

## **Current practice in art-therapy: clinical research and indications for traumatized patients**

L'art-thérapie aujourd'hui : la recherche clinique et les indications pour des patients traumatisés

**Odette Chesnot, Joice Menegatti & Silke Schauder**

In line with the theme of the 17th ECARTE Conference, we propose an introductory review of current international research in art therapy, focusing primarily on the indications for traumatized patients. Through creativity, these patients will be able to resist the dark times and the dehumanizing experience they have endured. Methodologically, two case studies from two distinct clinical settings will be presented.

The first case study examines, based on a mixed methodology, the effectiveness of clay art therapy in the treatment of victims of the Beirut port explosion on August 4, 2020. First, our study focuses on clay as a malleable medium. Then, the follow-up of eight victims during ten group sessions is analysed, revealing the importance of art therapy in order to establish a sense of security amidst chaos, promoting emotional expression and rebuilding self-esteem. This clinical approach facilitates the grieving process, and its findings highlight the significance of art therapy for traumatized individuals.

Based on qualitative methodology, our second case study examines the benefit of co-creation in art therapy for mother-child dyads seeking asylum in France. Thus, a research project offered twenty-one art therapy sessions to six dyads from Africa, Georgia, and Syria in a centre for asylum seekers. The study concludes that mother-child bonds are deepened through co-creation. When mothers are able to express and symbolize their trauma through the creative process, the passing on of the trauma to their children is prevented, and processes of transformation and healing are enhanced.

What will be the future research, what may be the innovative practices for traumatized patients? How can we repair dignity in those who suffered dark times, how can we restore their capacity

for creativity which is, according to Winnicott, the ability to be oneself and to feel alive? In our conclusion, we try to answer these questions.

### **L'art-thérapie aujourd'hui: la recherche clinique et les indications pour des patients traumatisés**

En cohérence avec le thème de la 17e Conférence d'ECARTE, nous proposons une revue des recherches internationales en art-thérapie, mettant l'accent principalement sur les indications pour des patients traumatisés. Grâce à la créativité facilitée par l'art-thérapie, ces patients seront capables de résister aux temps sombres et à l'expérience déshumanisante qu'ils ont endurés. Méthodologiquement, deux études de cas seront présentées.

La première étude de cas examine, avec une méthodologie mixte, l'efficacité de l'art-thérapie avec l'argile dans le traitement des victimes de l'explosion du port de Beyrouth le 4 août 2020. Notre étude se concentre sur l'argile en tant que médium malléable. Le suivi de huit victimes lors de dix séances de groupe révèle l'importance de l'art-thérapie dans l'établissement d'un sentiment de sécurité au milieu du chaos, favorisant l'expression émotionnelle, la reconstruction de l'estime de soi et l'élaboration du deuil.

Basée sur une méthodologie qualitative, notre deuxième étude de cas examine les bienfaits de la co-création en art-thérapie pour des dyades mère-enfant demandant l'asile en France. Ainsi, un projet de recherche a offert à six dyades en provenance d'Afrique, de Géorgie et de Syrie, vingt-et-une séances d'art-thérapie dans un Centre pour les Demandeurs d'Asile. L'étude conclut que par le biais de la co-création, les liens mère-enfant sont approfondis. Lorsque les mères sont capables d'exprimer et de symboliser leur traumatisme à travers le processus créatif, la transmission du traumatisme à leurs enfants est évitée, et des processus de transformation et de guérison sont facilités.

Quelles seront les futures recherches et les pratiques innovantes à destination des patients traumatisés ? Comment pouvons-nous restaurer la dignité de ceux qui ont traversé des temps sombres, comment pouvons-nous restaurer leur capacité de créativité qui est, selon Winnicott, la capacité d'être soi-même et d'être vivant ? Dans notre conclusion, nous essayons de répondre à certaines de ces questions.

## Biography

**Odette Chesnot** is an art therapist specialized in psychological trauma. Odette defended her PhD in Clinical Psychology in September 2023 at the University of Picardie Jules Verne. Member of the Laboratory CRP-CPO (UR 7273), lecturer at Paris VI (Postgraduate Diploma in Psychological Trauma), member of the Medical-Psychological Society, founder of the Lebanese Association of Terrorism Victims (AVT-L) and consultant at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Vienna. For 20 years she has promoted specific actions to assist victims in France, Lebanon, and Iraq. She has created a psychological support programme for the surviving families of French soldiers who died in combat. She is also leading an awareness project against radicalization in schools and high-risk areas in Lebanon and Iraq. She received the Order of Merit from the French state for her work in the field of trauma.

**Joice Menegatti**, will present her doctoral thesis in Clinical Psychology at the University of Picardie Jules Verne in May 2024. She holds a Master's degree in Art Therapy from the University of Paris Descartes and a Master's in Psychology from Brazil. Member of the Laboratory CRP-CPO (UR 7273), she has over 20 years of experience in clinical and work psychology and in education. She has lived in France since 2016 and works as an art therapist in mental health with adults in a psychiatric clinic, with children affected by autism spectrum disorders in a medical-psychological centre, and children benefitting in an association of an educational success programme and parenting.

**Silke Schauder** is Professor in Clinical Psychology at the Université de Picardie Jules Verne, Amiens, France. A member of the Laboratory CRP-CPO (UR 7273), she lives in Paris where she has practised as a psychoanalyst and art therapist for over 30 years. Member of the Société de Psychopathologie de l'Expression et d'Art-Thérapie since 1986, of which she held the presidency for one mandate. She is co-responsible of the Arts plastiques Art-thérapie, Création artistique speciality at the Université of Paris. Her main interests in psychoanalytic and scientific research are creative dynamics and sublimation processes in artists such as Auguste Rodin, Camille Claudel, Oskar Kokoschka, Egon Schiele, Charlie Chaplin, Michael Jackson,

David Bowie, Marilyn Monroe and Jean-Michel Basquiat. Member of Pandora Association Française de Recherche sur les Processus de Création, she studies the mediation processes that are efficient in the psychotherapeutic treatments of patients including the disabled, the traumatized, migrants or cancer patients.

### **Recent publications and conference presentations**

Chesnot, O. & Kachaamy, E. (2023). **Sexual violence related to terrorism: Psychological care for Yazidi women in Iraq.** *Annales médico-psychologiques*; 2023, ISSN 0003-4487, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amp.2023.05.005>.

Chesnot, O., Chidiac, N. (2020). **Clay mediation: An innovative therapy in the treatment of trauma and post-traumatic stress.** *Annales médico-psychologiques*, Vol 178 - N° 1 - January 2020, pp. 1-104.

Chesnot, O. (2020). **Clay mediation in the treatment of psychological trauma.** *Le Journal des psychologues*, 2020/9 (381), pp. 40-46.

Schauder, S. & Chesnot, Odette. **Therapeutic processes in art therapy: current theories and practices**, *Evolution psychiatrique* (submitted in December 2023).

Lecourt, E. & Schauder, S. (2017). **Introduction to art therapies.** In: Lecourt, E. & Lubart, T. (eds.) *Art therapies*, Armand Colin, Paris, pp. 15-45.

Schauder, S. & Korff-Sausse, S. (2016). **Art therapy workshops: the diversity of expression throughout life.** In: R. Scelles, A. Ciccone, M. Gargiulo, S. Korff-Sausse, S. Missonnier, R. Salbreux (eds.). *Being born, growing up, growing old with a disability.* Erès, Toulouse, pp. 203-217.

Schauder, S. (ed., 2012). **Case study in clinical psychology: Four theoretical approaches.** Dunod, Paris, p.376.

Schauder, S. (2012). **What are the benefits of art therapy in a situation of disability?** In: Korff-Sausse, S. (ed.). Art and disability, clinical issues. Connaissances de la diversité, Érès, Toulouse, pp. 177-191.

### Conference presentations

Chesnot, O. (2023a). **Participation in a roundtable on art therapy.** RFI Priorité Santé. Intervention on air June 20.

Chesnot, O. (2023b). **Art therapy with clay: How to restructure psychic boundaries after the explosion in the port of Beirut?** 59th Conference of the French Society of Psychopathology and Art Therapy dedicated to Borders, Mental Cartographies, Creative Crossings. November, Paris, France.

Schauder, S. (2022). **Actual discussions in art therapy: indications and research,** May, University of Picardie Jules Verne, France.

Schauder, S. (2023b). **Research in art therapy: models and indications,** May, University of Paris, France.

Schauder, S. (2023a). **Clinic dedicated to the theme A Place of One's Own: living with a disability.** Basquiat, homeless, 17th International Interuniversity Seminar on Disability. November, University of Rouen, France.

Schauder, S. (2023c). **Basquiat, cartographer of urban space.** 59th Conference of the French Society of Psychopathology and Art Therapy dedicated to Borders, Mental Cartographies, Creative Crossings. November, Paris, France.

Schauder, S. (2024). **Enfant terrible, radiant child: Basquiat and contemporary art.**  
Babylone Seminar on Art and Psychoanalysis coordinated by Prof. Dr. Maurice Corcos.  
Institute Mutualiste of Montsouris, February, Paris, France.