



Gently Gently Gently

Acrylic on canvas, mounted on paper, 30cm diameter.

Andrew Campbell

The Dance Integral

Picasso wrote that there is no abstract art.

You just always start with something. Afterwards you can remove all traces of reality. There is no danger there anyway, because the idea of the object will have left an indelible mark. It was what started the artist off, excited his ideas, and stirred up his emotions. When I paint a picture I am not concerned with the fact that two people may be represented in it. Those two people once existed for me but they exist no longer. My vision of them gave me a little emotion, then little by little they became for me a fiction, and then they disappeared altogether, or rather they were transformed into all kinds of problems, so that they became for me no longer two people but forms and colours - forms and colours which nevertheless resume an experience of two people and preserve the vibration of their life (1972, p. 64).



The Painting Table, garden, North Moreton, summer 2006

In the Rich Vibrating Ground

In 1998 I facilitated a three day programme with a group of people; among them was the wife of a wealthy property developer. To give an idea, in 2003-4 he paid himself a salary of 22 million pounds sterling. This young and beautiful woman came up to me in a session break, just prior to my workshop. She briefly explained that she had trained at art school, but had since lost her creativity, despite having a wonderful studio in London. She was, she said, facing the prospect of ‘painting’ with some dread and anxiety.

I told her about my first teacher, Leonard McComb RA who had, at the age of fifty, destroyed a lifetime’s work, describing it as ‘frozen.’ He then had a moment of metanoia, while ‘copying’ a small JMW Turner in the National Gallery, a study of ‘Mackerel’ - seeing, for the first time the way that he had ‘captured light’ through placing tiny speckles of ‘china white’ into the translucent ground. His images then ‘grew’ over a period of years from these small, strangely-incredibly lighted applications of watercolour to ground—sometimes making subjects appear as ephemeral ghosts, transparent. Often he would flick random paint onto the surface, as he worked. The paradox was that they became more stilled, more monumental

within the disturbances. So, I suggested she take the water and the paper and *paint with no colour*, since this would have a liberating effect in several directions. I spoke about the way that the water would bring the paper (dead tree fibres) back to life, and it would buckle as if in memory of its own water born life ;-). Liveness essentiality . . . becoming-being. As the conversation progressed, I shared with her that I had no children, and that I had a dog, called Bucket. And that Bucket would curl up and sleep with me, nestling as if he were a child in a womb.

During my workshop on that occasion, I told her and the 30 or so others in the hall about my life and work and learning, about agape as unconditional love (Agape) which I'd come to see as unconditional collapse, which releases free energy. The day passed. I didn't follow her progress through the session and I never saw her outputs.

Two years later I was invited to attend another group workshop, but not to facilitate, at the same venue. The large manorial barn was already full, and they were about to be addressed by a Benedictine monk. I took a chair, right at the far end of the barn at the back. A man stood up. It was the woman's husband.

"I would like to point out that man, the one sitting over there. He worked with my wife and me a few years ago, here." "(Andrew) I would like you to know that my wife has since had a child, and we have given her a middle name, stemming from what you taught us that day, about *love*, her name is Agape."

I don't recall that I spoke to the couple during those whole two days either. Shortly after this I broke my association with the consulting group, who had convened the sessions.

In general, I understand all these events as examples of a 'creative collapse.' These in turn release tiny quanta of 'free-energy.' The trick, I have found, is to follow the 'free energy' back to the ground ;-).

In the Poor Vibrating Ground

Recently I shared an intimate conversation with an Integral scholar and practitioner. It involved complex dynamical properties, implied above, but the deepness of the nature of it precludes the kind of narrative given already. Therefore, I will, as Rosch implies it, *slip it to the reader sideways*.

Recently I was in the home of a client who lives, as they say, on the other side of the track. Her life is one of unremitting difficulty, boredom and background intimidation.

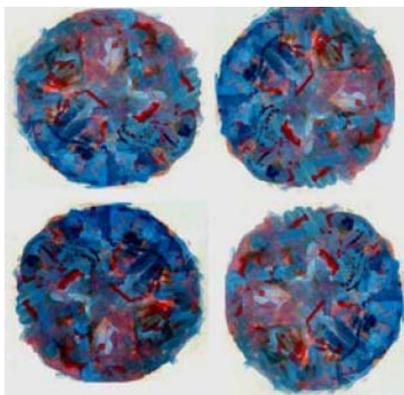
She has noble aspirations, to become a scientist, but she lacks the most basic education, she is saddled with a partner who never works, his friends regularly invade her home where they live on minimal 'state benefits' and the life she lives is one of 'confusion.' She has two children, a daughter of about three and a son of eight months.

While we were simply *waiting* one day, I was on the floor, playing with the daughter, who was building forms with long coloured lines, the kind that molecular scientists make models of atomic structures from. But it was the child's development toy. I could see she was deeply involved.

Suddenly, in and out of my peripheral vision, the eight month old began to approach. He was on all fours. Then, his tiny warm hand reached out, and touched me.

It was a shockingly gentle moment, because it became a continuum—just as *a snowflake slides upon its own melting*—he rose up, using me as his ladder, until after just a *little time* he was standing there, just under my face. His face was purest pink—no other word conveys the palpable aliveness. His hair was yellow and his eyes sky blue. Our eyes met and, somehow, his very soul entered. It was as if a Buddha has come to sit beside me, a large mountain beside a tiny one; a large hill next to a small hill.

In this moment I realised that I had ‘suffered’ a Metanoiaical moment. A deeply spiritual happening. The small mountain was the large one and the large one the small—an impossible exchange had taken place. Though the purpose is still unresolved, in the image placed here is a partial resolution.



Gently, Gently, Gently, Four Angels

I want to paint men and women with that something of the eternal which the halo used to symbolize. Ah! Portraiture with the thoughts, the soul of the model in it, which is what I think, must come. So I am always between two currents of thought . . . to express hope by some star, and the eagerness of a soul by a sunset radiance. Vincent van Gogh (Hammacher & Hammacher, 1982, p. 163).

Anton Ehrenzweig (*The Hidden Order of Art*, 1967) wrote, “the artist when working could produce works and internal states of extreme ‘de-differentiation’” (Glover, 2005). That’s an important word with an equally important meaning for us. De-differentiation is an *all embracing way of looking* and is used, according to Ehrenzweig, by artists to *really see* the parts of a composition as well as see the whole, simultaneously.

A state acquired like that of scattering the attention (like so many seeds of corn into the ground in a farming culture and community, a living into dying and back again in season) to such an extent that it is not even necessarily retained by our conscious memory. Our co-creative work, whatever it is—paintings, writing, compositions—seem to have ‘just happened’ and resolve themselves without conscious intervention. Such an ‘un-looking’ way as this is full of the paradoxical. It is *a new form of vision*.

It could be called paradoxically, the structure of spontaneity. Ehrenzweig considered this ‘non-linear’ (‘polyphonic’) and ‘undifferentiated scanning’ looking and working as being superior to our often over anxious, overtly self conscious and often restricting ‘linear’ ways, and especially our over-intellectual reasoning. Through this suspending (his term), by entering the undifferentiating process, people may contact, even overlap (‘nesting’ and ‘integral’ are technical terms that come to mind), with aspects of themselves that were hitherto unmet in both self and work. (The ‘appearance’ of the/any artwork, its ‘forming’ of itself, is very unimportant, even in art based workshops or retreats. It could be an arrangement of sticks, leaves or ideas.) What matters is the *opening of a new relationship*, a willingness to generate dialogue between the person and his/her deeper self—nature to Nature. Maybe it starts to resonate with those elements in the larger fields, in which he or she lives and operates, so that, Something like a true (more authentic) conversation takes place

between the person and his or her own work. This ‘medium,’ by frustrating the purely conscious intentions you will inevitably bring to the project, allows contact with more submerged parts of his or her own personality and draws them up for contemplation. While we may struggle with (the) new medium, unknown to oneself we wrestle with the unconscious personality revealed by the work – or *work* of art. (David Bohm pointed out long ago that the basis for the word ‘Art’ was from the verb, *to fit*.) “Taking back from the work on a conscious level what has been projected into it on an unconscious level, (making it *fit* again) is perhaps the most fruitful and *properly painful* result of authentic creativity” (Bohm, 1998).

You and I like the parent as a creator of children, have to accept that their work has an ‘independent life’ and acceptance of this requires humility and perhaps a little genuine suffering. Hannah Arendt, the pupil of philosopher Martin Heidegger, recognized herself that once we have written or created something and ‘let it go’ out and into the world by sharing it with others, then we have to accept that we no longer control it, but that we may continue to learn from what others do with it.

The . . . world begins by making splits, then drawing boundaries, then solidifying these boundaries. Then we fool ourselves into believing what we have made ourselves see. Solidifying boundaries is very comfortable, because it allows us to deny our experience.... We miss the whole system (Bateson, 1978, p. 44).

Some years ago I shared some imagery inspired by Francisco Varela’s work, sharing my own ideas, art-work and personality is something I have learned to do in new ways since I became aware of the Internet. Caroline Hegedus (2003, personal communication) said something interesting to me about those works, as she experienced them and as someone who’d met Varela:

“...my sense was that you ‘received’ the images rather than making something you ‘thought’ about.... (and) The fact that you did this on glass is quite intriguing to me also... when I started writing the book on John (Fetzer), I had an image of a glass book that was laying open, and that was a very important image for me as I began to write. I understood it to be about *the process* for the book.”

Ehrenzweig explicitly and firmly believed that perception was implicated in both conscious and unconscious mental processes. He puts forward his main thesis that (authentic) artwork has a *hidden substructure*, which can *seem* disruptive, disordered and chaotic only to conscious perception. However, working alongside the gestalt preoccupied conscious mind is what he calls ‘unconscious scanning,’ where ‘depth minds’ perceives the hidden substructure beneath. It is this (creative) tension between an apparent surface order and the deeper structure which appears chaotic to the conscious perception, which is the essence of creative and aesthetic perception. (His work should also be read, he advised, with the same kind of ‘unconscious scanning.’)

I have always kept in mind since the seventies, that creativity is defined by Ehrenzweig as the ‘capacity for transforming the chaotic aspect of undifferentiating into a hidden order that can be encompassed by a comprehensive (syncretistic) vision, and that ‘conscious surface coherence has to be disrupted in order to bring unconscious form discipline into its own.’ However, because this ‘unconscious form’ cannot be consciously analysed in rational terms, we must rely on our ‘low level sensibility’ to distinguish ‘irresponsible arty-crafty gimmicks from truly creative art ruled by an inner necessity.’ David Bohm (1998) said something very

similar when he wrote, “For me, giving simple attention – a finer faster process than confusion – is itself the primary creative act.”

*Imagine an infinite sea of energy filling empty space, with waves moving around in there, occasionally coming together and producing an intense pulse. Let's say one particular 'pulse' comes together and expands, creating our universe of space-time and matter. But there could well be other such pulses. To us, that pulse looks like a big bang; in a greater context, it's a little ripple. Everything emerges by unfolding from the holomovement, then enfolds back into the implicate order. I call the enfolding process "implicating," and the unfolding "explicating." This implicate and explicate together are a flowing, undivided wholeness. Every part of the universe is related to every other part but in different degrees. There are two experiences: One is movement in relation to other things; the other is the sense of flow. *The movement of meaning is the sense of flow* (Peat & Briggs, 1987/2006).*

People are essentially polyphrenic.

Schizophrenia is a disease of the human condition, and polyphrenia—the orchestration of our many selves—is our extended health. We have a vast crew within that used to be called sub-personalities. But I think it has more autonomy than that, and we have to speak to 'the cook' and 'the healer' and 'the therapist' within. And 'the mechanic' . . . And you allow them to come into the forefront, so that local ego and its limiting and habituated structures are pushed aside for the time being . . . It's *who* you bring out of the background into the foreground that makes the difference as to how you feel about things. Or, as Francis of Assisi put it, 'What we are looking for is who is looking'" (Houston, 2006).

“You have taught me to look at nature, very closely” Pupil ;-) 20th Nov. 2006

A few days ago, early in a cold morning I passed by a dead tree, within the branches of which clattered a frantic dove; it rose and fell, rose and fell again, and again. Then it fell out to the ground. I picked it up and I saw its eyes were closed. It was blind. I took it to the open field and threw it into the air, but it flew straight into a tree and fell again. I picked it up a second time. I saw its eyes were still shut. I kissed each eye and each opened, I threw it into the air once more, it flew. It flew away. No miracle. I saw that its eyelids had been frozen together by the coldness.

Since everyone is different, I cannot give one strategy that will work for everybody. For some, the contemplative path is a real path; for others, who are more kinesthetic, say, it may be a walk or a dance. . . Joseph Campbell used to tell me he got his finest ideas just editing his manuscripts, just crossing out words on yellow pads. So what I'm suggesting is that there are as many strategies as there are people. . . For me, it means getting up at five o'clock in the morning (because I'm a lark; I'm not an owl)... (Houston, 2006)

Brigg's Reflectaphors

Briggs has worked with both Dave Peat and David Bohm. He thinks his term Reflectaphor is a 'hinge' of another form of a 'hidden order' both in art objects and also the creative process of the artist herself.

According to Briggs, Bohm stated that matter and energy continually unfold and enfold, appearing in particular (explicate) forms like photons and mountains and then disappearing into the (implicate) background. For Bohm this primordial unending movement from implicate to explicate and back again *implies* the whole. He calls it 'holomovement' and considers it primary to all natural law. In a metaphor, an analogous sort of thing seems to happen with meaning.

Recently one of the many subtleties of the often paradoxical movement of meaning through metaphor surfaced during a class discussion. I was explaining that I personally experienced the image as a flight of birds in formation very high up and silent, wordless. Then someone in the class pointed out that birds in flight often make quite a bit of noise, also not words, but probably communication of some sort and we realized such an image could also fit the class metaphor. Obviously, taking that angle on the metaphor alters and broadens—in Bohm's terms unfolds and enfolds—one's conception of its meaning. In the movement through the mind of the old conception and the new, one gets a taste of the whole. This suggests the metaphor is meaning as an ongoing process and perception rather than meaning as the conclusions of knowledge.

At present, neuroscience is only beginning to grapple with the immensely intricate questions of how consciousness works. But whatever the specific mechanisms, it seems plausible to generalize that a great deal of conscious processing (including layers of the unconscious and perception) relies on some form of comparison and contrast activity. These comparing and contrasting activities then refold into the background (implicate) levels of the brain to set the stage for further comparisons and contrasts.

The word metaphor comes from the Greek *meta* and *Aryan medhi* which mean 'middle, between, among and beyond' and from the Greek, *Chore* derived from *phoros*, 'to carry or to bear.' The word 'reflect' comes from the Greek *re* and *flex* which means 'bending back or bending again.' Putting these together, a reflectaphor can be thought of as having the quality of *carrying between and beyond by a constant bending back*. One side of the reflectaphor is carried over to the other, but then is reflected or carried back again and, therefore, once again beyond. The comparison/contrast design of the reflectaphor propels this movement, bending the mind back again and beyond, giving no rest in conclusion. Between the elements of a reflectaphor there is no meaning as such; the meaning is the continual revelation what Bohm calls unfoldment and unfoldment of this reflective movement.

Two further important dimensions of the 'reflect' in reflectaphor will also become apparent as we probe deeper into artistic process and structure. First, a reflectaphor mirrors the apprehender of the reflectaphor so that, as Bohm would say, the observer becomes revealed as the observed. Second, a reflectaphor in the context of a particular artwork is mirroring other reflectaphors in that context and in fact is a reflection of the whole of that context (Briggs, 1987/2006).



Leo Minnigh PhD, Spain O→ Leo's 'Self ←O→ Portrait' ←O Leo's journal page while being *carried* to me, 2002

"I have no idea how that picture I painted appeared, maybe there was something in the strange atmosphere of your garden that day" (L. Minnigh, personal communication, 2003).

"So a moment enfolds all the past? Yes, but the recent past is enfolded more strongly." (Peat & Briggs, 1987/2006).

In the art of painting, reflectaphors exist on a number of levels and are articulated through numerous techniques. For example, reflectaphors can be created when a painting of one thing looks subliminally like another - a building that looks subtly like a face, a range of mountains that is as sensuous as a reclining body (Briggs, 1987/2006).

At times there emanated from people almost palpable extensions of themselves, and certain objects possessed a special dimensionality. A small puddle iridescent with spilt oil and reflecting a patch of mid-western sky would suddenly expand for an endless split-second to encompass my entire universe (Unknown, sculptor, as cited in Briggs, 1987/2006).

This glance of this*other-ness becomes for the artist a touchstone or what Henry James called a 'germ' out of which the piece evolves. The germ might also be thought of as something which serves the artist as a sudden window, opening between the explicate and the implicate. The evolution of the piece out of that germ (a process which Frost described as like *ice riding on its own melting*) is a reflectaphoric evolution, each element emerging in X/Y tension with others. In a peculiar and often quite indirect way, the inspiration for the creation and the thing created began to mirror each other. The initial perception is that some one element idea, memory, melody, contained the whole, and, in the end, the creator produces a form in which each unique element reflects the whole of the piece. Then, since each element in the piece stands or moves beyond itself, the piece as a whole stands beyond itself which, again, is in keeping with the *standing beyond* quality of the piece's inspiration or germ.

The artist's biography also enters strongly into this process. As Rothenberg (1979) has pointed out, many elements of creative works arise out of superimposing remembered or personal experience on to the constraints of the piece. For example, in creating a character, a novelist may adopt personality traits of someone he has actually known or read about as well as his own personality traits, he then finds these traits modified, shaped and coordinated by the imagined events and other characters in his story. The fateful balancing of this unfolding X/Y (which can become exceedingly complex) enters into such important issues as finding

the proper 'distance' on the piece, attaining an authentic 'persona' or style and achieving the appropriate voice or tone for the work.

In the evolution of the artwork, the artist doesn't *make choices* according to some analyzable logic or pattern, but chooses elements that feel 'right,' in harmony with the this*other-ness of the germ. In this process, the particular, the individual, the puddle iridescent with oil, the two roads in the woods, the artist's own life becomes the universal. The universal, in turn, is revealed as something immediately present to our senses, the place where implicate and explicate have coalesced.

The reflectaphor is a hinge between the explicate order of our familiar reality (the grain of sand) and the implicate order (the whole implied by the sand). If we were to observe objects around us as grains of sand, as this*other-nesses, could this provide a new perspective into - evolution? Should our scientific explanations of natural phenomena have a comparison/contrast dynamic between implicate and explicate; between analysis and what lies beyond analysis? Bohm himself has been an advocate of this position. If we were to take such an approach seriously, how would the universe appear to us and how would we perceive nature's laws? Might, for example, the unknown then become a vivid dimension of our experience of the known similar to what happens in metaphor when the unknown emerges out of the junction between the two known terms? In a work of art, only when the unknown or ambiguity is present does one implicitly perceive the whole of the piece and the whole beyond the piece. What would be the role of the observer and the observed in such an X/Y relationship? For ages artists have been portraying the physical world as a reflection of the mind, heart and soul of human beings - and vice-versa. What if the artists are right and the world around us is literally a mirror of our minds (Briggs, 1987/2006).



Mountain Man Acrylics on paper, Unknown (workshop) Artist, 1998

[In this artwork above, one might see that there are two orange 'marks' that give to the blue motif the appearance of eyes. What appeared to have happened is that one person had put their partly 'orange' picture 'face down' on this 'blue' one, so leaving a faint imprint. In this way, the blue motif becomes like a Zen mountain, which is somehow now 'alive' and has become here a reflectaphor for Brigg's reflectaphor. When this happens in 'printing,' it is called a 'kiss' ;-)]

References

- Bateson, G. (1978). [Article title not available; an interview with Daniel Goleman]. *Psychology Today*, [Vol. unknown], p. 44.
- Bohm, D. (1998) *On creativity*. Oxford, UK: Routledge.
- Briggs, J. (1987/2006). Reflectaphors: The (implicate) universe as a work of art. [Originally published in 1987 in *Quantum implications, essays in honor of David Bohm*. Routledge & Kegan Paul]. Retrieved on September 9, 2006, from <http://people.wcsu.edu/briggsj/Reflectaphors.html>
- Glover, N. (2005). *Psychoanalytic aesthetics: The British School*. [Chapter 5, Ehrenzweig and the Hidden Order of Art]. In Retrieved June 2, 2006, from <http://human-nature.com/free-associations/glover/chap5.html>
- Hammacher, A. M. & R. Hammacher. (1982). *Van Gogh: A documentary biography*. Thames and Hudson: Macmillan.
- Houston, J. (2006). Retrieved on October 4, 2006, from <http://talentdevelop.com/jhouston.html>
- Peat, F. D. & Briggs, J. (1987/2006). *David Bohm 1917-1992*. [Originally published in *Omni*, January 1987]. Retrieved July 21, 2006, from <http://www.f davidpeat.com/interviews/bohms.htm>
- Picasso, P. (1972). Picasso on art: A selection of views. In D. Ashton (Ed.), *Documents of 20th-century art*. New York: Viking.
- Rothenberg, A. (1979). *The emerging goddess: The creative process in art, science, and other fields*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Andrew Campbell trained under the visionary artist Leonard McComb, D.Phil., R.A. (Keeper of Pictures) at Oxford and London and studied as a pupil of Mnr. A.M. de Lange, M.Sc., Goldfields, Pretoria, RSA - the discoverer of the Seven Essentialities of Creativity. My artwork is an integral part of the project known as Presence and Presencing, viewable at the www.dialogonleadership.org web site.

ACamprona@aol.com