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Art as a Form of Non Verbal Communication

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Art as a form of non verbal communication

Statement of intent

With this dissertation intend to enforce the position of art as a form of non verbal communication. I will explore the metaphysical links between human evolutionary behavioural psychology and artistic expression. I will identify the biological processes that have enabled us to understand and create symbolic representations. I will also revise the methods of reclaiming this psychology to more accurately and effectively analyse in the context of psychotherapy and trauma, and how they be used with therapeutic value.

Introduction

I am a fine art student with my main practice involving symbolism and surrealism using a range of mixed mediums. With a strong body of personal research into body language and micro expressions, I have become interested in how these unintentional expressions of truth also come into play through artistic expression. As my own practice consists of fictional imagery invented by myself as a means of sharing information too tricky to put plainly; I question how the brains defence mechanisms have an impact on how we process and portray life through art.

In this essay I am going to discuss the process of our evolutionary development of communication. How the biological processes within our complex unconscious mind provides with information in response to visual stimuli giving an omnipotent internal translation. The power of body language, and gesture, a product of our limbic brain based on evolutionary data, that is the most faithful insight into human emotion and state of mind.

I would like to to explore how the ability to associate and think symbolically influenced some of history's most notable religions and cultures, sensationalising colours and materials and transforming them into echoes of mysticism and ritualism.

I will review the findings of psychologists such as Sigmund Freud, that contain methods and processes of harnessing the unconscious to reveal the deepest inhibitions and desires of the human mind, through automatic drawing and writing, and why these are the same processes and theories that influenced the Surrealist art movement.

I am going to investigate how art and gesture acts as a visual language directly influenced by the unconscious mind, and how this can be used to aid in therapeutic contexts.

It is of my belief that art can contribute as a means of non verbal communication, from both the conscious and unconscious mind. It is a channel of raw human emotion and important outlet when dealing with trauma and repression. The ability to create representations of the indescribable or incomprehensible acts as a brief moment of relief from the strain of repression. Trauma evoked art can also be a valuable point of reference for analysis and investigation.

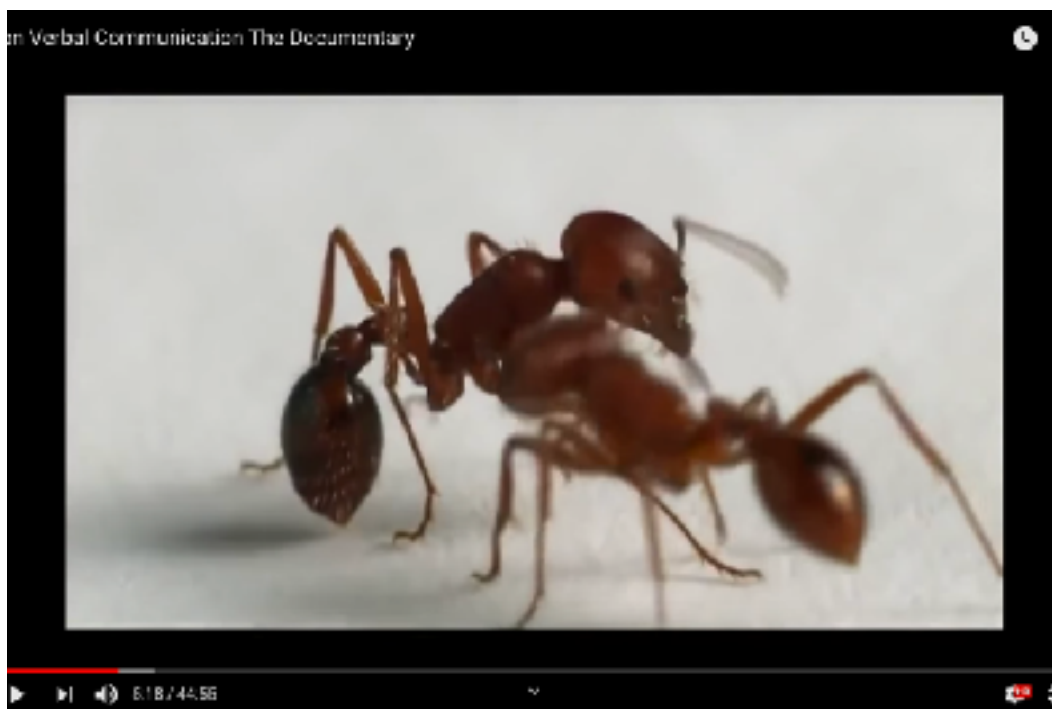
Using my background knowledge of body language and the limbic or primitive brain (evolutionary behavioural psychology), and the work and research of other artists, psychologists and thinkers, I aim to develop an understanding of how art is a valid form of expression and how it can be put to use in areas such as psychological profiling and dealing with trauma.

The primitive brain

With the introduction of the neocortex in the limbic brain, (which is only around 200,000 years old), the part of the brain responsible for our “fight or flight” reaction , first Identified by Hans Selye in his report of General adaptation syndrome 1936. It describes a generalised pattern of how the body responds and adapts to and restores itself to balance (or homeostasis) (Sincaro, 2019). Given that Darwin is correct, Homo Erectus began to walk on two legs rather than four. Our soft, delicate organs were then no longer protected by the ground. Our primitive brain reacts by giving us unconscious automatic defence when under stress and the ability based on evolutionary data to sense threats through the behaviour of others.

With the new found usage of our hands, we became tactile and able to manipulate the world around us, and began using tools and weapons. One of the most prime examples of these behaviours is when a person is stimulated or triggered their body language will become closed and they will shield their ventral sides. Also, the universal sign of bearing no arms/threats is to show both palms. This kind of open body language, displaying your ventral and palms as opposed to more closed body language is what will unconsciously decide for people if you are a threat to them or a friend (Mark Bowden, 2013).

With out use of tools and naturally sourced materials, the early human began to depict scenes and symbols as a form of communication before language. This is called prehistoric art. The first examples of prehistoric art can be dated back to 400,000 years ago and played a vital role in the survival of early humans (Moffat, 2007).



Designed to obtain food, acquire mates and defend against predators, the ability to relay information has often depended on a species very survival. There are a myriad of communication methods a species rely on such as visual, chemical, vocal and gestural, how effective the method of communication often means life and death. Communication was also the evolutionary engine for prehistoric animals, including the ant,

which has ultimately become one of the most numerous organisms on the planet. To understand what made this small and seemingly inept species into evolutionary giants is through their collective power. The ants engineering feats are the result of cooperative organisation. For this to be pulled off effectively they have to be able to communicate. An ant's nest is much like a human construction site with each one being given specific roles, however instead of these orders being given out verbally or gesturally, they operate with no central control but through hydrocarbons (commonly found on social insects) that give out an odour that is used to communicate a basic piece of information, their status and colony. The ants use their recent experience of interactions to perceive these 'messages', for example, when a patrolling ant returns to the nest, the foraging ants will smell them and know that it is then time to go out and forage the food found by the patrolling ants. (Non Verbal Communication: the Documentary, 2014: 5:00-7:00).

Prehistoric art and communication



Art Under our Feet, Sudres, J.

Early humans, before any means of spoken or written language, used their tactile skills to develop tools and methods to enable them to recreate imagery based on memory. A function that lies within the limbic system, as a visual language. Tools were used for sculpture and engraving as well as natural pigments such as ochre, hematite and charcoal. Petroglyphs were images put into rocks, a method used to communicate an obscure ritual language. Depictions of animals are most commonly found in the petroglyphs of the upper Paeolithic period and human figures are scarce, apart from sometimes isolated drawings of genitalia and faces. Hand stencils are also commonly found as well as geometric patterns (Chromsky, 2016). After viewing the prehistoric paintings in the caves of Lascaux, Pablo Picasso reportedly sighed, "They invented

everything." He was realising the strange fact that the fundamentals of artistic creation were settled from the beginning. Art didn't slowly stumble into historical time; it appeared at its full form and quite suddenly. All the subtleties were there from the beginning. And all of the mystery too. (Martel, 2015).

Research suggests that the cognitive mechanisms necessary to create rock and cave art are likely to be comparable to those used in the expression of the symbolic thinking required for language (Leasure, 2018). It has been suggested that the regular geometric patterns found in cave paintings are a proxy for symbolic thinking (Henshilwood et al., 2002; Tattersall, 2009). These paintings and engravings are an external, abstract manifestation of internal complex cognitive process. This process is similar to spoken language which is a higher order of external representation. The phenomenon of prehistoric art likely indicates to an internalised system of thought (chromsky 2016), which presumably equated to the concrete externalised spoken language. The significant relation of the function of both art and language is that both can be used to communicate, for example: indicating actions, objects, and internal mental states.

Early symbolic language was evolved through the combination of pictograms (pictures which resemble what they signify), and ideograms (symbols that represent ideas). Ancient civilisations such as Chinese and Egyptian began to develop this into iogographic writing systems, such as hieroglyphs. We could hypothesise that human language became evident from an abstract symbolic writing system (Nobrega, 2018). In a study conducted by Giacomo Rizalatti in the 1980s using macaque monkeys, Rizalatti discovered a class of neurons that later became known as 'mirror neurons'. These neurons were activated in response to different actions carried out by both the self and others. The neurons were also activated when exposed to symbolic representations such as mime and illustrations. It was these neurons that allowed our ancestral primates to adapt and display primary forms of symbolic representations in order to communicate.

Communication through colour and material



OXFORD UNIVERSITY

The 'Red Lady of Paviland', refers to the partial male human skeleton remains discovered in 1823 during an excavation of Paviland cave on the Gower Peninsula, South Wales. These are the oldest known buried remains in Britain, thought to be 29000 years old. The remains were discovered by geologist William Buckland, who later that year wrote about his findings in his book *Reliquiae Diluvianae* (Evidence of the Flood). In this book Buckland states that the remains he found were "*enveloped in some kind of ruddle*" and "*superficially stained red*", including items he found with the body that included shells, ivory rods and carved rings. Because of the staining and decorative items that accompanied the skeleton, Buckland misjudged both the age and gender of the remains (Buckland, 1823: 88).

Assuming they could be no older than the biblical flood, Buckland believed the remains dated back to the roman era and that the remains were female, and likely to be a witch or prostitute. The jewellery

accompanying the skeleton once thought to be ivory are now known to be mammoth's tusk. The true gender of the 'Red Lady' is actually male and thought to have had an important role in society or was a religious leader or Shaman. The ivory rods he was buried with were not weapons or hunting tools and may have had a ritualistic or artistic use. The significance of the ochre is that within the location it would have been a prime source of pigment, used in drawings and rituals, also strongly linked with the land, giving it a strong sense of symbolism. Symbolic features within burial rituals featured all over the prehistoric globe, notably in ancient Egypt. Not only were important figures buried with riches, weapons and food, the mummified were also coated with gold resin and layed to rest in gold coffins or painted gold faceplates. This is because they believed that gold was the colour of the gods (Martin, 2019).

In pre renaissance art, at the wider end of the gothic period, a transitional art style emerged that gravitated around christian beliefs and idols. The prominent material in these is gold leaf, mixed with an egg tempura to create gold paint. Much like the Egyptians, this material was used to symbolise the status and mystic power associated with Devine beings. The brilliance of the gold leaf added extra dimension to the paintings and were intended to be seen by candlelight, often in churches. The illumination of the gold leaf translating into a spiritual presence. As well as in paintings, gold leaf was used in the middle ages to illustrate hand written books called 'illuminated manuscripts'. These shimmering highlights were intended to "mark important messages, or to enhance or comment on the meaning of the text" (The British Library).

Gustav Klimt (1862-1918), an Austrian symbolist painter entered his famous golden period in 1900s, producing notable works such as the Portrait of Adele Bloch-Baur (1907) and the Kiss (1908). Klimt was inspired by sensuality and connection, his work largely features the subject of love and eroticism. He was an advocate of Sigmund Freud's theories and ideologies, drawing on his subconscious to produce symbolic and dreamy allegories (Prodger 2016):

"Whoever wants to know something about me, they should look attentively at my pictures and there seek to recognise what I am and what I want."(Gustav Klimt).

His paintings were the visual language in which he used to express himself. Klimt's golden phase was the height of his career and made him one of the most prominent members of the Vienna Secession movement. It is interesting that Klimt's fathers profession was a goldsmith, perhaps igniting his fondness for the

element (Christoforou 2019). Klimt also had a taste for Japanese artwork, and travels to Venice and Revenna inspired his Byzantine middle age imagery and gold technique. The effect of the gold leaf within Klimt's paintings was to highlight the divinity and antiquity of love and passion.

Visual Associative Memory refers to sensory neurons in the visual cortex that process information and translate it to us based on our every day experiences. Our memory relies on objects the ability to associate as a way to retrieve information. The development of associative memories is believed to be the effect of binding, or strengthening of connections between neurons that represent the visual stimulus. These depend on previously forged links through first hand experience (Salk institute, 2007). A common example of these associations coming into play is green for 'go', and red for 'stop'.

Today, advertisers play on this psychology to influence our perceptions and create a placebo effect through the colours that they use. The use of colour is important in marketing because it alters the viewers perception of its product or services. Colour is used to best represent the companies identity and therefore attract customers that will be more interested in this. For example, Victorias secret, a women's lingerie brand uses mostly pink for their displays and advertising. These colour perceptions will vary amongst different age groups and genders. A study shows that customers will make a judgement on a product within 90 seconds of interaction, and about 62-90 percent of that decision is based upon colour (Singh, 2006: 787- 789).



The rose of temperaments, 1798

In 1798/9, poets Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe and Friedrich Schiller created the 'Rose of Temperaments' (*Temperamenten-Rose*). This is a diagram that relies on the four temperament theory, which is a theory that suggests there are four basic personality types: sanguine and choleric (extroverted personalities), melancholic and phlegmatic (introverted personalities) (Ekstrand, 1). In this diagram, a gradient of 12 colours are assigned to the different personality traits and occupations. The warmer end of the spectrum belongs to the sanguine and choleric, and with melancholic and phlegmatic to cool.

A similar colour wheel is used in modern marketing. colour mapping is a way of determining what colour a brand should adopt to represent its company in an industry that is already so full of visual stimulus and brand association (O'Connor, 2016: 55-60). Brands will trademark colours used in their marketing and packaging so that competing brands cannot claim them in association to their own. With exposure to a specific logo or packaging, we begin to associate the fundamental colours within the marketing to the brand. For example, Cadbury's milk chocolate has been using the colour purple for its wrappers for decades, and it has become a highly distinguishing point of reference for the brand. Cadburys trademarked the colour purple, or more specifically Pantone 26853 in 1995. The deep purple and font that cadburys uses for its logo is nothing short of iconic and is internationally recognised as a brand. However, the company has recently lost this trademark after a court battle with rival company Nestle. this has been described as devastating blow for the company. Other famous examples of colour trademarking include: Tiffany & Co. Blue (Pantone 1837), Barbie Pink (Pantone 219C), and Coca Cola Red (Pantone 2347C).

Visual aid

In human social behaviour, the non verbal channel is used to negotiate interpersonal attitudes whilst the verbal channel is used for conveying information. Our non verbal channel offers information about our emotional state, attitudes toward others and social interactions. These tells are crucial for developing interpersonal relationships (Beattle, 2004: 20).

“Non verbal communication is precisely concerned with matters of relationship... From an adaptive point of view, it is therefore important that this discourse be carried on by techniques which are relatively unconscious and only imperfectly subject to voluntary control” (Bateson 1968: 614-15)

Gregory Batemans argument is that we express our interpersonal relationships through our non verbal channel because that realm of feeling is less susceptible to voluntary control. Trying to to disguise your feelings toward someone non verbally is far more difficult than verbally deceiving someone. Essentially, our non verbal pathology is presumably the most trustworthy. The function that non verbal communication serves is quite different to that of verbal communication, making it possible to express things that spoken language is unsuited to.

Francis bacon, in his book *Advancement of Learning* (1905) discusses the value of gesture in relation to understanding the mind. Bacon believes that gestural actions are indicative to the state of ones mind and will.

“as the tongue speaketh to the ear, so the gesture speaketh to the eye” (1605/ 1952: 49).

Just as we fluently understand a spoken language, we are also fluent in the visual language although we may not know it. Bacon argues that the gestural language is the most ‘natural’ form, compared to a more artificial and capricious spoken one. He states:

“*gesture is the only speech and general language of the human nature*” (1644/ 1942: 3).

Bacon is suggesting that this gestural language is something we are born with and is the most intone with our raw human state and reflects on the origin of communication. These ideas about gesture and expression is what inspired Bacon to produce his own emotionally charged gestural painting techniques.

Although, it appears that non verbals are an important part of our ability to communicate even along side spoken language. For example, how we gesture to help get our point across, and even do this whilst speaking on the phone when the other person can't see you (Beattie, 2004: 65-67). This suggests it's not just important to help others understand us but aid us in delivering the message itself. The analysis of gestures and how they identify with speech show the close integration of these two platforms of communication.

Iconic gestures are forms that exhibit a strong correlation to the meaning of the speech it is accompanied by. These types of gesture develop alongside speech as a child learns it. Children usually start gesturing at about ten months old, using deictics (pointing gestures), with the meaning revealed through context rather than form. We also use iconic gestures to illustrate speech. When a speaker is having difficulty forming a word they cannot locate within their mind, they will display an iconic gesture that closely resembles the lost word. This use of gesture is intended to assist the speaker in locating the term within its internal dictionary, and to also suggest to others what this might be (Beattie, 2004: 65).

Metaphoric gestures are also gestures that are used to depict, however the content of these gestures are fictional.

"The gesture presents an image of the invisible - an image of abstraction" (McNeil, 1992:14)

With this, McNeil tells us that these metaphoric gestures illustrate a concept. For example when describing to someone a story from a book or an idea not yet produced.

What is interesting about these forms of gesture, is that they reveal how the speaker perceives the event or thing in discussion. They also give indication to how the speaker might feel towards it. As we all have different experiences of life, attitudes and views of ours will vary and shape our perceptions of the world around us.

Freud's automatism

Automatism is a term used in physiology that describes the involuntary action of the human body, such as breathing and sleep walking. Psychologist Sigmund Freud used this theory to create a method of investigating the unconscious minds of his patients. These methods included free association and automatic drawing or writing. The aim was to write, or draw as fast and automatically as possible with no conscious effects inflicted onto the outcome. Freud developed the process in 1892 to 1898 and was unique because it gave patients the ability to examine their own thoughts. With the lack of intervention from a therapist, it conquered some of the common potential problems in therapy. These problems include: transference, meaning the transference of emotions from person to person. Projection, the effect of projecting qualities onto someone else. And resistance, which is the effect of blocking out memories or emotions (Baudin, 2015).

The concept of free association is that it will uncover associations and connections created by the patient, opening them up to uncovering repressed memories and emotions. Through the unconscious flow of automatic drawing and writing, parts of the patients subconscious can come to the surface and shed light on issues that need to be touched upon. This is similar to the 'freudian slip' or Parapraxis, which refers to the involuntary error in speech, memory or action that happens due to internal dialogue or unconscious desires and feelings.

"He that has eyes to see and ears to hear may convince himself that no mortal can keep a secret. If his lips are silent, he chatters with his fingertips; betrayal oozes out of him at every pore." (Freud, 1905).

Our involuntary behaviour is our biggest give away, there is much to be learned through the analysis of these actions.

The repression of memory and emotions is activated by the brain as a defence mechanism. When exposed to stressful stimuli, the brain will protect itself by burying it into the unconscious. Although hidden, these repressed memories and emotions forever live in the shadow of the brain and if left to fester, will cause a more harmful outcome.

Trauma displayed within artistic expression is often presented as something unidentifiable to the trauma or event, although still directly in communication with traumatic memory (Bennet. J 2005: 1). When there is no

rational form of representing the true traumatic experience, the mimetic or symbolic image claims representation in its stead. Traumatic events or experience can be internally demanding of urgent portrayal however in the same instant defies all sense of comprehension and allusion (Guerin. F, Hallas. R, 2007: 2).

“we should speak of a passage into the temporality of narrative that encases but also mutes traumas perpetually haunting force by means of a structuration that is delivered by representation.” (Pollock, 2009: 40)

Trauma researchers have sought to influence sufferers of trauma to regain their understanding of the traumatic event by connecting their representations to reality in attempt to heal (Guerin. F, Hallas. R, 2007: 3).

“Psycho analytical thought concerning both art and repetition revolves around the impossibility of annulling originary oppression and accessing the psychic *Thing* encapsulated and hiding in an ‘outside’ captured inside in an unconscious ‘extimate’ space. The thing is traumatic and aching, and we don’t know where it hurts or that it hurts. It struggles unsuccessfully to re approach psychic awareness, but only finds momentary relief in symptomatic repartitions.” (Ettinger, 1999: 89)

Ettinger’s theory on aesthetics goes beyond mental links between object and *Thing*, to a more primitive and physical reaction where there is no direct distortion of reality, a more habitual or compulsive motif in the In the imagery that contains the presence of the unexplainable and is being translated through gesture and tactility. It is not the content but the performative process that creates a raw and unique platform of revision.

Inspired by Freud’s teachings and methods of tapping into the unconscious, the Surrealist movement adopted these techniques for their artwork. Andre Breton (1896-1966), a French poet and writer, borrowed the term automatism in his manifesto of surrealism (1924), and thus giving birth to the movement. In this manifesto, Breton describes surrealism as:

“pure psychic automatism... the dictation of thought in the absence of control exercised by reason and outside all moral or aesthetic concerns.”

The idea was to express the very process of thought. A process that consisted of raw spontaneity and unconscious actions, without any pre determined influence on the hand. The surrealists beliefs were based upon the symbolic meanings of dreams and the unconscious train of thought.

Some notable pioneers in the surrealist movement include max Ernst, Salvador Dali and Rene Magritte. Max Ernst developed a technique that involved creating collages consisting of different body parts from different sources in order to make something new and interesting. A technique to recall buried memories or emotion is to create a collage using images that would stimulate links within the mind (visual associative memory). This then acts as a channel to project the process of association, and allows the freedom to visually analyse the outcome.

Spanish painter Salvador Dali (1904-1989) was probably one of the most influential members of the surrealist movement. Heavily inspired by Freud,s writings in the subconscious and dreams, Dali created paintings of 'dream sequences'. These sequences would contain bizarre and hallucinogenic imagery that gave him his reputation of being an extremely eccentric character. The surrealists focal belief was that products of the unconscious mind such as dream imagery has symbolic significance. Dali explored his dreams and imagination and harnessed it as inspiration to continue to create.

“The fact that I myself, at the moment of painting, do not understand my own pictures, does not mean that these pictures have no meaning; on the contrary, their meaning is so profound, complex, coherent, and involuntary that it escapes the most simple analysis of logical intuition.” (Salvidor Dali).

Dali's surreal and curious imagery is a product of a free flow of unconscious dialogue which may not even make sense to Dali himself, but express an intricate wealth of information that simply cannot be put into rational or comprehensible words.



Magritte, 1928: The Lovers

Rene Magritte (1898-1967) is a Belgian surrealist artist. He was well known for his curious and dreamy imagery. My favourite element within Magritte's work is a recurring motif involving the head of figures being wrapped in a white, cloth like material. These paintings include *the Lovers 1* (1928), *the Lovers 2*, (1928), *the Central Story* (1927) and *the Invention of Life* (1928). They have always struck an interest with me and into what they mean to Magritte.

When Magritte was 13 years of age, his mother committed suicide by drowning herself in the Sambre river. It has been rumoured that when her body was discovered and hauled out of the river, her white nightgown became wrapped around her face and head. This speculation is commonly used as an explanation to the symbolic reference within his paintings.

"everything we see hides another thing, we always want to see what is hidden by what we see. There is an interest in that which is hidden and which the visible does not show us. This interest can take the form of a quite intense feeling, a sort of conflict, one might say, between the visible that is hidden and the visible that is present." (Rene Magritte).

Here Magritte tells us that information not from the physical world but from the inner psyche is what we existentially desire to comprehend.

Primary research



During a research trip to the Venice Biennale 2019, I came across an installation accompanied by a sound piece occupying a sixteenth century church - *Chiesa di Santa Maria della Visitazione*. This piece was created by American installation and performance artist James Lee Byars (1932-1997), and titled *The Death of James Lee Byars*. This work was conceived in Byers studio in 1994, during which time he was battling terminal cancer. Composed of gold leaf and Swarovski crystals, Byers creates a beautifully eerie homage to his own death.

"i hope that people will experience my way of practicing my own death as something useful for themselves." (James Lee Byers).

Through this piece Byers is reclaiming the inevitability of his fate and giving his memory empowerment through this ancient, ritualistic style of memorial. Whilst visiting Japan for the first time in the late 1950s, Byers became inspired by the world of mysticism and ritual. Gold became a strong motif within his work as an ethereal counterpart, reminiscent of the classic representation of gold in association with divinity. Byers installation presents a golden void like chamber, minimalistic and captivating to behold. The walls are adorned with thousands of pieces of gold leaf that perform a soft flutter through draft, giving the piece a breath of life. Crystals lay upon the on the featured rectangle, representing a sort of sarcophagus. These marked where Byers once lay during a performance in Brussels in 1944 where he rehearsed his death. Byers is known for exploring the act of disappearance within his works, and in this piece represents his final act. With an overwhelming feeling of absence, and a contradicting presence of divinity, partnered with the setting of the *Chiesa di Santa Maria della Visitazione*, this piece is his most magical and emotionally charged.

Curator of the show Walter Vanhaerents partnered this installation with a sound piece by Lebanese artist and composer Zad Moultaka. Comprised of 16 speakers on podiums lining each side of the church aisle. this audio piece contains echoes of a funeral choir, quoting verses from the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*. It evokes religion, mysticism, symbolism and ritualism. These are all deep interests that Byers held throughout his life and career, making it a perfect accompaniment to the installation. It creates a strong presence and atmosphere that ripples beautifully throughout the acoustic space.



Diazepam Dan the Three Legged Man is a wax sculpture I created whilst in my second year of study, and the initial conception for a series that developed that I refer to as the 'drug slugs' or 'addiction demons'. Using small plastic doll arms and sculpting wax I built a manifestation of the addictive force that takes hold of your mind when abusing or misusing substances. The process was a mime like reflection of representational constructs that I have accumulated within my own mind. The sculpture itself is fleshy and leach like, almost tumorous. His eyes are black and filled with tar-like viscous slime, and his expression is melancholy. I attached three arms to represent the instability and difficulty within motor function whilst under the influence of substances such as benzodiazepine's. For me, it is the form of this piece that really vocalises its nature, the worm like form that takes my mind to wiggling and flailing, accompanied by the waxy and almost clammy surface. I feel that when I look at this piece I can hear the anguished high pitch wailing of infants with outreached hands grabbing at the air. Although the aesthetic and context is grim in nature, the sculpture possesses an endearing element, perhaps because of its dainty size or baby arms. There is a certain charm to it, which has been a reoccurring motif within my body of work. I seem to explore macabre and nightmarish themes in an playful and satire context.

Conclusion

In revision of the evidence I have presented, I would like to highlight the strong correlation between the biological activity within the human brain when activated by visual stimuli, and the influence it has on our state of mind. How symbolic materials can induce emotion and associations through a high functioning process unique to our biology, that has been the foundation of cultural and linguistic evolution.

Colours, symbols and gestures are communicating information to us that we unconsciously ingest within seconds, indiscriminate to language barriers and unique to each individual Interpretation. It is an important part in the brains fascinating methods of self defence to create associations, based on stored data to determine potentially dangerous or stressful interactions. The ability to communicate is a fundamental part of our evolutionary success and social relationships. The process of symbolic recognition enabled us to develop written language and eventually speech, which is the key feature that sets us apart from all other forms of life.

The unconscious mind exposes itself involuntarily through expression and gesture. This is a feature that we can harness and examine to reveal truths, desires and mind sets. This information can be used within psychology and also has therapeutic value. This raw and primary language and the exploration of the human psyche lead to a prominent movement that liberated many great artists, poets and thinkers.

Art as a form of non verbal communication, or the visual language, is a hybrid between biological and neurological factors as well as existential and philosophical counterparts. The neurological and involuntary behaviour is something that can be examined scientifically and also happens to be the gestural language of art and muse, an incredibly natural and honest representation of the soul. Elements of science, psychology, history and art reveal to us a story of visual language that began pre history.

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