

The First Exeter Arts and Therapies Conference

'Authenticity, Pragmatism and Survival in Art Therapy'.

March 23rd 2002.

Speakers:

MICHAEL EDWARDS: 'Liquid assets: Adventures in complex allegiances, subtle obligations and unlabelled living'

Art therapists have never been so accountable. Does this dedicated accountability constrain the potential of art processes in the service of healing? What, for example, are the parameters for 'evidence-based practice,' or 'even continuing professional development?' The making of pictorial images is a dynamic and often anarchic process, perhaps not easily evaluated in terms of new psychological theories, or the refinement of ethical concerns. 'Art' is essential to our professional title. How are we to understand its essence and scope in the present context?

Michael Edwards trained in fine art then worked as a Jungian art therapist at the Withymead Centre, Exeter. He established art therapy training programmes at Birmingham and Montreal, and then trained as a Jungian analyst in Zurich, where he was also Curator of the CG Jung Picture Archives. He is currently Director and was a founder of the Champenowne Trust annual summer course at Cumberland Lodge, Windsor. He is in private practice as an analyst and art psychotherapist in Cornwall, where he also teaches on an art therapy foundation course.

CAROLINE CASE: 'Authenticity and Survival: working with mess, aggression, chaos and anger.'

This talk focussed on children who are hard to reach through autistic defences and consider the chaos that can emerge when these breakdown. How do therapist and child survive these sessions? Consideration will then be given to the images emerging in the created play space between child and therapist that can hold the tension between merging and separation. This paper was subsequently published in The British Journal of Art Therapy. Caroline Case is in private practice as an art therapist, working with children and adults. She also works in the N.H.S. as a child psychotherapist in Bristol. She has published widely in art therapy including:- Working with Children in Art Therapy , Handbook of Art Therapy, both with Tessa Dalley

DOUGLAS GILL: 'Dwelling, Wandering and Lingerin g in the Therapeutic Studio'.

Can the true nature of art take place in an environment made clinical? In the 1960s Dr R D Laing and the Philadelphia Association developed therapeutic households as places of asylum away from the psychiatric institutions. Since its inception Studio Upstairs continues to be informed by the philosophical thinking of the Philadelphia Association and its relevance to psychiatry, art therapy and contemporary art today.

Douglas Gill is a founder and director of Studio Upstairs - an art and psychotherapy resource in the community. He trained in psychoanalytic psychotherapy with the Philadelphia Association and has given a number of talks on the phenomenology of art in relation to psychotherapy. He is based in Bristol developing a 2nd Studio, where he also has a private practice.