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ARCHETYPAL ART AS A MEANS TOWARD WHOLENESS[1]

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THE VALUE OF THE IMAGE IN LIFE AND ART

Painting symbolic expressions from our psyche in images is an inherent human capacity that communicates a potential of consciousness beyond the scope of sensorial, rational thought. When someone enters into the mythic and symbolic dimension, they encounter a primal way of knowing that is unusual and that may appear unbelievable to the logical mental constructs we have been accustomed to call reality. Beyond our conscious mind, which reflects the ego, deeper than the personal unconscious, in the collective unconscious where our archetypes reside, there exists another mind directing our actions. This deeper consciousness perceives in a way that is not conditioned by our sense perceptions. It is another dimension of reality of which we may not have conscious knowledge. Mechanisms of subliminal repression prevent it from arising to consciousness because it may flood ego boundaries. We can observe certain phenomena appearing from this dimension, such as dreams or extrasensory perception, but ultimately we cannot reduce the language of the unconscious to terms of consciousness because it is a way of knowing that does not operate in a linear time sequence or by deductive logic. Jung said that the unconscious has an altogether different way of thinking and understanding from what we understand as thinking. Of this different form of knowing John Weir Perry (1974) has written:

> In all of us, only a hairsbreadth below the level of conscious rational functioning, there is quite another state of being with an altogether different ... way of growing to meet it. And that state of being, or that world, since it is experienced in terms of images and symbols, metaphors, and myths, is considered mad and worthy only of banishment from the sane world of common sense. (p. 6)

In a description of my own deep symbolic process as depicted in my paintings (Bello, 1991, Chap. 1), I make statements that cannot be verified or evaluated rationally, however, I require the freedom to express my symbolic process in this form. Willis Harman (1988) has called for just such an approach:

> Instead of starting with a limiting bias and having to defend against the anomalous, let us start with the assumption that *any class of inner experiences that have been reported, or of phenomena that have been observed, down through the ages and across cultures apparently in some sense exist and have a face validity that cannot be denied.* (Harman, 1988, p. 15)

As a result of my personal experiences in painting spontaneously and encouraging other people to do so, I have observed how through art, working over a period of time, we encounter a powerful tool of creative expression that integrates emotional experience with cognitive perception. Furthermore, I have found that this process may direct the individual on a personal odyssey or quest toward experiencing wholeness (Jung) and self-actualization (Maslow), the process of self-actualization that Abraham Maslow (1968) identified as a tendency or need to grow toward a unity of personality and full expression of one's individual identity, and the process of development toward wholeness Carl Jung (1952/1956) defined as individuation, where the ego relates to the Self in a new way, can both be realized and accelerated through expressing one's living symbols.

By "spontaneous painting process," I mean painting courageously whatever comes up from your unconscious and establishes a connection with the Self. Through painting spontaneously, that is, not copying external forms but facing a blank canvas and allowing the unconscious to express itself, the thinking, rational mind relaxes and allows another process to take control. First we have to relax the critical mind. In the spontaneous painting process esthetic considerations of beauty or ugliness do not apply. Here the artist is primarily concerned with the expression of emotion and permitting anything to manifest through the image. The painter expresses new "affect images" in the form of symbols that over time are assimilated into consciousness. Spontaneous painting may produce

> a high arousal state in which the energy has been withdrawn from the ego functions and from the complexes that govern the everyday activity of the emotions and has, instead, been concentrated at the deeper levels of the psyche which are composed of the emotionally laden, symbolic affect images. (Perry, 1973, p. 64)

Elsewhere, Perry (1970) states: "The image renders the meaning of the emotion; the emotion gives the image its dynamism" (Perry, 1970, p. 2).

This method does not direct itself to analysis of pathology, but to evocation of the raw potentiality within the individual, which gets defined over time as unconscious content rises to consciousness. Jung believed that the unconscious reflects the individual's potentials and life purpose. My work is directed toward exploring and arousing these directions. Carl Jung

[1] This is a revision of the Introduction to the author's doctoral dissertation at Union Institute (Bello, 1991). It is published here because what Bello writes about drawing out the meaning of symbolic imagery in painting is analogous to the process of understanding those spontaneous experiences we have labelled *exceptional*. In addition, because of her description of the way she grew into the technique presented here, this is a partial EHE autobiography. - Ed

wrote: "The main interest in my work is not concerned with the treatment of neurosis, but rather with the approach to the numinous .... The fact is that the approach to the numinous is the real therapy" (in Jaffé, 1979, p. 123).

The numinous element defies rational, logical explanation. An intensely felt emotion may arouse the numinous element and evoke a symbol that channels the psyche's energy (or libido), taking it up to the conscious world in the form of the painted image. The symbol is contained within the image. Even though we may not know the meaning of the symbol, meaning is not immediately essential.

By painting spontaneously we may bypass the defenses of the ego. Words need to be understood by the rational mind, whereas images do not need to be understood rationally to be effective in provoking inner movement of the psyche. In therapy, we often try to talk about or analyze a feeling, whereas in spontaneous painting we are participating in a symbol-making process. Certain contents within the unconscious have been unleashed that will begin to ferment within the psyche, and over time they may lead the individual to integrate unconscious contents with consciousness. The unification of these two modalities through what Jung (1960) termed the *transcendent function* may occur when art creates a bridge between the unconscious and the conscious world, the symbolic mind and the intellect, the creative drive and the phenomenal world.

I have observed in my own work and in the work of some of my students that through the process of spontaneous painting, individuals may rebalance their masculine and feminine polarities. The dominant mode of therapy in patriarchal industrial societies relies on lexical rather than visual communication to reveal deep unconscious content. Freud's model uses a verbal rather than a visual approach to express unconscious material. He had a more rational approach to understanding the unconscious than Jung, who believed that analytical reason alone could not heal the psyche. This form of therapy reflects a dysfunction in society, favoring linguistic and auditory forms of communication. The *word* is a masculine characteristic. *Art*, according to Jung, has a feminine quality. The one-sided verbal approach limits the ways in which we express ourselves, confining us mainly to an ego-centered consciousness that reflects the orderly dimension of temporal time. Priestley (1964) refers to this as Time One. We have learned how to express our rational mind through words, but most people, save the poets, have difficulty expressing their soul and their heart in words.

We have not been taught to acknowledge messages from our psyche. Many people in technological cultures are experiencing great pain, alienation, and rootlessness. Many find life meaningless and feel empty inside. According to Murdock (1990):

> We have separated from our feelings and our spiritual natures. We are lonely for deep connection. We yearn for affiliation and community, for the positive, strong nurturing qualities of the feminine that have been missing from this culture .... We yearn for a strong powerful female parent. (pp. 131-132)

We also yearn for a visionary, wise male parent.

The overemphasis of the rational side of consciousness is a the root of the mental disaffections of modern times (Progoff 1953). In many cultures the very existence of the psychic disorders that we call neuroses and psychoses result from a betrayal of the self[1] by society, the Great Castrator, and by an imbalance between the conscious and unconscious tensions (Gruen 1986). Most of the time we perceive from an ego-controlled reality of prestructured ideas, activities, and social codes that separate us from our essential nature. When so much of our being does not align with our cultural norms and is forced to conform or be repressed, we create an unhealthy situation for the individual and for the society.

The patriarchal fathers of the Western world did not have the foresight of the American Indians to consider the tremendous effect their perspective would have on the next seven generations. We, the recipients of almost 500 years of this worldview, are now reaping its effects on our mental health and on our ecosystems. Michael Polyani (1966) believes that the main influence of science on humanity has not been through the advancement of technology but through the effect of science on our worldview. Perhaps the time is coming when technological societies will have to value other modes of perception aside from the sensory. It may be that the purpose of awakening nonsensory states of knowing is to contribute to the evolution of humanity's consciousness.

Creative expression is intimately linked to mental health. Other ways of knowing and mind potentials, such as developing one's imagination, intuition, self-esteem, personal mythology, as well as the creative characteristics of risk-taking and the ability to live with ambiguity, to name a few, must be encouraged in developing technological cultures. It is essential that we all realize that "if we say that imagination stands for inner reality and cultural requirements stand for outer reality, it becomes incumbent on the individual to recognize both realities and to learn to strike a balance between them" (Neumann, 1973, p. 68).

In my work, I encourage people to define the limiting beliefs of their inner critic, to delineate those fears that hold them back from manifesting their unique inner beauty, from speaking from their heart, and from being more spontaneous and authentic. Initially, it is difficult to hear messages coming from one's inner voice, for it has been ignored for so long. I provide channels for the unconscious process to express itself, and I try to lead persons away from societal directives and social roles reflecting limiting belief systems or conditioning toward a deeper awareness of other depth dimensions existing within them. Once the point of contact is established and a relationship exists whereby the inner being initiates expression, a new structure of personality comes into being, not deliberately but spontaneously, leading one to pursue a meaningful life direction and contact

[1] The term "self" will only be capitalized when referring to Gruen's and Jung's concept of Self.

with their inner power of wisdom (see Progoff, 1985, pp. 146-147). It is difficult for most people to initially have the courage to trust what glints come from their deeper selves. But how can people follow the voice of their own inner wisdom if they don't believe in it or if they don't take the time to listen or search for it?

In the spontaneous painting process it is essential to develop a sensitivity and respect for the inner voice of the Self trying to emerge and not censor it. I have observed in my own painting process and in my students' work that an image wants to express something but sometimes the rational mind does not allow it to happen. In one painting, for example, my deep psyche wanted to paint a child in between a couple, but "I" censored the idea. However, the energy the symbol of the child represented would not be repressed, and it appeared in the next painting I did. Neither dreams nor art can be encased by our logical mental constructs. One of my students told me how she wanted to paint birds flying in the night sky, but her intellect told her that these birds do not fly in the night, so she did not paint them. In *Women's Ways of Knowing* (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986), the authors describe how it felt for women they interviewed to gain confidence in their inner voice:

> Early in the transition into subjectivism, women can have a difficult time identifying the new source of knowing. ... Subjective knowers may be shaky about their own judgment but are proud if others affirm their conclusions and opinions. Some told us they were mystified that they could know something before others and had no idea where their own good ideas came from. . . Other women were better able to describe this newly recognized power of subjective knowing. It was as if there were some oracle within that stood opposed to the voices and dictums of the outside world. ... These women do not see themselves as constructors of truth, but as conduits through which truth emerges. (pp. 68, 69)

Biological Implications of Image-Making

Our early emotional responses developed before our verbal and semantic responses. Because they were seen, felt, and experienced on a preverbal level, these emotions may be more readily translated through a visual than a verbal mode. Images are one of humankind's oldest forms of expression of the soul. David Bohm (1988) points out:

> Images are important in that the neocortex can express itself in images. Images are a key bridge between the older emotional brain and the more intellectual neocortex ... The rapid evolutionary growth of the neocortex and intellect, however, has not come into harmony with the rest of the biological system . We need to learn how to use images to integrate the old brain and body, we need to integrate the limbic system and "reptilian" brain with the neocortex. (pp. 26, 28)

A great number of people abandon their image-making ability in grade school, leaving it for professionals in art-related fields. Yet, it is an important predisposition, a biological ability with which we were born, but which only artists have tended to develop. Schweiger (1985) writes:

> The arts represent, perhaps, the independent development of vestigial forms of communication originating with phylogenetically earlier, preverbal effective intraspecies exchange. It is assumed here that the artist, producing a work of art, serves to articulate heretofore amorphous emotional states. Different artistic activities will be associated with somewhat different neuroanatomical substrates than language. Because of this, the right hemisphere may provide the neural substrate for fresh perspectives or insights, simply because of its different mental modes of operandi. (pp. 360-361)

Human visual information is generally processed in the right hemisphere, and the left hemisphere specializes in verbal information and sound arranged in meaningful sequences. According to Jungian Ernest Rossi (1977), "Jung's concepts of archetype, collective unconscious and symbol are more closely associated with the use of the imagery, gestalt and visuospatial characteristics of right hemispheric functioning" (p. 42). It has been observed in the brains of premature fetuses, as well as in cats' and rats' brains that the right hemisphere develops before the left (Geschwind & Galaburda, 1978).

Long before the anatomical apparatus used in spoken language evolved, the organs of vision were already highly developed. In the darkness of the uterus, one lunar month after conception, the embryo's brain, eyes, and hands are already taking form. The retina is an outgrowth of the developing brain:

> Up to about the eighteenth week of its fetal development there is a striking correspondence between the several layers of the retina and the brain cortex .... Human vision outranks all other senses in the abundance of its sensory, motor, autonomic and higher cortical ramifications. There are a million fibers in the optical nerve and they have vast representation within both the ancient brain and the neopallium. Each eye has more than 100,000 photoreceptors in the retina, which consists of highly specialized neurons. The retina has been likened to an island of the central nervous system with a cable of incoming and outgoing nerve fibers establishing connection with the main body. (Gesell, 1952, p. 51)

The following evidence suggests that the capacity to create visual images may have profound potentials and implications that we have not yet fully understood or developed: the human eye, which develop shortly after conception, is intricately con-

nected to the brain; the right hemisphere, which specializes in the processing of visual information, has been observed to develop before the left; the development of the capacity for discriminating visual stimuli occurs before motor differentiation, which continues on until late childhood; the visual motor activity of picture-making occurs early in the cognitive development of the human child.

Desmond Morris (1962) has researched how "apes, both young and adult, can become engrossed in picture-making to the point where ... they may prefer it to being fed and will exhibit temper-tantrums if they are stopped" (p. 144). He observed, especially in the case of chimpanzees, that when their survival needs were met, they engaged in "self-rewarding activities," or "activities for activities' sake." Morris notes that such activities "may inadvertently keep the animal mentally and physically healthy and thus indirectly assist in its struggle for survival, but the actual driving force behind these self-rewarding activities appears to be simply the unleashing of surplus nervous energy" (p. 144).

Humans have a natural predisposition to draw, whereas language must be learned. Children who were brought up by wolves in the forest do not develop a language system on their own. Perhaps inherited tendencies for symbol formation, which may manifest through the natural ability of the human species to draw images, are an extension of the perpetual, biological self-actualizing creative process present in all organic processes of life.

Philosophy of Art—Plan or Directing Principle in Nature?

Some physicists have theorized that an intelligence is built into the forms of life existing in the universe. I believe that the symbols aroused in spontaneous paintings may function as catalysts through which the directive creative principle in nature manifests in the individual's psyche. Through this process of exteriorizing unconscious imaginable content the individual activates his or her unconscious potential, aligning it with the self-organizing process at work in the Universal Mind (Bateson, 1979) as both processes participate in nature's creative act. In this sense, personal unfolding and global unfolding are united.

Through the act of expressing unconscious emotions and memories spontaneously through our natural ability to create images, our own creative process may unfold a life purpose that exists in a dormant state in the psyche. I agree with Ira Progoff's conception of the human psyche as a directive principle that exists inside each of us in seed form. As an embryo grows to maturity following a directing principle inherent in the seed of the individual organism, so too, "assuming no severe illness or accident happens to impede the seed tendencies from actualizing themselves, the principle that guides the process of growth all through the life of the individual is what we speak of as *psyche*" (Progoff, 1963, p. 73). The analogy often used for this is that of the acorn growing into the oak tree.

Art can express the pulse of life. When we are living from the pulse of our spirit, we may experience more instances of synchronicity in our lives, as if by living out one's creative process, individuals align with a similar process occurring in the universe. George Leonard, in The *Silent Pulse* (1978), asks: "What would happen to your self aware consciousness if your center were also the center of the universe?" (p. 184). The sense of identification with the universe characterizes a spiritual artist. This act involves a participatory epistemology, which was early set forth by Goëthe, Hegel, and Rudolf Steiner. Tarnas (1990) notes that, in essence,

> This perspective acknowledge ... that all human knowledge of the world is in some sense determined by subjective principles; ... [which] are in fact an expression of nature's own spirit, and that the human mind is ultimately the organ of nature's own process of self-revelation. ... A developed inner life is thus indispensable for cognition. ... The spirit of nature brings forth its *own* order through the human mind when that mind is employing its full complement of faculties—intellectual, volitional, emotional, sensory, and imaginative. (p. 12)

Philosophers such as Aristotle, Teillard de Chardin, and Mircea Eliade, as well as scientists such as Paul Davies, Wolfgang Pauli, and Ilya Prigogine, to name a few, have written of a plan or self-directing principle through which the universe is constantly creating and actualizing itself. According to Davies (1988),

> An increasing number of scientists and writers have come to realize that the ability of the physical world to organize itself constitutes a fundamental, and deeply mysterious property of the universe. The fact that nature has *creative power*, and is able to produce a progressively richer variety of complex forms and structures, challenges the very foundation of contemporary science.... Prigogine and Stengers dedicate their book to Erich Jantsch, whose earlier work *The Self-Organizing Universe* also expounds the view that nature has a sort of "free will" and is thereby capable of generating novelty. (p. 5)

Gregory Bateson (1979) has observed that the individual mind is immanent not only in the body but also in the pathways and messages outside the body; and there is a larger Mind of which the individual mind is only a subsystem. He proposes that this larger mind is perhaps what some people mean by God, "but it is still immanent in the total interconnected social system and planetary ecology." Gowan (1975) believes that the process of individual evolutionary development and the evolutionary development of the species are both moving toward greater contact and unity with the numinous element or the universal mind. Perhaps all life in the universe forms one gigantic organism that is always in the process of unfolding to a higher level of complexity. This unfolding may emerge through

the practice of spiritual art.

Spiritual Art

One of the objectives of spiritual art is to help us resonate with our deeper emotions. The concern of spiritual art is with the world beyond the ego, which is just as real as the phenomenal world. In the mind exist hidden unused potentials, which I believe the spontaneous process of imagination augments and develops. Just as the stars are always in the sky even though we are unable to see them because of the light of day, our overreliance on the ego and rational thought blinds us to other potentials of perception that the mind is capable of experiencing at deeper levels. To leave the secure, orderly dimension of temporal rational time, which Priestley (1964) refers to as Time One, requires great confidence in one's inner process. It is necessary to achieve a state of total surrender and trust, allowing other potentials of the mind to direct the ego in the direction toward growth of the Self.

Often people become so absorbed during painting that after awhile they lose all notion of time and enter into a meditative state in which thoughts gradually diminish. In this altered state the painter is one with the process of symbolic painting. It is here that the artist may enter into what Priestley has termed Time Two and Time Three. Times Two and Three are independent of our rational cognition. In Time Two we begin to move from our personality to our essential self, which is never realized in Time One. We may contact the memory storage center and experience precognition, distant viewing, or have a sense of déjà vu.[2] In Time Three there are greater experiences of synchronicity, insights, and actualizations of our potentials. In this dimension we connect to the creative layers of ideas and to our biopsychic blueprint. We must become more completely our Selves before dissolving into selfless consciousness and experiencing a feeling of oneness with the cosmic order (Priestley, 1964).

The unconscious mind uses the conscious mind as a transcribing instrument to actualize creative potential and insights. At times, seemingly pathological symptoms are likely to appear during the creative process of spiritual evolution. The individual needs to remember that they are signs of growth. It is difficult to associate to them because it requires entering into the aroused affect state and assuming the role of the archetypal character in the drama (Perry, telephone conversation). When one of my unconscious mythological characters, a 2,000-year-old spiritual woman, for instance, would spontaneously appear in my ego state, this process of one reality entering another provoked fear and confusion because the "I" was not in control.

A great deal of archetypal content catalyzed by the symbols continues to operate long after the painting has been completed, and its effect will continue to influence consciousness until the symbol extinguishes itself. The time its effect lasts corresponds to the fecundity of one's symbols. Although they reside within us, they have a life of their own. James Hillman believes that when an image is realized fully, when it is imagined as a living being, then it becomes a guide: "The image lives; is treated with respect; is distinct from the person of the client and the therapist; is to be interpreted and understood phenomenologically, on its own terms; is sacred, and a manifestation of the gods themselves" (in McNiff, 1986, p. 99). As a result of the symbol's gradual unfolding, I believe that some spontaneous paintings have the capacity of portraying multi-dimensional aspects of time (such as future events) and are precognitive. Almost all the paintings in this series portrayed future conditions (new perceptions and states of awareness) or events (specific happenings) that occurred sometimes months or years after the paintings were completed. Peter Rogers (1987) confirmed that his paintings portrayed events that later happened in his life. Both Edinger (1985, 1990) and McNiff (1989) have also observed this capacity of symbolic art to manifest precognitive events: the symbolism clearly represented something that had not yet occurred. This capacity to portray other dimensions of time, in my opinion, qualifies a painting as archetypal.

Archetypal Art

Historical Perspective

Painting and visual imagery are one of the oldest forms of expression of our species. Long before language was ever recorded, we have evidence of early human cave art dating from about 50,000 B.C. Art from its conception had a spiritual significance. The first artists were often shamans. They painted pictures on their cave walls, deep inside the recesses of Mother Earth, where fertility rites and rituals were held. For many Stone Age people, God was feminine. Archaeological evidence from the burial sites at Catal Hujuk, Turkey indicates that the cave painters were women, as only the women's graves contained painter's tools (Johnson, 1990).

It may have been believed that the female shamans were representatives of the Primordial Mother. When they entered into trance states and painted images of animal figures six or seven feet long deep within the dark womb-like caverns in the earth, perhaps it was imagined that the female shaman was a channel of the Goddess, the creator and nourisher of life. Through rituals of sympathetic magic, which included painting animal images, they connected to her divine source of power.

To understand the present multi-faceted cultural crises we need to adopt an extremely broad view and see our situation in the context of human cultural evolution. Eisler (1987) describes how, over a series of invasions that began in the 5th millennium B.C. in Old Europe, the social and religious structures

[2] The psychic and artist Ingo Swann (1987) relates how, when being tested for extrasensory perception (ESP), he was able to identify more targets accurately when he drew them as opposed to when he relied on his verbal processing mode. In his book *Natural ESP* he writes: "Basic imaging occurs long before words are learned to describe those images. Imaging, then, is closer and more intimately connected to the psychic nucleus and the ESP core. Any information derived psychically from the second reality by the deeper self is first processed as imaging. Later in the chain of interpretation, the images are translated into the language the individual normally uses" (Swann, 1987, p. 74).

that were centered in Goddess worship were conquered by warriors who brought with them male gods of war. These invaders imposed their ideology on the peoples of the lands they conquered. Whereas in the Goddess-oriented societies there existed a system of partnership and a general nondifferentiation of gender roles between males and females, in their place these new rulers inflicted their belief system, which included the concepts of male superiority and dominance and subordination of the female. The seeds of many of the gender role beliefs we hold today originated during this period.

It is a common phenomenon that in societies where a revolution or change of power takes place, the new group in control destroys the art work, legends, and beliefs of the conquered culture so that they will not live on in the people's minds. Art was considered to be particularly potent, according to Kris:

> The interdict against art in the Hebrew and Mohammedan, and the temporary and partial interdict in Christian civilization is based upon the belief of the magic potency of imagery: According to a widely spread notion, images give power over what they depict. In the folklore of art, the creator of the image is close to the sorcerer and magician. (1952, p. 48)

With the initiation of patriarchal society came the decline of modes of perception that did not fit into beliefs of the male system. In Western culture, there gradually arose an overemphasis on secondary process thinking and a repression of the feminine ways of knowing. By the 17th century, means of perception that could not be measured, controlled, or predicted were not trusted. People were also culturally discouraged from developing their imagination, inspiration, and intuition.

Western culture is currently experiencing a transformation in how the world perceives the feminine archetype. This is an important historical moment. It appears that Western culture is redefining its patriarchal values and may be progressing toward a balance or divine marriage between male and female polarities. It may imply returning to the concept of nondominance, of viewing each other as human beings independent of gender biases and imposed social roles.

In order for this to occur, a new context of the feminine archetype is emerging. The effects of the resurgence of women's influence in the power structure, and the movement in the "new physics" led by Bohm, Capra, and others are reflected in a receptivity and acceptance of other ways of knowing in addition to logical deductive thinking.

Patriarchal dominance is one aspect of the masculine principle. Patriarchal characteristics include the need to be powerful and in control or authority, the need to repeat the same model and not be open to change, domination by ego consciousness and an overreliance on reason and logic, materialistic science, competition, mass production, and standardization. Other aspects of the masculine principle include protection, organization, direction, production, assertiveness, decision-making, aggression, discrimination, discipline, logic, consciousness, and wisdom.

The feminine principle is a universal pattern in the human psyche that Jung called an archetype and, like the masculine, it is not restricted to one gender, but is present in both men and women. The feminine principle implies certain characteristics: a sense of caring for life, an ability to relate on deep emotional levels, being in touch with one's maternal roots of relatedness, cooperation, valuing relationships, introspection, thinking intuitively, surrender and receptivity, nonaction, peace, and being in harmony with life and the world order.

The Feminine Principle

A significant archetype[3] appearing in my art work is that of the Great Mother. It is a repetitive theme that runs through the entire series of my recent work. In reviewing my paintings from 1984 to 1990, the major theme of the process occurring over this six-year period was the balancing of my masculine and feminine polarities. This balance was needed because at one time my personality was dominated by a patriarchal model that encouraged me to believe that I was dependent, incapable, and frail, which then repressed aspects of my true feminine potential and prevented them from emerging.

When I began to actualize the repressed feminine within, it was accompanied by an awareness that I had a mission or a life's purpose, but I did not know what it was. Today, I have a "known sense" that I am here in service of the feminine principle. The Great Mother archetype, an important aspect of the feminine principle, is working through me. I sense that I am here to reintroduce feminine ways of knowing into Western culture, renewing the meaning of art for spiritual healing.

Throughout my work there is an abundance of feminine images that are symbols of the nutritive and creative aspects of the Tellus Matus, or Great Mother: trees with long, umbilical roots going deep within the earth; orchids; vaginas; the breasts and belly of the Earth Mother; the uroboros as symbol of creation; the vase or chalice; the uterus of the earth as seen in cross-section; and women walking with the staff of the half-moon, to name a few. Over time, as the symbols matured, I began to see a latent expression of my inner feminine principle emerge out of my own creative process in the image of the Great Mother archetype. For others, the feminine principle may emerge in other ways (e.g., as the Queen, the Seductress, the girl-child), but for me it took the form of the Earth Mother.

After several years of painting symbols from my unconscious, I began to perceive that the painting reflected an archetypal drama that was being played out on various psychological levels in my life. For example, on the level of the personal unconscious these paintings were healing my inner orphan, the puella "eternal girl" personality, and the wound in the inner daughter-father and daughter-mother relationship. On a deeper level, I was healing the imbalance between my masculine and

[3] An archetype is a universal theme or motif that has its origin in what Jung called the collective unconscious. It is a preexistent form of thought, feeling, and imagery that is part of the inherited structure of the psyche and is common to all humans.

feminine polarities, learning how to assert and reconnect to my creative source of power. In this renewal process I saw a vision of reality behind the rational. On a personal level, I was rebirthing myself. On a mythological level, I felt that I was birthing a new light or consciousness for humanity.

This kind of art comes from something far deeper than a purely human source: it comes from nature itself, from the collective unconscious, which brings forth through living symbols the individual's unconscious, along with its own gradually unfolding reality. "An authentic symbol serves to deliver one from subjectivity and self-interest into an opening toward Spirit and, finally, access to the universal" (Dillistone, 1986, p. 146).

Sometimes, while painting, I felt as if I were being led and used as a channel. The symbols emerged spontaneously, and at times forcefully, from my creative process. I did not plan them intellectually. They often reflected symbols from the collective unconscious because they contained common identifiable themes found in alchemy, myths, and in the imagery of other cultures. For example, when I painted a uroboros, I do not remember ever having seen a snake devouring its tail, nor did I know what the word meant at that time. A painting of a cosmic egg or vessel to incubate the birth of the divine child was not done consciously.

Nise da Silveira (1981), a pioneering Jungian analyst who for more than 40 years worked with schizophrenic and mentally-ill patients, observed that images occurring in schizophrenic art work[4] could also be found in past cultures of antiquity of which these patients had no known knowledge. Jung (1956) reported observing similar occurrences. He believed that if we contact deeper dimensions of the mind in the collective unconscious, we find the archetypal symbols and patterns of humanity. Therefore, archetypal art is creative work dominated by common human themes represented in images so vital and meaningful that they evoke a memory or recognition of that theme, or an unconscious resonance with that theme, on the part of those who encounter the art work (whether it be a painting, sculpture, poem, film, dance, or other artistic expression).

Models of the Renewal Process

All my paintings in a series presented in my dissertation (Bello, 1991) are part of a reconstructive process occurring in the Self which can be broken down into cycles of development. These paintings span a six-year period and comprise several cycles and cycle/units (Progoff, 1963), by which I mean that each art work I produced is a unit of experience. Those units or paintings expressing related themes or common images comprise a cycle. Several examples of the cycles portrayed in my journey are confronting demonic forces; rebirth with embryos being exploded out into the universe; initiation, as my S dimensional double (Arguelles, 1989) enters doorways other side of which is light; descent to the underworld; d tion and transformation; the inner warrior ascending; co tation with the Terrible Mother and Terrible Father arche rebirth and reencounter with my feminine force; the un the masculine and feminine polarities, the Goddess birt new logos; the inner marriage; and the birth of the I Child.

In ancient Chinese philosophy, the word for process is translated as Tao, or the way. Each cycle comprises a g movement within the overall process. Each person mar these *archetypal* stages or cycles according to their own sonal unconscious. These cycles do not necessarily fol linear time sequence and may be repetitive.

John Perry (1974) has identified several stages, whi observed in the reconstructive process of the psychotic in ual, that coincide with several of the stages I experienced creative renewal process of the Self. He formulates the ments of the process (of renewal) in 10 categories, involv center; death and dismemberment, return to the beginnir world creation; also to one's personal birth and suckling breast; a cosmic conflict of opposing principles; the thre the reversal of opposites, notably the sexual identity apotheosis as ruler, hero or savior, a union in a sacred mar of mythological cast; new life, birth or rebirth; a mess program for a new society, and finally the gradual formati a world image in the form of a quadrated circle or mandala pp. 29-30).

Edward Edinger (1985) also relates the stages in th chemical process to this self-therapeutic process. The va alchemical stages described in the quest to turn base m into gold, which symbolizes the Self, are the *Calcinatio Mortificatio*, or going through the fire, suffering, death, destruction of the ego; the *Solutio*, or dissolving the mental forms and coming into contact with the unconscious *Coagulatio*, or taking form, grounding in the earth; the *S matio*, or revelation, inspiration, objectivity, allowing relea the creative force; and the *Coniunctio*, or chemical coml tion, making connections, integration.

According to Progoff (1980), "the continuity of pro moves by means of cycles. And the nature of cycles is that are a combination of opposites in motion" (p. 55). I think process of individuation follows a spiral path. Washburn (1 proposes that in the spiral perspective, regression is inherer transcendence. Emotion is energy in motion. When we are moving between the polarities, our emotional energy gets s on one of the polarities. When there is a strong obstacle prevents the libido's natural flow, the libido moves in reg sion, the balance between the opposites is broken apart, and psyche splits. In the renewal process, the conflict that oc when opposites fall apart and the cognitive structure breaks generates additional energy, but it is energy that is not g anywhere. If this state continues, the energy continues accu lating, not progressing outward and upward; eventually it

[4] Doctor Nise da Silveira was the director of O Museu do Inconsciente, Hospital Psiquatrico Dom Pedro II, Engenho de Dentro, Rio de Janeiro. Collections of more than 300,000 paintings and drawings of mental patients spanning a period of more than 40 years, are in this museum. Dr. Silveira died in 1989, but her work continues at the museum.

cumulates to the point where it splinters off and moves in opposite directions. It goes deeper down, passing the personal unconscious, until it reaches the deeper layers of the archetypes. Here it reactivates the archetypal material, which leads to healing and forms a new personality as it progresses upward. According to Progoff,

> if it progresses far enough, [it can lead] to a reintegration of personality based on a newly found religious belief or a newly developed philosophy of life. ... The possibility therefore opens for the individual that a break-up in his conscious attitude can be superseded in time by a new integration at a more basic level of the psyche. If this is accomplished, it means that consciousness has been brought into a closer relationship with the unconscious and that the new conscious attitude is on a more solid base. (Progoff, 1953, p. 148)

The lessons experienced during one's life help the individual balance the polarities. Centered in the middle, one is whole or integrated. For Jung, the term wholeness is more concerned with completeness than perfection.

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