

Illuminations From Jane's Tribe

A newsletter for the Art Education and Art Therapy Communities

Visual Arts Education – Art Therapy Program to Host Drs. Charles Flood & Gioia Chilton



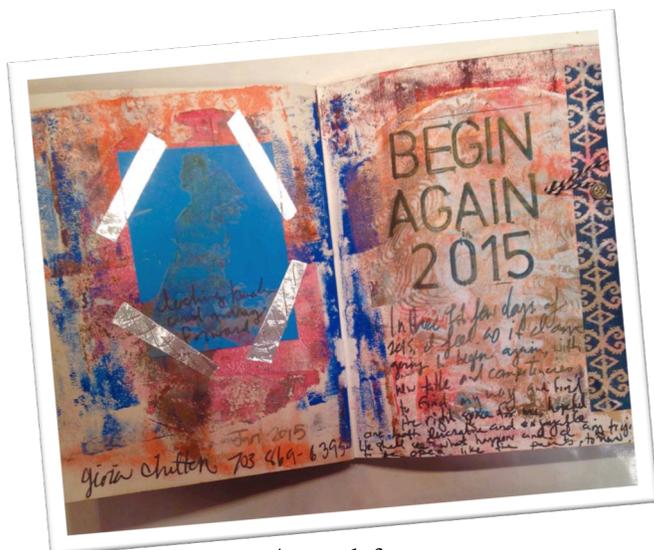
Dr. Charles Flood (top) &
Dr. Gioia Chilton, ATR-BC
(bottom)

The Visual Art Education-Art Therapy Program is pleased to announce two notable speakers who will deliver lectures—free and open to the public—during the week of June 3rd – 7th. On Wednesday, June 3rd, Dr. Charles Flood (BS, WSU Art Education, 1968), 2015 recipient of the Award for Community Service in Visual Art Education - Art Therapy, will present “*Mitigating family and survivor trauma: Using art with children as compassionate intervention after a mass trauma event.*” The lecture is drawn from Dr. Flood’s experiences in trauma response, particularly following 9/11 and the tsunami of 2004. After the tsunami, Dr. Flood initiated the Children’s Art Project; teaching drawing to children in order to give them a therapeutic expression for their upset and trauma. An overview of this work may be found at www.compassionresponder.org.

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Artwork from:

<https://www.facebook.com/CreativeWellbeingWorkshops>, courtesy of Gioia Chilton

In recognition of his pioneering work in hospice care and end of life counseling, Charles Flood was awarded the degree of Doctor of Medical Science from Thomas Jefferson Medical School and University. Currently, Dr. Flood lives in Philadelphia where, as an ordained Episcopal priest, he is Rector of historic St. Stephen's Church.

The June 3rd lecture will begin at 4:00 in Room 157 in the Community Arts Building. Students are encouraged to attend. In addition to this lecture, Dr. Flood will deliver remarks on Thursday, June 4th during the opening reception of the 2015 Visual Arts Education - Art Therapy Student show. His talk will follow the presentation of the Award for Community Service, which is planned for 6:00.

On Friday, June 5th, Gioia Chilton, PhD. ATR-BC will present an interactive talk entitled "*Positive art therapy: New directions in positive psychology and art therapy practice and research.*" This lecture is made possible through the Frederick C. Neff Memorial Lecture in Philosophy and Education, and it will be held in 146 DeRoy Auditorium. Dr. Chilton recently completed her PhD from Drexel University Creative Arts Therapies Program, and has specialized in positive psychology and art therapy and arts-based research.

Gioia Chilton will also be teaching an extended class on Saturday, June 6th & Sunday, June 7th, which will be open to current art therapy students and alumni. This class will focus on discovering and capitalizing on character strengths and the importance of positive emotions in using creative techniques. Additionally, 1.2 CEUs or 3 - 13 SCECHs will be available to participating alumni. For more information or to RSVP for any of these events, please contact ArtEd_ArtTherapy@wayne.edu or (313) 577-5469.

Understanding Positive Psychology

Positive Psychology is the scientific study of the strengths that enable individuals and communities to thrive. The field is founded on the belief that people want to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives, to cultivate what is best within themselves, and to enhance their experiences of love, work, and play.

Positive psychology has developed out of the theories and practices of several humanistic psychologists, including Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, and Erich Fromm, whose concepts focused on themes of human happiness and acceptance. The term positive psychology was brought to the attention of the psychological community in 1998, when Martin Seligman, the president of the American Psychological Association at that time, identified it as the theme of his term.

Rather than emphasizing our inherent weaknesses and the negative effects of mental illness, positive psychologists take a strength – based approach, stressing human beings are very capable of, and often do flourish. This is not to say that the negative aspects of mental illness should be ignored, but rather that there is a need for balance within the field.

For further information and resources on this topic, visit <http://www.positivepsychology.org/index.html>

Faculty Art Show & Tell

During the months of February and March of 2015, a group of faculty members from the Visual Arts Education – Art Therapy program displayed their personal artwork in several of the showcases located in the lobby and hallway of the Community Arts Building.

On February 25th a dialogue session was held for all students who were interested in engaging in a conversation about the pieces that their professors created, as well as the philosophies that have inspired their own modes of creation. Participating faculty members included Dr. Holly Feen and Linda Ulrich of the Art Therapy Program, Dr. Jim Brown, Denes Galfi, Kathy Arkles, and Debra Graham from Visual Arts Education, as well as student assistant Bill Ebersberger. Students and faculty enjoyed a potluck dinner together, and then engaged in a conversation about the art pieces. Discussions centered around why people choose to create art, as well as the conscious and unconscious elements that are part of the creative process.

Students who participated in the event expressed an appreciation for the openness of their teachers, noting that there are very few opportunities to engage with professors about their artwork. For a more in depth look at some of the concepts that were explored in this event, see the article on page 4, “Art and the Ego: A Dialogue with Denes Galfi and Jim Brown.”



Visual Arts Education - Art Therapy Student Show Seeking Submissions

The annual student art exhibit will be held from June 4th – July 3rd in the Art Department Gallery. The show will contain a variety of works from current students in the program. The opening ceremony will take place on Thursday, June 4th, from 5 – 7 p.m.

Students who are interested in entering pieces for the show should bring their work to the art therapy office and complete a submission form. The deadline for submissions is Monday, April 27th, 2015. Pieces will be juried by the beginning of May and participants will be notified shortly thereafter.



Art and the Ego: A Dialogue with Denes Galfi and Jim Brown

By Angie Bolton

I had the privilege of sitting down with Jim Brown, the coordinator of the art education program and Denes Galfi, a long-time adjunct faculty member in Visual Arts Education. Galfi has taught design and printmaking classes, and has done extensive research on the relationship of the ego and the act of creating. Our conversation covered a broad array of topics, from the personal development of each of their artistic processes to the ways in which these ideas can be encouraged within a classroom setting.



How did you first become interested in this concept of the role of the ego in the art-making process?

Denes: It's something that seemed very natural to me. As an artist, it is an issue that is always in play, although there are times when it is almost completely hidden from view and others where it is much more visible. I have spent many years teaching design, and a concept that is always at the core is that of the interplay between the figure – ground relationship– a perfect metaphor for the ego. When you have a blank picture plane and you introduce something into that field, it sets up an instantaneous relationship.

Think of the relationship of a mother and her child in her womb. Although she has not yet met the unborn child, she can already distinguish certain characteristics just by the way that they are interacting together. It can be the same way with the relationship between the ego and the emerging artwork as its unique character emerges through the process.

Jim: As a young art student, it would have been very accurate to say that I was both anxious and depressed. Those emotions were manifested through a certain shyness, and a reluctance to engage in deep conversation. I was also afraid to engage authentically in my artwork. My presence manifested itself at that point in a very particular kind of way.

It was towards the end of that first year in art school when I began to see the ego connected to the image in a very clear way, as well as the connection between who I was then and the art that I was making. I had been asked by the head of the art school to be his apprentice, and through the experience of watching a very successful artist work, I began to understand how a person puts himself into what he is making. By the end of that year, I was significantly more sure of myself and the images that I was making. I was still coming out of a presence of a depressed, anxious young man, but, I could see parts of myself in the work that I was creating.



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You mentioned the idea of being unsure of how to interject your own voice into what you were creating. What does this process of making authentic artwork look like?

Denes: When I first started art school, I did not really speak. I spent most of my time listening to what other people had to say. It took me about 1½ years before I really began to interject my own voice into talking about my own artwork. It was this interaction that began to change the way that I understood what I was making. When we begin to discover those innermost parts of ourselves in our artwork, we take the risk of not knowing where it is going to go, of relinquishing all expectations of what we want it to be or what we think we know. What one is creating takes on a life of its own. There is a sense of surrender in creating something that we do not fully understand or know what it is, and watching it come alive through that give and take relationship. The creative process is an incredibly vulnerable place to be.



Jim: We have to understand that creating a representational image is all about maintaining control. It is an intellectual and kinesthetic activity. But when we fully engage in this process of letting go of what we think should happen, it becomes an intellectual, kinesthetic and affective experience.

If so much of the artistic process is based on letting go of making a “perfect image,” how do we interact with that product once it is completed? How do others interact with these images?

Denes: When we use an external device – a material, tool process, vehicle of thought, etc., what becomes thinkable becomes different than what had previously only existed in our thoughts. By using any one of these devices or symbolic means, each of these is represented in a tangible context. Each of these devices allows something to be expressed that would otherwise remain inaccessible. Making intangible material become tangible can be one of the most powerful forces that we have at our disposal.

During my last few years in art school, I began to realize a pattern of how others were experiencing what I was making. People began to make suggestions about my artwork, and often expected me to take them. I began to realize that I was making my art for the benefit of other people, and not for myself. I began to safeguard my processes more, and to tune out those other voices, which were well-intentioned, but not what I needed.

Jim: Each individual interpretation of a piece of art is a realization of a certain aspect of the relationship between that person, whether artist or viewer, and the object that they are viewing. Also, these relationships are based on individual experiences that may not have any immediate relationship to that piece, but nonetheless, are still highly influential of a person’s perception. For instance, my experience of the word “mother” is different than yours and so each of us brings our own experiences to this word that have nothing to do with the actual definition of that word. However, our individual experiences dictate how we understand that word. We interact with art the same way.

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So, how have you translated these ideas in an educational setting? Can these concepts be taught, or is it something that is learned as people are given the space to discover themselves and how they interact with their artwork?

Jim: One thing that I always try to tell my students is that I cannot possibly know what is essential for them. I cannot even know what is necessary for them. I am willing to give you my opinion, but my opinion is bound in my cultural experience, my education, gender, age, etc. and that may not be anywhere near what they need to hear. So, the teaching aspect of this always needs to be about allowing that [student's] voice to come forward and feel safe enough to make itself known. You cannot develop your own voice by listening to what other people are telling you that your voice should be.

Denes: It was after I realized that I had to make any art according to how I understood it, and not other people's suggestions or perceptions that the tone of the dialogue about my art also changed. This did not happen until I had mustered the courage to be defiant. The changes in my artwork had to come from me, not from an outside source that did not know me. This is a very important aspect of the student – teacher relationship – a respect that the teacher will teach the basic rules of line, form color, etc., but that the student also has the freedom to take what they have learned and make it into something that is their own. Artistic endeavors, just like the ego development, are the mechanisms that aid in the development of self-actualization, which in turn, brings the individual's identity to the surface.

Undergraduate Art Therapy Concentration Under Consideration

The Visual Arts Education – Art Therapy Program is in the process of developing an undergraduate art therapy concentration. This option would allow undergraduate students at Wayne State who are interested in pursuing a master's degree in art therapy to complete all of the pre-requisites for admissions, while gaining knowledge and experience in the art therapy field. The planned program would consist of psychology and studio art classes that are currently offered at Wayne State, as well art education and other required courses. The art therapy component of the program may include expressive arts modalities as well as a possible service-learning component.

The exact nature of the program is still being developed and must go through the university approval process. It is hoped that such a program will enhance the enrollments of both the graduate Art Therapy Program as well as the undergraduate Visual Arts Education Program.



Student, Alumni & Faculty Spotlight

Anita Bates (current Doctoral student in Art Ed.) had her artwork featured in a show at the N'Namdi Center for Contemporary Art in March, 2015

Adjunct faculty member Kathy Arkles has two pieces in the Detroit Artists Market show, opening on May 1st!

Adjunct faculty member Diane Krempa has one of her pieces in the 2015 College for Creative Studies Alumni Show, opening April 17th!

Jamie Pillow (M.Ed., 2014) is working at Common Ground as a contingent art therapist, and is leading weekly workshops and open studio sessions at The Art Experience.

Marie Murray (MA, 2011) received her LPC and ATR!

Jennifer Fox (MA, 2009) was featured in an article about her current work at the Children's Hospital of Michigan. The article can be found here:

<http://groundreport.com/photography-eases-the-stress-of-bone-marrow-transplant-procedure-for-commerce-michigan-girl/>

Deb Czechowicz (current MA) and Jamie Pillow (M.Ed., 2014) are facilitating a 20-week art therapy program at the Ypsilanti Riverside Arts Center, that began in mid-February.

Michelle Figurski (MA, 2012) received her ATR and LAC in Arizona!



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AMERICAN ART THERAPY ASSOCIATION
BRIDGING CULTURAL TERRAINS
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JULY 8-12, 2015 • MINNEAPOLIS, MN



SMATA

Students of the Michigan Association of Art Therapy



SMATA Members created handmade Valentine's Day Cards and sold them as a fundraiser for upcoming events.

SMATA is starting to put together our plans for the 2015-16 school year, and we would love for as many students as possible to be involved! Are you interested in gaining more networking and professional development opportunities? Of course you are! We would love to hear any input you have on what you would like to see in the upcoming year. Nominations for officer positions and Elections will take place during April. All current art therapy students are eligible to participate in SMATA and vote in elections! More updates will be coming soon, so watch your email!

Please direct all questions or suggestions to WayneState.SMATA@gmail.com. Thank you!

- Angie Bolton, SMATA Secretary