



EGS – Alumni Masters Spotlight

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How did you find EGS and Expressive Arts?

I met the method "Expressive Arts Therapy" during my research to find a more "making sense" way of working with children and youth with special needs. I'm working with kids, most with a migration background since many years and I'm convinced by now that working *art-analog* and *process oriented* as we've been taught at the EGS is the only way supporting emigrants with their "arrival in the new world", to make a "*Be-Heimatung*" (being home) possible and at least to evoke a change in our social and education system. The very first contact with the EGS was actually my reading the book "*Lösungskunst*" by Paolo Knill & Herbert Eberhart. Paolos approach with the "*Decentering*" convinced me that much I decided to go for the master program at the EGS.

What was your fondest memory of your experience in the Masters Program?

My personal and most fond memory in the master program was meeting Prof. Sally Atkins and her "Expressive Arts Dreamwork". That specific seminar triggers me to further research. Find more in my article in Sally's and Herbert's Book "Presence and Process in Expressive Arts Work". One of my main "life questions" I mention in this article, is how being both an artist and therapist, I could answer largely while working on my thesis "The birth of imagination". At this point I would like to name my thesis advisor Prof. Peter Sinapius, he always kept me conscious of writing with clear and precise thinking. Through this "thesis working process" I found the way that "art-analog thinking" can be profoundly scientific.

Since graduating, what Expressive Arts work are you doing?

I kept on with my "Expressive Arts Dreamwork" research. I opened my own Expressive Arts Therapy practice in Basel (Switzerland), which needs all this acceptance procedure for low and health insurance and so much (which I really hate) advertisement. Still I continue lifting up my very big project "Be Home" which supports refugees and emigrants with "Expressive Arts" to find to their own life in this 'outland' home. And yes, my artwork... it's silent, there is no exhibition up and running ... but I feel the pregnancy of change.

Imagining yourself in five years, how do you see yourself working in Expressive Arts?

If I could look into a crystal ball for the future, I would have secured the finances to continue with the CAGS, would have finished the Doctoral Program at the EGS *and* am teaching "Expressive Arts Therapy" all over the world!! It would also be great to be known as a Fine Arts Artist writing a book about "Expressive Arts Dreamwork". A final wish for the future: I'll be the Director of the Basel Expressive Arts Institute "Be Home" which works with refugee kids and their families.

Anything else you want us to know?

I would like to share with you my first Expressive Arts 'aesthetic response' in a public (mental hospital) environment.

For the English translation on the following article my thanks goes to Habib Afsar my friend, tremendously inspiring core group member during EGS study time and now college lecturer at the "Expressive Arts Institute" Berlin.



the call or the german romantic

riven
torn
deep abyss
fades to cry

awakened
again the child
cradled in the song of lorelay

the melody carries you down
ground
on safe shore trail

hand to greet
opening the sky
while infinity
kisses my feet

Der Ruf

Zerrissen
zerfetzt
im tiefen Schlund
zum Aufschrei verhallt

Erwacht
erneut das Kind
zum Ruf der Loreley

Die Melodie
hinab dich trägt
zum Stand
auf sicherem Ufersteig

Die Hand zum Gruss
den Himmel zeigt
Unendlichkeit dir
die Füße küsst

Article on the symposium "Play Range-Creativity in Therapeutic Relationships"

This brief is in response to my attendance of the symposium "Play Range - Creativity in Therapeutic Relationships" held at the Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy Basel country. Instead of a practice report on my Expressive Arts work and specifically my work with dreams, I would like to give feedback and an 'aesthetic response' based on the discussions with the speakers at the symposium.

What stood out to me again was the fact that conventional analytical and psychiatric ideas, despite tremendous efforts and creativity - are still very rigid (or requires a systemic thinking/approach), and that much action is required on our part in order to develop a systemic thinking in therapeutic practice that is truly open to the artistic.

>>Therapeutic relationships in psychiatry and analysis were discussed by the speakers with great expertise. Our attention was drawn to the collection of "Prinzhorn Foundation", one of the largest collections incurred in the context of psychiatry artworks. It was a rich, informative day ultimately revolving around the question of the emergence of a creative process in a therapeutic relationship.

And yet, at the end of the day the question in the room (especially for the speakers) was still: "What is art?"

This is not at all surprising, but created in me the desire to explore this question in an artistic process (see image below), or as one may say as an "aesthetical response" to the proceedings of the symposium:



When it comes to the question of play range and creativity in therapeutic relationships should we be defining art or should we rather not be asking more: "what makes a genuine process possible at all?" Just as the analyst understands well how to create space in which the analysis can take place, in the context of art, we have to consider what flexibility is needed for an analog art in order for a creative process to be able to take shape. If we understand the creation of art as the connection between aesthetic perception and imagination, i.e. the interaction of an "outer" with "inner" perception, so our focus should be addressed in the therapeutic relationship vis-à-vis when, where and how this 'play range' is created in which the "unexpected" is allowed or even encouraged within the genuine process.

A "polyphony", to borrow the metaphor used by speakers to summarize the day, would quickly descend to a cacophony if the polyphony itself is considered as the art. But if we, in the scope of the therapeutic relationship allow for a "sym-phonie" (Symphonos = Sounding together), the art swings within in the form of the "immediacy" incorporating the "unexpected". Allowing for this resonance in the creative therapeutic relationship and making the client's intermediary "perceptible", brings us those "art- rich" harvests from the therapeutic relationship. Let us turn to the aestheticism in the therapeutic relationship and we will find the core of how art is able to act and effect.<<

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