Motivation: the artist and the psychoanalyst

Presented by ResCen

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Introduction by Christopher Bannerman

Welcome to this evening's seminar 'Motivation: the artist and the psychoanalyst'. This is the first seminar in the series for 2004/05 and we are delighted to be joined by Dr. Hanna Segal.

Before introducing Hanna more fully, I should note that this seminar follows on from one held in May at the Clore Studio in which the six ResCen artists discussed the 'Motivation of the Artist'. The discussion was rich and was marked by an honesty that meant that new aspects of their work were revealed to me, even after some years of working together. The contributions from those attending also added significantly to the evening and through this self-examination, the familiar world of art making became a new and at times strange realm.

This evening we bring the discipline of psychoanalysis as lens through which to examine the artist's motivation and, in dialogue with the artists and with you, we hope to find new insights to explore.

I should also take this opportunity to offer an update on developments at ResCen. The ResCen team has expanded in the past year and we have been joined by Research Associate Jane Watt and by Research Fellow Joshua Sofaer. Both Jane and Joshua are artists in their own right, but they have also gained research degrees within an academic context. They bring new skills to ResCen and they will make significant contributions as we enter a new phase in our NESTA funded project *Navigating the unknown in the creative process*.

Thanks to Jane for organising tonight's seminar, thanks to Joshua for his help in gathering background research material, thanks to the ResCen Administrator Natalie Daniel for managing the booking process, thanks to Yael Lowenstein for videoing this evenings proceedings, thanks to the South Bank Centre for hosting us and thanks to our funders NESTA, the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts.

We have also begun a process of gathering feedback on our seminars and there are questionnaires for you this evening and they will also be available on the website. We are also launching an online forum so that the points raised this evening can be debated more fully and points that arise through reflection can be included. This is especially relevant this evening as the discussion here is framed by parameters set out by Hanna Segal and the artists – other views and theories of art making and psychoanalysis are welcomed but, due to the constraints of time, they may only be noted and the substantive debate will arise from what we are about to hear from Hanna and the artists.

Now to turn to the business of this evening's seminar, we would like to welcome Hanna Segal to this ResCen Seminar. Hannah Segal is one of the best-known living British psychoanalysts. She was one of the first European psychoanalysts to receive the prestigious Sigourney Award for contributions to psychoanalysis. Her first two books on Melanie Klein are classic texts and she is one of the most influential figures within the British Psychoanalytical Society. Her substantial body of work embraces a large number of published papers and five books. She has made seminal contributions to the understandings of psychosis, the theory of symbolism, aesthetics, literature and politics.

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In 1947 Hanna Segal read her first paper to the British Psycho-Analytical Society, *A Psycho-analytic Approach to Aesthetics*, which was published in 1952. This paper had a very important influence not only on analysts, but also on many people with little or no knowledge of psychoanalysis, but engaged in creative work themselves.

Her work with psychotic patients and with artists blocked in their work led to discoveries about the nature of symbolism and of the creative impulse, discoveries which in turn have opened the way to refinement of theory and technique.

Born in Poland and educated in Poland and Switzerland, Hanna Segal moved to Paris in 1939 but with the German occupation made a gradual passage to Edinburgh, where she continued her studies before settling in London. Ever since her qualification she has devoted her entire professional life to practising psychoanalysis, teaching and writing as well as holding numerous important positions in the field. We are delighted to have her with us today.

Dr. Hanna Segal: I'm afraid that I'm like President Ford he couldn't talk and chew gum, I always talk and chew gum, but I cannot read and talk at the same time because I don't see very well and my voice doesn't carry. The other thing I have in common with that American president is that I don't like broccoli. But that is the end of my resemblance to American Presidents I hope.

Now first I must tell you that I enjoyed enormously meeting the artists with whom I had a small internal seminar last Friday. I think right from the beginning we were on the same wave length. They knew what I was talking about and I knew what they were talking about. But today I realised that I missed a particular problem [issue]. I was at home and I said to my daughter-in-law that I was meeting some professional performing artists. She said to me that one of the things that she admires the most, is how a performing artist can perform the same role ten nights, or a hundred nights in a row, and that if he is a good actor, he doesn't loose his freshness. My daughter-in-law is a mature, but extremely devoted dancer. In fact, I asked her about how easily she can dance the tango or cha-cha-cha whenever she can and how she's not tired by the performance. But I don't think she could do it a hundred nights running.

However, I was thinking that, for me, it's a new experience. On Friday, I asked this small group of artists, to tell me what they would like me to do this evening. They told me to repeat more or less exactly what I said in our internal seminar. So here I am faced with an unusual situation: to see if I can perform the second night and still keep it fresh.

I think that one thing that helps me is that these ideas that we discussed together are so much part of my functioning. Of course they change over fifty years – I've brought many modifications to my theories – but they are me, and part of my thinking. So in some way it is very old and very fresh at the same time. But what I don't have is the other thing that you artists do have, this whole technique and mastery.



Now what I did in the internal seminar, and what I want to repeat here, is simply to start to tell you very, very briefly about my ideas of art. It might seem to you very theoretical, but you can look at the papers I have produced as evidence of how I arrived at these ideas.

Tonight, I'll present it much more systematically, and instead of my own evidence, I bring you a fable about creativity written by Salman Rushdie. This idea has often been accused of being very restrictive in relation to art. It is true, since most writers in the past have paid attention to the content of the art much more than to the aesthetic impact of it. Freud knew about this. Very early on, when he still had his Wednesday evenings at home I found a report, minutes in which Freud said that we can speak about content of art which is Oedipal, but as to the form, it must have from much more archaic roots. He often said that he didn't understand the creative impulse. It was restricted when he analysed say the stress of the Oedipus complex, or something like that. He was very aware of it, but he actually had nothing to say about it himself. Although in some ways he does talk about it when he analyses Michaelangelo's figure of Moses. He describes the contained anger in the figure, but he doesn't link it with the aesthetic impact that it could have.

Now since Freud's time, we do know a lot more about those archaic roots. Archaic roots mean early infancy, where we learn to symbolize, to speak, to relate, what we do in the first two years of life. I'll go back right to the beginning. Here I'll follow Melanie Klein who is also one of the few people who took seriously the death instinct. At the beginning of life, when a baby is born, it is assailed by the complete change of environment: sounds, noise, light, coldness of the skin, whatever you have. The baby also has inner impulses, which he doesn't differentiate from the external ones: he may already be hungry; he may already be uncomfortable. And the way I formulate this is that basically we have two reactions right form the start. One is the reaction of the life instinct: the recognition of a need which searches for being held; for being fed; for knowing the world.

I spoke in the internal seminar about my great-grandson. I've got a photograph of him at three weeks old looking at the breast (some psychologists say that the child doesn't see up to the mother's face until she is six months old, or eighteen months old). He is looking with enormous eyes which record the brave new world: "what is it?" And he

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really wants to explore. When he was three months, he first bit all my fingers to explore what they were, and then he put his fingers in my mouth and giggled. He wanted to explore what it's like the other way around. So this is a life instinct which is wanting to grab at the life that is given, as against a reaction, equally understandable, that life immediately brings frustration: pain when one is worried; cold when one wants to be warm; not getting the need satisfied. And the reaction to that is to hell with it.

There's a beautiful passage in Jack London when the hero commits suicide. He experiences some pain and wants to swim up and he tells himself that all pain comes from living. If he were just to stop, the pain will stop. It is what one could call nirvana and 'wanting to return to the womb'. Except it is not, nirvana is an idealised state. You want to be back with the angels, but in fact the death instinct is very violent, because in order to be unborn, there is a violent attack on the reality. The reality of oneself and the object. Freud speaks only of the death instinct against the self. But I think it's against the self and all the perceptions which include the object. It is like the basic conflict that the child has with the external input. There is an internal push to life and a push to death. The infant organizes this world. I think the infant's ego is much stronger and more present right from birth than was assumed before. Even Freud said that together with the omnipotent fantasy, the ego – he calls it pleasure and pain – there is always a reality ego somewhere. The ego organizes by splitting the bad from the good. The death instinct is felt like something life threatening and bad and this becomes split off and projected. Freud said 'deflected'. But now we think it's not just a deflection but it is a projection of anything that is bad and painful outside, creating a bad object, or a monster, and wanting to keep everything good inside. And so this is denying the frustration of producing an idea of object and an idea of self and an unreal world or monsters and angels. And so there is no clear division between the self and the object. The division is between good and bad. And the predominant fear is terror of annihilation.

Now given good enough circumstances, when the good object is felt to be stronger than the bad, the infant gradually withdraws his projections and he doesn't have this desire to push the bad out: the two come closer together. The infant begins to perceive the mother, as Klein describes it, as a whole object. It is an object separated from the self, not just a reflection of the self and possessing all characteristics and life. It very soon includes the father too. In fact, it happens much sooner that Freud thought. It was often thought that Klein was all about mothers and babies but she brought in the role of the father much earlier than Freud does. She thought that from the beginning as there is a cognition of the mother's life, there is also a cognition of the father.

An important thing is the recognition of ones own ambivalence. The infant realises that he's not either all good or all bad, but that he hates his mother, and very soon his father and all that they represent, they are the ones who are loving and hating, and loving and hating the same object. And Klein thought of that present position because that brings in very new feelings. One is the feeling of loss: the fantasies that the infant creates he then destroys the mother and his whole world because that is his world: mother, father, and later siblings. It is in a very omnipotent way, but he recognises that it's with that, because the loss and the mourning for a real loved and hated mother and family. This is an extremely important change in development because there's the distinction between self and object, and responsibility for ones own wishes and fantasies. There is the gradual loss of omnipotence – recognising that ones omnipotence doesn't destroy the world, with a repeated return of a good experience. A very important part of the new feeling – a feeling of loss, feeling of sadness, feeling of guilt and responsibility – is also a wish to repair everything that has been destroyed: to retain and restore internally what has been destroyed in ones mind. And it is my contention, because all that is, let's call it 'standard Kleinian' and 'post-Kleinian' analytic theory, in my 'Paper of Aesthetics' to suggest that all artistic creativity is rooted in those reparative impulses. Every creation – and often the artist is not aware of this – is always also a re-creation, a re-creation of a lost world. Some artists who write about art know about it very well. Proust for instance, who has a whole theory of art comes in his old age to see the graves on which he can't even read the name. He says "how can I bring alive this world when I am lost? What other way is there but writing?" Unconscious guilt is always a part of it. Another writer, Patrick White, talks about it in his book *The Vivisector*. In it, a painter is asked why he made a certain portrait of his sister. He was very nasty to his sister. He said that painterly reasons but also to atone for his enormities. So somewhere in the background there is this unresolved guilt.

I'm speaking here of normal development. I'll speak a little of pathology maybe when I come to the performing arts. I don't think that it's more pathological [laughs]. Every artist of any importance creates a world of his own. The same landscape, painted by two different painters is seen as two different worlds. We recognise that the world of the artist coloured by his style. We recognize that a painting is by a particular painter because it is his world. We pick up a book of an author that we know well, that we recognize and we're in that world.

So it seems to me that these are the things I wanted to say about art. At the internal seminar, I told my friends a fable. A good writer who is a poet put it much more better than me, and it might have more echoes for you too. The book in question is Salman Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, some of you may have read it.

Briefly the story is this: Haroun lives with his mother and his father in an anonymous city which is very sad. He comes

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from a very happy family home. His father, Rashid, is a storyteller, he is also an artist and a performer. The storyteller makes stories and performs them and is always cheerful. His mother is loving and beautiful and sings beautifully. Haroun has a very happy family in the midst of this very, very sad nameless city. Then tragedy strikes. The mother – I think Soraya is her name – leaves Rashid. Rashid becomes completely disorganized and develops a complete writer's block. It is a fable that Salman Rushdie wrote for his little boy. Rushdie said one of his greatest fears when he was in prison and in hiding, was that he'd not be able to write. So this is also a very personal story.

Haroun wants to regain his happy world and he starts on what is a very reparative endeavour. He wants to find the reason why his father can't tell any more stories.

Haroun accidentally discovers a genie called 'Iff' (this name is important to me because I speak a lot about the phrases 'as if' and 'what if'). The genie, Iff, has disconnected the pipes that bring the stream of stories. Haroun eventually discovers that on the sunny side of the invisible Moon Kahani there is an ocean of stories which has the beginning of the spring of stories. The ocean is polluted and so the stories either become distorted or have stop flowing. Haroun eventually gets to Kahani and finds a number of things on the invisible moon.

There is so much in this story, that I must look at my notes. One thing is that this moon has completely stopped rotating. The people on the sunny side – they are called the Eggheads – discovered a way of stopping the moon so that one side of the moon is always in sunlight with happiness, and in song, and intellectual development. The other side without the sun is always in darkness, and cruelty, and full of shadows, and hostility. Like with arrested development, things stop developing and become stuck in the paranoid/schizoid world of all lightness or all darkness.

Haroun is not too impressed by the sunny side because the Eggheads are terribly intellectual and out of touch with any feelings. There is love but it's all romantic and sentimental. For instance the fiancé of the prince on the moon shrieks and sings out of tune, yet she is admired. So there is something unreal about the world.

On the other side which is ruled by Khattam-Shud singing and dancing is almost prohibited and now it has become worse, because they are worshipping a god called Bezaban. She forbids speech and people tear out their tongues in order to make a sacrifice to the god. They are about to invade the ocean and the basic source of stories in the Ocean. A great battle is engaged. By then, Rashid returns with his son and with his army. The two armies are about to meet. They enter the Transition, or Twilight Zone, which to me is maybe the most beautiful part of this book. As they approach the Twilight Zone of the moon, Haroun becomes extremely sad. He is told that everybody approaching this zone becomes very sad because this areas is full of shadows and so it's like approaching your own shadow. The army progresses and as they enter the zone they see a strange figure, a figure that is fighting his own shadow. They become frightened, he is the first of the enemies and the army want to attack this figure. Rashid says "Stop it! He's trying to tell us something. He's struggling to speak but he's talking to you in Abhinaya, the oldest language in the world. Abhinaya is the language of the dance." It is the poet Rashid who can understand that this is a language that the figure, Mudra is doing. Mudra is telling them that he, and many people, are horrified at the cruelty of the regime and they want to make peace with the sunny side.

The battle goes on with Mudra and his friends not supporting the bad side. There is a point at which Haroun reaches the point of total despair. He is alone at the bottom of the sea, the sea's already polluted, he can't find the source, he's attacked by all sort of things. Suddenly he remembers he has a torch with him that throws out some light. It is only after touching the depths of despair and almost a death-like state with this little torch that he comes out of it. I think it's the torch that dissolves some of the shadows. So I would say that in the depths of the depressive position, it is insight, this little light that disperses the nightmarish shadows.

It seems, to me, that Mudra is the most moving artistic creation. Because it is Mudra who brings in the peace. Eventually peace is established, but not with the supremacy on one side. Under Mudra's direction, the two sides start talking together, and learning how to live together. And lo and behold, the moon starts turning again so that all the inhabitants are sometimes in shadow and sometimes out of it.

But also Mudra, who represents blackness, is very beautiful. At the beginning of the fable, there are some lines which say "Isn't he wicked? Isn't he horrible? Isn't he beautiful?" The death instinct has its own beauty. You cannot grow without the recognition of your own bad impulses and coping with them. You can have prettiness, but you cannot have beauty which doesn't take into account the black side of the life, however unconscious. Rilke said, and I think I use it in my paper as a motto: "beauty is the beginning of terror that you are only just able to bear".

Now how does that apply to the performing arts and is there a difference? Well, it seems to me that the first thing is that it is called 'performing arts': they are both called 'arts'. They have the same root of the artistic creativity. And the two of course very often come together. But there are certain differences which are important. One is the tremendous importance of the body in the performing arts. You aim for – you never get it – complete control of the body. It's not only the dancer, the actor must have a control of every wrinkle, of every smile, but also the whole posture. Speaking is only a very small part of the actor's performance

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and even speaking depends on his control of the voice, when he speaks, when he raises it, etcetera.

Other performing artists like violinists or singers must have complete control over their fingers, over their voice. While the creative artist is much less dependent on the actual body performance. I saw a play of *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, and Rashid was acted by a cripple. He only spoke. He could push his wheelchair around? But I think it's an interesting point that the poet does not need to have complete control of his body, but the performing artist does.

Now I had some thoughts particularly about creativity involved in the performance. The performer has a particular relation to the person who wrote the music or the text. He doesn't bring to life so much his own world, but the world of the person who wrote the music, or who wrote the play, or who designed the dance. So that he's more concerned actually with restoring the parental creativity. Every interpretation is new and the actual creative contribution whether it's music, whether it's an act, whether it's even a dance must be true to the music, but the interpretation must be true to the text.

I very seldom go to the theatre now, but I saw a production of *The Tempest* in which Prospero was not acted in usual interpretation – as an old man – but as a man in his mid-life crisis. And it struck me as extremely illuminating. The point was that this was completely true to the text, because if you look at the text, one way of reading it is he puts childish magic aside, not to go home and die, but to go home and resume his adult responsibilities as a prince. A sort of regression can be seen as a mid-life crisis in which he turns back to childish things. When he overcomes that, it's not to die.

So the interpretation must be true to the text and the same thing goes with music, because if it's not true to the text it becomes a perversion. I've seen plays of *Oedipus Rex* and some Shakespeare which made me scream with what had been done with the text. One example was where Oedipus Rex was acted by a neurotic post-adolescent clinging to his mum. It's infantile, all the power and dignity and depth are completely lost. And now I've got completely lost in my text!

But the other thing I thought about acting is how much it depends on projective identification. Maybe more than writing. Because you must actually project yourself into somebody else and become that person. That must be flexible because there's a great danger that I've seen, at least clinically to the actors, where they identify completely with their roles. The artist can only play one character, and also starts to play this character in life.

I'm sorry to repeat an old joke, but the joke is still with us. For instance, because one particular actor has successfully made B-movies as an actor and a cowboy hero on the good side, and he then tries to live it out as a president of the United States. Or if somebody has played the role of *The Terminator* for a very long time, God help us, he is now a big say in politics. But I'm not saying that it is only actors who do this, artists also identify with their characters. But they have to be flexible. For instance, Flaubert, when he was asked where did he get material for *Madame Bovary*, said "Madame Bovary? It's me." But he didn't mean that. What he meant was that one part of his personality which he had put into Madame Bovary comes from himself. But woe betide the little boy who starts living as Madame Bovary. There is also a story of a man, who learns his hero Porthos has died in *The Three Muskateers*, rushed out of the room crying 'I've killed my Porthos! I've killed my Porthos'. But I don't think he had a lifetime of believing himself the murderer of Porthos and not doing anything else. So it's a matter of flexibility that you have to identify but to be sure enough of your own personality to identify completely with another role and be able to come out of it.

I'll make two more points. I'll speak of it 'what if' and 'as if'. A person can imagine "what if I was in the shoes of an old man badly treated by his daughter" as distinct from living life 'as if' it were true. 'What if' belongs to imagine and 'as if' really belongs to psychosis, maybe more or less overtly.

At the end I wanted to come back to the body because what also impressed me is this: that art, somewhere aims at immortality. Other art – representational art – achieves immortality. The pyramids are still there: a fantastic achievement. In other continents there are works that are older than that which are still there. If you can't read the Iliad in it's original text, enough is left of it for us to know the story and to read. Not so with a performance. When you perform, the performance doesn't live after you. The performance comes to an end. I started discussing this and didn't go very far with it, and I was wondering if it is associated with the relation to the body, because the body dies. I don't mean that I believe in immortality, and that a great writer is immortal except in a symbolic way. But the body dies, and therefore the performance dies. That is a recognition that our body will die. You will never see the same performance again, even if there is another performance. Now how it comes out documented in new media I don't know?

There are two things that I have learned since I talked to the Research Associates on Friday. One is something interesting. The actress Edith Evans said that she loves playing wicked characters because the more wicked the character, she realises, the more likely she is to be very sweet at home. She knows that she's not an angel, so she knows that one of the things that she recognises is to get rid of that. The other thing I learned which was very interesting about the media, because somebody suggested to me, that I might be interested in (which I wasn't) how technology alters a performance. I've learned since, that a great pianist, and I don't know who it must have been a Chopin pianist,

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absolutely refused to have any recording made of any of his performances. He said that is the performance and nothing can actually record the performance without distortion. So one lives and one learns. I hope I learn a lot more from you when we continue the discussion because we started many discussions on Friday in the internal seminar which we didn't finish. Thank you very much. I told you I would talk for forty minutes and that's what it is!

I think I can continue without a break for about half an hour. I'm not tired now, I don't know what I'll be like in half an hour. That's the problem with being a performer is you have to rely on your body and I can't in any way. Well, it got me here!

Christopher Bannerman: Now is the time where we hear from each of the Research Associates and then we will turn it over to you, the audience. And just another little announcement that I neglected to say earlier, that we carry on the evening after this formal bit of it, with liquid refreshments and that is a chance for the discussion to carry on. So I do hope that you will all stay for a glass of wine or juice afterwards. Without further ado, let's make our way down the line, and and we'll start with Graeme Miller.



Graeme Miller: My name is Graeme Miller and I'm one of the ResCen Research Associates. I'm an artist. The area that I am involved in is performance. I am interested in this idea of the reparative nature of work, although it's not something that I think about a lot. Very often, strong motivations to do things come, I would say, really from inside. I have touched on this before; the idea that there is also, in my mind, a scale of values where the sheer expiation of my own dark side is not necessarily enough to make good art. The word I've used is 'transformation', the quality that you might drop in, is maybe a quality of transformation, and is a prerequisite. I suppose the question is: what is the transformation? What is being transformed? What is the base material and what is it being transformed into? And how important is it that it's a witnessed event? To perform or to be a performer – as someone who's just knocked over my tea and who isn't necessarily completely in control of my body at all moments – is also to be a representative of the audience on stage. So at what point, either as a performer, or a maker of performance, is your process dependent on the audience, and also how dependent is the audience on you? This is particularly in the sense of reparation and restoration (Restoration Comedy!).



Ghislaine Boddington: I'm Ghislaine Boddington. I am a Research Associate with ResCen and I work as a director. I work mainly with projects directing small to large groups of people in work which is more created as a group, so it's co-authored or inter-authored. It's been really fascinating having your input Hanna. We saw Hanna last week on Friday and I have had a lot of things going in my head from it over the weekend. I do not have any particularly solid conclusions. But I was thinking a lot about the group work I've done, directing and working with groups where, as many of you here would know, one of the things you have to do, in a way, is you have to let go of your own ego to a certain extent. You go into something which is, in a way, a place where egos have to merge. You have to allow space for each other, not compromise, but have to find a place, where in this situation will possibly heal together. Maybe there's a healing element in there.

I was thinking about you talking about the ego – we all have it – and the pain that comes from that, the pain of trying to find what you really want to say through the types of symbols that come through you to communicate to others. We talked about this on Friday. Possibly that happens in group work as well: symbols become relevant to many, both when you're making work, but also when you're watching as well.

I was really wondering about the concepts of, say, about group work and symbols. There's obviously negative versions, with political situations and people en masse following without thinking enough. But in the positive side of it, how does group work shift a perception when you're co-authoring, when you're making together as a group in a situation? It could be in folk dance, or a contemporary dance piece, or a much bigger happening, or a carnival event, or something like that in live performance? How do those symbols get formed and actually become positive and communicative in a positive way rather than used in a negative way? And where is the line between them?

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Richard Layzell: My name is Richard Layzell. I'm a sculptor and a performance artist. This seemed like a real challenge, as an artist, to be confronted by a psychoanalyst. And I think it's a very interesting challenge, and you're a delightful person [turning to Hanna], but it's still a challenge. And why is that? Why are artists slightly afraid of exploring their inner selves? Because they feel they'll lose something. And I think that's still true of me. Although I have done some therapy, I haven't done psychoanalysis. So I'm interested, but also I'm still afraid I think, and I'm okay with that.



With art, I think that we're on our journey. Our journey is painful at times, very frightening at times, very wonderful at times. There's a bit of me that says: "I'm going to hold on to that journey, I don't want to know so much about what makes me tick, if I know too much it might endanger my integrity."

I imagined Freud as my father and then I thought of Jung. And I thought if we were Jungian we might be feeling more of a happy mix with creativity. And then I thought of Freud as my father and Jung as my mother and I thought "God! What kind of dynamic is that?" So these are some of my thoughts after we met on Friday.



The thing that touched me very deeply was thinking about this early childhood experience; how we are when we are just born, which you describe so beautifully. Also how we relate to the people around us, the people closest to us. I thought about my relationship with my mother quite a lot. So I brought a picture of her today. I'll show Hanna first. This is my mother during the war, with my grandmother. And my brother's hidden there in the pram.

Hanna Segal: An important person.

Richard Layzell: Yes. So my brother was important. These were the women, powerful women. This photograph was taken for the local paper. They were donating pots and pans to make spitfires. You know, it was the war effort. My father was away.

Errollyn Wallen: Richard, where are you?

Richard Layzell: I'm not born yet. This was before me. My elder brother's in there (points to pram in photo). And this looks like such an extraordinary photo. It looks like a still from a movie. So I keep it on the wall and it has lots of resonance for me, because I see it very visually. It's visually very rich. There's my brother who is the reason why I became an artist. How we survived our particular family dynamic – which was a very intense and quite dark family dynamic – was to both become artists to escape. It was a very painful environment.

Hanna Segal: To escape from these monster women.

Richard Layzell: Yes, but also my father. My father was a bit monstrous; he was quiet. So I'm celebrating my mother too by bringing the picture here because obviously we change and we develop a different relationship as we get older. But it strikes me that we certainly all have that, even if as artists we deal with it in some way. But we all have it as human beings, this bit of past. The family is there for every single one of us. That's all that I wanted to say about that.

Some other things you said were about creativity relating to aggression, which I thought was very personal to me. People sometimes find me very angry when I perform. I'm usually a bit surprised, but it's okay as well, it doesn't do me any harm to get a bit angry through performance.

The other thing we talked about was making a mark and the significance of making the first mark, or making a move, or writing the first word when there's a blank space. That was very resonant to me. There's the dream of what it's going to be, you make the marks, it's done and then it's gone. And you feel the grief. It's a little death. It is a real death. It really is. It really is. Then you reject it. Well, I do.

For me depression has not been creative. I've never been clinically depressed, but I've certainly suffered from depression and I haven't found that spark within it I don't think. But I kind of believe you that it's there. But I wouldn't associate depression with creativity.

I had two more things to say. One was I have titles of some of my work that I thought analysts might really enjoy. One is called *I've Never Done Enough Weird Stuff*, another is a videotape called *What Do You Mean By That?* A performance called *Fingers and Fathers*, an installation called *The Elevation* and a current project which is *Talking to Tania*, where I have extended conversations with an artist I've invented.

Christopher Bannerman: Hanna wants to deal with those three contributions.

Hanna Segal: I certainly agree with Graeme's contribution, that the reparative impulses are not enough. The reparative impulses are in all of us whether we are engineers or in any kind of creative, positive endeavour. Nevertheless, I hold to my point. Why is it more powerful in the artist? It seems to

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me that it does come into art because art basically is symbol making isn't it? All art symbolises something. This is a speciality of the artist. You don't make bricks, you make symbols. Without symbolism there is no art. And of course I think the first art in the world probably was dance. It's very symbolic of war, of death, whatever preoccupied the people at that time. But it isn't enough. First of all, what differentiates art is simply the in-born talent. You cannot deny that certain people are more gifted to be painters, or indeed it comes to them more naturally. Often it's hereditary. You've not only got the internalisation of your parents, but also I think that certainly we are born with different talents. Of course most of reparative impulses are unconscious more than conscious. We're not do-gooders. We're not doing a dance because it's good. I think that it has to do in the artists with very extreme states of mind. And the capacity of the ego of being able to express it.

I said at the internal seminar that a great British analyst said that when he asked him what he thinks of genius he said "well the poor buggers make such a mess of the breast that you have to be a genius to reconstruct it!"

In relation to Ghislaine's point about the group. It's very important because man is a social animal. We form groups from the beginning and we project into the group bad aspects of yourself which the group modifies. Like converting vengeance into justice because the group can contain, as it were, the bad feelings and modify them. Freud would say that it is partly to combat forces of nature. It seems to me that art in that sense is extremely reparative in relation to the group. I remember when I was younger, my memory of it was that, you'd drink cider with friends until closing time and then you'd all go to the back room and continue with the cider, and we all sang. It makes polycohesion of the group. The joint symbols that you can find together.

And about your contribution, Richard, thank you very much for your things. You brought in the monsters of your youth [laughs]. We have different parenthoods. I see Freud as my father and a proper woman, Klein with children and grandchildren as my mother, a better mother. But of course everyone thinks mum and dad are the best, even if they are the worst, at the same time. To be more serious now, where I differ and what I don't like about Jung, is the vagueness and the denial of personal responsibility. Putting it much more to the archetypes, and the whole mythology. And it takes away, at least in my mind, from the personal responsibility. I also don't like his politics and the two often go together, the tendency towards idealisation and vagueness, and the cruelty behind it. Although I may be wrong.

Christopher Bannerman: Thank you. So we continue now with Errollyn.



Errollyn Wallen: I'm a composer but I also perform. I'm very interested in what you were saying, Hanna, about the body. I've become aware that with my composing, I'm very anxious to escape the bounds of my own body. Actually, in the process of composition, when I hand over a piece of music to performers, I disappear, and that's what I want: to disappear. It's not even necessarily to be immortal. The score that I make is so I can disappear. I've just had an opera premiered and I was speaking with the conductor today. Now we're going to revise the score. He was saying to me that he'll put in all the corrections so that when it is performed again, and I'm not there it'll be clear.

A lot of my work is about that, making something that can be performed without me being there. So it's a curious thing. But I also perform and what I love about performing, and what's interesting about it is that I feel much more part of the audience than I do as a composer when I'm sitting in the audience. When I'm in the audience and not performing, I find performances of my work quite excruciating because I'm hyper-critical and also somehow over-detached. Whereas, when I'm performing my own music I just enjoy the sensation of the to-ing and fro-ing of energy between the audience and myself. I feel music and am very vividly alive.

I think there's a myth that composers are always superbly emotionally engaged with their work. I am, but more and more I'm detached when I'm writing something. I know what the emotional objective is of what I'm trying to write, but I have to be super-detached to make the thing clear and, of course, to disappear.



Shobana Jeyasingh: I'm Shobana Jeyasingh. I'm a choreographer. Listening to Hanna at ResCen on Friday, one of the things it really made clear to me was that for a great chunk of my life, I have lived a very non-psychologised narrative. For example, in the way that I studied. I came to Britain to study literature at university and before that I studied Tamil literature in Sri Lanka. One of the biggest differences was that when I studied literature in Sri Lanka, it was never considered important to actually know anything about the personal lives of the writers or artists. Indeed, we were not even told historically where they sat. So we actually only just studied

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the literature as it was. Then when I came here to study English literature at university, it was fascinating for me because I had to completely change the way I looked at art. In Britain, it would have been unthinkable to have read a poem of Shelley's without knowing something about Shelley's life, his infancy, his archaic history I suppose. Without that information, it would be considered that a whole part of the appreciation of his art that would be invisible. So I hold these two narratives that are possible for me and I really don't know which one is more useful, and which one not useful, to me as a choreographer. I just know that I've experienced both ways of looking.

What I recognised in one of the things that Hanna said, she didn't mention it here, but when we were at ResCen, I think she spoke about how for an artist it was quite difficult to make the first mark on something: for the writer to write the first word; for a composer to put the first little black dot on the manuscript. I was also thinking about her description of the child, the child learning how to distinguish between self and object and how that's actually a painful exercise. Those first steps you learn. It is a very complex relationship you have with your mother and I suppose as a child at the beginning, you don't separate your mother from yourself. Part of growing up is that love/hate relationship you have in the process of separating. I immediately recognise that as an artist, because I know that whenever I have a new piece of choreography to make, the last steps before actually getting to the studio are the most painful and almost nauseating. I just hate the moment where I have to go in there and make the first move. For a long time I used to wonder why it was that I hated that moment so much. But I think I've begun to realise it's part of that journey of separation because I think before I make that first move I'm in that ideal state, a bit like a child. The vision of the dance that I'm going to make is a bit like the relationship you have with your mother where there was no separation. Then the minute I make the first move to a piece of choreography I have to face that journey of separation. Usually in my case it is a slow path towards imperfection. But it's that sort of pain of separation I guess, that makes it so difficult to make that first move.



Rosemary Lee: Hello. I'm Rosemary Lee and I'm a choreographer as well. I've just picked a couple of things to respond to because there is so much that one could say. Firstly, following on from Shobana, what really resonated with me was this description of the child who feels both intense love and intense hatred of the same thing and I certainly feel that about my work. Actually, I thought it would get easier, but as I get older it gets more intense. I feel like I'm getting pulled asunder at times. But it's also what makes it challenging and exciting. So I realise that I have that relationship to the work. The dualities that Hanna mentioned about having something very old, but at the same time, fresh and asking how we could perform a hundred times. Well it's precisely that. It's because it's old and the old bits are the roots of ones work and roots of ones continuum with artists through the ages; and the new bit is the innovation and the blank page. Somehow it is the balance between feeling a sense of connection with the strands of art making through human history and feeling the sense of the abyss of jumping into the unknown. Somehow again that duality makes me feel most alive.

Coming to that sense of feeling really alive, when you, Hanna, describe your grandson looking, your whole being becomes so alive. And I am struck both at how I feel when I am 'in the groove' as a musician might say, or I would say 'on the velvet stream' where I'm suddenly there and focussed and connected with my dancers and I've found something. It feels like you're kind of eating life. It feels like you're devouring it. And I wonder, having watched people in action, other artists, other colleagues, you see them when they're in that state and you recognise it so clearly. Even a poet beginning to read, I'm thinking of one particular poet, who just seemed to be experiencing life in such an intense way. And that's what keeps me going back to the studio, because, in a way if I'm honest, that's when I feel most alive, but also most myself. Whatever reality is, the everydayness or the ordinary life to me feels full of a kind of puzzlement. On some level I feel I can't connect with the way that the world behaves: economics; cars driving around… The value system of our everyday life seems so askew to me that if I'm in the studio, I am home. I'm home and I'm safe and I'm comfortable. And partly that is because the values somehow are infinitely shared between me and the dancers. I'm in this world in which a) I can be alive, but b) I feel more secure. I also think, and now I'm going to make a big statement, that it connects with dance being the first language of all. So if we, as dancers or as movers, are really going back to pre-word, pre-verbal, then it's no surprise that I feel most alive and most safe.

Hanna Segal: … It seems to me that art is always fighting and breaking imitation outside and inside. Somebody said that all art is about previous art. You have to break the limits that were imposed to get out of it and it's also breaking the limits of the body. You can feel a prisoner of your body, and depending on it, and you break out. But it also contains the death element, because you want to break out of life; break out of the limitations of the body, of what hurts, of what pleases. So it also has a very well integrated, but sort of a death wish, to get away from it all.

Now Shobana, when you speak of the Sri Lanka culture, I'm afraid I was diverted by Sri Lanka because it's such a beautiful and tragic country. When the Portuguese came, they wiped out every religious centre whether it was Hindu, whether it was Muslim. Then there was a time when the

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Tamil, the Muslims and the Christians and so on, were in complete harmony trying to throw off the English and build a life. And what has become of Sri Lanka now of course is really tragic. It's the most beautiful and tragic country. And one can see that in that situation the child-mother bond is even stronger when you are in any way persecuted from the outside. And for Rosie's contribution I must only say thank you very much. It shows me a lot about how you can't recreate this world outside now as it is. All the values are unaesthetic values I would say and they are in the internal world, but you create an external world with other artists, and with your audience, which is so important. It is like a safe home.

The last thing I want to say, that I think runs through what the artist is after, is managing to create symbols. I think what gives it the aesthetic value and part of the aesthetic experience of the audience is psychic truth. The notes must be true not false. And this is an unending search because all of us fight the psychic truth as well. I think that's because it is also the endeavour of the analyst, who is halfway scientist and halfway artist, so much still depends on intuition if we don't have a properly established proved theory. So, I think if a psychoanalytic session goes well, the effect is an aesthetic effect. It is bringing fragments together, admitting aggression and having it contained or shared, in a way, which restores communication. I think that's it. My parting words.

Christopher Bannerman: Should we hear from the audience now?

Hanna Segal: Just a few contributions from the audience and then go home because of the limits of the body as well as the mind.

Audience member: Thank you Hanna, I enjoyed that very much. I am a teacher and I work with people who are going to work with young children. So part of my study and interest, in fact, involves psychology and psychoanalysis. There is something you mentioned that sticks like a splinter in my mind which is 'what if' belongs to imagination, but 'as if' belongs to psychosis. Can I ask you to expand a little bit about that. The reason I'm intrigued is because my PhD study was on metaphor: 'as if' and I never thought of my PhD as a study in psychosis until this moment.

Hanna Segal: When Ernest Jones read his first paper on symbolism, he spoke of metaphor as something different from unconscious symbolism because of course it's conscious. An officer in the audience said pointing to his war decoration "Do you call that a metaphor Doctor Jones?" I don't use the word metaphor, so I consider it conscious symbolism. But I can't talk a lot about 'what if' and 'as if' because that would take half an hour. A major part of my work is what I call concrete symbols. When the symbol is confused with the projected part of the ego. So the ego perceptions are lost and what remains is a delusion, that's a delusion of being looked at and not being able to look at oneself. 'What if' is the imagination, in the sense that you can imagine. To know that you are imagining is projected identification. It's not to project something into the role and you become it, but you can imagine yourself and the other. The other has to do with the functioning of the pathology of symbol formation, but that's a very technical and long affair to talk about. The main thing is the delusion and the artistic creativity; that is a sort of borderline. The more that artists can include of the psychotic the greater the art. If you look at a Picasso, it's pure horror and fragmented. I had a book of sketches – actually, it wasn't mine, it was borrowed and very precious. They were sketches that he made from the beginning to the end of a work. He started with triangles and circles. It was a part of him that had to contain. Of course there are artists who think they're completely broken up and there work can be just dots. It's not enough to be reparative, it's also having access. The more access you have to the most primitive destructive part, the more difficult it is to make art of it. I'm afraid I'm not for action writing, and letting go, that's not art, that's psychotic expression. So this is a crucial question and as I say, a lot of technical work has to be sorted out about the role of projection, and that is why it becomes so concrete. It is an 'as if' instead of a 'what if'.

Audience Member: I think I'm more of a proponent of Freud rather than Klein, but I wondered if you'd like to comment beyond a proposition that there's an oscillation that goes on between the paranoid/schizoid and the depressive position. I would see that almost as a kind of post-Kleinian version of negative dialectics. I think it is a very helpful idea of this constant oscillation between one idea and another, one negating the other. And I think there is another view of imagination as it would relate to the performing arts. It is that imagination, as a debate that goes on from Kant through to Heidegger, is something that erupts. There is this constant oscillation and then something new erupts.

Hanna Segal: I agree with it completely. Only again if I talked about Bion and the transformation between beta and alpha it would take an hour. I spoke of projected identification in parts and he did it more microscopic, the elements, which are the beta elements into it. And certainly we have this oscillation, everyday we respond to one level and have to work it through. And it's always an enrichment that if you regress from the depressive position, get in touch with it and come back, it's on a higher level. I think Ron Britten, you might have read it, described it, like depression one, then back to the psychotic material and then if you work it through it becomes a different depression because it's on another more mature level. But I say each of your questions would take a paper. Because Bion extended, because he says this state is coexistence, the transformation from beta to alpha is part of the transition from paranoid/schizoid. There's a complication because he also speaks… after Klein, we did a lot of work on the pathology

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in the paranoid/schizoid position. Why is it that for some people the transition to the depressive state isn't so easy because of the paranoid/schizoid element in there. The artist always has something concrete. The art hits you. It is almost a type of bodily reaction.

Christopher Bannerman: Any comments, questions, thoughts?

Hanna Segal: I think that will be the last question if you don't mind.

Christopher Bannerman: Hanna thinks that perhaps that is a good point to draw it to a close. Let me remind you again that there is an opportunity for a glass of wine and further discussion. Also, on your seats there is a questionnaire. No one can leave this room without filling it in and handing it in to one of our new ResCen researchers.

Hanna Segal: I have to apologise to you that I won't join you for a glass of wine and further discussion, which I'd have loved to do. But I just can't. It's past my bed time and medicine time and dinner time and at the moment I'm not allowed to drink wine.

Christopher Bannerman: Thank you to Hanna, one more time.

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