

2003

Inscape : Symposium Concerning the Arts in Psychotherapy

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INSCAPE: SYMPOSIUM CONCERNING THE ARTS IN PSYCHOTHERAPY

Spectrum Gallery Exhibition

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‘I read a broad careless inscape flowing throughout,’ reminding me of my internal thoughts and feelings. Those thoughts which require little concentration, yet make themselves so known to me, so much so that their presence cannot be ignored. In conjunction with this the ‘blue spot pushing its way through the darker cloud,’ the blue spot being my inscape that bursts through my conscious bringing me back to who I am, where I have come from, and what I’m doing. Including the notion put forth by G. M. Hopkins of being able to see a brindled heaven from the gallery window, which to me elicits the idea of witnessing the spectacular, through a glimpse of ones internal and external realities. The fore mentioned elements derived from G. M. Hopkins passage, are the core elements I have endeavored to explore within my artwork for the Inscape Symposium.

Being both an artist and an MA Art Therapy student, I have found that the combination of the two has exposed my inner world, my inscape, leaving me to both witness what emerges and assist in my own understanding of it. This has occurred, firstly due to the nature of art therapy, and noticing reoccurring themes emerging subconsciously, and having the space and modalities to then explore these themes further. Secondly, allowing my inscape to speak, to find it’s creative voice and listen to what it is trying to convey to me, as an artist and therapist.

In making this artwork, I was taken back to my earliest childhood memories and experiences. Conjuring up pleasant thoughts and images, as well as sad. I found I was fixated on this area of my life, my development as it were, as I see it, it was what helped define who I am. The landscape I found myself in at such a young age, is my first experience of the world, the richness of its texture and beauty of its animals, is a founding component of what creates my inscape and how I view external factors.

The acknowledgment of where I grew up is a point of reference that before beginning the MA Art Therapy, was on some levels undervalued and hidden for the better parts by myself, to myself. So in choosing an image to work with for this exhibition, I kept in mind an extract from Jung’s *Man and his Symbols*, (1978, p.87). “When there is merely the image, then there is simply a word-picture of little consequence. But by being charged with emotion, the image gains numinosity (or psychic energy); it becomes dynamic, and consequences of some kind must flow from it.” Both the artwork I have created and the accompanying installation piece, hold a great deal of the emotion Jung mentioned. The artwork is not only charged with emotion, but memories, hence the title ‘Looking Back’, as I feel I am looking back on a moment that has long passed and faded. But in creating

and exhibiting the image and installation, I'm not only hoping to recapture some of the emotions I felt as a small child, but reaffirm the strong bond that exists between siblings.

The image I have presented in conjunction with an installation, is a black and white drawing of myself and my older brother, in the first landscape I can recall, this being a sheep station, several hours outside of Kalgoorlie. In the image we can be seen standing on the bank of Bronco Dam, looking out at the vast landscape unfolding before us, almost in a contemplative state. The larger figure, being my brother, is my guide, passing down his learnt traits and information, in essence he also acted as a filter, he was how I learnt both to interact as well as both good and bad reactive emotions. The installation box, on the gallery floor in front of the image hanging on the wall, contains some of the rich red dirt from where I lived, and my foot prints can be seen in the dirt leading up to the drawing on the wall. The two acting aesthetically as polar opposites of one another, and yet so greatly interconnected both to each other and to me.