

Archetypal aspects of pictures drawn during Covid-19 lockdown in Israel

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Covid-19 pandemic caught the whole world by surprise and changed our lives in profound ways, urging physical, social and psychological changes. As governments all over the world struggle to manage the virus and minimise deaths, people across cultures are finding ways to cope with this new reality.

Confined to our homes, what was revealed was evidence of tremendous creativity as well as fear. On the surface most people were coping, but the extended duration of this virus as well as forced changes in our behaviour and society has exposed many mental health challenges and a list of insidious effects on the everyday lives of people, many of which we are not yet aware. Through art, we see traces of this extraordinary time: of emotions, thoughts, hopes and fears - the makings of future memories.

This presentation looks at images made at the time of lockdown in Israel. Images made spontaneously by 97 participants (mostly women) were reflected upon and examined for themes. Art made during the time of closure embodied conscious and unconscious material and expressed personal and collective reactions to the pandemic. The implications of the pandemic reverberate not only as personal artistic expression, but bare collective and archetypal aspects, exposing a fascinating window into our human plight over time.

Aspects of resilience are evident throughout the pictures, illuminated by the artists' words, explanations, style of making art and titles given. The pictures also revealed themes of hope, despair, isolation, human connection, nature, fantasy, chaos and order. The end of humanity as the devouring aspect of the great mother archetype, as well as the nourishing aspect of the great mother archetype was also a recurring motif. Some of the themes that emerged and their archetypal implications as they appeared in the pictures will be explored in this presentation.

Biography

Elana Lakh, PhD, is a supervising art therapist and a Jungian analyst. She teaches art therapy in the school of society and the arts in Ono academic college and conducts a private practice in Jerusalem specializing in treatment of sexual abuse survivors. She is a member of the Israeli institute for Jungian Psychology in honour of Erich Neumann. She studies creation mythologies and her research interests include archetypal aspects of art made in therapy.

Debra Kalmanowitz, PhD, HCPC, BAAT, reg. art therapist and artist, works in the context of humanitarian aid, disaster relief, trauma, resilience, political violence, refugees and social change and has done since the early 1990's. She held positions at the Medical Foundation for Victims of Torture, London, and Christian Action, Hong Kong, where she worked with refugees. She is currently a practising artist and art therapist, a lecturer at the School of Society and the Arts in Ono Academic College, co-editor in chief of the Journal CAET (Creative Art in Education. Eastern and Western Perspectives) and is a psychosocial facilitator for the international non-government organisation (NGO) IsraAid. She is the co-author of *The Portable Studio, Art Therapy and Political Violence: With art, without illusion* and *Art Therapy in Asia: To the Bone or Wrapped in Silk*.

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