

ENVISAGE

The Canadian Art Therapy Association Online Magazine Volume 3, Issue 1



COLLECTIVITY/CONNECTEDNESS

- >> **All in this together:** Leaning into our intertwining relationships with nature, history, and each other.
- >> **NEW!** Call for content: Student Community Board

ENVISAGE WINTER 2020
Showcasing the
visions, insights, and
innovations of art
therapists in Canada
and beyond.





Collective weaving created at the 2019 CATA-ACAT conference, *Weaving Community Through Creative Expression*, in Calgary, AB. Photo by Amanda Gee (president's message on p. 3).

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COVER ART: *collectiveEYEdentity*

These miniature works were originally shown in an exhibition titled *Community*, held in The Gallery at Sheridan College in Oakville, ON, in October 2018. The artworks were created by faculty, students, staff and administrators of the Faculty of Animation, Arts and Design, and curated by art therapist and faculty member **Susan Beniston**.

Read more about the artists and the project on p. 14.

Cover photo by **Julie Pasila**.

President's Message



Amanda Gee
BFA, DTATI, RCAT, RP
Executive President
Toronto, ON

Dear CATA-ACAT members and friends,

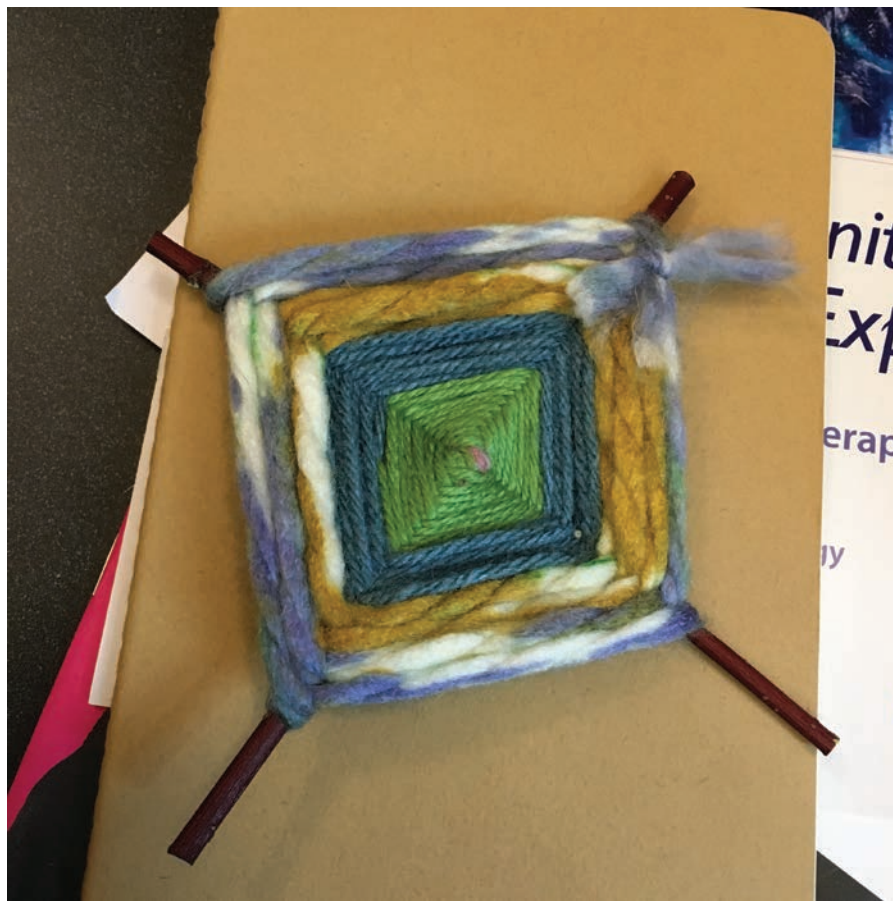
Hello again and Happy New Year. Instead of setting resolutions for the new year, I like to spend time reflecting on what has happened in the past year and looking forward to what's to come.

Looking back to the 2019 conference, *Weaving Community Through Creative Expression*, in Calgary, AB, I am full of wonderful memories. The sharing and learning, the connections made, the joy experienced, the work done. What a great conference, and a great team who put it together.

Looking forward, planning is in full swing for the 2020 conference in Corner Brook, NL. Thanks so much to the conference chair and planning committee for all of their hard work. I am really looking forward to this year's event.

As always I want to say a huge thank you to all of our amazing volunteers. We couldn't do all of CATA's great work without you. I also want to acknowledge the board of directors. We said goodbye to some long time board members and I want to say thank you for all of your hard work and dedication. You will be missed. We also welcomed some new members onto the board. We appreciate you coming forward and giving your time and energy to CATA.

I want to leave you with some photos of weaving from the opening of the 2019 conference. My own weaving (below), and the larger piece of art created by everyone collaborating (p. 2). When the community comes together wonderful things can happen. ●



Editor's Note



Patricia Ki RCAT, RSW,
Doctoral Student
Editor/Designer
Toronto, ON

By the time this issue reaches your computer screen it will almost be the first day of spring. The arrival of spring is my favourite time of year. The blooming trees, the lengthening daylight, the warmth in the air. It brings to mind the park by my old apartment. Sometimes on my way home I would walk through the park and lie on the grass for a while. Taking in the smell of the earth, the sounds of people's chatters, the brightness of the drifting clouds, I'd often wonder about my place in the family of things (as Mary Oliver writes in her poem, *Wild Geese*). I'd remember that Carl Sagan has famously stated: "All of the rocky and metallic material we stand on, the iron in our blood, the calcium in our teeth, the carbon in our genes were produced billions of years ago in the interior of a red giant star. We are made of star-stuff." As such, we as humans are connected to each other and everything in the universe in profound ways. So, what does it mean to be a part of this continually shifting, evolving world? How does knowing that we're all made of star-stuff make a difference when the things that ease the many ways I move through the world are built upon the subjugation and exploitation of many others? How do we work towards a more livable world for all? For these questions, perhaps arriving at definitive answers is not as important as the process, trials, and tenacious efforts in getting there.

In this issue our contributors contemplate our connectedness to the past, present, and the world around us. Elizabeth Needham's research on mindfulness, RB's artistic reflection, Jerry Stochansky's photo-art, and the participants in Shahin Jones' art therapy group highlight connectedness to oneself and how it enables meaningful (re)connections with others and life itself. Tisha Summers engages powerfully with the effects of colonial violence as well as growth and steadfast connections to community and the earth. Irit Epstein's paintings explore shifting relations between self and community through

immigration. Though writing in very different styles, Tzafi Weinberg and Chioma Anah both address the importance of learning from those we have the privilege to work alongside, not only acknowledging their experiences of suffering but also centering their knowledges of working through such suffering. Susan Beniston and Tamara L. Reynolds share stories of community building through collective art-making, while Taylor Bourassa's eco-art therapy practice and Claudia Mandler McKnight's photography explore nurturing relationships with the natural realm.

I'd like to leave you with a photo I took in High Park some years ago. The cherry trees were gifted to the citizens of Toronto in 1959 from the citizens of Tokyo as a symbol of continued friendship following WWII. To this day, every spring the trees create an opportunity for the community to gather and enjoy their generous gift of beauty. May you find soul nourishing connections in your every-day journey, wherever you go.



CALL FOR CONTRIBUTORS: *ENVISAGE* SPRING 2020

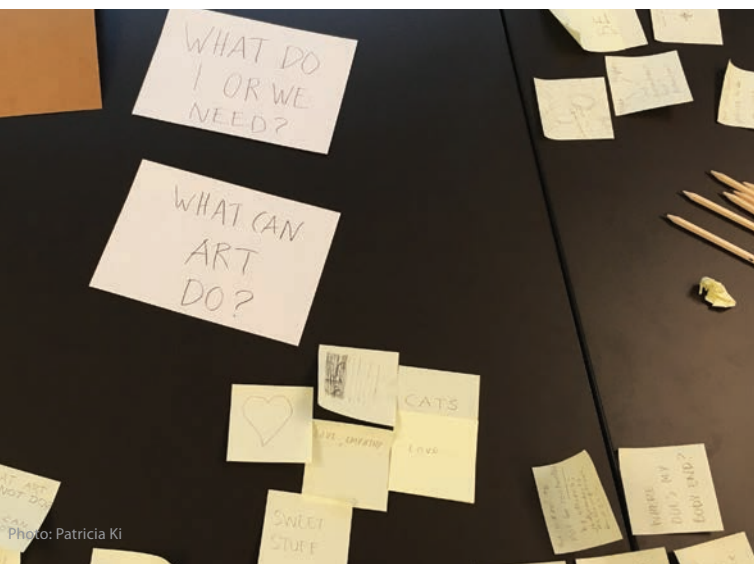


Photo: Patricia Ki

NEW! Student Research Community Board

Envisage is looking to create a virtual platform where student researchers can make connections, share ideas, collaborate, and build community. **Send us "sticky notes"** with descriptions of your research project, interests, questions, images/drawings/maps/sketches, and contact information, and we will post them on our "community bulletin board" starting in the next issue. Notes can be sent to us through email (see below), Instagram (@cata_photos_acat), and Facebook (@CATAarttherapy) by the submission deadline of May 10, 2020.

As always, we welcome articles, reflections, artwork, poetry, and campus events for our **Spring 2020 issue**, scheduled to be published in June/July. For submission guidelines please visit: <https://www.canadianarttherapy.org/online-magazine/>

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: May 10, 2020

Questions and submissions: magazine@canadianarttherapy.org



Phoenix Rising From the Ashes

*This work is contributed by an artist, therapist, and therapeutic art practitioner who works in Coquitlam, BC. She shares: Going through abuse mentally, emotionally and physically in my life showed me two ways to go... one was to live and that's what I chose, it gave me the strength to move on and make a life of my own. Leaving everything behind, I started off fresh. I have been an artist since I remember. An intuitive artist who creates as she feels. Growing up I learnt from my father to express my feelings and I did it through art. I am now at a stage in my life where I feel blessed to be able to help others who might have gone through what I did and make a breakthrough in their own lives. I would like to share my painting that showed me a way to get out of my situation. I called it *Phoenix Rising from the Ashes*. This is where there is an evil eye of the hunter and many feathers all over, still the bird finds a way to get out of all the obstacles that come in her way. This depicts me and I felt more strength than ever after painting this to move on and be who I am. Using art as therapy is one of the best ways to get through some extreme problems. "Art therapy gives you words when you can't express" —RB ●*



having

been

there

BY IRIT
EPSTEIN

These paintings are the result of a process of observation and memory that began externally and moved inward. I examine the deconstruction and reconstruction of my identity as someone who has left her home behind to replace it with a new one. The work offsets images from the past with those of the present, as a metaphor for the evolution of one's identity. It examines the seam between the broken and the renewed, and exposes the divided identity that is unique to immigrants. >>>



Previous page: *Having Been There*, oil and mixed media on canvas, 30" x 15".

Top left: *Inner Silhouette*, oil on canvas, 30" x 30".

Left: *Memory Room*, oil and mixed media on canvas, 30" x 15".

Right: *Sweet Dream Fades*, oil on canvas, 30" x 30". >>>

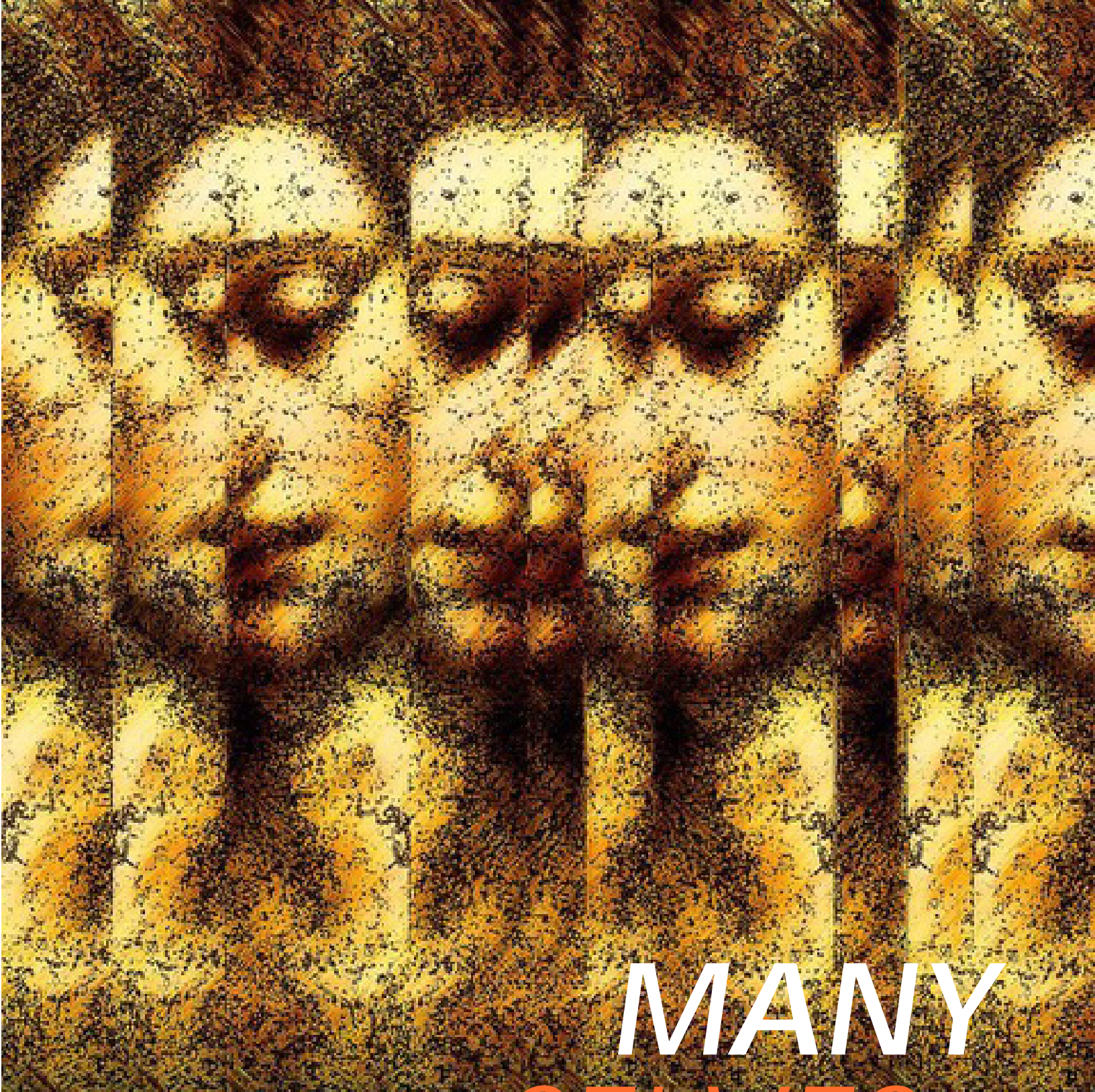




Irit Epstein MA, MFA has over 20 years of experience as an art therapist working individually and in groups with children, adolescents and adults. As an artist, she has exhibited in Canada,

USA, Israel, Mexico, Italy and Germany. She holds a master of arts degree in art therapy from New York University, NY, and a master of fine arts degree from the Academy of Art in Berlin, Germany. She presently lives and works in Toronto, ON.

Left: *Happenstance*, oil and mixed media on canvas, 30" x 15". ●



MANY SELVES

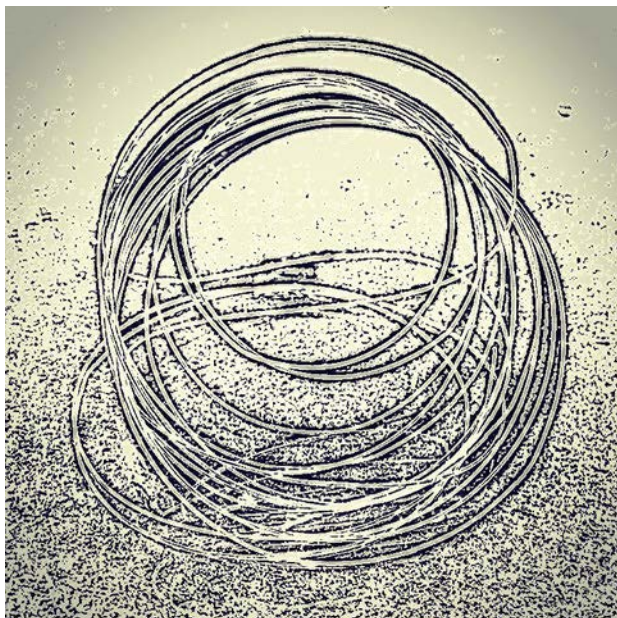
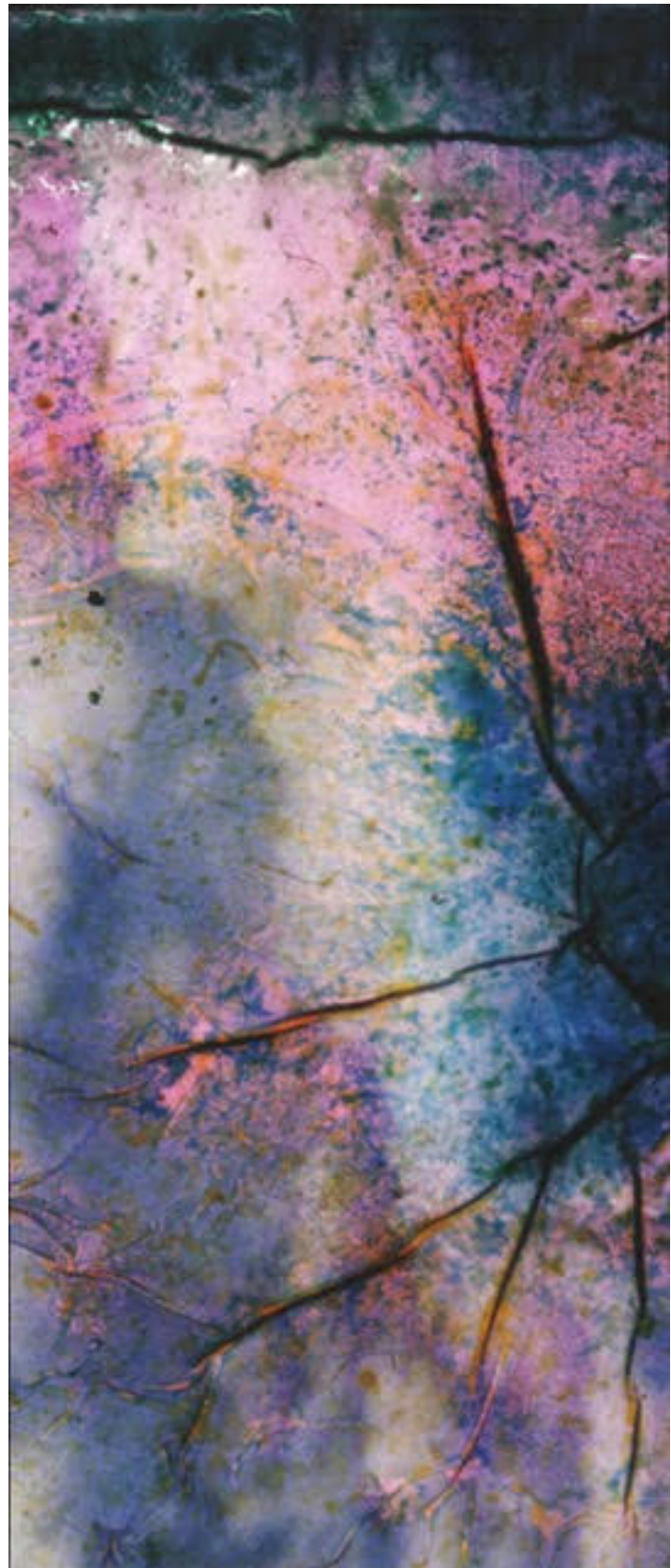
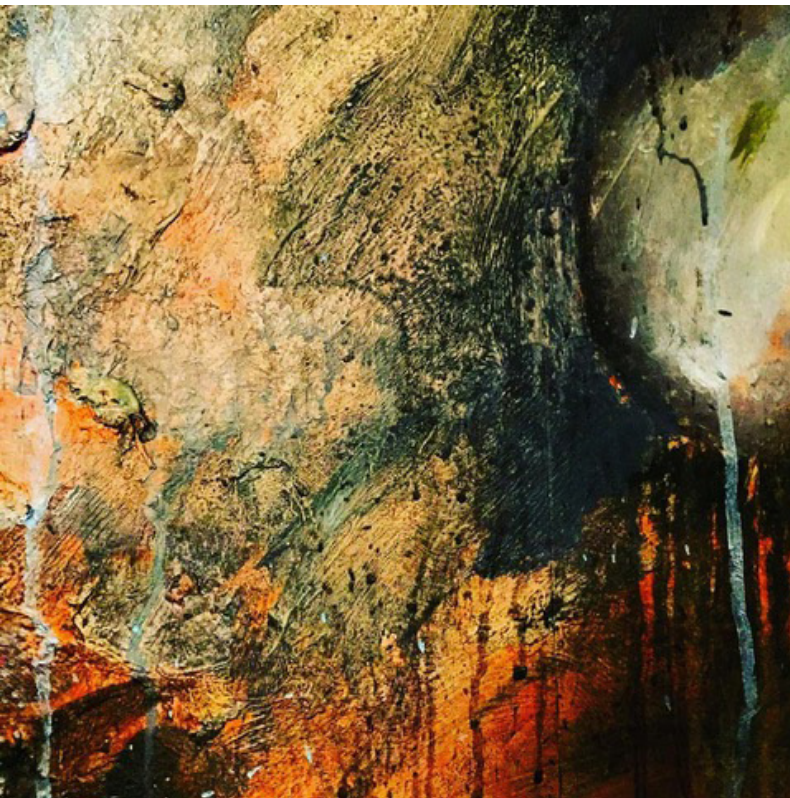
BY JERRY STOCHANSKY

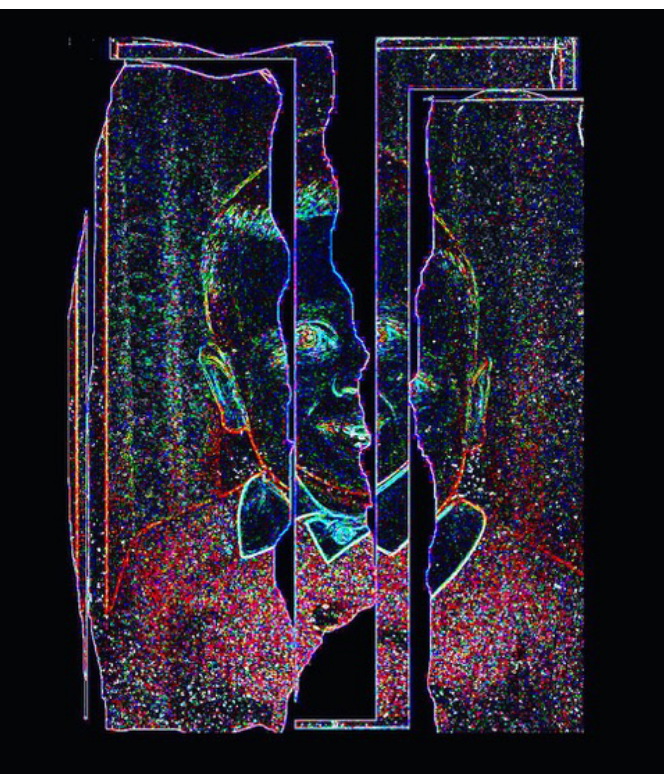
Previous page: *So Many Selves Presented*, mixed media, 2018.

Left: *The Deluge of Emotions*, mixed media, 2019.

Right: *The Fading of Memory*, decayed photographic film, 2019.

Below: *This Mortal Coil*, graphite drawing, 2018. >>>





Jerry Stochansky RCAT
New Westminster, BC

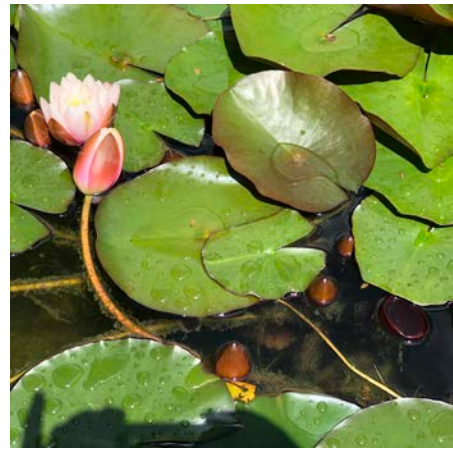
I have been practicing as an art therapist for over 25 years. I have also been a working artist for 34 years. My artwork as an artist has never been separate from my art therapy. The art work often

explores the human psyche and how it relates to the social and global condition. How the medium expresses has always been therapeutic for me.

Top left: *Proof Of The Soul's Existence*, mixed media photo-art, 2018.

Bottom left: *The Fragments Of Childhood Retained*, mixed media photo-art, 2018.

Right: *Reaching That Digital Destination*, mixed media photo-art, 2018. ●



Envision Garden Didactic

BY CLAUDIA MANDLER MCKNIGHT





When I was ten years old, our Midland, ON neighbours, the beloved Malinowskis, gave me the book *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett as a Christmas present.

The Malinowskis were Polish intellectuals who had met at the Sorbonne in Paris after WWII, and subsequently emigrated to Canada. Despite, or perhaps in transcendence of their extreme hardships in wartime Europe, they became like loving grandparents to the little girls who lived next door. I was the youngest of the three, interested in art, and as such formed an especially strong bond with Dorothy and Ted.

Set in early twentieth century India and the Yorkshire moors of England, *The Secret Garden* is a story of grief, loss, healing and transformation. Although the setting is clearly colonial, the underlying affirmations of listening to inner voice, embracing spirit, and seeking growth transcend the particulars of time and place.

Every year, I read *The Secret Garden* at least once, and enjoy anew its celebration of the restorative powers of nature and friendship.

This spring, during a four week residency in Florence, when I found the stone pavements, high density buildings, and hurried pace overwhelming, I intuitively turned to the theme of the garden as an anodyne. My research has not only informed my paintings, but has sparked for me a new practice of photography and poetry in response.

These photographs, along with paintings and poems, are part of the September 2019 *Ex Libris* exhibition at the MacLaren Art Centre in Barrie, ON. I call this body of work *Giardini*.



Claudia Mandler McKnight

RP, RCAT, BA, BEd, DTATI lives with her family in Barrie, ON and maintains a private practice as an art therapist. For over 20 years she has facilitated the art therapy and expressive art programmes for Candlelighters Simcoe, a support group for families

of children with cancer. She now facilitates the Grief and Loss course for the Toronto Art Therapy Institute, conducts clinical supervision for post-graduate students of art therapy, and is completing her second year of MFA studies at OCAD University. ●

Making Space: Art and Social Justice Advocacy with Dr. Anah

The Legacy of King: Counselors as Advocates for Social Justice in 2020



Hope, mixed media on paper, 2016.

BY CHIOMA ANAH



Chioma Anah EdD,
ATR, NCC, LCPC,
Board-Approved
Supervisor, ACS
Towson, MD

Editor's note: Making Space is an ongoing column by our guest writer Dr. Chioma Anah, who has over 15 years of counseling and art therapy experience, specifically using art as part of a healing approach and intervention to cultural and racial oppression. Her research interests are in social justice advocacy, racial microaggressions, and psychology of racism. She is a founding member and the first president of Maryland Counselors for Social Justice. Part of this article was originally posted in the Winter 2017 issue of the Maryland

Counseling Association (MCA) Quarterly Newsletter, Compass Points. Reprinted with permission of author.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. was an agent of social change, and every third Monday in January we, here in the United States, and many people all over the world, honor his legacy. King was inspired by Gandhi's nonviolent stance, fought tirelessly against racial inequality, segregation, and challenged discriminatory laws and practices in the United States. Further, he was a pivotal figure during the Civil Rights Movement, and urged Black Americans and other advocates to continue their fight for racial and social justice and promote human rights.

Although the Civil Rights Movement yielded significant changes in racial relations in the United States, sadly, we are still confronted with myriad oppressive conditions and social injustices today in 2020. More than ever, we continue to witness systemic oppression in the forms of racism, sexism, and other biases, as well as hateful rhetoric about "difference" and "otherness," which is evidence of just how divided we are as a nation. More than ever, the call for social justice is prevalent and pressing today.

As counselors, how do we continue King's legacy as advocates for social justice in 2020? It is critically important for counselors to be firmly rooted in social justice and multicultural competence, and to incorporate social justice advocacy in their work with clients (Ratts, 2009; Anah, 2016). >>>

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”

— Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

In keeping with King’s legacy, this article addresses what it means for counselors to be advocates for social justice, drawing from works by Arrendondo, & McDavis (1992), Goodman et al. (2004), Day-Vines et al. (2007), and Sue (2015).

Key Areas of Social Justice work for Counselors in 2020

Multicultural competence cannot be achieved without a commitment to social justice (Ratts, 2009). To this end, an important question to ask ourselves as counselors is, “what does it mean to be an advocate for social change and justice?” Goodman et al. (2004) have outlined six principles that define social justice work for mental health providers, which includes the importance of self-examination, sharing power, giving voice to the oppressed, facilitating consciousness-raising around systemic oppression, building on clients’ strengths, and arming clients with tools for social change. Goodman proposes three areas of social justice advocacy work for counselors: personal, professional, and systemic work, and each area is assigned specific actions and tasks designed for those advocacy areas. This article primarily focuses on social justice work with clients of color, and other marginalized groups.

Personal Advocacy: Personal development and self-care are important elements of social justice work for counselors (Toporek et al., 2006). It is incumbent on the counselor to actively engage in self-care and personal development in order to be an effective social justice advocate.

Self-care may involve regular exercise, good eating habits, meditation/and or prayer, social support, and peer supervision.

Personal development includes self-awareness, self-exploration, self-assessment, and self-regulatory work, that includes cultural competency; awareness of own biases, assumptions, stereotypes and worldviews, and awareness of the worldview of their culturally diverse clients (D.W. Sue, Arrendondo, & McDavis, 1992).

Professional Advocacy: In regards to professional tasks and actions when working with clients, the social justice needs of clients are critical for therapeutic change, and should be integrated into counseling practice.

Understand the historical and cultural context of client: “It is incumbent upon the counselor to recognize the cultural meaning of phenomena assigned by the client and to translate cultural knowledge into meaningful practice that results in client empowerment” (Day-Vines et al., 2007, p. 402).

Listen, Validate, and Empower: Empower clients by compassionately listening to their stories, and validating their racial/ethnic realities (Sue, 2015; Anah, 2016).

Open and honest discussions about race with client: Sue (2015) suggests that true open and honest dialogue about race leads to greater understanding about race and racism, which leads to greater racial sensitivity, and harmonious race relations. In addition, counselors are to

coordinate their discussions about race with the level of comfort and willingness the client of color is able to discuss such topics (Day-Vines et al., 2007).

Share effective coping skills and resources, particularly counselors of color who have experienced inequalities, oppression, and microaggressions.

Build on client strengths (Goodman et al., 2004), assets, and opportunities for growth. Arm clients with effective tools for social change (Goodman et al., 2004). For example, encourage them to vote.

Systemic Advocacy: Work to change values, policies, and laws that negatively impact marginalized groups.

- Challenge and Reject rhetoric and imagery that perpetuates racial stereotypes (Sue, 2015; Anah, 2016)
- Give voice to oppressed people and raise awareness of systems contributing to oppression (Goodman et al., 2004). Work to change values and policies that oppress marginalized groups.
- Collaborative decision making process in an effort to share power (Goodman, et al., 2004).
- Address gaps in counseling research and literature highlighting oppressive practices, and their effects on marginalized groups. ●

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collectiveEYEidentity

connecting community curation

BY SUSAN
BENISTON

Long fascinated and inspired by the history of eye miniatures as relational mementos that were carried or worn, I chose to invite others' reflections on this motif of attachment through an open call. I sought art contributions from those within the Faculty of Animation, Arts and Design (FAAD) in order to deepen both personal and professional connections to inclusive community-building at Sheridan College.

The *collectiveEYEidentity* miniature works were originally shown in an exhibition titled *Community*, which was held in The Gallery at Sheridan College in Oakville, during October 2018. The EYE-invitational was open to all artists: faculty, students, staff and administrators in FAAD who chose to contribute an eye or two, in any media on a miniature scale using a re-purposed tin or small container.

These *collectiveEYEidentity* miniatures are shown as intentional and attentive observers: in close eye-to-eye context, within a relational proximity that is integral to our sense of Community.

The second iteration of the miniatures involved a three-month exhibit in Sheridan's Trafalgar Library Learning Commons in 2019 from mid-May through August. It opened with a pop-up Art Hive, complete with eye-themed art objects, which included a large, interactive eye zoetrope to focus and kick off the event.

This Art Hive invited the broader community at Sheridan to engage and participate in the making process, to create their own EYE-identity works and thereby contribute towards building a more inclusive *collectiveEYEidentity*.

Stay tuned, new iterations of *collectiveEYEidentity* are in the works! >>>



Previous page: Oil paintings in two round tins, each 2.5"W x 1.5"D, by Katherine Cogill.

Left: Acrylic painting with jeweled rhinestones and feathers, 8"W x 6"H x 3"D, by Shelagh Armstrong-Hodgson.

Below: Watercolour on paper in an oval tin, 3.5"W x 2.25"H x 0.5"D, by Sheila Greenland.

Above: *collectiveEYEdentity*, artists listed alphabetically: Kirsten Abrahamson, Shelagh Armstrong-Hodgson, Elaine Brodie, Antonio Cangemi, Katherine Cogill, Isabel Cruz, Junk Drawer of a Long-Forgotten DADAist, Barb DiPietro, Virginia DiRuscio, Sheila Greenland, Thea Haines, Sherry Lawr, Mary E. Libby, John McCartney, Kristin Mesley, Natasha Nootchtai, Peter Palermo, Kim Ramsahoye, Nicolas Salisbury, Winsome Tse, Cheryl Vallender, Sydni Weatherson, Borbala Wellisch.

Photos by Julie Pasila.



Susan Beniston MFA, ATR-BC, RCAT lives in Toronto, and has been registered as a board-certified art therapist for 25 years. She has extensive experience in sensory-based attunement and trauma-informed art therapy practices. Currently promoting the arts and well-being through FAAD, Susan founded Sheridan's Art Hive Initiative in 2017. She adapted the model's flexibility, generating Art Hives with internal partners to meet compelling needs within Sheridan's learning community and to augment existing health and

wellness services at the College. As well as being an art therapist, Susan is a sculptor and an arts educator with significant expertise in all three spheres. Her inquiries include: art-practice as research, public creativity in community, and co-building relational knowledge and resilience through arts-based social engagement. ●

The Focus

and other poems

BY TISHA SUMMERS

The Focus

The black blanket that
Covers the earth is
Filled with holes of light.
The light is the focus,
For it is the hope of the people.
We reach out and touch
The light within each other.
We are all interconnected
And share our energy with each other.
We need to accept our connection,
Then we can accept each other.
We are interrelated and entangled
In the roots of our growth.
We need to flow with the
Connectedness and embrace our
differences.
For if we fight back,
We are simply fighting ourselves.

The River

The river flows
With red blood
Within its veins.
The river knows
And has seen
The indecency.
The river consumes
And envelopes.
It washes the hate
And shame.
The river carries
Her back to her mother.

Grow

Grow through that darkness
Lift your head up to
That bright powerful sun.
Stretch and grow
Towards the golden light.
Feel the warmth and
Soak in the energy,
The energy that
Has been missing
For so long.
The beauty that is exposed
When you open up.
You're exquisite when
You bloom.

White Hands

Walking down the road,
With a target on my back.
With hatred following me.
Blood streaming down
My back with your
Hands wiped clean.
White hands now
So, no question in sight.
Ignorance is key,
With this ongoing cycle.
When will the light
Break through this dark box?
The dark box of injustice.

My Mother

My mother,
My source of life
Walking softly on you.
Take you for granted,
Expecting you to always be there.
You are hurting,
You are whispering
For help.
Your cries are being ignored.
We need to take care of you,
Hold you,
And love you.
We are taking and
Expecting too much,
With nothing in return.
I love you,
I value you,
I feel you.
I feel your breath
While standing
Barefoot on your soul.

My Life

I created life,
I felt unbearable pain,
I ached,
And carried you.
I molded you,
Out of clay.
My love,
Is never ending
And infinite.
My gaze through
Clouded eyes,
Never altered.
Tired,
Scared,
And fulfilled.
I will carry you,
Within my heart
For eternity.



Tisha Summers CYW, BA, DTATI

I am from Oneida Nation of the Thames First Nation and Wasauksing First Nation. I reside in London, ON and have five daughters. I recently graduated from the Toronto Art Therapy Institute. I have recently opened my own art therapy business in London called Heal Through Love Art Therapy. I focus on one-on-one art therapy, workshops, team building, and motivational speaking. I began art therapy unknowingly at the age of 12 after being diagnosed with depression. I self-harmed and was suicidal. Poetry was the only way that I was able to release the difficult emotions that I was dealing with. Many of the poems that I currently write involve my life experience being a First Nation woman. ●



Presence and Mindful Art Therapy

BY ELIZABETH NEEDHAM

RESEARCH HAS SHOWN that mindfulness practices offer therapists a way to positively affect aspects of therapy that account for successful treatment (Davis & Hayes, 2011; Franklin, 2010; May & O'Donovan, 2007; Hass-Cohen & Clyde Findlay, 2015; Shapiro, Brown & Biegel, 2001). Kabat-Zinn (2003) states that "mindfulness is the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment" (p. 146), which leads to an open-hearted, non-judging, non-reactive mind. This attentional stance leads to emotional spaciousness, psychological flexibility, compassion, and self-awareness, which contributes to a more successful client-therapist relationship (Chang, 2014; Franklin, 2010, 2014; Hass-Cohen & Clyde Findlay, 2015; Herring, 2015; May & O'Donovan, 2007; McNiff, 2014; Rappaport, 2014; Shapiro, Brown & Biegel, 2007; Kabat-Zinn, 2003). It is clear that a regular mindfulness practice can increase an art therapist's ability to witness and hold creative space, to cope with stresses associated with the profession, and, perhaps most importantly, to develop greater empathy and empathetic communication, thereby resulting in a more attuned relational presence. As Kapitan (2010) emphasizes, "the ability of an art therapist to creatively imagine into another's state of being is at the heart of art therapy and the most effective and human environments where healing takes place" (p. 159). >>>

Previous page and right:
Photographs by Marcela Boechat.

Williams (2018) and others believe that a therapist's personal and professional lives are interconnected and that embodying mindfulness and self-compassion personally is an important factor in sharing it professionally (Davis & Hayes, 2011; Franklin, 2010; Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Davis and Hayes (2011), for example, found that the development of mindfulness skills has positive effects on therapists' counselling skills and therapeutic relationships, "including being more attentive to the therapy process, more comfortable with silence, and more attuned with oneself and clients" (p.203). Franklin (2010) discovered that mindfulness meditation creates a capacity for awareness, concentration, attendance and equanimity which supports the development of an attuned relationship. It helps to suspend the habit of "judging, categorizing, explaining or knowing" leading to less "cognitive debris" (Franklin, 2010, p. 162), which aids therapists to stay in the present moment, remain non-judgmental and more easily monitor counter-transference to prevent it from getting in the way of their work. Mindfulness assists therapists by helping them be more fully present with their clients. As Steele states, "by practicing focused curiosity, non-judgmental, present-centred awareness and compassion, mindfulness meditation cultivates this capacity for unconditional positive regard and genuine interest" (as quoted in Franklin, 2014, p. 270)—all prerequisites for compassionate witnessing and the holding of a safe therapeutic space.

McNiff (2014) emphasizes that successful art therapy involves the holding of a safe place where one can explore "express, explore, and understand the depths of the present moment" (p. 43), while the therapist bears witness and models this process. A key significance of a mindfulness practice is that it helps therapists to be more open to their own emotional exploration and to witness their own inner sensations, thoughts and moods which softens self-judgement and increases tolerance for ambiguity (Franklin, 2014). Other gains include increased patience, intentionality, gratitude, and body awareness (Davis & Hayes, 2011). Another key benefit to therapists is decreased stress and anxiety and lessened perceived job stress and burnout (Hass-Cohen & Clyde Findlay 2015; May & O'Donovan, 2007; Shapiro, 2001). Studies show that compassion fatigue and occupational stress cause a rise in depression, emotional exhaustion and anxiety, decreased job satisfaction, and reduced self-esteem. As Shapiro, Brown and Biegel (2007) detail, stress harms professional effectiveness because it can "negatively impact attention and concentration, impinge on decision-making skills and reduce provider's ability to establish strong relationships with patients" (p.105). Mindful self-care and reflection, however, contribute to a rise in positive emotion and a sense of well-being (Hass-Cohen &



Clyde Findlay, 2015; May & O'Donovan, 2007). As Franklin (2014) explains, "scientific evidence is demonstrating that mindfulness meditation reduces stress-related symptoms, strengthens parts of the pre-frontal cortex related to concentration, develops empathy and positive emotion while shrinking the amygdala, which is related to fight/flight reactivity" (p.270).

Mindfulness is also directly related to increased empathy and empathetic communication (Franklin, 2014; Hass-Cohen & Clyde Findlay, 2015; Herring, 2014; Kabat-Zinn, 2003; May & O'Donovan, 2007). Empathy, as defined by Hass-Cohen & Clyde Findlay (2015) is the ability to "sense, recognize, understand and respond to other people's emotions, thoughts, behaviours, belief systems and experiences... This is achieved by mentally and emotionally placing oneself in another person's experiences" (p. 349), which strengthens and positively affects the therapist-client bond. Indeed, empathy and positive regard are important relational aspects of successful therapy (Franklin, 2014) and contribute to attuned relational presence.

Just as unconditional presence, empathy, and an open, compassionate, curious, and accepting attitude generate attuned client-therapist relations, they are also key elements of mindful art therapy which focuses on non-judgmental awareness and process. As Hass-Cohen and Clyde Findlay (2015) detail, >>>

A mindful collage exercise where clients intuitively choose images they like and dislike, for example, reminds them that emotional responses can be fleeting, and brings attention to noticing present experience without reactivity.



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both art-making and mindfulness are about “doing and practicing” (p. 328). A key aim of mindful art therapy is to promote acceptance, regulation, insight and integration (Hass-Cohen & Clyde Findlay, 2015). For example, simple breathing exercises help clients to centre and to come into the present. In fact, Peterson (2003) has found that pre and post-meditation art-making allows for objective observation of state change, and art tasks support the exploration of stress-associated issues. Mindful art interventions help with affect regulation and grounding. A mindful collage exercise where clients intuitively choose images they like and dislike, for example, reminds them that emotional responses can be fleeting, and brings attention to noticing present experience without reactivity (Hass-Cohen & Clyde Findlay, 2015). Another exercise which heightens awareness of breath, body, emotions and thoughts is a mindful walking exercise combined with attentive media exploration which, as Peterson (2015) states, “actualizes nonverbal creative expression as embodied practice” (p.79). Mandala drawing is another exercise where the stabilizing effects of drawing in a circle lead to focus on the present moment, relaxation, and an opening to what is moving through the situation at hand (Hass-Cohen & Clyde Findlay, 2015). Mindfulness-based art therapy encourages complete immersion in process. As McNiff (2014) explains, “art heals by transforming difficulties into creative expressions... Witnessing is an integral part of the process where mindful attentiveness to the present moment and the outcomes of actions complement art-making” (p. 40). Part of this immersion and witnessing is an acknowledgment of not wanting things to be different, which leads to an opening of psychological and artistic space (Hass-Cohen & Clyde Findlay, 2015). Mindful art practices encourage both client and therapist to become “more compassionate, curious, attuned, accepting, relaxed, and open” (McNiff, 2014, p. 48). As Hass-Cohen and Clyde Findlay (2015) conclude, “mindful practices contribute to flexibility, adaptability, empathy and well-being that is vital for relational therapy” (p.343). Mindful art therapy deepens art therapists’ connections to themselves and to their clients. ●

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mending the cracks

CERAMIC WELLNESS JOURNAL WORKSHOP



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BY SHAHIN JONES

Editor's notes: We thank the participants of this workshop for sharing the images of their artwork and their words with us.

THIS WORKSHOP TOOK PLACE at a recreational centre in Victoria, BC, facilitated by art therapist Shain Jones and clay instructor Mary Loria. The goal of the project was to foster artistic skill engagement in ceramic building and therapeutic healing from the effects from trauma. The workshop was limited to ten participants and ran for about eight weeks between fall of 2018 and spring of 2019. Each week the participants were provided with a demonstration of the process of constructing a clay object such as a mug, bowl or vase. Then they were shown techniques of glazing when their artworks were ready for firing. Towards the last weeks of the workshop, the participants were invited to create a visual wellness journal to reflect on their therapeutic and interpersonal experience throughout the workshop. >>>

It was helpful in regards to my self-confidence increasing by leaps and bounds. It increased my self-confidence to work with my hands, it was very therapeutic and very calming. The sculpting and the tool work made my Anxiety and Stress levels decrease and I loved using the wheel and using new tools and learning painting and glazing techniques. **The journaling... was like an old friend that I can share things with.** — S

I started with the intension of balance (Ying & Yang). The symbols I used were leaves, bees, flowers, patterns, frog, cultural design, milestone, sea creature, fossils, spirals and sundial. The symbols inspired me to look at my milestones and what energies I attracted along the way. — N

My light shines in the darkness. I see truth, and it's not random. Its beauty underlies all good. I choose truth, and truth is love. Love is constant, and guides my light, together, always, with faith and hope. And the darkness does not comprehend, for we are light. — H

The clay instructor's one-on-one demonstration process of kneading clay, and rolling it out into different shapes helped for the pre-assigned piece of work. I Learned how to use various hand tools; how my mood, intentions, body temperature affect the quality of the piece I am working on for each particular session. The benefit of clay instructor being readily available to help when I was stuck was helpful. **Hands on remedy for mending the cracks, I learned that I can heal myself slowly going towards recovery.** — N

I included the female Snowy Owl as this is my spirit animal that provides me guidance for my intuition and to learn to listen to silent impressions and look beyond deceitful appearances in life. I created a Yin/Yang backdrop in order to create balance for my need of hope and to be grounded in peace and strength to make authentic intentions in my life. The stars represent the light and hope that can seem dim at times in life. The hearts represent the need to remember to carry out intentions with love and compassion. The bear paws represent a feeling of strength, protection and loyalty to myself and my family. A female Snowy Owl exhibits more black flecks throughout their feathers which represents a boldness and courage with which to fly through life. — K ●



ECO-ART THERAPY: Integrating the Environment into Art Therapy Practice



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BY TAYLOR BOURASSA

IN A WORLD that is increasingly technologically centred and reliant, there is a marked disconnect from our natural environment. Louv (2005) refers to this disconnect as nature deficit disorder. This disorder is not meant to act as a medical diagnosis; rather, it is a commentary on the negative ramifications of a disconnect from natural environments. Stevens (2010) suggests that a disconnection from the environment can produce psychological symptoms such as depression and anxiety, and exposure to greenspace has been associated with mitigating feelings of depression, improvements in self-esteem and social cohesion, and reductions in levels of anxiety and aggression (Wilson et al., 2010). There is a distinct necessity for our society as a whole to access natural environments at a much higher rate than we are, and one such way is through accessing eco-based therapy, in particular, eco-art therapy.

Eco-psychology or eco-therapy explores our natural and interdependent relationship with nature and its impact on our health and well-being (American Psychological Association, 2019). Eco-therapy is therapy facilitated inside an environmental space, or incorporates the natural world into the therapy space and relationship. In eco-art therapy, we incorporate the use of natural and found materials into the creation of art work, and facilitate therapy inside a natural environment. My experience with eco-art therapy has just begun, however the more I incorporate it into my practice, the more I recognize the benefits of this extremely potent tool. I would like to provide a few examples of directives I have created and their reception so far.

Walden Safe-Space

I have garnered much inspiration from Thoreau's (1995) *Walden*, and have introduced the idea of creating a safe-

space, a Walden of sorts, using primarily natural materials. The idea behind this directive is to inspire a connection to nature, and to develop, strengthen or tap into participants' inherent need for safety, exploring how one would navigate accessing that safety.

I first introduce this directive by sharing with group participants the premise of *Walden*, and providing them with essential quotes from the text. The quotes I choose are meant to inspire participants to create their own *Walden*, and are meant to embody the felt sense of the text. Some quotes I have used include:

"I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life" (p. 100).

"I wanted to live deep and suck out the marrow of life." (p. 101).

Once participants have been familiarized with the premise of *Walden* and offered some musings to reflect upon, I invite them to think about their own idea of a *Walden*, a place all to their own, a place in nature where they can retreat to for a reprieve, a time of relaxation, and most importantly—safety. The structure each participant makes reflects an embodiment of their safety, and can be used to help explore safety boundaries, and ways to securing and maintaining safety. Participants are encouraged to think about what this safe place offers them, and who or what they would allow to share the space with them. It is reiterated that this safe place is a structure created for and by the individual participant, and inside this space they create the rules and set the boundaries. In this way the participant has complete control over the narrative created around their *Walden* safe place. By offering the client complete control, they can strengthen their self-efficacy and can practice setting and maintaining boundaries, which is an essential component of safety. >>>



This can be a world-building exercise, and can help participants experience the felt-sense of safety, and embody that safety inside their structures.



Previous page: Materials in burlap and twine.

Top: Eco-art therapy materials for *Walden* safe spaces.

Bottom: Safe place—Wishing Tree

The materials for this directive are primarily natural materials, including leaves, sticks, branches, flowers, rocks and stones, moss and other found objects. I prefer to use natural materials that are local to the environment in which I am working, to provide a deeper sense of connectivity to nature and one's environment. The only non-natural materials that are provided are craft sticks, hot glue guns and glue sticks. Some participants might prefer to paint the structure or other parts of the environment.

Often, while the structure is being made, participants would discuss information about their safe place: where it is, what it represents, what is comforting about the space, who is allowed to share the environment with them, and why they chose to build the structure how they did. One can encourage participants to strengthen the safe-places' potential power by inviting them to construct a narrative about the place, and practice role-playing within the structure. This would be a world-building exercise, and would help participants experience the felt-sense of safety, and potentially embody that safety inside their structure. An important question to explore with participants would be why and when the participant would need to access their safe place, and how this could be done. By externalizing the safe place into a three dimensional structure, the client can practice grounding techniques in times of distress, and makes their safe place more accessible to them.

Letters to and from Nature

This directive is best facilitated in a natural environment, such as a garden, park, or forest. Participants are invited to sit in a circle on the grass, and a brief meditation is facilitated. Each member of the group with a dandelion, acorn or stone to hold onto during the meditation. Participants are invited to focus on the environment around them, being mindful of

the feel of the air on their skin, the smell of the grass and flowers around them, and the security and groundedness offered to them by the ground on which they are seated. They are invited to mindfully acknowledge the space they find themselves in, and to think about what it is about this environment that they are grateful for, what the environment might be trying to share with them, what it is trying to teach them.

The participants are then invited to think about what they would like to say to nature, and to imagine, if they were to send a letter to nature, what would it say, and how would nature respond? The participants are then provided with recycled paper, natural materials, and pens and pencils to write with. They are invited to first write a letter to nature, encouraged to reflect on the process and the contents of their letter, then to write a letter from nature to them.

This directive can encourage individuals to analyze their relationship to nature, mindfully recognizing the interrelated relationship between self and nature, and can help to ground us in the here and now.

Eco-art therapy is as essential to the development of our practice as is digital art therapy. The difference is, one stretches into the future and accommodates our growing human development alongside the technological boom, while the other reaches far back into our deep unconscious, to a primordial age when we used natural materials to create our art-work. Both are important, and should be incorporated to the best of our abilities, into our practice as art therapists in order to provide clients with as holistic an approach as imaginable. ●

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We're all in this together



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An art project incorporating the recovery principles of CMHA in an art therapy group

BY TAMARA L. REYNOLDS

IMAGINE YOUR LIFE IS A CANOE. The canoe can be large or small depending on your life experiences and how many burdens you carry in your canoe. Some canoes are small, some are larger, but all are capable of carrying people, goods and camping gear. Some canoes are light, while others are heavy. Some can be maneuvered easily by one person and others require more than one person to propel. Canoes can go over rough and treacherous waters, calm lakes and rivers, but you also have the choice to portage around those treacherous waters.

It's not an easy journey, with waterfalls, rapids, high winds and cross currents in the water swirling around and sometimes the water swamps the canoe and threatens to sink it. You can bail it out and sometimes it's a losing battle and you are pulled under. It is how you get back to the surface that's important. And even though there are times when you feel you're being pulled overboard, there are others around to

offer guidance, support and resources to get you through. A small canoe may get lost in the water because it is too light for the conditions, and a large heavy canoe will make it through the water but it's harder to control by one person. A canoe requires strength to maneuver and navigate the treacherous waters, but also enjoys the calm times that are pleasant.

The canoe is a metaphor for resiliency. A canoe will float with a small hole or a dent and sometimes a larger crack that can be repaired easily, and you're on your way again. It may not be exactly the way it was before, but still functional and usable. Even if it capsizes, most often the canoe will float on the surface, albeit upside down, but it is still functional if you stay with the canoe and use it as a floatation device. It will take effort and time to upright that canoe, but it's possible. Especially if someone cares about the canoe and takes the time to repair it. We are like that canoe with cracks, small holes, dents, and may have been capsized during our lives, but we manage to repair the holes, bang out the dents and fill in the cracks and move on.

Traveling on a lake, or a raging river may give us an adrenalin rush as we approach the fast-moving water and this can cause anxiety for many people. When it gets really treacherous, we have a decision to make. Do we go through it and take a chance on our canoe getting us through in one piece, or do we portage around that part and take another path? >>>

The canoe is a metaphor for resiliency. We are like that canoe with cracks, small holes, dents, and may have been capsized during our lives, but we manage to repair the holes, bang out the dents and fill in the cracks and move on.

“We’re all in this together” is the cry as they dig deep into the water and help paddle your canoe. They are there in the treacherous waters and the gentle waters. The canoe is stronger with more than one person in it helping to push it forward. They help to challenge the inner critic when it wants to take control. They help you to recognize your boundaries and establish good relationships.



Top: Acrylic paint on craft paper. The completed canoe project with the members’ paddles attached to the wall. The final project was approximately 25 feet long and each member was active in the whole process of planning, drawing out and painting the canoe shape and the water.

Bottom: Markers on foam board. The paddle on the left is entitled *On the wings of change* and represents the future of my journey to become an art therapist. The paddle on the right is a representation of me as I see myself and entitled *All that I Am* (Artist, singer, traveller, friend, pet mom, and love nature).

Do we allow the canoe to get swamped with the water and let it pull us under? Once you capsize, can you find your way back to your canoe and navigate the waters again?

It depends on the size of your canoe as well. A small one in a raging river may get capsized easier than the heavy large canoe. Which canoe do you use? Most often you can use the right canoe and navigate the waters successfully and find your way through to calmer waters.

But what happens if you get overturned, fall in the water and can’t find your way back to your canoe feeling like you are being washed down river? Sometimes we feel alone in our canoe and if we fall out, we may be in big trouble. Suddenly, there’s one, two, three hands reaching for your hand and working together, they pull you out of the water and safely into the canoe. The other people in the canoe check to see if you’re ok and give you comfort offering support and helping the canoe to get moving again.

“We’re all in this together” is the cry as they dig deep into the water and help paddle your canoe. They are there in the treacherous waters and the gentle waters. The canoe is stronger with more than one person in it helping to push it forward. They help to challenge the inner critic when it wants to take control. They help you to recognize your boundaries and establish good relationships. They offer a safe and secure place for you to rest if you need to take a break while they take your paddle and work with you to recover. They offer their strengths and gifts to you without asking for anything in return because they know their strengths can “pump up your tires” and you’ve used your strengths to help them previously taking their paddle when they needed it. They help you to move forward to a future whether it’s tomorrow, next week, a month from now or five years in the future.

They paddle with you not against you. After all, can you imagine a canoe with everyone paddling every which way? It would never get anywhere. Is it going to be a hard journey? Of course it is, but it pays off in the long run with support, friendships, trust and working together to create something wonderful and meaningful. A large sturdy canoe with lots of room ensures that everyone will fit in the canoe and leaves room for others to join when they need to. The canoe is open to all possibilities and adventures with people to experience life, joy and work towards a common goal of recovery and maybe have some fun along the way.

The canoe doesn’t move without a paddle, as we know, and the paddle can represent the pull forward and the way you gently force yourself to go ahead, which may be little by little. While you could paddle alone, and sometimes you have to, you can also have the help of many paddlers. When the canoe gets moving smoothly and every paddle works together, it is very satisfying to know that you are all working together towards the common SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Reasonable and Timely) goal and to have the canoe glide over the surface and navigate the treacherous waters with the strength of many paddles.

As we move along the surface, we know that we have developed resilience because we’ve seen these treacherous waters before and we know that we are many in the canoe to push ahead. As you paddle, you keep your eyes forward looking ahead, rather than looking back at the swirling waters. Sometimes you take a glance behind but then turn your eyes forward again, dipping your paddle in the water to propel the canoe because if you don’t, you may hit a rock or something worse. Paddling the canoe reminds you to work hard and fight the roughness of the water because in the long run, it will be worth it and you will be able to say you did it.

If you paddle with others, you will make slow and steady progress because it is a journey across a lake, river or ocean. Is it filled with obstacles and challenges? Absolutely it is—both of our own doing (Inner critic), and from others (boundaries and trust violated), but working together and being supportive of one another makes all the difference (safe place, sharing strengths and gifts). We truly are all in this together.

Each river, lake or waterfall in life you encounter, allow others to help you navigate your canoe and offer your strengths to others who may need someone to take their paddle, even if only for a minute. One of the biggest strengths a person possesses is to ask for help when you are struggling or need help with navigating your canoe.

As a student at the Toronto Art Therapy Institute, I was fortunate to work with the recovery program with members from the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) as an art therapist. I facilitated an open group with the members which numbered from six to ten participants in a guided art therapy group. The art directives were based on the recovery principles, which included building self-esteem, security, relationship building, and looking to the future. This final project included all of the recovery principles covered over the first month of the open group and gave the opportunity for each member to create a paddle which represented themselves through their journey of recovery.

The final piece was a collaborative effort for the group to plan, draw and paint a canoe to display their paddles, which was taped to the wall of the building for everyone to view and to create a dialogue about the successes that each member experienced and to remind them that there may be treacherous waters to navigate but they had support to help them. As a facilitator of the group, I completed the art project along with the members as a prototype or example for the members to view as a starting point. All the various directives were well received, with this final project being the favourite. ●



Narrative Reflections on a Triadic Art Therapy Process: Two Stories

BY TZAFI WEINBERG

The following stories are my narrative reflection on the conversations and art-making in a series of triadic art therapy sessions with an Indigenous foster parent and foster child. This illustrates the values I learned from the foster parent and child I worked with. The term *triadic art therapy* refers to the involvement of an interpersonal dyad in joint art-making sessions with an art therapist.

The story of *Drums for the Heart*

It was a sunny afternoon on the riverside and the big old trees were swaying with the wind. A tall boy named Jordan (pseudonym) was walking aimlessly alongside the rippling river. Distractedly, he walked closer to the trees and noticed a few brown squirrels playing and gnawing on some nuts. The sound of the little creatures nibbling on their acorns reminded the young boy of what was nibbling at his own conscience. As he sat down to watch the squirrels, his mind couldn't help but wander to his memories of a best friend who had passed away only a month before.

He felt a surging pain as he recalled the suffering that his best friend endured. The long nights, the sullen eyes, how weak and helpless—his friend was at the mercy of his sickness. Now, all that was left was a black hole of emptiness. Jordan reminisced on all the times that they had come to skip rocks and swim in the rippling river. But those times were over, they were all gone, and no matter how hard it was for Jordan, he would have to accept it. Jordan slowly stood up and then climbed onto some nearby rocks. He looked down at the shadows of the trees, reeds, and bulrushes that were growing around the rocks, reflecting his own inner darkness. The sound of rushing water and falling rocks was all so familiar to him, triggering something inside him. Now he felt the river rushing past him, almost as fast as his racing thoughts. Jordan looked for solace in a quieter place on the riverbank. In his searching, he passed thick and tangled tree roots and small slippery black rocks.

In due time Jordan found a quiet spot where the waters calmed and time stood still. He gathered some stones and started skipping them over the shallow water. He watched carefully, as the ripples slowly grew bigger and then faded back into the rhythm of the water. Every time Jordan skipped another stone, he heard a kind of empty echo. Jordan paused for a second, taking in the sounds around him. He suddenly felt that he had to sit down—something about his surroundings brought on this sense of heaviness. Maybe it was the gloomy sky, as the dark clouds felt as though they were closing >>>



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in on him. Regardless, there were no more stones to throw. It was cold. The grey, coarse rock that he sat upon sent goosebumps down his spine, chilling him to the bone. He was all alone.

But still he kept hearing the empty echo. It resonated throughout his body; he felt it to his core. It wouldn't stop. He'd have a moment of tranquil loneliness, but each time he heard the sound it drew him back in. Rhythmically stealing his focus, and gradually getting louder and louder. Now it was pounding in his ears. But the sound had a sort of mystery to it— each echo called to him, as if inviting his soul to come play and follow its alluring pull. The sound reverberated in the trees. Jordan got up and headed towards the mysterious sound.

As he drew closer to the forest's edge he noticed that what was calling him was really more than a sound; the vibration was recurring in rhythm and low musical notes. Through the thick, bushy fir trees, he knew he was heading into the heart of the dark forest where the music resided. Its source was hidden deep inside the trees. As Jordan traversed the tangles of branches, roots, and leaves, he realized that this was no ordinary sound. Closer now to the source, he stepped into a clearing where he was greeted by a circle of drums.

Within the circle, he saw a mother and daughter sitting on a large log near the campfire and playing drums. The mother had a gentle face surrounded by long black hair. She was young, but her eyes showed that she'd been through more than her years. The daughter seemed like a younger version of her mother, with eyes filled with wonder and curiosity. Her little hands danced to the movement of the drums, learning from her mother, and glancing up at her with admiration.

Jordan approached the campfire and joined them on the log, taking in the mother/daughter ritual, kinship and music, and taking in the night, appreciating the beauty of the music, the simplicity of the beat, and also the presence of the Spirit all around him. The music matched his beating heart. With the pulse of music, he could feel each note reverberating in every cell of his body. Now, his fingers joined in with delight, his fingers tapping gently along, becoming one with the music and the new community and kinship he had discovered.

As the night went on, the drumming gradually died down and he grew more and more tired. He could feel the day had finally taken its toll on him. Eventually, his body softened, his eyes slowly closed, and he escaped to a peaceful slumber. Jordan lay there, his body relaxed and his mind rested, but the wonders of dreaming continued. An angel guarded over him, as he walked in dreaming down to the riverbank. His friend was lost to him, but he knew he would always be with him, always be watching over him. In time, he woke up, but the mother and daughter were gone. He was alone, yet he knew he would never be completely alone.

Learning from the Story

As I reflected on the story, I became aware of Jordan's attachment to his memories and grief for the death of his best friend. I wondered about a connection of these feelings of grief with those of his ancestors who had endured many losses. Connectedness comes through his senses to the music, the vision he saw and his continued dreaming. Strega (2005) refers to dreaming as an integral part of Indigenous people's worldview. My work with Jordan draws me into relationship with the importance of dreams. Adolescents often talk with me about their dreams and are eager to draw them; they are a valuable source for helping teens develop meaning from their work in art therapy. Dreams can also help to process unresolved concerns, by thinking about an issue and looking to get answers through the dreams (F. J. Graveline, personal communication, January 24, 2019).

The story of *From Heart to Heart*

One winter day, a woman passed away. The snow was lightly falling, while the cold land slept below it. The woman had been a mother of six children. One after another, as each child reached the age of three, they were taken away from her. The mother never knew why this had to be and as time passed, she felt the winter winds gnawing at her heart. Whenever the wind settled, she was left with a painful silence that left her feeling empty inside. Now she had finally passed away, her death leaving behind a gaping hole of pain and suffering upon the tundra floor while her spirit began to wander, trying to find a place to rest. The spirit of the mother writhed in the cold snowy sky, always seeking home, until it came upon a warm trail of smoke from a nearby campfire. The spirit curled around the smoky warmth, breathed it in, and came back to life in the body of a baby girl named Sol (pseudonym).

Winter turned to spring, and Sol's family marked the blessing of her arrival into the world with a special ceremony to greet her. How she sparkled and glowed in her newborn clothing! Noticing this, they called her the newborn miracle. As she grew older, Sol's dark, wavy hair grew ever longer. Her eyes were bright and deep, but she was a quiet child, and the silence that hung about her was lonely. Every year, Sol traveled with her family to the many ceremonies of her people. There she would receive bracelets made of round beads, all connected by one string. Later, Sol would play with the bracelets, feeling the smooth beads touching and caressing her skin. The girl who was not so little anymore felt carried by a strong connection: she knew the bracelet was a part of her, of who she was, and this knowledge filled her soul with something newly born within her. This energy pushed her to grow stronger, to become a better person, to love and to heal. Sol the woman wore the bracelets to always guide and teach her the importance of her community's knowledges. Sol



Previous page and above:
Artwork by Megan Jonkman

spread this message to her community and shared the wisdom of the bracelets that touched her soul.

Learning from the Story

The story, written from reflection on the artwork of the foster parent and child as well as the therapist's art created in response to the sessions, illustrates the importance of spirituality and connectedness to family lineage. The bracelet functions in the story as a symbol of the spiritual; the collection of many beads on one string symbolizes community. According to Phinney and Chavira (1992), within an individual's identity a collective identity can be a source of strength. The strengths of Sol's personal identity evolved over time through her engagement with her community. ●

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CANADIAN ART THERAPY ASSOCIATION (CATA)

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We are the Canadian voice of art therapy. We bring together art therapists to raise standards and advance the profession.

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Bringing together art therapists

1. Network and connect members
2. Host an annual national convention
3. Support the creation of provincial chapters
4. Sponsor regional events and workshops

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