

Paper presentation 12:

## Art therapy in a museum environment as prevention

Celine Schweizer, The Netherlands

Studio Connect is a program for vulnerable young people with weak social and communication skills, such as young people with autism. The program is initiated by an art therapist (who presents this paper) and is developed in collaboration with a museum art teacher. A school for special education participated with 15 youngsters from 13-16 year, their mentor and their art teacher.

Also art therapy students were involved. They experienced how to work in a museum environment. Also they monitored the project with observations, interviews and measurement instruments in a mixed methods, pretest posttest design.

Young people who do not find it easy to make contact with others, such as young people with autism, often feel lonely. This target group is sensitive to depression, anxiety and addiction. The preventive value of the project lies in the development of self-confidence, having fun together, learning to express themselves and learning to share experiences also by talking with each other. The art therapy triangle is involved in the way of communicating: via the art. While watching art in the museum and creating art in the museum studio, it is expected the youngsters will develop more self-confidence, learn to express themselves better and make personal contact with peers more easily. Studio Connect aims at prevention for possible problems in the future.

Results of three years experiences with Studio Connect are shared in this presentation. The project is experienced as successful by all participants and will be continued.

***Dr. Celine Schweizer** is an art therapist, lecturer, supervisor and researcher at NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands. In 2020 she received her PhD on art therapy for children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders. She conducts several art therapy research projects, has (inter) nationally published and presented and is an active EFAT member in its Research Committee and Special Interest Group for art therapy in museums.*

Paper presentation 13:

## Equality in Art Therapy—how might we build meaningful therapy programs for individuals with developmental disabilities and language dysfluency?

Kreg Viesselman, Norway

Finding and securing equality in therapy—that is to say, therapy of equal value to that available to neuro-typical clients, can be exceedingly challenging for individuals with hearing loss and comorbid developmental disabilities. The difficulty is compounded in clients who are also language dysfluent. What if a client is also a refugee, with little understanding of the cultural reference points, or the various schemata that weave together an average person's life in modern Norway? What if this person has also witnessed the horrors of war, and likely bears the scars of childhood trauma? And what if, on top of it all, the client grew up in a culture where talking about difficult emotions or terrible events was considered taboo? Despite the likely need for meaningful therapy, the reality of providing it for such complex clients can seem like an impossibly daunting task. But through our work with «Jasmine», employing art therapy in creative, and sometimes unorthodox ways, we have discovered that there is a way forward...there is hope.

In this presentation, we will discuss our journey together with Jasmine, so far. Our process will be divided into several themes, to better reflect our progress together:

1. How we dissected the concept of therapy to understand better what fundamental skills were needed for worthwhile participation in therapy, to better understand Jasmine's needs.
2. Our strategies and tactics employed to address those needs exhibited by the client,
3. Themes, activities, and therapeutic elements that were built in from the start that helped us help Jasmine begin to attain these basic skills, while simultaneously providing therapeutic benefit.
4. How Jasmine mobilized her experiences in therapy to her own benefit, in her own life.
5. An audit of where we are now, and where the road might lead from here.

***Kreg Viesselman** works as an art therapist at Signo Conrad Svendsen Senter in Oslo. Most of his work as an art therapist has been with deaf or hearing impaired clients.*

Paper presentation 14:

## 'Baby Doll': The role of art making in the healing journey of a profoundly wounded adult in analysis.

Katherine Killick. United Kingdom

This paper, with accompanying slides, will use both words and images to tell the story of the evolution of a three-dimensional image which played a significant part in a lengthy analysis. The theoretical context for the paper draws on post-Kleinian and post-Jungian thinking. Concepts of the sense of self, defences of the self, psychotic anxiety, analytic attitude, and container/contained will be defined and used to understand the healing journey that I will describe.

The patient arrived in a regressed state, in which enactments frequently conveyed extremes of affect that she was unable to communicate symbolically. Her sense of self was impoverished, she had little sense of her history, and a motif of despair was audible in all her actions and utterances.

After some years of analysis, the patient's anxieties were more contained from 'projective identification as evacuation' to 'projective identification as communication'. One day she created a little doll which was 'lodged' in my consulting room and used by the patient in her enactments. Narratives gradually emerged in the transference/countertransference field, reclaiming and reviving traumatised aspects of herself which had been split off from her sense of self. As her psychic 'skin', and sense of self, developed, the image underwent multiple transformations, alongside which she was able to make significant life choices for herself. Eventually, after many years, she chose to end her analysis with me, and took the image home. By this time the little doll had clothes, a toy, a blanket and a bed.

I will suggest that the way that the image emerged, the part that it played in her sessions, and its development as a symbol whose meaning became increasingly conscious, forms a testimony to the healing power of art making.

***Katherine Killick*** is a Training Analyst of the Society of Analytical Psychology, and a Training and Supervising Analyst of the British Jungian Analytic Association working in private practice in Central Bedfordshire, UK.

*She trained as an artist and art psychotherapist before training as a Jungian analyst. She worked for over 15 years in adult mental health services in the NHS where she developed a specialised art-psychotherapeutic approach to people experiencing acute psychotic states. She has taught and published widely on this subject.*

*She maintains an interest in working with regressed states of mind in adults and teaches regularly on the trainings at the Society of Analytical Psychology and the West Midlands Institute of Psychotherapy, UK.*

Paper & Workshop – paper presentation 15

## TEXTILE COMMUNITIES: Social impacts and psychological benefits of creating with textiles.

Jasmina Ferček & Zala Orel

**RESEARCH AIM:** To explore how textile communities function as spaces of political, cultural, and social change, with an emphasis on the personal, social and societal benefits they offer, and to derive new concepts or ideas from the stories and testimonies of individuals involved in these communities.

**BACKGROUND:** Throughout history, sewing in groups helped women to reduce pain, share burdens, and strengthen resistance. Group work strengthened their community. Because of the bonding nature of textiles, creating with textiles remains an appropriate way of collective care and nurturing.

**OBJECTIVE:** To research and categorize the social impacts and psychological benefits that derive from creating with textiles in the communities.

**METHODS:** Narrative text analysis of four semi-structured interviews and a panel with six participants, all selected by their practical and theoretical references in the field.

**FINDINGS:** The effects of textile creation often occur within specific spaces, which can be interpreted as physical, mental, or semantic spaces. Textile communities empower individuals by contributing to their self-actualization and self-realisation, enabling them to experience a sense of belonging, pride, self-worthy power, freedom, and identity. With text analysis, the research team has classified and categorized the collected data into three areas, labelling them as 1) Well-being, 2) Internal, and 3) External processes. Textile creation enhances physical, psychological, spiritual, social, and existential well-being and health. Here the spaces for (1.1) well-being and health and (1.2) meditation, self-exploration, and reflection have emerged. Internal processes are the field where (2.1) forming a new identity, both personal and collective, or strengthening an existing identity, occurs. It is also a space that can (2.2) support a healthy sociocultural transition for individuals who have experienced migration to a new cultural environment (immigrants) or another social space (prisoners). External processes address the characteristics of creating with textiles that enable textile communities to contribute to socio-cultural changes. When a textile community is open to the outside and communicates with the world, it can become the space of (3.1) equality, power, independence, and emancipation and even (3.2) activism and social change.

**NB!** For the workshop: all participants must bring a textile piece - a kitchen cloth - from their home country. This kind of workshop is not really a 'happening', it is quiet, contemplative and intimate. Together we will create an atmosphere where we can become a short-term textile community.

**Jasmina Ferček** is a textile artist and holds a master's degree in art therapy. She explores the significance of women's creative experiences with textiles. For 20 years, she has been involved in participatory and psychosocially engaged textile art as a member of the Oloop collective. She researched the impact of textile creation on women's well-being and health in her master's thesis and subsequently wrote a book on the topic titled "The Power of Textiles" in 2022. She is a member of the Slovenian Association of Art Therapists (SZUT) and the European Federation of Art Therapy (EFAT).

**Zala Orel** has been developing the Textile Art Biennial BIEN as an executive producer and chief curator since 2019. Orel holds a master's degree in communication from the University of Ljubljana and is a doctoral candidate at Charles University in Prague, specializing in social geography and regional development.