acquainted with the sensuous pleasure of experimenting with colours in a safe format, freed from performance expectations.

References   - Working with colours: Farelly-Hansen (2001); Rhinehart & Engelhorn (1984).

Weekly Assignment: (Journaling) *Free "ARTIST DATE"* [a]

Week 4: INNER KINGDOM (Mandala)

Art media   4' x 4' thick paper on the floor, pastels and paint; magazine images, various wrapping paper and fabric samples for collage; scissors, glue; (pencil, compass, ruler and A4 sketching paper available on demand, as well as images of mandalas for inspiration).

Directives   Stand in the middle of your paper. This is your sacred space, your imaginary kingdom, castle, village, house, farm, city, or temple. Starting from the center, imagine its spaces, rooms, courtyards, gardens, activities, their ambience, colours, materials. You can start by drawing a circle or square around you if you find it helpful.

Processing   Description and story telling about the various spaces and life of the place, atmospheres, inhabitants (king/queen, prince/princess, knight, artisans, jester, priests, sage/guide, animals), their relationships, functions, etc.

Purpose   To experience the complexity of one's psychological make-up through a spatial metaphor allowing integration of inner "polytheism" into an organic system. To help identify values, priorities (centre/periphery, treasures), fundamental worldview, inner organisation, inner

contents (archetypal figures and symbols). Also, to help understand relationships of various

sectors of inner life between them and with the outside world (boundaries, gates); sources of

safety/ inspiration/anxiety (chaos), areas that are defined/undefined, full/empty, etc.

References   - Interior spaces as the most relevant metaphors of one's inner life: Bachelard (1969).

- Castle as symbol of self: Amatruda (1997); Woodman &Dickson (1996).

- Mandala as inner city/temple/cosmos: Crossman & Barou (1995); Trungpa (1991).

- Mandalas as centering modality for psychological integration: Brown (2001); Farelly-

Hansen (2001); Hagood Slegelis (1987); Kellogg (1978); Rhinehart & Engelhorn (1984)

-Inspired by Loo's (1974) Self-Puzzle, but used as self-exploration vs. diagnosis tool.

Weekly Assignment: (Journaling) *Free "ARTIST DATE"* [a]

Week 5: ENVIRONMENT FOR AN ANIMAL (Mix media)

Art media   A good sample of miniature animals to choose from, various craft materials (coloured tissue

paper, play doe, clay, feathers, wood sticks, popsicles, pipe cleaners, needles, fabric samples,

etc.); glue; staples; scissors, tape; various sizes boxes and solid supports.

Directives   Choose an animal (and optionally, a box), and make an environment for it.

Processing   The story of the animal, description of state, needs, wants, way of life, family, strengths,

vulnerabilities, tastes, messages, with focus on fantasy life (Marek 2001).

Purpose   To help contact and integrate the "daimonic" (Hillman, 1989; May, 1969; McNiff, 1994b) as

source of energy, strength, guidance and empowerment (McNiff, 1988). Also to help identify

primary motivations and potential vulnerabilities, wounds or unmet needs to be attended to.

References   - Working with animal imagery: Henderson (1999); Animal as shaman: McNiff (1988).

- Engaging limbic brain and attending wounded, frozen, trapped, buried animal: Baring (n.d.)

SECOND PHASE (optional)

Directives   Put all the environments together.

Processing   (See Activity Week 10: Group Island) focusing here on relationships, boundaries, territories.

Weekly Assignment: *LOOKING FOR THE CHILD (Photocopies)*

Find a photograph of yourself as a child that particularly speaks to you (if unavailable, find a photograph of another child that moves you). Make black and white photocopies of it, playing with size, contrast.

Week 6: INNER CHILD (Personal photograph)

Art media	Photocopies of personal childhood photography; various size coloured papers, glue, scissors, paint, pastels; mint oil and cotton for transfer of photocopy onto chosen support.
Directives	Play with the images, cutting, transferring to chosen support, adding colours, text etc.
Processing	Active imagination with the image and "witness writing", focussing on what the child longs for, sees, feels toward the adult, and vice-versa what the adult sees and feels toward the child.
Purpose	To learn the technique of inner dialogue and active imagination. To contact one's archetypal/inner child and his/her wisdom, and reconnect with the intuitive knowledge of one's destiny/genius (Hillman, 1996). To help identify longings and remember one's forgotten childhood dreams, hopes and vision. To identify themes of helplessness, abandonment, betrayal, and awaken the desire to champion one's inner child (Bradshaw, 1990), hence taking responsibility for honouring one's emotional needs and dreams.
References	- Work with personal photographs: Weiser (2004). - Work with inner/archetypal child: Bradshaw (1990); Politsky (1995).

Weekly Assignment: (Journaling) *Free "ARTIST DATE"* [a]

Week 7: SOUL-IMAGE (Body outline)

Art media	On the wall, 6' x 3' taped craft paper for each member; oil pastels, paint, brushes of all sizes.
Directives	Have someone draw the outline of your body in your chosen colour. Then fill it up.
Processing	Active imagination and journal dialogue with the image, with a focus on energetic presence, feelings (longing, dissatisfaction, hopes), and possible messages and directions given by soul-image. "Witness writing" (Allen, 2001).
Purpose	To identify unfulfilled longings and dreams (Hillman, 1989) by meeting another face of oneself, whether "lost-self", "soul-image", shadow (Politsky, 1995), or "daimon" (Hillman, 1996). To dialogue with this other self (archetypal, imaginal, spiritual), feel its healing

presence and benefit from its guidance.

References   - Working from body outline: Steinhardt (1985).

This activity is a powerful illustration of McNiff's (1994a, 2004) vision of images as angels.

Weekly Assignment: (Journaling) *SEARCH FOR CHARACTER*

Looking in fairy tales, myths, childhood memories, identify a character that particularly speaks to you now.

Week 8: BUSH SOUL, PRIMAL SOUL (Mask)

Art media	Thick cardboard for the mask base; craft materials: tissue paper, fabric, cotton, feathers, beads, pipe cleaners, clay; scissors, glue, coloured tape, elastic ribbon, staples for attachment, etc.; pastels, paint; (collection of images and samples of masks bases for inspiration).
Directives	Make a mask of your chosen character (if you don't have one, let the materials inspire you).
Processing	Reflecting on the experience of making the mask. Active imagination with mask as "Other". Wearing the mask, embody the character, walk, talk, meet others, noticing how it changes one's feelings, stance, voice, outlook. Exchanging masks, choose other members to try one's mask on, and direct them to play its character. (Inspired by Silverman, 2004).
Purpose	To help connect with one's "daimonic" empowering energies. To appreciate one's idiosyncrasies and reveal/locate potential sources of inner conflict (Silverman, 2004) or inhibition (Bradshaw, 1990). By giving them dramatic, archetypal expression, to re-own disowned and denied aspects of personality (Jungian "shadow", Politsky, 1995). To begin redeeming potentially shamed, weak or "ugly" parts of self through attention (Hillman, 1989)
References	- Work with character and masks: Silverman (2004); Masks as revealers: Scott (1998).

Weekly Assignment: (Journaling) *NATURE TREASURE HUNT*

In nature or in an abandoned site, find one natural object (branch, rock) that particularly speaks to you.

Week 9: TALISMAN (Mix media)

Art media	Items brought by members; assortment of various natural and craft materials (dry flowers, shells, beads, fabric, leather, ribbon); thread, glue, knives; various size supports.
Directives	Listening to what your object wants, needs, inspires you, let it guide you in creating something special for yourself.

Processing	Active imagination and "witness writing". Free association as a base for poetry writing. (Optional). Put all the talismans together. (Photography) and contemplate/reflect.
Purpose	To practice conscious receptivity and responsivity (Allen, 2001). To reconnect with one's "naturalistic imagination" (Hillman, 1989), "bush soul", aboriginal instinct and love for the "language of aliveness" of natural things (Farelly-Hansen, 2001). To cultivate one's "skilful witness" and experience the pleasure of crafting and "making special" (Dissanayake, 1992).
References	- Work with natural objects: Farelly-Hansen's (2001); Lovell (2001).
	- Symbol/talisman-making: Politsky (1995); St-Arnold (2003).

Weekly Assignment: (Journaling) *GATHERING BUILDING MATERIALS*

Gather items (preferably natural) that can be used for building an imaginary miniature world/ landscape.

Week 10: GROUP ISLAND (Sandplay, mix media)

Art media	(Blue) paper covering a table -big enough to accommodate the group but small enough to encourage interactions; sand (enough to create an island); display of building materials (wood blocks, sticks, sugar cubes, clay, rocks, shells, pine cones, glass crystals, needles, rope, thread, etc.); various figurines and miniature objects.
Directives	Here is the sea, here is sand, and here are things for you to create an imaginary world.
Processing	Reflect on the experience (personal and group level) through sandplay image as *Group Process made Visible* (Riley, 2001). Spatial reading: general organisation, cohesion, hierarchy, center/edges; quality of spaces: areas of movement/ rest, conflict/harmony, spacious/cramped; openness/protection, connections/separations, etc. Imaginal reading: Where is the gaze drawn, favourite corners, safe, magical. (Photography before dismantling).
Purpose	To integrate previous weeks' work (1 & 5: fantasy worlds; 2 & 9: work with found objects) in a group format. To increase knowledge of self in group through the feed-back of the image and group members. To help identify one's individual skills, talents, favourite materials, areas, timing, scales of interventions, etc. (To locate potential areas of difficulty) .To get a sense of one's unique place, role and style of participation-contribution to the group through reflecting on one's actions: leading/following/completing; initiating/responding/bringing out;

building/filling; connecting/separating; organizing/detailing, etc. To experience non-verbal

communication, "talking through action" and metaphors (Zerbe Enns & Kasai, 2003).

To experience collaborative creativity through a symbolic practice of community building.

To strengthen group cohesion through engaging in group fantasy.

References   - Sandplay: Castellana & Donfrancesco (2005); Zerbe Enns & Kasai (2003).

    - Interactive group processing in art therapy: Skaiffe & Huet (1998); Waller (1993).

    - "Group world" in theme centered art therapy: Liebman (1986).

Weekly Assignment: (Journaling) *GATHERING PRECIOUS THINGS*

Bring some objects from home that have a special significance for you (e.g. talisman, photographs, etc.).

Week 11: SPECIAL CORNER, ALTAR (Mix media)

Art media   Objects brought by members, collection of various colour and size fabric, tea-light candles.

Directives   Make yourself a special corner to contemplate/bring out the object that you have brought.

    (You can use the furniture). Optional: Invite someone in the group to come and visit.

Processing   Witness writing. Sharing the experience. (Optional: sacred performance in front of others).

Purpose   To play with spatial arrangement. To identify and honour sustaining connections (memories,

    ancestors, loved ones) and sources of comfort. To introduce to the practice of personal ritual

    and inner sanctuary in daily life. To experience personal "sacred space" and presence to self

    -and mindfulness of one's movements- in the presence of others.

References   - Cultivating "Hestia consciousness": Bolen (1984). - Everyday shrines: Moore (1996).

    - Personal rituals: St-Arnold (2002). - Arrangements as sacred performances (Trungpa, 1996)

Weekly Assignment: (Journaling) *PREPARATION*

Prepare a presentation (3 to 4 min. long) to "present to the group as a creative expression of [your] personal

journey" (Silverman, 2004, p. 133) (Note: Members have been informed of this presentation from week 1).

Week 12: PRESENTATION (Free)

Art media   Free modality (from live performance to movie presentation or silent show of art).

Directives   Set up and presentations. (Personal video recordings to the discretion of group members).

Processing   Silent gesture response by the group members.

Purpose	To help integrate the process by having to reflect on one's experience in deciding on what to present. To get an opportunity for self-directed "artistic statement"; to experience freedom/ responsibility in expression (modality and content), and locate one's "edge" in terms of private/public personal realm. To confer value and respect to members' work through the formality of a public performance, which, by acting as a "rite of passage" ceremonial, facilitates closure on an individual level (Silverman, 2004).
References	This activity is taken from Silverman's (2004) course in creative process *The Story Within*.

Weekly Assignment: (Journaling) *OFFERINGS*

To prepare small things of symbolic value (from shells, to images, to poetry reading) to offer other group members as a parting gesture. Optional: bring decorations and food for "potluck".

Week 13: GROUP MANDALA (Offerings)

Art media	A round carpet or equivalent; offerings, and decoration brought by group members.
Directives	Make a group Mandala with all the offerings. Then sitting in circle, talk and share food.
Processing	Contemplation, appreciation, sharing of experience. (Photography before dismantling).
Purpose	To say goodbye and formally close the group experience through a symbolic group image/ceremony. To facilitate processing of "termination" through having to give tangible expression to one's emotional connections to the group and other individual members. To foster awareness of one's relationship to giving/receiving (gifts, feed-back, etc.). To leave with a symbolic image –and pieces- of the group. To ground the process in the universal aboriginal tradition of sitting in a circle, sharing food, gifts and stories. To end in beauty…
References	- Mandala/Medicine wheel: Brown (2001); Rhinehart & Engelhorn (1984).
	- Medicine wheel Ceremony: St-Arnold (2002); Ritual/ceremonial circle: V. C. Cole (2003).

[a] "Artist date", a term borrowed from Cameron (1992), describes a self chosen activity, done alone, which purpose is to nourish one's inner artist (e.g. taking a walk by the railway, cloud gazing, reading poetry, etc).

Appendix C

Examples of Art Modalities Facilitating Exploration

Containers

Working with a *container* by providing concrete enclosure frees one from the anxiety of unlimited space and allows one to focus on exploration.

Working with a *closing container* destined to receive future art-works or collections of treasures -whether 2D portfolio or 3D box (see Farelly-Kirk, 2001)- invites the decorating instinct (Prinzhorn, 1984) of craft and "making special" (Dissanayake, 1992) back to our hands.

Working within an *open container* –box or sand tray (Castellana & Donfrancesco, 2005) with figurines, and/or natural objects brings the enchantment of miniature worlds and childhood fascination for fantasy landscapes, particularly the image of the garden (see Moore, 1996; Zerbe Enns & Kasai, 2003).

Building in mix media with the support of a *pre-existing box* invites the architectural imagination and allows one to experiment with model construction, without the potential frustration caused by a lack of building skills.

Existing Objects

Working with *found objects*, "beads, broken windshield glass, flattened pieces of tin can, hardware and other bits and pieces of life discarded" (C. Moon's, 2001, p. 29) invites the treasuring –rescuing- instinct of childhood as well as the creative imagination of projecting stories into found objects.

Working with *natural objects* and materials (flowers, feathers, rocks, sand, shells, sticks) invites the sensuous "naturalistic imagination" (Hillman, 1989) and "biophilia"

instinct (Wilson, 1998; Ruth 2001) of our love for natural patterns, textures and the

aliveness of organic things (Farelly-Hansen, 2001; Lovell, 2001). Symbol-making in

particular, if directed to make a sacred or protective symbol –e.g. talisman or mandala-,

brings the reverent response of our aboriginal imagination (Farelly-Hansen, 2001) and

instinct to "make sacred" (Dissanayake, 1988, 1992).

Spatial arrangements, playing with coloured sheets, scarves, ropes and domestic

objects brings one back to childhood experiences of home tents and secret nooks. Framed

as theatrical *mise-en-scène*, it invites the dramatic and mythical imagination. Framed as

altar or shrine building (see Moore, 1996), it invites the ritual imagination and "Hestia

consciousness" (see Bolen, 1984) particularly if fire -candle, incense- and/or water can be

involved (see St-Arnold, 2002).

Images

Working from cut *magazine images* (People, Animals, Places, and Miscellaneous

objects) is appealing to people of all ages as a non-threatening, inspiring and imaginal

catalyzing activity, particularly if the selection of images is of good quality and wide-

ranging in themes (see Landgarten, 1993).

Working from a *personal photograph* (see Weiser, 2004) of one's life -self,

family or places- can be powerful in evoking and stirring personal memories, feelings and

longings. A childhood image particularly might bring forgotten dreams and hopes.

Taking photographs, awakens our "skilful witness", or "sensuous animal" (see

Farelly-Hansen, 2001) particularly if framed as a quest for beauty, messages, or strange

encounters. "Seeing is like hunting and like dreaming, and even like falling in love….

Ultimately, seeing alters the thing that is seen and transforms the seer" (Elkins, 1996, p.

11). Focussing on light, colours, textures, or shapes awakens the aesthetic/artistic imagination, receptivity to one's physical environment and the awareness of the interconnectedness of all things (see Marek, 2001; Trungpa, 1996).

Forms

Working within a frame or the contour of a pre-drawn line (body outline, circle etc.) brings the instinctual response of filling a void. In particular, a *body outline* (see Steinhardt, 1985), by the sheer realism of its presence and the safety of its boundaries invites deep imaginal response. A pre-drawn *circle* (Mandala) facilitates focusing and concentration (see Brown, 2001; Hagood Slegelis, 1987). When working on the floor in big format, it suggests personal boundaries and the archetypal symbolism of sacred space as practiced in aboriginal and spiritual rituals (see Crossman & Barou, 1995).

Paint/Colours

McNiff (2004) recognises *colours* as the "principal carrier of emotions and feelings" (p. 128) in the studio. By activating "both the eye of the senses and the eye of the soul' (Farelly-Hansen, 2001, p. 147), they spark the sensuous imagination: "The sheer brilliance of a tray of tempura paint, open with a brush in every jar, calls people to engage, to explore, to play" (p. 146). For free "play with colours", the option of *small size supports* can help alleviate "white page" anxiety.

Animals

Working with *animals* -either through 2D images (Henderson, 1999) or 3D figurines- invites our "animalistic imagination" (see Hillman, 1989), and can be empowering (see McNiff, 1988) as a renewed source of energy and knowledge.

Appendix D

Archetypal Themes and Materials

The following are "archetypal themes" which have resonance for people on the path toward individuation, as I have found in my work and readings.

Characters/Figures

Angel (McNiff, 1994a); *Animal* (Hillman, 1989): powerful (Henderson, 1999; McNiff, 1988), wounded, enraged, trapped, frozen, buried (Baring, n.d.); *Animus/Anima* (Jung, 1975; Politsky, 1995); *Beauty/Beast* (Hillman, 1989); *Child*: as artist (Hillman, 1989), abandoned (Politsky, 1995), enchanted (Moore, 1996), inner-child (Bradshaw, 1990), lost, orphan (Jung, 1980); *Demon/Monster*; *Guide* (Feinstein, 1988); *Good self/Bad Self*; *Healer/Shaman* (McNiff, 1992); *Hero* (Campbell, 1968); *King/Queen*: wandering, exiled, in castle; *Lost-Self*; *Man/Woman* (Bolen, 1984); *Soul-Image* (Politsky, 1995); *Shadow-Self* (Jung, 1975; Politsky, 1995); *Rebel*; *Warrior*; *Wild-Self/Bush-Soul* (Scott, 1998).

Places

Altar/Shrine (Moore, 1996; St-Arnold, 2002); *Castle* (Woodman & Dickson, 1996); *Cave* (Politsky, 1995); *Farm* (Hillman, 1989); *Garden* (Moore, 1996); *Hearth* (Bolen, 1984); *House*: dream house, childhood house (Moore, 1996), inner house (Bachelard, 1969); *Island*; *Lake/Ocean/Sea* (Bachelard, 1983); *Moon* (Hillman, 1989); *Secret hiding spot*; *Sanctuary* (Moore, 1996); *Temple*; *Tree*; *Underworld* (Hillman, 1989); *Village*; *World*: miniature world (Castellana & Donfrancesco, 2005; Zerbe Enns & Kasai, 2003).

Items

Crown; *Cup*; *Cross*; *Egg*; *Jewel*; *Key*; *Ring*; *Shield*; *Sword*; *Wand* (see Politsky, 1995); *Talisman* (St-Arnold, 2002); *Treasure Box/Chest*.

Notions

Beauty (Hillman, 1989; St-Arnold, 2002); *Centre* (Bolen, 1984); *Dream* (Hillman, 1989); *Exile*; *Family* (Hillman, 1989; Moore, 1992); *Healing/Wholeness*; *Home* (Moore, 1996); *Initiation* (Bogart, 1993); *Journey* (Campbell, 1968); *Love/Hate*; *Origins*; *Ritual* (Moore, 1996; St-Arnold, 2003); *Roots*; *Sacred*; *Secret* (Farelly-Kirk, 2001); *Shadow*; *Source*; *Treasure*; *Truth*; *Vision Quest* (Bogart, 1993); *Wandering*; *War*; *Wounded* (Hillman, 1989; McNiff, 2004).

Colours

(see Farelly-Hansen, 2001; McNiff, 2004; Rhinehart, 1984).

Materials/Elements

Clay; *Fire* (St-Arnold, 2002); *Fabric*; *Metals*; *Pebbles/Rocks*; Sand (Zerbe Enns & Kasai, 2003); *Shells*; *Water*; *Wood*: driftwood, sticks (Farelly-Hansen, 2001);

(see Bachelard, 1987; Castellana & Donfrancesco, 2005; Moore, 1996).