

# The *Wednesday*



Weekly Magazine of the Wednesday Group at Albion Beatnik - Oxford

## Editorial

### *Lost in the Translation*

A number of editorials in *The Wednesday* have dealt with the issue of the contrast between analytical and continental philosophy. The two schools of philosophy seem to be speaking different languages and using different methods for different objectives. The languages they speak are different because analytical philosophy is mainly English-speaking and the continental, mainly, speaks German, French, Italian and some Spanish. But this is not the point. It is the spirit in which they speak that is different. We mentioned last week that analytical philosophy is conservative in nature and the continental is more revolutionary and subversive. I want to substantiate this claim with the debate on the philosophy of Nietzsche. What is the impact of Nietzsche's thought on continental philosophy and how is his philosophy being received in the analytical world?

Nietzsche was a lonely figure and the power of his thought was not recognised until the last days of his full mental life. But shortly afterwards he gained wide readership and recognition, not only as a literary figure, but also as a philosopher. One of the best books on him in his own country came at the end of First World War One. Ernest Bertarm's *Nietzsche: Attempt at a Mythology* was, and still is, a very influential book, well written and densely argued. It influenced the interpretation of Nietzsche in the years between the two wars and was admired by a generation of intellectuals but was only translated into English seven years ago. Nietzsche was then put on the map of philosophy with Heidegger running a course on him in the second half of the thirties. These lectures had a major influence on Heidegger himself. But Nietzsche also had a major influence on Adorno and the Frankfurt School.

Outside Germany, the thought of Nietzsche, Heidegger, Marx and Freud created most of the post Second World War philosophy and literary theory in France. They also found their way to Italy. The thoughts of Vattimo are a creative synthesis of the thought of Nietzsche and Heidegger and the consequences of their philosophies.

In the English-speaking world, it was the effort of first Oscar Levy and then Walter Kaufmann, and especially the latter, that put Nietzsche on the philosophical map of English-speaking philosophy. But what happened to Nietzsche's philosophy then? It lost the power that it had in its original country or on the continent generally and gradually got domesticated. Nietzsche once wrote of himself in *Ecce Homo*:

I know my fate. One day my name will be associated with the memory of something tremendous - a crisis without equal on earth, the most profound collision of conscience, a decision that was conjured up against everything that had been believed, demanded, hallowed so far. I am no man, I am dynamite.

And:

How I understand the philosopher - as a terrible explosive, endangering everything... my concept of the philosopher is worlds removed from any concept that would include even a Kant, not to speak of academic "ruminants" and other professors of philosophy...

But the dynamite has been taken out of his arguments. They became logical games about what theory of truth Nietzsche had, or how he fitted into the accepted theories of truth in the analytical tradition. I remember seventeen years ago there was a conference on Nietzsche at London University where the speakers were debating this theme. But there was a lone voice that questioned whether Nietzsche was really worried by theories of truth and asked whether he had a bigger project. The same voice insisted that to turn Nietzsche into an analytical philosopher was to kill Nietzsche's spirit and project. I would say that Nietzsche gets lost in the translation and his dynamite gets defused. This applies to most continental thought when it is turned into analytical logical topics and treated with a language foreign to its spirit.

*The Editor*

# Synchronicity

**Synchronicity is one of the important ideas in Jung's thought. The Wednesday had published a long article on this topic in issue 6. Below is another view of this mysterious idea.**

DAVID BURRIDGE

*I say there is a peculiar principle of synchronicity active in the world so that things happen together somehow and behave as if they were the same but for us they are not – I am absolutely unable to tell you whether it's the body or the mind that prevails, or whether they just coexist.*

**From Jung's Tavistock lectures: Lecture one.**

In this short article I want to explore this strange experience which seems to give us access to a dimension of our minds that is ordinarily inaccessible.

According to Storr (See Anthony Storr's Fontana original book *Selected writings of Jung*), Jung believed in a universal order of meaning, complementary to causality. This was the principle behind synchronicity. In his autobiographical work: *Memories, Dreams and Reflections* Jung describes a dream he had of feeling a dull pain on his head, as if he had been hit by a stone. When he awoke he discovered that a patient he had been treating had shot himself through his head. Jung believed he could perceive something in his unconscious which was happening in time and space somewhere else.

Jungian determinism is contained within the Archetypes. Whether it's the black shadow or anima/animus, they are *a-priori* in our unconscious mind and will seek to fashion our thinking. According to Jung we tend to perceive them particularly through dream sequences. So, the perception of an actual physical situation or event will be interpreted through our predetermined unconscious images.

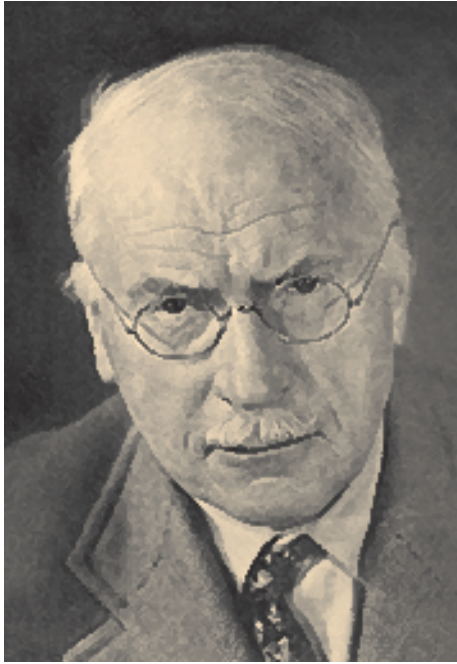
Pushing away from these mythological entities

we still have a tendency to perceive connections and meanings between unrelated things. The psychiatrist Klaus Conrad called it *Apophenia*. (Other related patterns have been posited. For example, Patternicity – the tendency to find meaningful patterns in meaningless noise).

What is common is that we don't simply perceive what our senses dictate, but immediately make sense of our perceptions according to the priorities already in our heads. Truth for each of us is about experience and the shaping of that experience according to deep seated passions and fears. Memories are not, as Hume suggested, just a pile of images in our heads. I would say they are prepared sequences of behaviour waiting to be activated and fashioned by past experience.

The synchronicity referred to by Jung seems to be about mental predictions of physical events. His example given above predicts through a dream precisely what happened to his patient. Of course, he would have deeply analysed the man involved, so it was conceivable that he could have predicted the suicide and felt the pain of the outcome in his dream. Who knows?

In common with other thinkers through history Jung believed in the ultimate unity of all existence. (Unus Mundus). The unconscious has nothing to do with the empirical world so its activities cannot be seen by the conscious mind. It only manifests itself through dreams of archetypal symbols. The total reality for Jung contained the conscious and the unconscious. Jung saw these two dimensions as making up the self: *By self we mean psychic wholeness, but what realities underlie, we do not know, because psychic contents cannot be observed in their unconscious, and moreover the psyche cannot know itself....*



Karl Jung



Erich Fromm

So, the unconscious seems to me similar to Kant's dimension of pure reason or his 'thing in itself'. He argued that we will only ever experience appearances but this will never be the total reality. There is a thing in itself which conceptually drives us to question what we sense.

Jung is however going further than establishing concepts: he sees the psychic faculty as a working reality. He argues there is a link between the physical world and the psychic world which is evidenced in synchronicity.

The archetypes manifested themselves in physical events and in states of minds at the same time and this was synchronicity. If this were the case then the archetypes could shape actual situations and make things happen. This is a kind of determinism which is a far cry from modern behaviourism. It leans back towards a religious conception of the world and of course Jung had for many years studied all kinds of religions, drawing together the commonality of their metaphysics. This led him to declare the unity of all humans: *One world has shrunk, and it is dawning on us that humanity is one, with one psyche----*

The universality of archetypes means they are *a-priori* patterns of order. That order can be experienced through dreams. He told the story of a young woman who had a dream that she was given a golden scarab (beetle). While she was telling him of this dream Jung heard a tapping at his window. He saw a flying insect knocking against the window he said: *I opened the window*

*and caught the creature in the air as it flew in. It was the nearest analogy to a golden scarab that one finds in our latitude .... which contrary to its usual habits had evidently felt an urge to get into a dark room at this particular moment.....*

Of course, the sceptic would say that given the intensity of his interaction with his patient at that moment, he was likely to fashion the perception in keeping with what he wanted to experience. This leads to a broader point. The so-called archetypes that we might perceive through a synchronistic experience are nothing more than an imaginative shaping of one's perceptions. They have no independent psychic power to move the physical world. One would also question their value in shaping ethical behaviour. I prefer to use our power of reasoning as defined by Fromm in his *Sane Society*:- *It takes a long evolutionary process to arrive at objectivity that is to see the world, other persons and oneself, as they are and not distorted by desires and fears. The more man develops this objectivity, the more he is in touch with reality the more he matures, better he can create a human world in which he is at home.*

So as a gentle pragmatist I prefer to fashion my morality with what I can sense and with situations that present themselves to me. I have never had a visit from my so-called unconscious (I just remember a lot). Until the day that happens I will concentrate on what is in front of me – or down the road.

# Is Emotion Affective or Cognitive?

PAUL COCKBURN

A cognitive theory of emotion is that emotion is evaluative or judgemental. A situation is judged according to our wants, wishes, values, interests, beliefs and goals. If I am afraid of a bear, it is because I judge the bear to be threatening to me.

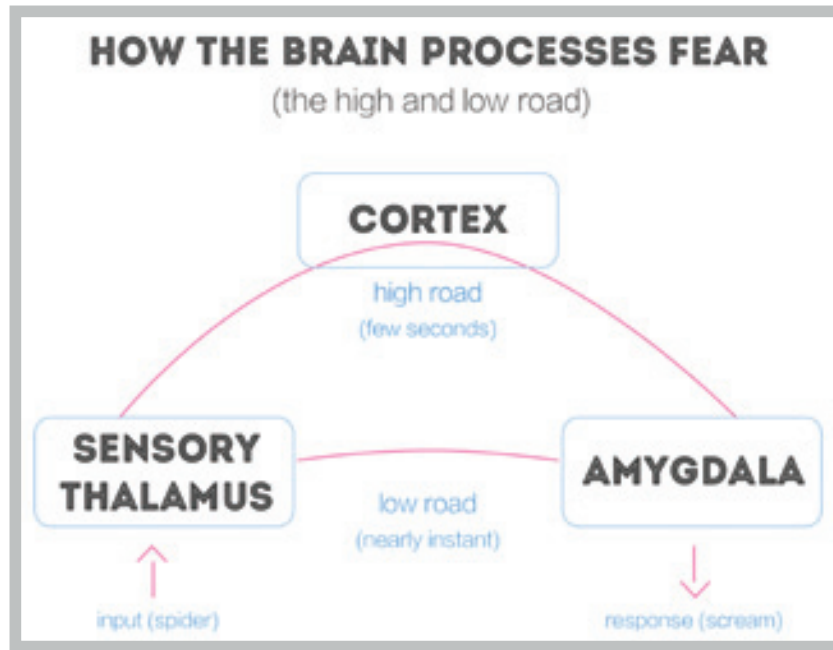
These evaluations are often not simple: if I say I love someone, this does not mean he or she is lovable. But it does mean that he or she is important to me, and my emotions are involved. My feelings towards that person could reverse: love and hate, for instance, and other emotions do seem to run on a continuum from one extreme to the other. An affective theory on the other hand is that emotions are physiological: I perceive a bear and am physically frightened and my heart beats faster and this is my feeling of fear. (It could be that my brain senses in some way these physiological changes, and this is the experience of the emotion of fear, or that the changes actually equate to my fear).

of the emotions which holds them to be judgements. In her book 'Upheavals of Thought' (2001) she recounts the emotions she experienced upon the death of her mother and of the grieving process involved. The intensity of the emotion, her unjustified anger at flight attendants who are carrying on normally when she is grief-stricken for instance, are to her the proof of the value her mother had for her. It is such an earth-shattering experience that the emotion of grief has to be worked through, again and again, in continued acceptance of this important fact. The root of the word emotion in Latin is something that moves us: and she describes running through the hospital corridors to get to her mother, so that her grief is active in this sense, it is literally moving her physically. And the physical accompaniments of emotion are also movements, we 'boil' with anger, the blood rushes to our face when we blush, we feel pain in our guts when we are anxious.

One problem for an evaluative theory of emotion is that the emotional state and the

Martha Nussbaum gives a neo-Stoic account





corresponding judgement may not be linked in an obvious manner. Judgements are sometimes unemotional, and if we are insulted we may feel sad rather than angry. Here narrative is key. There is a narrative whereby past loves and experiences influence our present attachments. We have a complicated temporal history. This can lead to seemingly inappropriate emotions – for example, someone may cry at hearing a particular happy song. This may be because they shared this song deeply with a loved one who has died.

It seems also that the judgement may need physiological changes to give it emotional intensity, or it is just an intellectual perception, as William James noted.

Emotions also degrade and change over time, so that a judgement does not seem to stand for all time, and this seems to fit a physiological model better. However, the cognitive response to this would be that we adjust our priorities and goals over time, accept our losses, adjust our mindset and move on.

The simple answer as to whether emotions are cognitive or affective may be that they are both. There may be a very quick emotional reaction which is not cognitive, so that some emotions involve primitive evaluations which

occur below consciousness. This is particularly the case for primitive emotions such as fear. According to Joseph LeDoux (*The Emotional Brain*, 1996), the amygdala (a structure in the brain) is the key to the fear system, firing an initial response of fear to say an auditory stimulus. This is then followed by a slower cognitive appraisal, which can analyse the stimulus in more detail and evaluate it. (See figure above). When someone sees a spider say, the second 'high road' through the cortex can conclude that the danger is not real and can cut off the fear response initiated by the 'low road'. In phobias, the second pathway ceases to function properly, so we continue to react fearfully to harmless stimuli.

This does seem to fit other aspects of human experience as well: there is a time factor where we sometimes react quickly (and regret it) with the reverse being we think too long and do not respond in time.

An affective response would appear to be pre-programmed, in other words one would expect the physical response to a particular stimulus to be the same every time and the same across individuals. In fact, the perception of say a threat and the emotional and physical response to it is complex and depends on an interaction



Martha Nussbaum



Joseph Ledoux

with the perceived object over time, so that the response is not in fact the same every time.

Nussbaum also links emotions to the Greek notion of 'eudaimonia' or 'well-being' which Aristotle proposed. In order for a human being to flourish, he or she must incorporate what is valuable to them into their way of life in a personal way. This must include training the emotions over time so that they are in line with what become deep values.

Many emotions are I believe dependent on how we view the 'other'. We are nourished by and hopefully develop a relationship with our mother, and this bond or attachment is key for the emotional development of us as children. In terms of our desires, we must adapt our behaviour to the mother's needs, because we eventually recognize she cannot always give us all that we want. So emotions such as love, joy, sadness, anger, bitterness etc. are rooted in this relationship of succouring and the eventual limits of love and care involved. Although this sounds very cognitive, in fact this developmental process is I would hold also affective as well. The well-being will be a physical well-being as well as a moral, mental and spiritual well-being; the blood and the 'juices' of the body will flow so that

the physical or affective and the mental or spiritual will coincide in a healthy way. (Once we have grown up, as adults we should also relate to the wider community, and there is a security found by establishing ourselves in this community, which is also part of our well-being. I believe this community engagement will also have an affective component in terms of our emotional health.)

I have argued that emotions are both affective and cognitive. This links to the old mind-body problem in philosophy. It is very hard to say how thoughts are linked to the physical substrate of the brain, but it seems clear that they are linked. The dualism involved is hard to escape, and there is a similar dualism in terms of emotions being both affective and cognitive. However, in the case of the emotions there is a complex interplay involved between the physical and mental, as Descartes in fact noted. This interplay is fundamentally about our being people, with personal and emotional characteristics. We are embodied in a physical and material environment. In the case of the emotions it is much harder to postulate 'disembodied Cartesian' minds or concepts, because it can in fact be seen that the affective physical processes are fundamentally linked to the emotions themselves.

# The *Wednesday* Books

**Volume 1 & 2 in Print Now**

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We are pleased to announce the publication of the first two volumes of **The *Wednesday*** in a book form. The two volumes cover the first six months. Volume one included twelve issues (1-12) plus the experimental issue; issue no. zero. Volume two includes another twelve issues (13 – 24). The issues represent the journey so far and we are pleased with this achievement. The volumes are printed by The Wednesday Press, Oxford.

We are grateful to all the writers, poets and artists who contributed throughout. Special thanks to Dennis Harrison who supported the magazine since the experimental issue and hosted the Wednesday group until the closure of his Albion Beatnik Bookstore. But Dennis is still a great supporter of the magazine and the group and we will stand by him in his future endeavours in the cultural sphere.

*The Editor*



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### A Partial Truth



**CHRIS NORRIS**

For the artist himself art is not necessarily therapeutic; he is not automatically relieved of his fantasies by expressing them. Instead, by some perverse logic of creation, the act of formal expressions may simply make the dredged-up material more readily available to him.

*Al Alvarez, The Savage God: a study of suicide*

Some truth in it: the poems keep you sane.  
Those critics aren't entirely wrong who think  
There's psychic healing in the verse domain.

Why doubt the poets and their old refrain?  
'We write to keep us off the drugs and drink.'  
Some truth in it: the poems keep you sane.

Who knows what rash decisions they restrain  
In those long poised on self-destruction's brink?  
There's psychic healing in the verse-domain.

Let's then admit: no reason to disdain  
All versions of the poem/life-world link.  
Some truth in it: the poems keep you sane.

Where the whole doctrine comes most under strain  
Is when picked up by True Confessions Inc.  
There's psychic healing in the verse-domain





But not the kind they wrongly hope to gain  
By setting up as their own cut-price shrink.  
Some truth in it: the poems keep you sane

By giving the neurosis-ridden brain  
Some formal challenge to undo the kink:  
There's psychic healing in the verse-domain.

That's why the savage god's a poet's bane  
And lets verse-chaos in at every chink.  
Some truth in it: the poems keep you sane

So long as you've Apollo's gift to train  
Raw passions till they're formally in sync.  
There's psychic healing in the verse-domain.

Else it will be your inchoate cries of pain  
That crave redress while form goes on the blink.  
Some truth in it: the poems keep you sane;  
There's psychic healing in the verse-domain.

# Polarity and Creativity

*Notes of the Wednesday Meeting 11<sup>th</sup> April 2018*

**PAUL COCKBURN**

**W**e discussed in this meeting the nature of human reason and the polarities that appear in knowledge. For instance, it may be that the truth discovered by reason is an identity relation between 'thought' and 'reality'. We experience or know about many polarities: for example, good and bad, sadness and happiness, male and female, positive and negative, subject and object, light and dark, inner and outer.

The interplay between these polarities is creative, as is dialogue between different points of view, and leads to diversity. The basis of matter could be the interplay between positive and negative forces. In terms of looking at a work of art, there is some sort of dialogue going on between observer and object when we look at a painting. In theology the 'apophatic' claim is that we can have knowledge of God by postulating what God is not.

In philosophy, we have a major polarity, the analytic/continental split. In science and mathematics there is an established body of knowledge for much of which there is consensus. It is likely that this knowledge will last.

For instance, it is highly likely the Periodic Table in chemistry and some of our medical knowledge will not change in a fundamental way. But this is not true for philosophy, which has been studied and worked on for at least 2,500 years, with many theories being postulated, but little agreement and accepted knowledge being achieved.

Much recent philosophy has been about critical philosophy, which is sceptical about how much we can know, and suspicious of ideologies which are too dominating and try to explain everything. However perhaps critique has gone too far and there is now a move back into a less suspicious realm where there can be more certainties.

We also discussed politics. It was noted that this year is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the student revolt in Paris in 1968. In terms of the global picture at this time, there seems to be a danger that democracy is on the way out in many countries. Nationalism appears to be on the increase. But historians may make simplistic forecasts of what will happen in the future based on patterns arising from the past.

We also discussed the surprises of the future, particularly in the realm of technology. Artificial Intelligence (AI) may be used to create robots who can in some sense be programmed to have emotions. For this to be the case, emotions must be defined in a behavioural sense.

If I feel anxious I look for threats and take action if there are any. If I feel angry I will do something to confront what I feel is wrong. The root of the word emotion is to be moved to do something, and it might be possible to program these sort of reactions and actions into a robot. The physical 'substrate' of the human body may not be needed for this subset. But AI cannot create a human consciousness. It is a mystery!

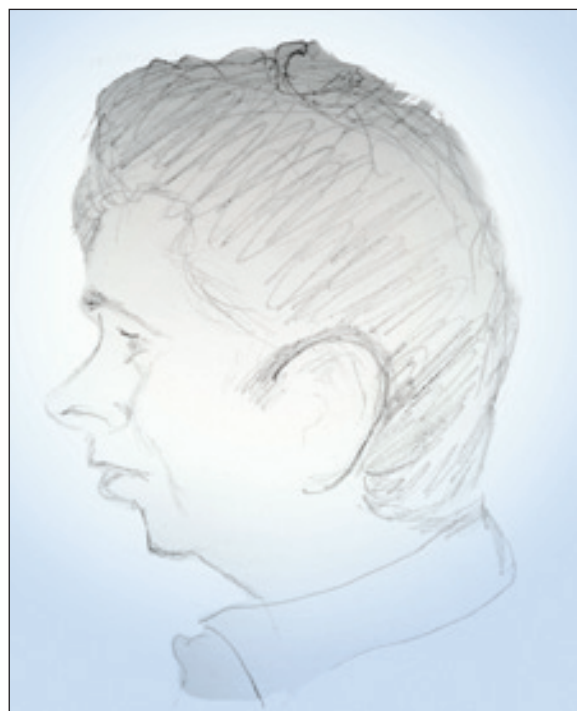
# The Allegory of the Cave

DAVID JONES

There are different ways of interpreting the allegory of the cave that is included in the dialogue by Plato called the *Republic*. In the context of the setting it seems to concern a question about the type of education that would be needed for the ‘guardians’ of the hypothetical society which is developed within the course of the dialogue as a ‘thought experiment’ to illuminate what ‘justice’ is to human beings.

Some details of this allegory are occasionally overlooked. The prisoners in the cave are those who are attached to a wall in such a way that they can only see shadows that appear on another wall.

However, the shadows, which are the only things that they can see, are not shadows of ‘real’ things. They are shadows of artificial things or models that ‘represent’ things that the reader of the dialogue would regard as real. Furthermore, the light which casts the shadows of these artificial representations of real things is not the actual light of the sun but is light from a ‘man made’ bonfire inside the cave. So, we have shadows of artificial or representations of real things cast from an artificial or man-made and temporary light.



David Jones by Edwina Harris

One possible way of thinking about this scenario is that it represents the relationship between human language, which is artificial and representational, and individual human understanding, which is never complete, and the world which human beings strive to comprehend. It might even suggest to those who claim that all thinking is through language a route to an alternative point of view.

## The Clouds

In the play called ‘The Clouds’ Aristophanes portrayed a character called Socrates as a person who taught young men to only be interested in either those things which are too small to see or those things which are so high as to be out of reach. I am surprised that the relevance of this play to modern particle physics and cosmological theories about the origins of the universe does not seem to have been noticed.



Poem and Artwork **by Scharlie Meeuws**

# Overgrown

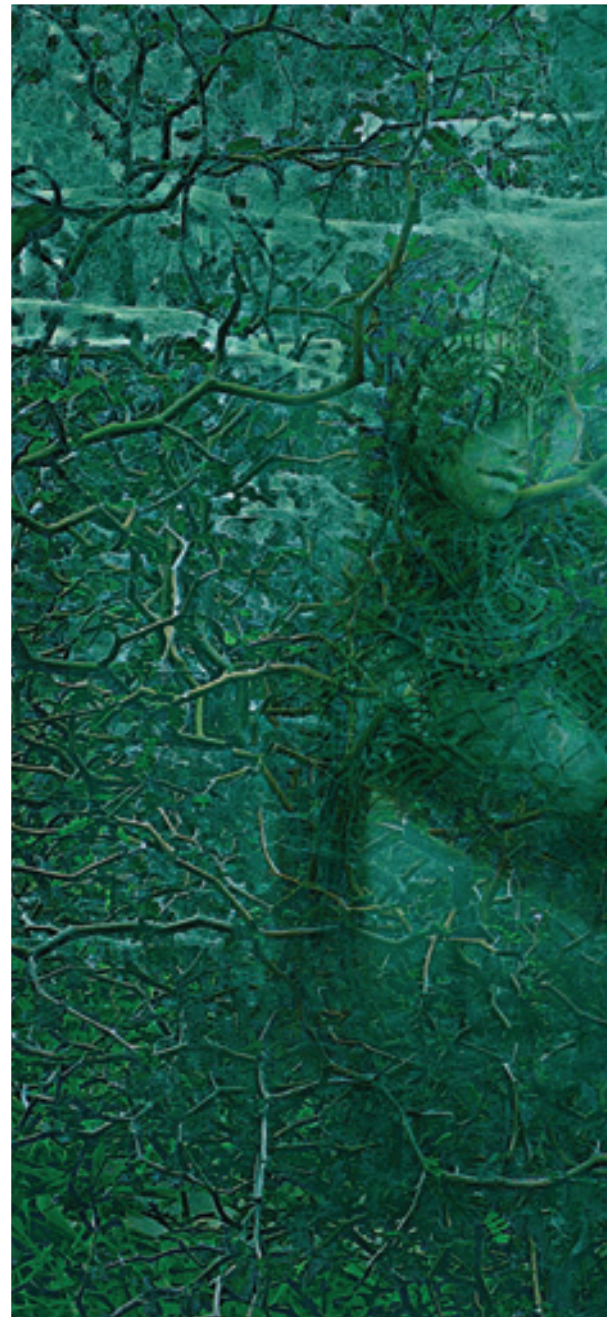
## Überwachsen

Die Augen überwachsen, kaum zu lesen.  
Das Herz, es dehnt sich aus, wird groß.  
Aus allem flieht das was gewesen,  
läßt Stürme aus den Stirnen los  
und macht zu Sternen alles Ausdruckbare,  
setzt Dunkelheiten um das Licht  
und schwingt ein Schweigen hin durch alles Wahre,  
das ewig und wie eine wunderbare  
vertonte Symphonie das All durchbricht.

*(translation from German)*

## Overgrown

Overgrown eyes, hardly perceived  
a widening heart expands  
out of everything flows the past  
releasing storms from foreheads  
changes all expressible into stars  
surrounds darkness with light  
and drifts silence towards truth  
eternally setting it to beautiful music  
that breaks through space









## Creative Art: Rules and the Genius

**MIKE ENGLAND**

I remember seeing a retrospective of Jean Baptiste-Camille Corot (the pre-Impressionist painter whom they called papa Corot) about fifteen years ago. I had also seen a Jean Michel Basquiat exhibition at the Serpentine Gallery in London five years before. I remember thinking there were similarities between these two painters.

At first sight you might respond by thinking: Are you mad? Or how could that be possible? And you would be right in thinking this, as their

way of representing the world is so different. The worlds they knew were different... about 150 years apart. But apart from their Christian names being Jean, the similarity I felt, was their ability to paint, and to let go of expected traditions associated with painting. Jean Baptiste-Camille Corot lived until he was 79; Jean Michel Basquiat until he was 27.

Forgive me, I diverged. Back to this retrospective of Corot of over five decades of selected works at a huge venue in Paris. It was incredible to trace Camille Corot's progression



**Corot: Hagar in the wilderness**





**Basquiat**

in paint, to see him acquire and learn his techniques and his understandings... and then to see him in the last decade of his life, letting go of the rule book and trust his instincts to paint.

Although he was famous for his landscape painting, in the last ten years he also painted many portraits, and if you look closely at his application of paint, you can see that the way he painted was more about the paint than it was about the subject. I noticed a freedom in his use of paint. It is this freedom in the use of paint that I saw in Basquiat's work. Like Basquiat he seemed to understand naturally the rhythm and composition, of space and the relationship between colours, although his work was literal. It was expressive of the world around him. They both absorbed and expressed their worlds in very unique ways. They each had unique perspectives.

Imagine watching a finely tuned gymnast doing flips and cartwheels across a canvas floor, making it look so easy and effortless. The same can be said about these two painters and the way they painted. It seemed to me that their work was more about painting than making pictures.

Corot learnt this over a long life and Basquiat instinctively had this understanding during the period of his short life. It was this thought that drew my attention to thinking about this question: 'Do we have to *learn* the rule-book first, before throwing it away'?

In my humble opinion, creativity comes from having the courage to throw the rule-book away after learning it.

## *The Wednesday*

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## Golden Scarab



*(A reflection on the example of synchronicity given by Jung when he recalled dealing with a female patient, who had dreamt of a piece of jewellery shaped like a golden scarab)*

A repeated tap on the shut window pane. Insect is  
then lifted-in to tweet the sparkling jewel in her dream.  
Did this fusion release her from her corseted existence?  
And did the Scarab look-a-like fly over the horizon to where it belonged?  
A binding together of things in-passing,  
with things fixed in the head brings relief it seems.

Of course we all crave patterns and perfect completion.  
Hell is a random state of understandings, a worry that we are uncontained.  
*I have found meaning therefore I exist. Have I?*  
Or have I tried piecing together, what in all reality remains unpieced?

David Burridge