

Towards a Theory of the Imagination

Alison Farmer

Antioch University, Seattle

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The Golden Age of Science set out to solidify an objective reality but now obscures its form, molding it into infinite possibilities. Science shows the mind evolving as the change around us continues to happen, and the interdependence leaves us in a constant state of flux and ensuing apprehension. As low grade mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety increase the imagination is being studied as a powerful tool to re-vision and re-create our world. Imagination thinks and acts through images, it borrows from life memories and sensory experience, reshaping and transforming the raw materials into something new, it provides meaning to experience and understanding to knowledge.

This essay intends to show the need for imagination as an individual and planetary remedy to counter the negative social and ecological effects of modernization. First it will summarize a history of western thought, showing how certain people from the past have contributed to my own theory of the imagination. A closer look at the art of alchemy will underline the pivotal role of the imagination in the 'Great Work'. Finally, the essay will explore the healing possibilities of the imagination as a postmodern tonic to reverse the damage caused by years of worship to the God of Science and Reason.

## Brief History of the Evolving Western Mind

Today, as I write, (Sept 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008) scientists around the world celebrate as the huge and costly Large Hadron Collider starts up. Built within the Swiss Alps, the collider will search for the 'God Particle' (the Higgs boson) in man's continued search for his role and place in the universe. There was some relief this morning when mans newest mechanical monster came alive and the earth was not swallowed by a black hole, but concern continues about the unknown, immeasurable effects of recreating nature. There is excitement for possible discoveries that may solidify our concrete reality, even give life to other dimensions. But there is also worry as people and courts question if Science has finally gone too far.

Richard Tarnas (born 1950) explores the damage arising from the Golden Age of Science and ensuing current torment within the western mind in his book 'The Passion of the Western Mind'. He warns of the suffering caused by the restricted perspective we have been following. His theory is a lengthy and detailed linear progression of evolving thought that incurred a major shift with the post Copernican dilemma. When Nicolas Copernicus removed the earth from the center of the universe in 1543 it created disenchantment with the naïve natural world and loss of sacred connection. The post Cartesian dilemma then followed as Rene Descartes (1596-1650) gave rise to Cartesian Dualism which separated man's soul from his body. Immanuel Kant (1724 – 1804) then told us we cannot know whether the world always existed or if it had a cause, because all human knowledge of the world must first be viewed as centering in the human mind. This post Kantian dilemma left us with a subjective interpretive self-knowledge, unable to know the universe in its essence. Everything was then compounded by Charles Robert Darwin (1809 - 1882) and his theory of evolution, and Sigmund Freud (1856 – 1939) with his discovery of the unconscious. Darwin intensified a severing of the divine and Freud showed us the apparent reality of our objective world was being unconsciously determined by the condition of the subject (person). Within 300 years we had lost all connection with the outside world and could no longer even be sure of our own inner realities. Without any purpose or solid ground, we are left searching for a feeling of the wholeness and unity (soul) we have lost. Tarnas concludes his theory saying the western mind has been on an unavoidable perinatal sequence, a necessary archetypal journey, a painful birth drama needed for the male consciousness (ego) to reconnect to the lost feminine so that civilization can synthesize to the next level. Joseph Campbell said the male figure is the knower and the female is the known and in modern times the reductionist scientific age has been attached to male consciousness and the loss of our connection to nature as loss of the feminine. While I would agree with Tarnas that the integration of the feminine is vital for individual and planetary survival, there is a reluctance to accept the domination by male consciousness was a necessary hurt, it purely left

us with a witch hunt legacy. There are other theories that assign the destructive age of science to insecure masculinity (Easlea, 1983). Brian Easlea discusses a 'uterus envy' that has arisen out of disconnection from the naïve spirit world in a 1983 paper titled 'Fathering the Unthinkable: Masculinity, Scientists and the Nuclear Arms Race'. The envy of the feminine ability to create life has left masculine consciousness with an unsatisfied desire to control nature. The main contributor to our separation from nature, creating a divided world view, is thought to be Dualism, but man's latest experiment of the Large Hadron Collider appears to support Easlea's theory of a masculine need to re-create life. It is the ultimate Frankenstein fantasy, an attempt to recreate the start of life itself (the big bang) in a giant mechanical uterus built within the earth's belly. Tarnas brought up a need for a unified theory of the mind with an underlying spiritual reality in his book, mentioning George W.F. Hegel (1770 – 1831) as being one of the last to have one. Although largely dismissed in his time for questioning progress, concern at the direction of our progress, is leading people to take another look. My own look lead to a link between the synthesizing of opposites and imagination.

#### Contributors to my theory of the Imagination

In the chapters about the late 20th Century and Science under pressure, Tarnas covers Hegel's unifying theory based on the understanding of 'Dialectic'. The German philosopher believed in an underlying spiritual reality and sought to unify man and nature (female), spirit and matter, human and divine, time and eternity. He thought the world is always in the process of completing itself "all opposites transcend into a higher synthesis and "are logically necessary and mutually implicated elements in a larger truth" (Tarnas, 1991, p. 379). Hegel's view was shared and lived by German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749 – 1832), whose vision of nature permeated everything, including the human mind and imagination (Tarnas, 1991, p. 378). Goethe did more than recycle ideas from other people, he assimilated them into his being so that they "became part of the structure of his mind and

permeated both his feeling and his action” (Carl Hammer, 1969, p. 3). He believed that all existence is based on polarity, but was able to synthesize these complementary pairs of opposites together to make a whole truth greater than the combination of individual elements, noting “the whole is more than and different from the sum of the parts” (Carl Hammer, 1969, p. 6). Goethe was accused of importing the subject into physics, questioning two hundred years of object related science. He was distrustful of the way science was ignoring our subjective experience of the world known through our senses, seeing our senses as providing the true picture of the world and not doubting their reliability like Kant (Carl Hammer, 1969, p. 12). To Goethe, synthesis and analysis were opposite poles of one whole and his thought was free from the ‘subject – object’ dualism which has dominating the Western mind, saying “my perception is itself thought and my thought perception” (Carl Hammer, 1969, p. 8). Some think that Goethe’s greatest contribution to thought was the idea that the forms of the outer world correspond to the forms with in us, a resolution to the problem of dualism and making him the first ‘unitary’ man. He also said the mind of man should not be against nature but is the peak of it, the place where nature becomes conscious of herself (Carl Hammer, 1969, p. 12). Goethe regarded his discoveries as “possessing the finality of a work of art rather than the provisional character of a work of science” (Carl Hammer, 1969, p. 8). His views made him suspect to the orthodox scientist who often dismissed his achievements as imaginative flashes of poetic intuition. During Goethe’s time, and even now, proposing a study of living wholes rather than analysis of parts is difficult, requiring “great effort of the imagination to grasp living organisms in their changing forms” (Carl Hammer, 1969, p. 7).

Around the time of Hegel and Goethe, Romanticism reflected a desire to reconnect to nature and spirit. Romanticism was the opposite of Scientism, favoring emotion and imagination over reason and perception. The human imagination was seen as a counter to the rise of science. One of the most famous Romantic artists was William Blake (1757 – 1827), an English poet, painter, and printmaker. Blake’s art is full of opposites, with tales of joy and sorrow, realms of heaven and hell, and ‘songs of

innocents and experience', where he mirrors the world he sees. He embraced 'imagination' as the body of God and human existence itself, "The imagination is not a State: it is the Human existence itself" (Milton a Poem, copy C, c, 1811(New York Public Library)). Though Blake opposed science, Tarnas feels artists and visionaries are often able to overcome Kantian dualism through their imagination (Tarnas, 1991, p. 378). He thinks romantic art was not only able reconcile subject and object, human and nature, spirit and matter, conscious and unconscious, intellect and soul (Tarnas, 1991, p. 406), it gave birth to an unorthodox god, a "numinous creative force within nature and within the human spirit". Blake certainly gave a short lived rebirth to Spiritual freedom.

Art became a spiritual outlet in the new objective science ruled world that reduced nature to the human experience of it. It provided a unique point of conjunction between nature and spirit (Tarnas, 1991, p. 373) , a deeper understanding of the world as imagination and feeling now joined science and reason. Goethe thought one of the most mysterious manifestations of nature was the daemonic, the life force present in all. Neither good nor evil, he felt it had the elemental power to drive men to great heights of glory or to complete destruction of soul and body and can not be resolved through reason, only by intuition and consequently in art. Goethe noted the "daemonic is present in the highest degree in artists, but it is only when present in an excessive degree that it is dangerous. Poets and musicians are especially prone to it, painters less so" (Carl Hammer, 1969, p. 16). We could say Blake was susceptible to a little overpowering of the daemonic, preferring to follow the imagination and genius he saw in Devils rather than obey the laws of reason envisioned in the Angels of heaven. As the age of science broke our connection to Nature the spirits of the trees and rocks vanished to and the English philosophical writer Patrick Harpur suggests the Imagination is an intermediate realm, a 'Daimonic Reality', between mind and matter (Harpur, 2003, p. 119) a place the daemons retreated to when science banished them from our world.

The misunderstood imagination has often been linked to the daemonic, admired and feared at the same time. Linked to creativity, it is also equated to madness. A link between madness and creativity is investigated by Daniel Nettle (born 1970), an English professor interested in behavior and evolution. He discovered a hereditary link of heightened creativity arising out of psychoticism, noting a psychotic has a 50/50 chance of being a madman or a poet (Nettle, 2001). The Surrealist Salvador Dali said: "There is only one difference between a madman and me. I am not mad". Freud's investigations into mental illness advanced Surrealism greatly and his work with free association, dream analysis and the unconscious proved important to the development of methods designed to liberate imagination. However, Surrealists embraced idiosyncrasy, rejecting the idea of an underlying darkness of the mind that Freud was interested in.

At the time of the Surrealists movement in 1920, the artists task was to "make the world strange, to shock the dulled sensibility, to forge a new reality by fragmenting the old" (Tarnas, 1991, p. 391). Art was meeting science in the throes of a twentieth century epistemological relativism and to artists the growing uncertainty yielded freedom. They were able to see through and transcended the "false prison created by reality and identity, appearing neither humanly ascertainable nor ontologically absolute" (Tarnas, 1991, p. 390). Artists were liberated by the freedom of choice that followed the breakdown of psychological constructs that scared others, "it is the fear of the boundless that often leads one to be content with the ego limits one has rather than risk falling into the infinite by attempting to enlarge them" (Edinger, *Anatomy of the Psyche*, 1994, p. 13). Fearless and unbound the artists mind became a container of creative potential as noted by American psychologist James Hillman (born 1926), "psychological freedom is compositional, the private mind composes itself and inhabits an art-space" (Hillman, 1983, p. xi).

One artist who broke free during the surrealist age was Joseph Cornell (1903 -1972), a great 'Navigator of the Imagination'. Cornell was well known for his boxed assemblages created from found objects inspired by metaphorical journeys, nature, senses and feelings. Able to express "metaphor and abstraction in a box" (Hartigan, 2008, p. 60), the only thing containing his limitless imagination was the chambers he created. He believed art was an uplifting voyage into the imagination, building ambience and mystique his works were described as 'toys for adults'. Following the surrealist tradition, Cornell liked to create works full of irrational juxtaposition that disrupted pictorial expectations (Hartigan, 2008, p. 49). Similar to Goethe he equated experience with life and reality, connecting nature with art, seeing the spirituality in them all. Both men embraced creativity as a means of giving tangible shape, meaning and order to the equation. Cornell's use of the word 'cabinet' evoked "the conceptual construct that cabinets of curiosities represented in formalizing art and science as complements in finding new ways of seeing and interpreting the world" (Hartigan, 2008, p. 61). Cornell's chambers of imagery put feeling, imagination, art, science and nature together in a box to create a wonderful evolutionary experience.

More wonderful experiences came from 'The Wonderful Wizard of Oz' created by American author Lyman Frank Baum (1856 – 1919) born the same year as Sigmund Freud. Baum's observation of politics convinced him women were oppressed and he was an early supporter of feminism. His "fantasy world contains many mother figures, most of them good, and no father figures" (Rogers, 2002, p. 247). Baum examined the nature of human identity from many angles and took advantage of the potential of fantasy to present "the clash of ideas and issues in simple and concrete form" (Rogers, 2002, p. 249). He exposed the cruelty of man and the harsh realities of nature through a basically positive outlook and sunny imagination. So even though his books contain the good and the bad, they convincingly affirm positive, optimistic views and alert us to the goodness and interesting possibilities that in fact exist around us" (Rogers, 2002, p. 247). Though Oz is a fantasy world created by Baum's imagination, he

believed in it himself and was able to make it convincing by keeping it logical and consistent (Rogers, 2002, p. 244). The fantasy element associated with the imagination is addressed by Harpur.

In Chapter 9 'Imagining things' of *Daimonic Reality*, Harpur disassociates from the common fantasy, unreal suggestion in Imagination and gives further definitions, not only relating it to a 'Daimonic Reality' (the Otherworld that we no longer see) but also to Jung's Soul of the World (Axis Mundi) and Collective Unconscious. Harpur talks about an "Authentic Imagination" that has a sense of "awe" to it and which can be divided into primary (big I) and secondary (little i). The primary is the agent of all human perception and creation. It is sacred and profound. The secondary is an echo of the first, dissolves, diffuses and dissipates to re-create an atheistic and only differs in degree. We need the second to balance out the first so that we don't go mad and Harpur notes it is the struggle by this secondary imagination to realize the sacred that makes Art (Harpur, 2003, pp. 115-116). Hillman sees both daimon and unconscious as modes of imagining and says "a romantic view of Imagination inflates it so we need sober Science to bring ourselves back from the numinous to the commonplace" (Hillman, 1983, p. 69). Baum shows science and nature working beautifully together in the Land of Oz and his stories illustrate us an egalitarian acceptance of animals and machines signifying "humans living in complete harmony with nature and technology" (Rogers, 2002, p. 245). Coleridge wrote, "The artist's esemplastic power of the imagination gave to the human mind the ability to grasp things in their entirety, to create and shape coherent wholes out of disparate elements" (Tarnas, 1991, p. 368). Baum was certainly able to unify his world view and synthesize opposing forces into something magical.

### Imagination and Alchemy

The synthesizing of opposites and magic conjures up another image, the Art of Alchemy. "The mystery of alchemy was about a reconciliation of the opposites. The alchemic motto 'As Above, So Below' symbolized the paradoxical relationship brought forth by merging such things as macrocosm with

microcosm, masculine with feminine (BBC - h2g2 - The Secret Art of Alchemy, 2001). Up until the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the Art of Alchemy had been practiced since antiquity and investigated nature along with a philosophical and spiritual discipline. It combined elements of many disciplines, much like the Imagination is doing today, as science, medicine, philosophy, astrology, mysticism, spiritualism, and art, all come together as parts of one greater force. It was primarily thought of in the West as a chemical experiment that was capable of transmuting gold (the Philosophers Gold). However, it was an inexact philosophical science that was treated as a secret mystical adventure. Its mysterious spiritual, unrepeatable results left it dead and feared during the scientific revolution when chemist and the hermetic philosopher finally parted company.

Alchemy was built around the idea that the world originated from a single substance, 'First Matter', which separated into four elements. To begin the 'Magnum Opus' (the Great Work of alchemy) you must first start with Prime Matter. The 'Prima Materia' shares many features with the Stone it is destined to become, but no one can agree what it is. It has no literal substance, just as the secret fire 'Mercurius', the essence of alchemy (a coincidence of opposites that is unexplainable and identified with Hermes Trismegistus) was invisible, unchanging yet never the same. Mercurius is the "beginning, middle and end of the Great Work – prime matter, secret fire and stone" (Harpur, *The Philosophers' Secret Fire*, 2003, p. 143). Alchemy was the cultivation of 'Double Vision', and philosophers called the double nature of imagining 'Mercurius Duplex'. The world was seen in terms of imagination interacting with concrete substances through impersonal, objective operations. Alchemy itself was a means of entering the realm of imagination. It was an esoteric art based on the belief "that all objects possessed spirit and soul qualities, and there was a deep interconnectedness between all things" (BBC - h2g2 - The Secret Art of Alchemy, 2001). Similar to Goethe's view, alchemists thought spirit was contained in the entire material world and not outside it.

Another great advocate for the permutation of nature in all things and a deep interconnectedness was Swiss psychiatrist, Carl Gustav Jung (1875 – 1961). Jung had been a student of Freud, but it was Jung's belief in an underlying spiritual order that split their relationship. Freud referred to Goethe as being Jung's ancestor and we know Goethe's Faust deeply influenced Jung. There are some unsupported family legends that Jung's grandfather was Goethe's illegal son (Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961) , 2003). Jung was the founder of analytical psychology and located the powerful collective unconscious that we all share. He realized the importance of the lost Art of Alchemy, seeing it as a realization of the individualization process which first required a return to an original, undifferentiated state. Jung believed, like the Chinese, that the ancient Great Work was “concerned with self-transformation as much as with the transmutation of metals”; (Harpur, *The Philosophers' Secret Fire*, 2003, p. 135) the goal was an inner gold, the ‘Philosophers Stone’. Hillman developed archetypal psychology based around Jungian principles and notes, the “imagination embodies the faculty of transformation itself” (Hillman, 1983, p. x). The alchemists work was thought of as a philosophical vessel, the ‘Hermetic egg’ which was an emblem of the psyche itself, “One the vessel, one the stone, one the medicine, and therein lies the whole magistry” (Harpur, *The Philosophers' Secret Fire*, 2003, p. 139). Blake connects the philosopher's vessel to the imagination, seeing “imagination as the sacred vessel of the infinite, the emancipator of the bound human mind, the means by which eternal realities came to expression and consciousness” (Tarnas, 1991, p. 369).

“For the alchemist, the vessel was something truly marvelous, a kind of matrix, or uterus, from which the miraculous stone or 'divine' child is born. As a place of containment, it was both womb and tomb, death being intimately connected and essential to new life. In us the retort is the vessel of memory and imagination, holding events and fantasies where they can be subjected to the heat of passion and feeling or to the simmering of thought and reflection”. (BBC - h2g2 - *The Secret Art of Alchemy*, 2001)

Live long dream explorer Robert Moss feels there is an underlying transpersonal energy in the imagination, “a realm beyond worldly forms – coming to take up residence in the container that had

been made available” (Moss, 2007, p. 170). The connection between the alchemic container and imagination contributes greatly to my own theory and also to that of Harpur’s. In his latest book ‘The Philosophers’ Secret Fire’, Harpur sees the Imagination as that Philosophical Gold, the Elixir of Life, Mercurius that lures us with treasure, “in pursuit of which if we do not go mad or die (‘nonnulli perierunt’) we acquire a greater one” (Harpur, *The Philosophers' Secret Fire*, 2003, p. 152). Moss introduces Imagination as yet another reality; they are all one’s own soul as well as the Soul of the World, everything and nothing, everywhere and nowhere. He says, “soon as we make a definite assertion about the nature of reality, reality itself – soul, imagination, the unconscious and (the best model of all) Mercurius – immediately constellates its opposite” and slips away (Harpur, *The Philosophers' Secret Fire*, 2003, pp. 142-143).

The ‘*The Memoirs of Elizabeth Frankenstein*’, is a creative alchemic journey into the polar tensions of modern society by American writer Theodore Roszak (born 1933). Roszak has drawn on “William Blake (in particular, Blake’s critique of ‘the industrial spirit’), and what has recently been referred to as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s ‘holistic science’” (Theodore Roszak: Information from answers.com) to form his own personal view of the correlation between the degraded condition of the Earth and an uneasy state of the human psyche. In his fictional story masculine and feminine tension is built between Elizabeth and Victor as they are prepared to marry their opposites together into a transforming transcended chemical union. The resulting rape of Elizabeth, conception and torrid bloody miscarriage of a ‘monster’ symbolizes the birth of the golden age of science and man’s domination over nature. In the end the fire of life at the center of the earth is stoked by men as they search for the ‘Philosophers Stone’ by taking the world to pieces (a possible Hadron Collider scenario?). They find the stone and name it “Division Forever and Death Everlasting” (Roszak, 1995, p. 416), man makes his own child, the last woman on Earth Dies and the stars become screaming, clanking, metallic, Newton numbers in the sky. The image captures the way the metals of Alchemy suffer in the fire, howling in

agony, “The metals do not wish to serve. One day they shall rise up against us” (Roszak, 1995, p. 417). The demise of Alchemy in our exterior world has not caused its death and like the banished Daimonic world it appears to have taken up residence within us.

Roszak’s fictional image of metal in the sky is re-iterated in a dream of a middle-aged businessman who knew nothing of alchemy. He saw four metal-clad figures descend from the sky, each suited figure was made of a different metal, suspended weightless in the air and seeking their corresponding metal. In Alchemy the metals of the heavens correspond to the metals in the earth, “as the planets revolve around the earth, they gradually spin their corresponding metals into the earth.” (Edinger, *Anatomy of the Psyche*, 1994, p. 3). The dream can be seen as both a personal and a collective one, with the gods we have lost descending on us, demanding reconnection (Edinger, *Anatomy of the Psyche*, 1994, p. 4). The spirit beings represent archetypal images of the objective psyche and descend in search of an earthly embodiment that will help concretely actualize them in the conscious experience of an individual ego. Alchemy has become of special value to studies of the mind as “its images concretize the experiences of transformation that one undergoes in psychotherapy” (Edinger, *Anatomy of the Psyche*, 1994, p. 2). Today alchemy’s matter is in our projected everyday occurrences of life. “It is in everything we are unable to 'see through,' everything we take unquestionably, uncritically for 'real'” (BBC - h2g2 - *The Secret Art of Alchemy*, 2001). Rather than having lost the alchemical model, we can see many of its processes alive today in the form of psychopathology. Psychotherapy helps to weed through all the confusion as lower grade mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety have increased.

#### Healing power of the imagination

As the world becomes one of disagreement, growing numbers are being compelled to work out their own relationship to existence, and the mood today is an alchemic one of deconstruction and integration. The evolving brain has had to make up an image of its own reality, chew it up, then put it

back together again, and people are drawing on a wide range of spiritual resources to find their own truth. By reducing substances to their original elements, re-arranging their relative proportions they bring their new reality's into being. Moss feels the greatest crisis in our lives is a crisis of imagination, "we get stuck, and we bind ourselves to the wheel of repetition, because we refuse to reimagine our situation" (Moss, 2007, p. 172). Blake felt that once the energy of imagination is used effectively to realize the connection between man and nature, the individual gains freedom from the restrictive bonds of unimaginative thought, attacking what he called the "mind-forg'd manacles, the shackles on the human spirit (Whitney). According to Hillman, all existence is structured by imagination and the world is incomplete without it, "The world's truth realizes itself within and through the human mind, incorporating both forms of epistemological dualism; all existence is structured by imagination (Hillman, 1983, p. 75). His theory about psychology is that it "starts neither in the physiology of the brain, the structure of language, the organization of society, nor the analysis of behavior, but in the process of imagination".

Talking about how important the imagination is, Hillman notes "Imagination itself must be cared for since it may well be a source of our ailing" (Hillman, 1983, p. 73). Here Hillman supports Harpur in the idea that the Imagination is an underlying psychic map that holds the information necessary for our survival. In a largely de-spiritualized, de-animated world, nature spirits are said to now reside in the dark shadows of human rationality. "Psychologically, as Jung observed, the gods, deities and spirits have become our modern day dis-eases" (BBC - h2g2 - The Secret Art of Alchemy, 2001). Hillman proposes that any introspection with imagination brings you into direct contact with inner images (archetypes/daimons) and if repressed these images return unimagined as archetypal delusions (complexes) that give the ego a delusional power, "without images, the imaginative perspective itself withers, only reinforcing the ego's literalism" (Hillman, 1983, p. 65). We can then become blocked and experience paralyzing fear. Moss believes there is always an image within the blockage waiting to be

discovered and if we can bring it into consciousness and rework it, we will bring healing and be able to move forward (Moss, 2007, p. 178), a seeing cure that is also supported by Hillman.

Interest in the imagination is growing as more people study the power of the mind and the effect of image on mental and physical illness, depression has already been linked to a lack of the imagination. All images carry an electrical charge and chemical reaction; they generate and constitute our experience of reality. Moss believes whatever we can imagine has the tendency to become real in our bodies and our world and says when an “image comes alive in our mind there is nothing ‘imaginary’ about it” (Moss, 2007, p. 170). A quote by the poet Tagore supports Moss’s view “the stronger the imagination the less imaginary the results” (Moss, 2007, p. 210). The realm of images is revealing itself to be “a real world, as well as a creative state of consciousness” (Moss, 2007, p. 170) and Hillman believes if the image is experienced fully as real it can provide unconscious healing.

Hillman highlights the importance of Jung treating the figures who he met in his dreams “as though they were real people” – an as-if reality, neither literally real nor unreal/unreal, fully felt but wholly imaginary. He notes “Poetic, dramatic fictions are what actually people our psychic life. Our life in soul is a life in imagination” (Hillman, 1983, p. 56). By taking the inner images of his dreams seriously Jung noted “they took on a life of their own,” they became “autonomous and he could relate to these images as independent ‘Imaginal’ beings” (Morris, 1999). In modern academic and healing practices, the word imaginary is more often being substituted with the adjective ‘imaginal’. The substitution is a way to disassociate the ‘unreal’ suggestion contained in the word imaginary, the common fantasy element Harpur prefers to separate Imagination from. By trusting in his dreams Jung’s enabled the characters of his imagination to provide him with great insight and guidance and according to Moss, the true imagination is a place of spiritual dramas and higher concepts where you meet those who can help you (Moss, 2007, p. 201).

Cornell held the perception of “art as a spiritual gift to humanity” (Hartigan, 2008, p. 46) , a view that Jung supported. In one of Jung’s last letters he images the artist as a mouthpiece calling out the way forward noting, “All his love and passion (his values) flow towards the coming guest to proclaim his arrival” (Stern, 1987). Jung’s observes the fear as we are confronted with the darkness of our soul the unconscious, struggling through shifting values and loss of certainty to understand what is happening to the world. He pleads with the artist to use his brush for the good of the people. "The artist is not a person endowed with free will who seeks his own ends, but one who allows art to realize its purposes through him. As a human being he may have moods and a will and personal aims, but as an artist he is "man" in a higher sense - he is "collective man," a vehicle and moulder of the unconscious psychic life of mankind." (Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961) , 2003).

Jung’s plea to the artist appears to have been heard, in modern times they prove to be the key to envisioning and realizing social alternatives (Mertes, 2004, p. 215). As the world wobbles out of perspective they can use the double vision of their imaginations to help us see the truth. The nonviolent movement fights injustice by seeking integration of opposing forces, holding out two hands to the one of science and reason saying, ‘stop and welcome’ at the same time. Some of the best results appear to come from the synthesizing of the most liberated individuals of society (the artists) and the most oppressed (often the peasants), a powerful alchemic union of imagination and feeling (Mertes, 2004).

With the age of science the study of the mind has also become scientific and there is a worry that the reductionist, empirical method is leaving big gaps in our understanding. Hillman notes “what remains unsaid in us if forever angling to come into view, it seeks its art” and notes “as psychology grows scientific, art becomes its unconscious” (Hillman, 1983, pp. xi -xii). Art does indeed appear to treat the human condition (Harpur, 2003, pp. 115-116) as image appears to not only heal the mind but provide a canvas of possibilities for the world. Artists have always constructed their realities, Blake

devised his own mythology, a private reality, preferring to 'create' a system rather than be enslaved by another man and Cornell said art was "beyond the reach of those who are slaves of others" (Hartigan, 2008, p. 37). The evolving mind of the west has unshackled us from any objective reality and we can look to a famous quote from German-Swiss artist Hermann Hesse (1877- 1962) to see a reflection of our new world. Hesse said "there is no reality except the one contained within us. That is why so many people live an unreal life. They take images outside them for reality and never allow the world within them to assert itself" (Moss, 2007, p. 172). We need to look within ourselves for that secret internal psychic map of self-development that artists and alchemists have found. To do that, we first need to power up our imaginations to break down the many dualistic facets of our personality, and then use it to synthesize the parts into a greater a psychic wholeness that permeates everything around us with imagination. Imagination is our reality as well as the beginning, middle and end of it.

*"It is the great dream which has always spoken through the artist as mouthpiece" – Carl Jung*

The End

What we can do to cultivate the imagination?

Everyone is born with an imagination and it is still alive in our dreams; it is our overwhelming current literal focus that leaves it unused. If we are to adapt to our environment, we need to awaken the imagination and let it breath. Once awakened it will feed its self as studies of consciousness have shown what you expect to see increases the likelihood of you seeing it and energy appears to flows where the attention goes. The main question for today is how to awaken this golden psychic guide?

Jill Bolte Taylor is a brain scientist who suffered a stroke 12 years ago; she sees the damage to the left hemisphere of her brain as a revelation and insight. Suddenly there was no judgment or

analytical rationality only big moments, big possibilities, euphoric present moment awareness and a newborn feeling (Taylor, 2008) provided by the right side. She says “people can chose to live a more peaceful compassionate life by hooking into brain circuitry and stepping into the right”.

The imagination does not seem to restrict itself to the left or right side, tapping into a psychic source once stimulated, stimulation can be provided a number of ways. Surrealism advocated the idea that ordinary and depictive expressions were vital and important, but that the sense of their arrangement must be open to the full range of imagination. Children and Surrealist artists seem to be able to make wild unexpected links that give an element of surprise. Cornell’s new world was made up out of the old, by re-using found objects he was able to give them fresh purpose and deliver something new. Imagination and memory are two powers that appear to be impossible to separate as the mind constructs concepts primarily as sensory thoughts and feelings and memories are largely imagistic in form, we can use tools like free association and dream imagery to awaken a new colorful world view.

In Roszak’s book, the curative effects of imagination were thought to come about by activating the forces of the imagination through sensory and physical stimulation. Cornell gained stimulation from his locale in New York with its “multisensory environment that mingled textures, colors, sounds and scents” (Hartigan, 2008, p. 34), feeling them viscerally and perhaps even synaesthetically (Hartigan, 2008, p. 87). Music was able “envelope his in a liqracious atmosphere” that liberated his tendency towards free association (Hartigan, 2008, p. 23). Leonardo da Vinci’s method was to stare at a blank wall - not be literally blank but stained, cracked and discolored, where you stare until images form in your mind (Moss, 2007, p. 218), a similar strategy of the alchemists whose discipline was built on the psychological phenomenon of projection; too much or too little attention either way could spoil the work.

Also in Roszak's book Victor says the imagination is “an eye of the mind that sees into other worlds” (Roszak, 1995, p. 94) and artists like him appear to be able to tap into an imaginal intuition to

highlight and change their world views. Tarnas says 'Imaginal Intuition' is "not a subjective distortion, but is the human fulfillment of realities essential wholeness, which has been send asunder by dualistic perception" (Tarnas, 1991, p. 434). It is our psychic guide that can help us reconnect to our soul purpose. Hillman suggests the key to re-establishing a third realm (soul/psychic reality) between theology and scientism is metaphor. Double Vision (imagination) can also be cultivated "by as sense of metaphor which as its etymology suggests, is the ability to "carry across" (Harpur, 2003, p. 90). Metaphor is a bridge we can build between internal image and language, and it is being highlighted as a remedy for the restricted narrow literal perception of today. Blake distinguished between "seeing with the eye and seeing through it" and insisted his poems could be transformed by the power of creative imagination into true accounts of the natural world rather than just words (Harpur, 2003, p. 86).

Many feel a cultivation of the child within us will help, Moss tells us to "reclaim from the past the wisdom of the child mind. Build your home in the imagination strong enough and you may find it is a place of creative birthing we all long for" (Moss, 2007, p. 174). Blake saw the limitless mind of a child being darkened by the adult one. He first created a world of innocence where the inhabitants are child-like and are completely accepting of knowledge without any concern for truth or meaning. He then progresses to the world of experience where nature has been abandoned and evil prevails as a result. (Whitney). Wandsworth also "recognized the numinous vision of the natural child possesses a deeper insight into reality than the opaque, disenchanted perspective of the conventional adult" (Tarnas, 1991, p. 369) . Blake saw the imagination as essential to individual happiness because it allowed the individual to "half-create" the world (Whitney). Cornell kept Blake's Songs of Innocents in his scrape book as inspiration and conflated the worlds of child and adult, being "a child of new evaluations of common things" (Hartigan, 2008, p. 37). He often created a fine line between playful and macabre that is not uncommon in a child's world of make believe. Baum equally had to keep the mind of a child alive to be able to create such a believable magical world where nature is animate and respect and love unite man

and machine. Ultimately, in this view, our sense of separateness is just an illusion, manufactured by the narrow preoccupations of the mind.

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