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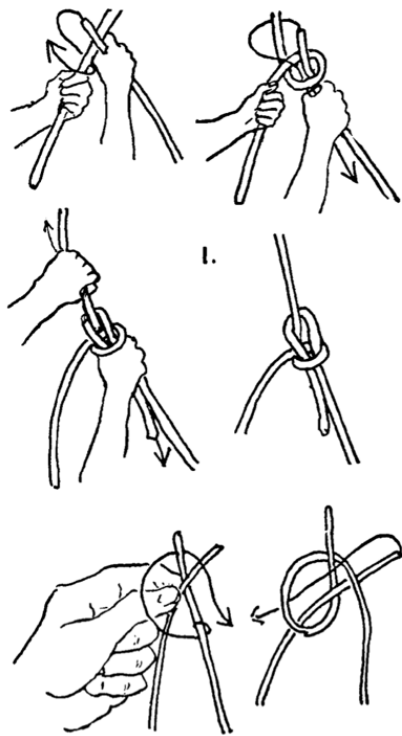
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This essay will demonstrate the power and ability of a visual language in evoking therapeutic endeavours. An endeavour is the act of doing something with clear intent or purpose (Oxford English Dictionary, 2022). However, to me, an endeavour is representative of a fruitful journey that brings and teaches newness of vast benefits. Understanding art as a therapeutic endeavour will be supported by themes like Affect Theory (Brennan, 2004), the unconscious mind (Freud, 1997), Phenomenology (Costello, 2018), and Surrealism (Dempsey, 2019). Furthermore, thinkers like Freud (1997), Brennan (2004), Costello (2018), and Birren (1976), and artisans like Picasso (Blue Period, 1901-1904), will further support the discoveries made throughout. Seeing the therapeutic ability within the arts through varying components is a subject noticed widely by artisans. This essay will break down the idea of art as a therapeutic, emotional experience, noticing how and when it can affect the mind, body, and soul, and its concurrent significance.



Budding relationships are much like a knot and find themselves in reference to several things. Relationships with people, with colour, material, texture, and with process within art and design become entangled and connected through varying components. The weaving and tangling contained within a knot resembles the coalescence of conversations, similarities, differences, and general understanding of two people present within relationships. Ingold (2015) expresses how budding relationships resonate with this knot analogy, being symptomatic to the binding of lives in relations of empathy and resemblance. Where rope joins, meets, and touches within a knot, experiences had, react the same within relationships. Noticing how these relationships differ in complexity reveals how and why connections between people are formed.

Figure 1: Knots, Clifford (1944)

The varying complexities within relationships is an idea studied by Costello (2018) who notices that 'ongoing mutual periods of reflection and candour' (Costello, 2018, p.156) are key components in their formation. The ability to reflect on an experience, from a place of honesty, is where further understanding of the self will occur. Developing this self-awareness will encourage and strengthen new relationships. Although the production of the piece itself is at the core of the relationship, within art and design, the feelings that develop between the viewer

and designer are often concerned with transference. Transference, as the combination of such elements through paths and journeys, enables new relationships to form whereby the self and others are considered, merging their personal experiences and circumstances (Dewey, 2005). Now that transference has caused these components to exist relationally, that gained and learned from interacting with art and design will be of more significant value to the individual.

Ingold (2015) develops this concept of transference by using lines as the carrier, bringing it into the province of human life. For continuation of life, we must mount the things we do and see within the life we are currently living through contemplation, analysis, and questioning. Consequently, the life we live has added value whereby different relationships can evolve. Ingold (2015) further explains that there is a principle of correspondence present that is fundamentally social in origin. The social act of responding, seeing, and relating to art allows for the diverse settlement of individuals where relational discoveries about each other surface. The perspective present when observing the arts is affected by surrounding emotion, likewise, the emotions present in the viewer will affect their perception (Gregory, 2015). As such, people surrounding the observer will also influence their perspective. Much like the knot, relationships, and people part, connect with new people, and re-connect, and experience different and similar things. This mesh and network of relations continues to grow concurrently with the person. Seeing art as a communicative source whereby budding relationships occur between the self and others, brings insight to the commonalities that, we may not be aware of, but all share.

The development of relationships will have consequent affects shaped by the artwork, that are enhanced by its atmosphere. This process is described as, what Brennan (2004) calls, 'Affect'. According to Brennan (2004), Affect is social in origin and has both biological and physical effects (Brennan, 2004) that are joined with subjective feelings of evaluations, images, and memories (Wetherell, 2012). This enables the viewer to observe the work as a bodily experience.

Art that stimulates the physical senses is relational to the emotional senses. This brings clarity to the understanding of artistic expression within a piece, giving the artist visual means to portray their narrative (Dewey, 2005). This suggests that the visual stimuli around us, whether chosen to interact with or not, will permanently exist within our minds and later affect what we do, see, believe, and feel. Wetherell (2012) notices that the paradigm change present due to these different interactions, can form its own epistemology. This epistemology dictates feelings that occur, demonstrating the influence, intensity, and impact possessed by Affect. It is an ongoing flow of knowledge that fluctuates between the background and foreground of the mind and body when facing different stimuli.

The interaction of people and environments, metaphorically described as a shared feeling voyage by Wetherell (2012), persuades Affect and conjures it from within another person (Brennan, 2004). Much like Gregory's (2015) discoveries, the power of the arts comes when emotions and perspective flow concurrently between the observer, the work, and the surrounding people. This is demonstrative of the shared feeling voyage discussed by Wetherell (2012) where, like the knot, the coalescence of these components allows for the creation of new relationships.

The energies of emotions displayed by a person can be adopted by another, this is the transmission of Affect (Brennan, 2004). As such, the transmission of Affect cannot be monitored by chronological time. Indeed, depending on its intensity, the voyage of shared feelings can feel as if it exists momentarily or as if it lasts a lifetime (Wetherell, 2012). Hence, relational experiences shared by the creator and viewer welcomes the transmission of Affect, moving and combining one persons' feelings onto and within another. The success of this intersubjective communication will rely on any similarities and differences in both participants lives.

The transmission of affects conjured will differ according to how much exposure the observer has to surrounding information. The importance of making information accessible to the viewer is explained by Birren (1976) and how the exposure to it, or lack of, becomes an independent factor in what we see. Alongside this, our past experiences affect our perception. Understanding that the epistemology created by past experiences becomes a new form of perception reveals the importance of how to present new information to an artisan. Gregory (2015) reamplifies this, noticing that to achieve success in how something is perceived, the way it is represented must be deliberated. For the narrative of a piece to be captured successfully, how it is created, the colours used, and its scale will all have an impact.

Personal feelings conjured by an artwork are often regarded as impartial to the observations had (Chilvers, 1990) but are relational to expression within a person. Expression reflects a person's mindset, in contrary to the solidity in what they are presented with, inviting the questions 'is what we see reality? Or is the world about us a construct of our eyes and brain?' (Birren, 1976, p.245). Considering the idea of a double reality, the mind's eye becomes susceptible to its surroundings, where what we see, know, and believe all differ (Gregory, 2015). Taught, and learnt, behaviours and opinions form personal sentiments within the eyes and brain. The diversity of perspective underpins the way in which an artisan captures their narrative.

It is suggested that an experience scenario is relational to a simulation about what is happening in the world (Godfrey, 2019) whereby the experience has largely to do with our presuppositions of the world. 'Experience teaches that in visual perceptions there is a discrepancy between physical fact and psychic effect' (Birren, 1976, p.106). The physical and psychic sentiments we have will limit our expectations, meaning that the life experiences had will also inform what expectations a person possesses as well as what they gain from new experiences and relationships.

As the physical fact and psychic effect are discrepant, they can be seen to be parallel to one another. Never crossing paths nor combining ideas implies that they cannot be considered as relational (Costello, 2018). However, the contemplation of the installed art experience becomes an involvement within both the mind and body of the observer. This is representational of the idea of a sensation. Where the layering of this parallel between physical and psychic effect meets personal thoughts and expectations (Costello, 2018). This deduces that 'the world and the things we experience exist outside of us and of our awareness of them' (Costello, 2018, p.12). Thus, the intensity of the sensation that occurs reflects the individual and will differ depending on their thoughts and expectations.

Designing sympathetically, considering diversity, can be realised as a 'living with' rather than a 'looking at' methodology (Ingold, 2015). This suggests the extent of empathy present within the designer to make considerations for others whom they have not met. Thus, the common ground of the intervening space of memories and experiences of the viewer and designer becomes central to how best to construct a story within a work (Ingold, 2015). Artisans consider how to create new relationships between ideas, people, materials, and differing forms of the arts; hence, 'if movement alone were perceived in music and rest alone in painting, music would be without structure and pictures nothing but dry bones' (Sullivan, 2000, p.327). So, although initially deemed as independent, they in fact exist relationally to one another once questioning and recognition of their commonalities occur. This sense is provoked largely within installation art which is demonstrative of art as an experience.

The Tate (2022) explains that installation artworks occupy the entirety of a space so that the viewer is immersed in and engaged with the work. When I visited the Olafur Eliasson exhibition at the Tate Modern in 2019, I felt so consumed by his work. Stimulated by his use of colour, process, and materials, my senses were altered largely to what felt like an affective episode. Time became that of a construct as I found myself physically and mentally overwhelmed by the visual stimuli and connected to the people surrounding me. This isomorphism embodied the overlaying of experiences from my past and present with those

around me. The intersubjectivity and pairing of these experiences became time-conscious whilst observing the exhibition, where instructive comparison overwhelmed my mind (Costello, 2018). I noticed that this phenomenal sense of an affective episode worked through a flow that's duration felt unaligned to time (Wetherell, 2012). Unaware of how long I spent observing his work, the only thoughts within my mind were responses to the visual stimuli I was immersed in and engaged with.

The exhibition in 2019 paraded Eliasson's research into 'cognitive neuroscience, interaction, play, collaboration and intersubjectivity' (Godfrey, 2019, p.154). Eliasson (2019) explains his awareness of an experience being a mingling of culture, biology, and psychology. The coalescence of these components of an experience makes it 'a process that one is caught up in' (Wetherell, 2012, p.140). Much like that discussed by Ingold (2015), this demonstrates how consuming these experiences can be, whereby, like I experienced, you cannot concentrate on anything other than what is before you. Eliasson (2019) believes an experience has a before and after and that its importance lies in that flow (Godfrey, 2019). My experience of the exhibition demonstrated this idea as the only thoughts entering my mind were about what I was observing. Noticing how other people were responding to the same visual stimuli evoked new feelings within me, as if I was experiencing the same flow as the people around me.

Csikszentmihalyi (2010) defines 'flow' as a state of mind or experience that is felt when we become completely absorbed by what we are doing or surrounded with. Noticing how each person's own experience with 'flow' is so consuming, Csikszentmihalyi (2010) draws on the isolation that follows it. Within the mind, everything that exists outside the reality currently consumed by, struggles to be recognised by the person experiencing a 'flow' state of mind. So, the only thoughts present in their mind are about what they are faced with, unaligned to the pace of life around them. Costello (2018) reinforces this idea of 'flow' whereby the 'consciousness of internal time involves a description of the now, the living present, or the moment' (Costello, 2018, p.118). This suggests that as we experience and live within the present moment of time, it is measured objectively as time becomes a series of interconnected moments of the mind and body. Thus, the only thoughts present in the mind whilst experiencing this 'flow', is about what is seen and felt concurrently. A concept that Csikszentmihalyi (2010) defines as near impossible to truly illustrate to another person outside of this 'flow'. Whilst observing Eliasson's (2019) work, I felt my mind enter a space of extreme intensity whereby I felt connected to everything I saw. The 'flow' I experienced is demonstrative of Csikszentmihalyi (2010) explanation of 'flow'; I adopted a state of mind that felt entirely individual to me.

Experience art encourages the observer to relate to the work far deeper than its outward surface. What can be revealed or learnt during this visual excursion depends highly on the observer's willingness, or lack of, to push their personal boundaries. The state of mind present when entering a territory of discomfort within a 'communal affective atmosphere' (Wetherell, 2012, p.140) shares characteristics with strict focus, discomposure, and rigidity. This 'wave of public feeling' (Wetherell, 2012, p.140) invites interruption to the flow (Costello, 2018), as the intersubjectivity of past and present experiences of the viewer and those surrounding him can be compared.

Dewey (2005) further explains that art involves both the artists and the active viewer, whereby each of their personal experiences and cultures become relational to one another. Thus, making art the communication between both the present and unpresented mindset (Dewey, 2005). Considering how one aspect may affect another, and to what degree, encourages questions about the authenticity of a feeling or idea, prejudice or bias, preference, and realism. The interconnection of these experiences and moments produces a flow of lived time. It allows the observer to remember and anticipate internal and external objects that may or may not be relational to them (Costello, 2018). Consequently, the continuation of the experience is fragmented, thus thoughts revealed, and lessons learnt can become disjointed, as the experiences of others participate in this process because they are isomorphic.

Eliasson (2019) expresses how he has formalised the 'elicitation interview method' (Godfrey, 2019, p.156) where the questions asked lead back to a previous experience. This affective practice encourages the realisation that you can gain access to many more layers under one dominating layer of brief subjective experience (Godfrey, 2019). Thus, revealing that by combining thoughts, feelings, and experiences, the wealth of that gained will be increased. Costello (2018) expands on this, noticing how the ontological pairing of self and others enhances the structure of self-modification where revisiting past experiences can occur. He goes on to define the 'now' as self-maintaining whereby it takes on a self-modifying structure and is ever-renewing, despite never being isolated. Thus, confirming that what we see, learn, and experience exist relationally to one and another allowing new thoughts and experiences to be heightened as various components cross paths and conjoin.

This suggests that an experience cannot be a flow of information into our body or presumed expectations about something. Rather, it seems to be closer to a space or place that invites investigation and enquiry (Godfrey, 2019). Eliasson (2019) clarifies this idea of an exploratory space when explaining that this third model experience is like a 'universe that can help you revisit the experience and deepen

and transform it' (Godfrey, 2019, p.157). Awareness of the influential external factors within the different spaces used to create and observe artwork further determines the extent of that gained. It establishes the degree of the transmission of Affect, for both the designer and viewer. Bodily responses as an effect to viewing and creating artwork instigates these affective states (Brennan, 2004) as our 'nervous systems are designed to be captured by the nervous systems of others' (Wetherell, 2012, p.148). It is within this moment that art as a therapeutic endeavour develops and prospers as we feel connected to those around us.

The healing value of image making for the creator is reminiscent with therapy. It encourages emotional findings and unconscious feelings to appear at the forefront of the mind, acting as a visual opportunity to bring awareness to feelings of an unsurfaced state (Oswald, 1993). This becomes a transformative event for the practitioner where an altered consciousness state of feeling transported occurs when producing work (Edwards, 2013). Csikszentmihalyi (2010) refers to the act of painting conducted by an artist when talking about 'flow', noticing how they almost dissociate from their external reality, and become emersed in what is before them. The transportation between the varied states of mind for the creator will give insight to their goals and help evolve their creative thinking (Brennan, 2004). Thus, strengthening and bringing clarity to what is the purpose of their individual visual language.

For the creator's visual language to affect the observer in similar ways, their cultural competence must consider the differences in modes of expression (Moon, 2010). Different people perceive and relate to visual stimuli in different ways. Materials register themselves in multiple domains of thought and practice whereby patterns 'of culture are sustained and bound into the interstices of human life' (Ingold, 2015, p.18). Edwards (2013) explains how the things we see are often interpreted and conceptualised in ways dependant of a person's mind-set, culture, and past experiences. As a designer, it is imperative to continually self-educate with regards to the multiplicity of ways to construct and perceive art (Moon, 2010). This everlasting learning process will give the designer the ability to become aware of their internalised biases, and design around or with them, depending on their desired narrative.

The cognitive components of an artist's visual language resonate with desire, an imagined entity. For the creator to successfully translate their desires through the transmission of Affect, material choice, colour, and process must be considered, as these mechanisms acquire intense evocative qualities in the viewer. Hence, the visual language created becomes a gateway to encourage spoken words and conversations that concentrate on materiality as opposed to form and content (Ingold, 2015). Conversations based on the materiality of a piece conjures

responses that allow a deeper understanding of the work being observed in contrary to what it outwardly presents. Costello (2018) expands on this noticing that specific sensations derived from a person's concealment of feelings determines the intensity of the apprehension of the perceived works. Hence, nuances are noticed that may have otherwise been overlooked if the piece was observed simply at surface value.

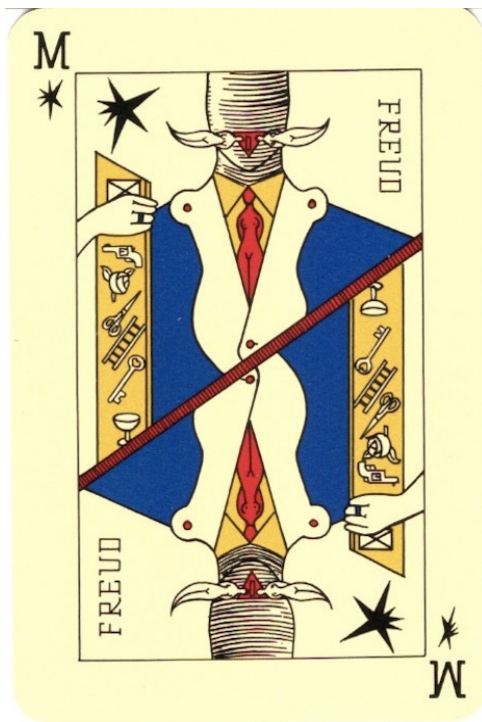
The tactile properties and marks created by a drawing material will produce an atmosphere leading to a visual language. Depending on the purpose of the work, material choice and the techniques used will influence how, what, and who it communicates to. Furthermore, the success of the works communicative abilities will be determined by the atmosphere it creates. The atmosphere will be experienced as 'both objective and certain' (Brennan, 2004, p.1) as its environment becomes one with the viewer. This becomes the gateway into deeper conceptual understanding of the piece for the observer. It reinforces the idea that for a piece to affect a viewer, their accessibility to information must be considered. The visual language embodies the mechanism of communication to the mind through visual stimuli rather than literal symbols or words. Edwards (2013) expands on this, noticing that the more succinct a visual language is, the easier it will be for the viewer to see and hear the artists input and desires. In turn, this invites further self-discoveries within the viewer and encourages deeper connections to the piece.

An art movement that demonstrates the power a visual language can have at summoning psychological affects is Surrealism. Surrealism is understood as a 'revolutionary mode of thought and action' (Chilvers, 2020, p.576) where the divide between imagination and reality collapses. It releases the creative abilities within the unconscious mind, 'breaching the dominance of reason and conscious control by releasing primitive urges and imagery' (Chilvers, 2020, p.576). Surrealism in its pure state, defined by Breton (1924), is the psychic automation and functioning of thought. It forces us to face what we understand to be far from reality, considering if and how it can be feasible, and in what reality this is possible. This questioning and investigation encouraged through the art of Surrealism, reinforces the uncertainty around what we deem as reality, discussed by Birren (1976), challenging the preconceived notions of reality. Artworks that demonstrate this idea are often the pieces that evoke diverse responses in the viewer, forcing conversation and questioning to be able to understand the piece the way it was intended.

A surrealist epistemology grounds New Image Painting whereby the unfounded is challenged to be rational. Whereby the artist becomes aware of his realities (Breton, 1924) and manipulates an image to be experienced as a 'psychological

associative or an ambiguous quasi-narrative' (Chilvers, 2020, p.419). Similarly, to the questions asked by Birren (1976), New Image Painting visually presents matters to invite a level of uncertainty in what we see. By breaking down the barriers of one's perception of the outer world in contrast to their inner world, New Image Painting changes the way people think by merging the conscious and unconscious state of mind (Dempsey, 2019). Hence, enticing debates on the level of confidence within such matters. The power held by communicating in this way reamplifies the fact that a visual language can conjure psychological discoveries, evaluations of personal values and beliefs, and social preferences within the artist and viewer.

Surrealism was largely influenced by the theories of Sigmund Freud. Freud (1997) believed that we could surface repressed memories or desires through the analysis of dreams (Dempsey, 2019). He explored dreams and the unconscious,



harnessing them and seeing them as the stage for imagination, to be able to access 'a treasure trove of buried images to exploit' (Dempsey, 2019, p.18). He believed that by gaining access to these parts of our mind, we would possess the ability to revisit and reimagine past experiences and memories. Breton (1924) recognised that Freud noticed this contained ability within our minds to argument surface ideas and submit them 'to the control of our reason' (Breton, 1924, p.2). Hence, Surrealism, and ideas behind it, are demonstrative of this neglected ability in our mind that many choose to ignore or dismiss which becomes the reason why surrealism is deemed as irrational by many.

Figure 2: Dominguez, Freud (1941)

Freud explained that dreams reveal themselves as significant psychological structures positioned within the psychic activities of a conscious state (Freud, 1997). Studying cognitive neuroscience and intersubjectivity, there are relational ideas between both Freud (1997) and Eliasson's (2019) research, whereby the activities of the unconscious mind are inspiring. Harnessing this ability to work with the unconscious, reveals uncertainty on different aspects about the proposed present reality lived in (Freud, 1997). Thus, using this notion to elevate work within design, specifically within surrealism, can help surface these ideas within the

observer, encouraging them to question their own unconscious mind and deepen their thinking.

Works created by artisans, especially within Surrealism, embody the condensation of the unconscious feelings they and we all possess, externalising them into visual entities (Oswald, 1993). The process of creating these visual responses encourages both the viewer and creator to externalize, re-experience, and resolve conflicting thoughts, beliefs, and feelings from an external perspective rather than internal. Freud (1997) expands on this idea of repositing thoughts and feelings as he notices they are often 'accustomed to project as an external reality' (p.7), despite the reality in question only existing internally within the individual. Hence, repositing these feelings externally gives the work produced the responsibility of being the container of the emotions as opposed to the mind (Oswald, 1993). This external container acts as a way of decompartmentalising issues the individual is facing, be that the viewer or creator, causing the process of valuation to be dependent on the inspired divine origin of these issues (Freud, 1997). This in turn encourages analysis of the emotional frameworks being targeted to allow a better understanding of their origin and past and present impact by seeing them as detached, separate, external entities of the self.

Visually representing and accessing levels of the unconscious mind within art and design is a common ambition for artisans. An example of a methodology used, often within surrealism, to introduce ideas and starting points in order to capture the unconscious activities is collage. Collage is regarded as a form of 'self-expression, a means of uncovering unconscious content, and a vehicle for more developed art making' (Moon, 2010, p.30). The ideology of collage repurposes and revives the accumulation of life transforming its identity to facilitate new conversations and viewpoints of different issues.

Collaging presents itself as a vehicle to facilitate the revelation of the viewers and designers' conflicts, defence mechanisms, and styles of functioning. It can be seen as a symbolic act of creating order out of fragmented aspects of life or chaotic feelings, represented through the broken materials used to build a collage (Moon, 2010). To better understand the state of a person's unconscious mind, techniques such as collage help externalise issues into visual entities (Oswald, 1993) by physically handling less fragile and precious materials. It is a less intrusive method of deconstructing a thought or experience that is held within the unconscious mind. Reaching the level of the unconscious where understanding can occur requires depth of investigation. Using collage as an investigatory tool encourages reaching that crucial point within the unconscious that so many have desires to communicate with.

For the designer, collage engages them through physically layering materials. It composes its own visual reality through the layering of varied meanings and realisms (Wehmeyer, 2021). This is seen as a symbolic reflection of combining and layering inner experiences and emotions to reach new understandings of ideas and thoughts (Moon, 2010) in the same way as the knot. The metaphor present when physically layering materials encourages a less intrusive questioning of what this layering can achieve, mean, or reveal. Wehmeyer (2021) further explains how the fragmented layering of materials is reminiscent of the layering of different contexts. Ideas of society and perception to society can be combined and contrasted to aid these refreshed starting points.

The impermanence of an unfixed collage gives the creator the freedom to make mistakes without regret, finding multiple ways of understanding the same idea through placement and intersubjectivity of their conscious and unconscious mind (Moon, 2010). This methodology of self-awareness and understanding deemphasizes verbal orders and relies on the materials in its raw state to create a new visual structural framework for digesting and communicating ideas and thoughts.

An artisan that demonstrated the evocative abilities of collage as a methodology to articulate a surrealist epistemology was Picasso. The *Minotaure* (Fig. 3) was produced by Picasso in the 1930's, four years following the publication of Bretons second surrealist manifesto. A surrealist collage produced in the heights of Picasso's proximity to surrealism (Ferrara, 2022), the minotaur was seen as a locus of opposing surrealist paradigms, and a platform for Bretons vision of surrealism. The minotaur was highly emblematic for Surrealists as they saw it as the personification of forbidden desires (MoMA, 2022), an ideology also discussed by Freud (1997). The work embodies Picasso's wealth of material exploration presenting us with a piece that acts as a site of accumulation and divergency



Figure 3: Minotaure et femme, Picasso (1937)

(Ferrara, 2020). Undergoing intense tactile examination of this piece reveals that Picasso was contemplating and re-thinking his image-making strategies and visual language. The extent of this personal analysis, conducted by Picasso, enabled him to better articulate the possibilities he believed with regards to the ultra-real within his work.

For Picasso, the minotaur expressed complex emotions during a time of extreme personal turmoil within his life whereby the figure embodied characteristics of lasciviousness, violence, guilt, and despair (MoMA, 2022). The creation of the minotaur personified a self-identification of himself with the part-man part-bull figure. Almost collectively known by art historians as 'his "personal icon" or "alter-ego," the striking recurrence' (Ferrara, 2020, p.2) of the figure within his work is commonly discussed alongside the unrestrained developments of his personal life. The minotaur is consistently thought to be a cipher for the shocking lubricity and human vulnerability which Picasso felt himself divided during the 1930's (Ferrara, 2020). The use of personification of the self with a new creature is an idea relational to surrealism whereby the self is outwardly presented in a means challenging to reality. Picasso accepted that feelings present within him showed similarities with a beast that, outwardly, is not representative of himself. Using the bull figure as an external container for these feelings, like discussed by Oswald (1993), conjured a sensation of relief within Picasso. Externalising the internal thoughts and activities of the mind in a surreal outward identity is metaphorical to means of digesting, accepting, and moving forward with personal issues.

The minotaur was seen and valued significantly by surrealists as a quintessence of the unconscious (Ferrara, 2020). The piece itself collapsed the mechanics of collage, reminiscent with the breakdown and divide between imagination and reality discussed by Chilvers (2020) within surrealism. It warped the amplification of drawing, the 'tactile immediacy of the sculptural found object, and the two-dimensional photographic print' (Ferrara, 2020, p.4). The work reveals the complexities of Picasso's exploration of collage as a drawing tool, as well as 'the nature of his elusive entanglement with surrealism' (Ferrara, 2020, p.4) that he experienced. His relationship with presenting himself and issues within his life in a surrealist style saw further success and strength through his interpretation of colour.

As well as metaphorically, through beasts and characters, Picasso illustrated his characteristics and life experiences through colour (Doyle, 2020). Picasso's gradual transformation through his life was manifested in change through his artist identity and visual language where he explored his subject matters explicitly in blue. He used the hues and tonal properties of this colour to embody features, changes of emotion, and feelings in a surrealist style (Doyle, 2020). His inner reactions of 'grief, loss, and loneliness were expressed in his melancholic blue compositions' (Blum, 2013, p.270). Achieving emancipation and independence was accompanied by emotional upheaval within Picassos Blue Period; a series of works overwhelmed by sadness.

Picasso's Blue Period is illustrative of how he adopted single colour and its hues to portray a narrative. He became entangled with issues like poverty, deprivation and disability, and psychological depression (Chalif, 2007). Whilst his monochromatic palette was representative of cognitive and affective rigidity, his compositions contradicted this. They, in combination with the fluidity of his line work and brushstrokes (Blum, 2013), captured the effortlessness and flow experienced when producing the works. Picasso depicted how these themes made him and his subjects feel with ease, surrounding them with 'the gloom of a nocturnal blue' (Chalif, 2007, p.413). His works radiated a melancholic atmosphere, painting his subjects and himself as clearly pained individuals. The power of using a single colour palette was regarded as an external projection of Picasso's attempts to dominate and control his personal mourning and melancholia in the form of a visual language (Blum, 2013). His artwork may have had a therapeutic function and may also have facilitated his adolescent development (Blum, 2013) whereby he began to understand the problems he faced internally, by breaking them down into visual entities using colour to help express them.



Figure 4: Picasso, Self Portrait (1901)

As discussed by Oswald (1993), art allows the creation of external containers to be produced to act as a tool for understanding and acceptance of thoughts and feelings within the artisan's mind. Embodying the unconscious and internal mind through physical creative outlets helps breakdown such struggles. This, making the creation of art, in combination with the observation of it, embodies how art and design can become a therapeutic endeavour for the artist and the viewer.

So, when both producing and observing work, several considerations are needed for the endeavour of this process to be as fruitful as possible. The visual language of a piece is symbolic to the creator and is the gateway for affect within the observer. Contemplating the use of colour, materiality, and composition within a piece will determine its therapeutic and affective abilities for both parties whereby these become the components of the affective state within the observer. Ultimately, telling a story of personal, social, or political value through visual means offers interpretation and understanding in several ways. Knowledge and experiences form the make up of perceptions had on a visual language and art piece. The

impact this narrative will have, its ease of understanding, and ability to resonate with the observer depends entirely on the visual language it is captured by.

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Figure List

Figure 1. *Clifford, Knots* (1944). Available at:
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Figure 2. *Freud, Mage de reve Etoile* (1941). Available at:
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Figure 3. *Picasso, Minotaure et femme* (1937). Available at:
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Figure 4. *Picasso, Self Portrait* (1901). Available at:
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