

Chapter 3, Artistic explorations

3.1 Introduction

I have reserved this chapter to elaborate on the characters and voices in the previous chapter.

This chapter contains specifically more interaction with the arts, including my own exposure to conferences, fieldwork, and etcetera. In addition of interaction between individuals and the arts. Adding to interpretations of own excursions as well as individuals' interactions with the arts one will find reflections from the scientific community.

All these interpretations and reflections are enmeshing in this chapter. Consequently, please realise that it is for the most part of this chapter and indeed the whole document impossible to separate the co-participants' voices from my own. In this regard, if one were to bake a cake, the eggs and other ingredients have already started to mix and so much the more in this chapter. The mixture consists of collaborative baking. So then, even if I am the one to eventually run the last stretch of this academic marathon (sitting down and writing these words) this has, as far as is possible been a participatory informed and approved endeavour.

3.1.1 Chapter three, outline

Attention has been given to the order in which the cast (research participants), so to speak appears. It is my wish that the reader will an inherent rationale based on content but also in terms of narrative practise values. Let me speak of content typography. An inclusion content typography is chosen whereby conferences and scientific community input and focus group input is situated on the margins while the textured lives of individual participants are placed in the middle (representing something of a value choice). This inclusion has effect subsequent to the brief description of the layered introductions to this chapter.

The introduction is the part where the actors of the play are getting in position. Our introduction consists of two cursory remarks about positioning and our research gap. Hereby I reiterate that chapters are intertwined and not categorised. Everything has to do with positioning the sense of being informed by it and thus sporadically we entertain this theme by cursory reflective remarks.

Hereafter we take a look at all the interpretations of everything and everyone that shaped this research. I introduce this movement by reflecting on the Cape Town conference since it is situated in the basic issues of the arts relating to this study, alluding to what arts is, what it consists of and so forth.

The opinions of the participants in that conference workshop make sense in light of what professor Leonard Sweet (1999:185-240) emphasizes about a postmodern culture, which is characterised by the acronym of EPIC: experience seeking, participatory, image driven, and connectedness.

It is the aim of the CAM community (Creative Arts Ministry - that functions to a large extent as a focus group, to immerse the congregational members' senses in artistic expressions exactly for this reason as noted by professor Sweet that EPIC has become the currency for a postmodern culture.

Narrative practise suggests that we cannot avoid the larger discourses in which we are situated. At best, we can illuminate their existence. It is on this basis that I acknowledge my faith tradition on a practical and academic level. Practically, the Dutch Reformed tradition is my informing tradition since our family attended its Afrikaans church. After secondary education, my academic training consisted of again being primarily exposed to the Dutch Reformed tradition. This does not imply having only been exposed to its customs. Admittedly, it is plausible to say that it was through other traditions such as more charismatic traditions that I was predominantly exposed to the arts. By linking up with Ds. Danie du Toit, also of

the Dutch Reformed tradition, I acknowledge this tradition's influence in my life and call it, in respect of theology (not arts) my home; thus, the heading of Staying close to my theological home. Let me remind the reader that Danie is a renowned speaker in respect of art, which makes it useful to reflect on our tradition in the manner in which theology relates to the arts.

From hereon I plunge into participation that is more personal. These individuals were amongst other reasons, as was mentioned in chapter two, chosen for being situated in the life of the church. With them, the primary concern was not to force certain understandings of that which to me the arts consists of. Rather, their colloquial understandings are what matters. As far as more formal understandings of the arts are concerned, such as was my original intention for the study, these were introduced by others on the team, the focus group, scientific community and so on. However, the 'bringing conversation together' principle in narrative practice served this study well. To refer to just a few exciting endeavours. In Bianca's story, we hear predominantly about dancing, music, and photography. Christo's involvement takes us on a discovery journey in respect of the power of audio media. Moré's story asserts to the influence of crafts but also dancing and storytelling/ writing. Marinus tickles our taste buds for the power of the visual media, which includes photography but more so moving images and video.

Professor Hagemann contributed greatly to this research and I am indebted to him in finding time for our discussions. From him we learn about drama as could be expected from the head of the drama faculty and in addition about story theory.

In what follows from the abovementioned, we find the voice of Henk who I judge to be wearing two hats, that of scientific community participant as well as a general conversational partner. Most definitely, the fact that he is professionally involved in the company called Learning Theatre imparts the idea of being a

scientific community member. From their name then I have derived the heading of A Learning experience. Apart from valuable drama insights, we find in our discussions the interface between the arts and organisational work, which naturally leads us to the next section.

Next, we find ourselves on the stage of facilitative work in communities such as organisations or churches. I enrolled in a costly weeklong community facilitation network course, with the sole reason to be able to make a knowledgeable contribution to this study and to talk to its presenters about their practises. The itch that made me enrol could be traced to the similar use of language between organisational facilitation and narrative practise and the implicit congruency between facilitation and non-directiveness in narrative ideas. Some obvious connections to this study, besides congruency with narrative (non-directive) principles can be found in the use of crafts, the use of story and imagination, body sculptures and so forth.

Sometimes a film will release *the making of* on TV prior to its release on the cinema circuit. We have done so exactly with chapters one and two. Now the audience anxiously awaits the event, the story. The audience will encounter in the acts and scenes numerous ideas and reflections. Some of these ideas might have been anticipated but others might not at first blush seem to relate directly to the theme of the film. These conflict in the scenes make sense in the story as its terminology and content (its script) finds resonancy in the language and metaphor of narrative practise.

The curtains are opened and so the cast appears.

3.1.2 Introductory positioning to chapter three

When reading and re-reading the experiences and interpretations of people who were in some, way part of this research I realise that there are no absolute or even remote universality in experiencing or understanding concerning the arts.

See in this regard Jo's critical reflection letter (Addendum M). Our understanding will ultimately be informed by the complex social realities that precede us, inform us, and which we as a matter of fact embody.

One may work with these experiences and contend that there is something general to some extent in the specific (as is stated in chapter one). Horton (1994:12, 16) uses the concept of resonance meaning here that stories and expressive arts have resonancy with human experience and understanding within a certain social and cultural context. Along these lines of thinking, it is possible for cinematographers to uphold the opinion that a great many people within a certain culture, likes this or that film as it resembles something they can relate to. It would be erroneous to look down the other side of the telescope and say that research reveals absolute or universal truths. Maybe for this reason, not *all people* and *all cultures* will enjoy such and such a film.

These remarks touches on the question of especially whether the arts and in particular music is a universal language. If music is perceived as a universal language then surely there should not have to be inquiry into multicultural concerns. It is quite apparent that cultures, sub-cultures, and counter-cultures differ largely in their preferences and practises surrounding music and its role in culture. This argument runs parallel to chapter one viewing our research endeavours as the process of acquiring a different language but even more so a specific dialect. The arts cannot therefore be a universal language, it always has a local and cultural understanding or as Brown (2002:89) puts it: "[W]hile the building blocks of music: (rhythm, melody and form)⁸⁸ may transcend cultures, the practitioner must appreciate that music and culture share very close ties and their approaches should be very carefully considered."

⁸⁸ In other art forms these could be replaced with for instance dance (form, movement, rhythm, space), fine art (composition, texture, colours) and so forth.

Brown (2002:88) even asserts based on the ethnomusicologist, Blacking (1987), and music therapist Even Ruud (1998) that music is perceived symbolically and is therefore not a language at all. Although people may have considered music a language as it powerfully communicates and evokes emotions, content is not passed on through music but through the listener attaching symbolic meaning to what they hear (Brown 2002:88).

These are important things to consider in reading this chapter since we are to understand that within a narrative or social constructionist paradigm the meaning of art is arbitrary and co-constructed. The arts do not work in this or that way, as if it could be an objectively true description of something. A myriad of voices is to be found, those within the viewer (informed by family, culture, and so forth), the artist, the arts community, the general public and more.

We choose to embrace numerous interpretations as expressions of multiple realities. We do this instead of knowing exactly what would work for people or organisations. We try to evade the authoritative knowing position.

In respect of this knowing position, Lowry (2001:61) speaks of the peculiar talent of the puzzle maker. The puzzle maker's gift is that talent of 'helping' us to make the wrong assumption. The wrong assumption then keeps the puzzle solver in bondage. Consequently the more obsessed or interested we are with a puzzle, the more active is the conviction of the wrong assumption – and hence the greater the bondage... The intrinsic power of the rut called common sense explains (in reverse fashion) the experience of serendipity. The reason that flashes of insight come when one is not looking is that our cognitive ruts lose their tenacious hold upon us when our mind is occupied with things sometimes even unrelated to the puzzle. Hence, the unthinkable thought (generally inverted from common sense) has a chance to break through.

Such uncommon sense comes as an intuitive *aha*. (Lowry 2001:161). This relates to the manner in which the obvious solution is almost never the right

solution: It is the lame dog, in the boy's life that while searching for honey saves him from the old lady, instead of his three good dogs as told in the Venda Müller uses as a metaphor for his book *Reis-geselskap* (Müller 2000:40).

Unfortunately Lowry states (2001:161), the more we know about a subject, the more apt we are to stay locked into our assumptions, and hence to become blind to alternative perspectives. So believes William Gordon (1961), who is convinced that experts in all fields are particularly susceptible to the counter-productive power of 'common sense.' In his book *Synectics*, he explains his method for developing creative solutions in the business world. Because the 'experts' seem trapped by mental blinders, Gordon's method uses small groups of persons unfamiliar with the technology or discipline in which the problem has occurred. Being 'innocent' of experienced perspective, these 'novices' are often able to provide solutions the experts cannot discern because of their expert common sense. (Lowry 2001:61)

3.1.3 Reiterating the research gap

This idea of being very cautious about expert knowledge and how arts could be used relates to our research gap again. Once the therapist or facilitator is committed in evening out the balance between verbal and non-verbal s/he can do nothing other than to relinquish power.

The reader might remember that our research gap partly consisted of the balance between the verbal and non-verbal approaches in respect of especially therapy. In this regard, in the dialect between verbal and non-verbal Brooke (1996:3) quote Moreno (1975) by alluding to the general societal emphasis on the verbal enterprise saying that it is due to the increasing isolation, dehumanization, and over intellectualization of our culture, that there is an increasing focus on affect and getting in touch with the inner self.⁸⁹ On some

⁸⁹ It should be clear that our epistemology does not choose to work within the metaphor of descriptions of the 'inner self'. The interrogation is not that much directed at the distinction as it is directed at how these concepts are often used. Often it is the therapist or the knowledgeable other that can access this 'inner self' whereas narrative wilfully position themselves with generating the knowledge that the participant

level, this is true since there would not have been grounds for our description of a research gap otherwise.

In contemplating the arts, I wish to acknowledge that there may be several understandings and descriptions of how the arts are understood. I subsequently now present ways in which the arts was experienced in this study.

3.2 Cape Town

My colleagues and I went to enrich our lives in Cape Town, not through breathtaking scenery, exquisite food, and good company but also with workshops in our various fields of interest relating to ministry. The event was called 'Verantwoordelike vernuwing 2004' with the focus on the role that the church could play in addressing themes relating to poverty.

During, what to me was such a relevant facilitative workshop I rigorously took notes on the discussions and opinions of the twenty-five or so people pertaining to the arts?⁹⁰ It would be reasonably safe to remark that they represent something of the understandings of people involved in the interface between the arts and church ministry, a type of focus group if you will.

These remarks (that I will present exactly as I wrote them down), signifies the local knowledge of those present and not necessarily that of doctors, professors and so forth. I think its best to merely describe these people as being people that plainly stated... love the arts.

I purposely begin with a reflection on my Cape Town experience (2004/03/24-26) since most of what the conversational partners describe finds resonancy in these remarks.

already has. For Hanneltjie that took part in the CAM community discussion of 15/09/05 the term *inner* as in inner voice relates to our human goals dreams and longings and does not so much function on the unconscious level as in Jungian psychology.

⁹⁰ Remarks in this chapter are numbered for clarity and for the sake of reference only. Obviously this might signify the use of discourse analysis but this is not my intention and not my preferred choice in doing research.

It was my observation that in the arts workshop most people took part in the discussion and that these subsequent remarks are truly representative of the majority in the group. I say majority since it is impossible to recount people's opinions that did not contribute to the discussion.

The questions the facilitators asked us to consider will subsequently be stated consecutively while remarks to them will be presented directly thereafter. Note that these remarks were rewritten from the field notes directly afterwards in order to be able to present them here vividly, in approximate verbatim accounts. It was also necessary to do this since we decided as colleagues to one and all reflect on what we have heard in the workshops.

The questions for discussions now follow:

3.2.1 “Wat is kuns?” / What is art?

1. Dit het te doen met Kreatiwiteit, veral visueel/ *It has to do with creativity, especially so visually.*
2. Wat van die blindes kom die vraag/ What about blind people then?
3. Dit het ook te doen met hoor en voel, alles!/ *It also has to do with what you hear and feel, with everything really.*
4. Dit is iets wat van binne kom/ *Something that comes from the inside.*
5. Musiek en woorde en prentjies/ *It is music and words and pictures.*
6. Die Here praat op 'n eenvoudige manier met my, deur kleur/ *The Lord speaks to me simply, through colour*
7. Verband tussen godsdiens en kunste, albei gee 'n “primal vision” maw dit gee insig op die oorsprong van alles/ *There exists a relation between religion and art; it gives a primal vision, that is insight into the origin of everything.*
8. Vind plaas vanuit ons skeppingsverhouding/ *It comes from our relation with creation.*

9. Die skeppingsteologie is die basis vir Christen kunstenaars/ *Creation theology is the basis for Christian artists.*
10. Kuns is 'n manier van om betekenis te gee sonder om te praat/ *Art is a way of expression without talking.*
11. Kuns gaan oor die manier om met iemand anders te kommunikeer/ *Art is about a way in which we communicate with other people.*
12. *Preek op 'n nuwe manier is ook kuns – woordkuns/ To give a sermon in a new way is also art – literary art.*

3.2.2 “Wat beteken kuns?”/ What does art mean?

13. *Beauty is in the eye of the beholder/ Beauty is in the eye of the beholder*
14. Dit is 'n moeilike vraag omdat elkeen met sy eie lewe en ervaringe voor die kunswerk staan/ *It is a difficult question since everybody stands in front of an artwork with her/his own experiences and life.*
15. Daar is twee soorte kuns: Konsepsuele kuns waar kuns betekenis opsigself het maw opgesluit in die kunswerk of uitbeelding is daar 'n idee wat uitgebeeld word. Dit het dus 'n bedoeling maar ook 'n interpretasie. Tweedens kan dit ook net bloot esteties bevredigend wees/ *Art has a twofold function, conceptual art where the meaning is situated in the work itself and secondly there could also be merely aesthetic value.*
16. Mens moet ook vra of die kunstenaar ooit 'n bedoeling gehad het vir die werk/ *One should ask about the original artist intention.*
17. Tyd en ruimte gee nuwe vorme van betekenis aan 'n bepaalde werk. Waar jy dus 'n werk neersit gee dalk ander betekenis daaraan/ *Time and space give new meaning to art, it matters where you put it.*
18. Kuns is enigeiets wat uitdrukking gee aan my binne-mens/ *Art is anything that gives expression to my inner being.*
19. Kuns is persoonlik verrykend: Dit maak heel in die uitlewing daarvan. Dit hoef daarom nie noodwendig iets te beteken nie. Die vraag is dus nie wat beteken dit nie maar wat doen dit aan my/ *Art is gratifying, it serves a purpose if it means something to me.*

20. Dit is omvattend omdat dit alle emosies kan oproep/ *It is all encompassing since it calls upon emotion.*
21. Kunstenaar skep die werk maar moet by 'n punt uitkom waarin hy homself los maak van die werk en dit as 'n *offering* gee vir andere wat dit gaan interpreteer soos hulle wil/ *An artist creates the work but should get to a point where it becomes an offering which is free for interpretation by others.*
22. Kunstenaars is soms ontsteld oor wat mense daarin in lees. Hulle vra na hoekom moet 'n kunswerk noodwendig betekenis hê. Ons moet eers kuns erken vir wat dit is voor ons dit in die kerk in bring. 'n Kunswerk kan aan die ander kant (teenoor die bloot estetiese kant) nie neutraal wees nie en is dit daarom geskik as 'n leermedium, kan dit gebruik word vir sosiale kritiek, pastorale versorging ensomeer/ *Some artists are alarmed by the idea of wanting to see something in art. It is said that we should first recognise art for what it is before we use it in church. On the other hand since it can never be neutral it is often educational.*

3.2.3 “Is daar iets soos Christelike kuns?”/ ‘Christian’ art?

23. Nee dit gaan oor dit wat vir my 'n Christelike boodskap het/ *No it depends on if I get a Christian message from it.*
24. Mens kry nie iets wat per definiese Christelike kuns is nie/ *There is no such thing as Christian art per definition.*
25. Enige kuns-gawe kom van God af en is per definiese Goddelik behalwe dalk waar dit pertinent in stryd is met die karakter van God. Daar is dus nie 'n skeiding tussen sekulêre en Christelike kuns nie/ *Any artistic gift comes from God and is per definition Christian except where it contradicts the character of God. There is there no distinction between secular or Christian art.*
26. Talente word gawes in die kerk/ *Talents become gifts in the church*

27. Mens het 'n aanvoeling oor die werk maar is nie per definiese Christelik of tematies Christelik nie/ *A work of art creates a certain feeling but cannot per definition be Christian.*
28. 'n Ander maatstaf lê in die gees van die werk. Dit moet lewe voortsit in ander vorme. Mens kry iets soos dooie kuns wat nie met tyd voortbestaan nie, dit is kunsrebellie/ *The spirit of the work serves as a criteria for Christian art. It must carry life forward in other forms. One does find such a thing as dead art that does not hold with hold with time, this is art rebellion.*

3.2.4 “Kan ons enige kuns gebruik?”/ **Could we use any art?**

29. Mens sal ver moet gaan soek om 'n kunswerk te vind wat mens nie kan gebruik nie/ *One will have to go to great lengths to find an artwork that one cannot use.*
30. Dit hang van die konteks af/ *It depends on the context.*
31. [One person tells about her son that takes art classes. The day she went in to the studio she notes that she felt unsettled upon finding pictures of a skull and dead birds.] Hereafter vocal artist Analise Wiid noted that one might then use this to portray something of the lifelessness of someone that does not know Christ.
32. Daar sal altyd kwalifiserend geïnterpreteer moet word/ *One should always qualify and interpret the work.*
33. Enige-iets wat uitbeeld hoe mense die lewe ervaar is bruikbaar/ *Anything that depicts how people experience life is useful.*
34. Wanneer mens die kunswerk gebruik moet mens konteks en betekenis duidelik oordra/ *When one uses an artwork one should clearly define the context and meaning.*
35. Dit het te doen met waarmee mense gemaklik is vanuit hulle persoonlike verstaan van wat kerk beteken. / *It has to do with what one is comfortable with informed by one's personal understanding of the church. An*

- example is used wherein at one church a clowning ministry was extremely successful while at another congregation it was experienced as scornful.*
36. Mens moet ook nie altyd te veel wil verduidelik nie omdat mens dan maklik die kommunikasie moontlikhede kan uitput/ *One should not always try to explain since it becomes easy to exhaust communicative possibilities.*
 37. Kuns kan ook as evangelisasie gebruik word/ *Art could be used as evangelisation.*
 38. Mens moenie soveel kuns gebruik dat dit die tema dood druk nie. Dit moet die tema ondersteun en nie die 'show' vat nie/ *One should not use so much art that the theme is smothered. Art should augment the theme not take over the show.*
 39. Ons sit opgeskeep met 'n dualistiese wêreldbeskouing/ *We have inherited a dualistic worldview.*
 40. Die gereformeerde tradisie sê tog dat God deur sy genade enige-iets kan her-fokus tot sy eer/ *The reformed tradition do say that God can through his grace re-focus anything to his glory.*
 41. Die oomblik as 'n talent 'n gawe word dan geld die riglyne wat die Bybel gee rondom gawes: tot opbou van die gemeente ensomeer/ *In the instance where our talents becomes a gift, the guidelines for the use of charismata applies; it should be to the edification of the believers and so forth.*

The following two paragraphs are reflections of the primary facilitators themselves after having listening to all the input. I judge these to primarily indicate that the church, the Dutch Reformed Church in particular has an enormous educational role to fulfil; thus the heading of the second paragraph. This educational role is especially important since, and I understand this to be the facilitators' view, Christians are uninformed about the significant role of the arts in the Bible. This educational role resonates very strongly with what has been discussed in conversations with all the people of the scientific community.

Two themes stood out from our discussions, that of the role of Art in various Biblical cultures and the educational role of congregations in aim of the arts.

3.2.5 Art from the Biblical times

It is the facilitators' observation that the arts played an integral role in biblical cultures. This especially is the case in respect of the religious practises and worship expressions of Israel towards God. They follow that it should not even be a question to consider whether we should involve ourselves with the arts.

They assert that in the Middle Ages and eastern churches of the time, arts could expressly be seen in mosaic work. In the west, we saw the birth of architecture and liturgical furnisher.

During the Renaissance epoch, arts were in high favour. This is said to be the case since the church commissioned and subsidised many of the most illustrious works. Mostly however arts in those times were a symbol of riches and status.

The allegation of the Reformed movement was focuses at the so-called alleged idolatry of the artworks and artists.

Around the 1900's the Protestant tradition became to realise that other churches has, in manner of speaking, hi-jacked the arts.

It is largely in the postmodern era that there is an upsurge in the arts presumably owing to the premise that people in this era want to feel and experience.

3.2.6 An Educational task

It is said that artists has been marginalised for a long time in the church. Now that we experience a gradual reappearance of the artist on church platforms, congregations should be sensitive to artists. The CAM community also suggest that the person heading an arts ministry should also be very careful and sensitive to the congregation taking into account their level of exposure and understanding

(2005/09/15). It is also imperative that ministry leaders that work within the sphere of the arts should protect the artists from the judgement or scorn of congregational members.

In connection with the above statement, it is said that we should also educate and encourage congregational members to seek God through alternative means. The artist in search of God through art is presented as an example in this regard.

Our educational task should include teaching people that an encounter with God does not only, contra our reformed heritage take place via our auditory senses. The congregation needs to understand that there are numerous uses for the arts in church. Apart from its use, space for the arts should be created in congregations even if only for mere aesthetic worth. This is being related to the worship service in that people should realise that a service entail exaltation, celebration and praising God, but also include existing for addressing social issues: poverty, violence etcetera.

Finally, the facilitators strongly suggest that educating people will entail education in terms of the currency of the arts, which is said to be pictures and metaphors. This does not mean that people need to be taught about a certain message or even that needs to be a message in art; such as in Medieval art (See reference to Medieval art). However, people need to be involved in explorative process about the potential of metaphors and metaphors.

We have in brief looked at the attitudes towards art in history while also with our other ears listened to contemporary people that work with the arts. Naturally ensuing these themes, we find ourselves in a postmodern paradigm when looking at EPIC. Professor Leonard Sweet uses this acronym to particularly refer to a postmodern culture.

3.3 EPIC

Recently extensive coverage has been given to the devastation caused by the Tsunami effects in Asia. It's almost unimaginable that more than 200,000 people died in these tidal waves. The brute destructive strength of these natural forces envelops our modern day sense of security. Such forces bring unfathomable change in thousands of lives. Professor Leonard Sweet uses the tsunami metaphor in his book (1999) *Soul Tsunami* to refer to the changes that's evident in what he calls the new millennium culture, or what I would call a poststructuralist culture if you will.

There are very concrete links to that which we have exposed ourselves to in professor Sweet's discussions and that of the current research endeavour. On various occasions and different times my colleagues made mention of the relevance of the discussions to my role as director of the arts ministry. In this research study the areas of narrative, postmodern, church/ or subcultures and arts intersect making professor Sweet's input invaluable to our exploration from a poststructuralist-church perspective. I believe that the efficiency of narrative practise could be enhanced by bringing into discussion some of the ideas of professor Sweet.

As I sit in the church building, I, figuratively speaking, hear music from his lips, saying: "There was a time wherein the arts were saved by the church. I believe that the time is at hand in which the church will be saved by the arts." This particularly touched Berna. For this reason she states that it is all the more important that churches need to accommodate artists (See also headings 5.3.3.1 & 3.2.6 abovementioned). She refers to a previous year's *dominee produksie* (See Media 1.1 Ministerial Fame or Illusion) we dubbed *Maak 'n Kraak* (idiomatic expression for *to laugh*) when the congregation invited a notable celebrity to perform alongside the ministers. Berna recounted on how this celebrity was accommodated in the church. This person she notes would otherwise never have been given the opportunity to be himself in church. In this sense the arts is

already busy saving the church whereby the church is in keeping with the people she tries to minister to. Further still our CAM community discussion (2005/09/15) proposed that the arts are really useful in breaking down perceptions in the church. Berna relates the incident of two people getting married that she knows that have been in search of a smaller church venue to get married. They eventually found a little church in Pretoria East. What a shock it was to the couple to find out about all the proverbial red tape: Amongst the taboos for the wedding event were the following: No video cameras are allowed in the church. The couple only had a choice between eight 'suitable' songs since; No English songs are permissible. No outside organist is allowed, The church is very prescriptive about what the bride, and the minister may or may not wear, and so forth. In light of what the CAM community says it is truly sad that there are still Dutch Reformed churches with these convictions, worse that they uphold these convictions as obligatory for everyone else. According to the Creative Arts ministry focus group it is exactly as a result of such church convictions that artists are marginalised. Perceptions formed in this manner keep people on the margins of the church instead of being open to the marginalised. To return to professor Sweet's remark: The context in which the arts will exhale, after having kept it's breathe in the church for so long, can be described by the acronym EPIC:

E (experience): Signifies a movement from rational to experiential

P (participation): Signifies a movement from expert representation to participation

I (image driven): Signifies a movement from words to images as cultural currency

C (connectedness): Signifies a movement from the individual to community

I will now elaborate on this acronym, yet not in the above sequence but according to that which is most relevant to our research.

3.3.1 An image driven culture

Let me start by the biggest paradigm resemblance between what professor Sweet says and that of narrative practise:

A sign posted on the glass door of a bankrupt bookstore told the whole story: Words Failed Us. In the modern world, the word was the primary unit of cultural currency. In the postmodern world, the image is the primary unit of cultural currency. In the modern world, preachers exegeted words to make points. In the postmodern world, preachers must learn how to exegete images to create experiences.

(Sweet 1999:200)

In narrative practise this is what we do, exegete (explore so to speak) the given images that emerge from discussions with conversational partners. We do not prescribe a couple of texts to read for work at home, we use the available metaphors to link reason and imagination, and the conceptual with the perceptual (Sweet 1999:200). On his account I realised what we were in reality busy with in church with regard to multimedia. We were doing the whole sermon point's thing; still a very modernistic approach and not fitting a narratively informed minister. The arts ministry would build PowerPoint presentations following the sermon points of the minister. The 'sin' in this; we were using media to make *points*, maybe with a nice photograph to accompany the text, rather than accessing the imagination through images and metaphors. This reformed notion of points, satirically stated "...began in 1517 with a 95-point sermon, and we are still preaching 'points' (although now they're down to three in club sandwich sermons) through Enlightenment-based linear exegesis as opposed to image exegesis" (Sweet 1999:202).

See in this regard *Media 2. Points versus Images*. I should emphasise though that having a great image that encompasses text is not necessarily postmodern as opposed to points only being modernistic. The primary focus is placed on the minister and his ability to explore the images that may be used on the slides. To extend the argument even further: Take note that images do not necessarily imply pictures but often uses them as visual imaginative stimulation. The focus is

placed on the transformative ability of the image (to be brought to life) and not solely on the use of the visual appeal created by the artist.

Sweet (1999:203) petition for going beyond those who decry myth as illogical – “go beyond even those like Levi-Strauss who see myth having a logical... structure – and realize the significance of Marcel Detienne’s [1996] work on pre-Classical Greece....” According to this reference the very distinction between *muthos* and *logos* (reason-emotion and myth-logic), is a not-so-felicitous fiction, invented in Greece by Thucydides and Plato and carelessly picked up by modern theorists (Sweet 1999:203).

One should still be aware of the fact that in the transition from a modern paradigm to a poststructuralist worldview the dilemma with power has not disappeared. It is masked in metaphors as Sweet (1999:201) says: “When someone is in a position to choose the metaphors, that someone is in a position to mess with your mind, to change your perspective, to generate new dreams.” This is all well but the challenge from a narrative position would be to facilitate the process in such a way that new spontaneous metaphors can be heard and developed. Narrative practitioners should thus be aware of the metaphors that are used in society and in individual lives. This is done by being attuned to what someone says and should not be very hard to find: Edward de Bono (2004:115) believes the basis of all discussion builds on conceptual frameworks. We could further argue from a narrative point that these concepts are informed by metaphors (economic, communication, industry, and so forth). From a non-directive perspective we help develop their own existing metaphors rather than randomly choosing metaphors, which we think, might apply to their predicaments.

3.3.2 An experience seeking culture

In accordance with conversations with research participants, arts can contribute immensely to a sense of growth, healing, or whatever reasons there might be for

our involvement. Relating the discussion to Sweet (1999:190) the arts create transformative experiences for people.

Sweet (1999:190) connects his thoughts pertaining to experiences to the concept of branding. In a modernistic yet very simplistic sense branding a certain product deems it trustworthy. This happens for having that specific icon or logo attached to it that people for some reason (advertising) started putting their trust into. From a postmodern perspective branding is all about creating experiences. “Through sports figures, celebrities, and created personalities, companies like Coca Cola (“Always Coca Cola”) are taking products and transforming them into experiences and relationships” (Sweet 1999:190).

From a narrative practise position this makes total sense when looking at the idea behind remembering (antonym for isolation), remembering creates experience. What is re-remembering other than branding through experience, connected to people? What we as narrative practitioners are in effect doing in creating an alternative story is branding experiences which is then linked in sequence across time according to a plot (Morgan 2000:5). I remember when going on vacation my parents would say that the journey also and not just the destination is part of the holiday experience. The experience that the narrative practitioner would facilitate using the arts is the journey. In Sweet’s terminology (1999:215) relating it to narrative practise, this makes us *experience architects*. Therefore, the healing doesn’t happen or even merely start there; it starts here to there and beyond.

Experience and participation is not only to be found as values in postmodern culture and the performing arts but can also be seen in exhibition work. Bättschmann explores the exhibition as a work of art in itself (1990:184). In this work of art, experience can be designed. “Designing experience means providing facilities, arrangements or objects that surprise the visitors to an exhibition by confronting them with an unexpected situation or involving them in a

process and so giving rise to an experience” (Bätschmann 1997:229). This is not too foreign to narrative practise in that in therapy for instance experience is designed by sometimes introducing, connecting, or re-introducing familiar objects and people from the past into the current discussions. The arts also provide an experience.

Unlike the long-held view that the purpose is in the work itself, experience design regards the installations as a means of starting a process for the public. It entails the difficult change from being a passive observer to an active partner and its objectives are participation and involvement through invitation, enticement, overpowering, shock, and danger.

(Bätschmann 1997:229)

In this sense the arts could be used in narrative practise as means of starting the process (forthcoming: chapter five, functions of the arts).

Designing experience in exhibition work “...is not only a new definition of the function of the artist, it is also a redefinition of the role of the recipient and the function of the objects, facilities or installations” (Bätschmann 1997:229).⁹¹ Relating narrative practise to this idea; modernistic informed therapies or ways of ‘helping’ people, wherein this redefinition of the role of the recipient and the functioning of the artist (client – therapist), has not taken place yet. In order for any change/ growth or for whatever reason we have encounters with people, to occur the narrative assumption is that the journey is only possible in this redefinition of the role of the recipient and functioning of the artist. Arts therapies and narrative practise seems to relate greatly with designing experience. Designing should here not understood as therapist induced pre-structured experiences since designing could take on the form of being participatory in nature.

⁹¹ See Bätschmann 1997:229 – 240 for examples in this regard.

3.3.3 Participation – having a voice

“I feel the business of finding a voice is something that should be examined more. For me the thing is to find the voice of your community, of your culture”
(James Kelman, cited in Hobbs 1998:71)

I remember professor Sweet referring to the upcoming millennial generation or poststructuralist culture: By way of example he said that when we sit in a sermon the poststructuralist generation wants to have a voice. He or she wants to know that if they have something to say at any given moment they could take the microphone and do so. Not that they generally would but they would like to know that they have a voice and that they could exert this right of raising their voice.

Narrative therapy links closely to this idea in that narrative practise is always participatory in nature. We freely support the idea of giving the marginalised a sense of existence by helping them raise their voice in light of dominant discourses that are silencing.

This fits well with Sweet (1999:216), saying that the postmodern culture is an age of *participation*, an age of *access* while the modern world is an age of *representation*, its goal to represent to the people the best that has been thought and said. In answer to the modern world then. Sweet (1999:216) remarks that “Peter Greenaway films (*the Draughtsman*, *Prospero*, *The Baby of Macon*) specialize in demonstrating the inadequacy of any representation (whether maps, films, or men and women) to embody and do justice to the reality.”

Sweet (1999:219) is of opinion that some museums are doing better than our schools and churches in pioneering some of the best forms of interactivity and participation. He illustrates that at the Museum of Science in Boston in visiting the Leonardo da Vinci exhibit, there are 13 different interactive stations where visitors could explore Leonardo’s life and work through hands-on, multimedia, and multi-sensory interactivity.

In our CAM community discussion (2005/09/15) Elna helped and reminded us to realise that the arts is not in church in the first instance about entertainment but about participation. Hence audience participation is a form of indirect worship. The possibility for participation is presented to the artist who worships God through his gift. The congregation participate not in receiving a show but joining, as such, in the worship. Hereby the arts become an extension of the congregation's worship.

3.3.4 Connectedness

If we were to be serious about participation, we should do less of trying to say the right things, bombarding people with our implicitly supposed superior knowledge of how anorexia, for instance is best overcome or how organisational development should, above all costs take place. We would do well if we were to realise that relationships rule postmodern life (Sweet 1999:195). In a postmodern culture our business with people is therefore not about providing knowledge that will help people or organisations cope. Knowledge according to Sweet (1999: 195) is a relational category and thus relationship is the central reality in both physical and spiritual existence. Sweet (1999: 195) draws readers' attention to the ministry of Jesus as a metaphor saying that Jesus pioneered a relationship ethic based on compassion. Unmistakably in this metaphor a disciple is required to build relationships, with the Creator, creatures, and creation (Sweet 1999: 195). Eloquently put: "The seat of the soul is not inside or outside a person, but the place where people overlap. The soul is less the space within or without as between. A soul becomes a soul through other people" (Sweet 1999:198).

Certainly logic is no longer converting anyone – only the transforming experience of the living Christ (Sweet 1999:199). Scholars are calling this lived religion, experience religion, or vernacular religion which is spirituality more internal than external, more individual than institutional, more experiential than cerebral, more

private than public (Roof 1996:153). Cox (1995:319) calls the new mode of spirituality *experimentalism*, and explains that it is emotional, communal, narrational, hopeful, and radically embodied.

In conclusion and assimilation of the idea of EPIC the following example stemming from the arts as it finds expression in music. Sweet (1999:208) teases that we should “get over it,” that the Pentecostals and eastern orthodox/Episcopalians have won. Whilst church is preoccupied with problems of meaning, the pomo (Sweet’s reference to *postmodern*) culture is very little concerned with meaning as sought in doctrine. In direct opposition to this pomo culture is preoccupied with the quest for experience, especially experiences with a purpose, and the revelling in full sensory immersion rituals, signs, and symbols that connect to the divine (Sweet 1999:208).

It seems that people are looking for primal experience much as was the case in earliest biblical patriarchal families (Albertz 1992:25-34). People long for the mystery and mysticism of an encounter with God and expect the church to help them get in touch with and interact with their experiences (Sweet 1999:208).

This had reminded me of how I was intrigued about the notion of personal piety and experience. So much that it found its way into the final year theological dissertation about *Die wording van God in die Ou-Testament* (Pienaar 2000) following Rainer Albertz’s (1992) notion of how there was a differentiation of experiences on three levels, that of the official, village (local) and even a familial (personal) level. This could shortly be explained by the following representation:

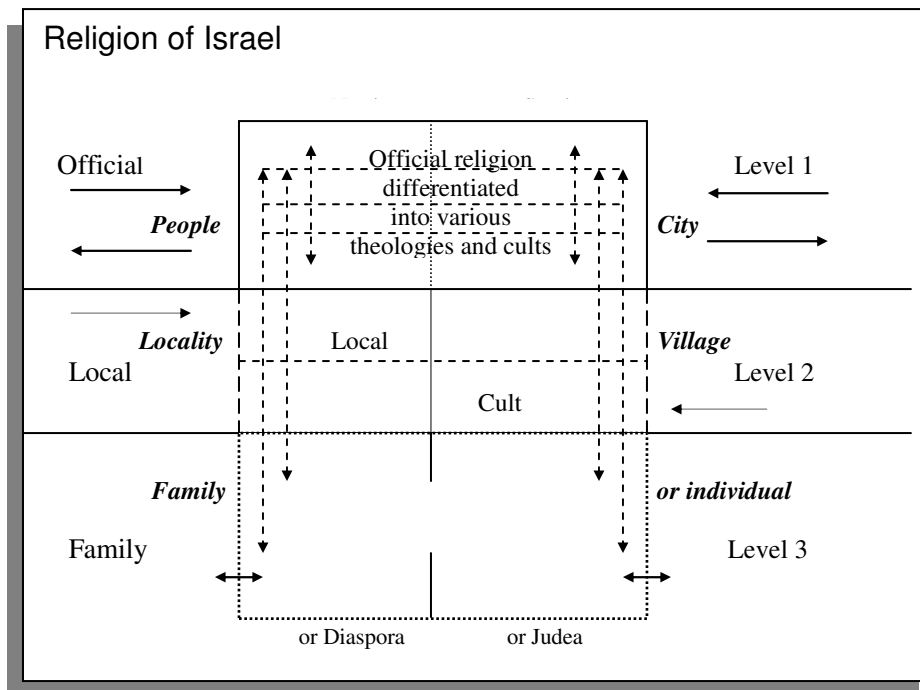


Figure 3-1 Religion of Israel (adapted, Albertz 1992:21)

In accordance herewith one should be cautious to make statements about exactly what Israel's religious experiences and practises were suppose to consist of; more so in remembering that Israel was probably a latecomer on the arena of established nations (Pienaar 2000:chapter 4, informed predominantly by Albertz 1992:volume1). This type of religious experience is much more congruent with what has been described as vernacular religion, local, expressive, interactive, and connected to significant other especially to local culture.

Consequently Sweet (1999:208) refers to the growth of primal spiritualities like Pentecostalism and Eastern Orthodox churches and on this basis asserts that worship plays a central role in postmodern culture. Sweet (1999:208) refers to the signs, symbols, rituals etcetera in the two above mentioned churches and maintain that that they have the greatest mastery of EPIC (experiential, participatory, interactive, communal) worship.

In considering that we live in an ever-increasing EPIC I would now like to turn to the CAM community's remarks on therapy and how arts could play a part therein

since the arts play a significant role to an EPIC culture. This is true in respect of the relationship therapy/ arts to all four concepts: experience, participation, image driven and connectedness. I introduce the CAM contributions by means of their reflection on a reflection letter I had written to them about the research at that time 2004/05/28.

3.4 CAM Reflection/ interpretation - about a rainbow (congregational story)

In the following paragraphs I would like to take you along the currents of the arts in the congregation where I minister. It might seem strange to know that as a minister I only preach a couple of times a year. However, the arts become the pulpit from where I preach in colours, movements, and melodies. It's on this pulpit that God can be touched, smelled, seen, tasted, and heard in ways unlike before. The congregational members' lives that are in some way touched by the arts become the rainbow that reflects the consequential beauty and mercy of the creative creator God. I cannot preach with what is not there, so if it rains I point people's sight on the rainbow. This I do in the hope that possibilities will be opened, and meaningful encounters with God will be experienced.

3.4.1 Congregational involvement

3.4.1.1 In the hands of God

In 2004 the congregation worked with the theme *Here, in U hande...* ("Lord, in Your hands...") with a suffix in each of the quarters of the year:

- i) ...gekruisigde hande (*Crucified hands*)
- ii) ...vormende hande (*Shaping hands*)
- iii) ...versorgende hande (*Caring hands*)
- iv) ...helende hande (*Healing hands*)

Effort was made in the ministry to refer, give sermons, and create interactions with the above themes. Throughout the arts ministry and leadership *referred*

numerously to this theme of hands as it relates theologically and spiritually to people's lives. Several *sermons* were constructed around the above parts of the theme. Symbolic *interactions* were created and *songs* (worship and otherwise) were sung and so forth. See *Media 3.2 In Your hands*, for a presentation on the construction of the hand alluded to here.

During worship one evening we created interaction through facilitation around the theme of brokenness and surrendering to God. This was linked to the sermon. Paper was available for people who were invited to write something that they could symbolically put in God's hands. They could do this at any time during a song that featured these prominent words; *In U hande gee ek my lewe oor, want Here troue God, U't my vrygemaak*. The words to this song might be translated to the meaning; *Lord in Your hands I surrender my life, for it is You oh Lord, trustworthy God that had extended salvation to me*. Possibility for interaction was strengthened by the use of a repetitive worship song. The experience that was created was one of dwelling with God. Finally when it was clear that all that wanted to, had the opportunity to interact. These writings (letters etcetera) were collected in a clay jar/pot, which was unnoticeably broken down the middle. This jar with the letters was then symbolically broken in two over the hand. This caused the folded pieces of paper to come to rest in the 'hands of God'. Letters were taken from the hand after the service to assure that people that were not meant to could not read what was written.

It was my perception that this kind of participation having to stand up and go some place was more suited to charismatic folk. I had my doubts about the intended participation. However, I was surprised at the amount of people that took part in this ritual. People were invited to talk or pray with others that did not feel to participate in the moment. Those were few.

3.4.1.2 The cross our freedom

My perception that people will not take part was again proven wrong at other symbolic interaction. One evening we took another bold move that involved a hammer, nails and a cross (See Media 3.3 *Cross with nails*). People could come to a space provided and hit as many nails to the cross as desired. This enactment was put in the context of victory and freedom. I suspect that part of what made this event successful in terms of participation had to do with where one put this in the sequence of events that construct a service. This was done right at the end. People could take part or they could just leave. *Meaning making* was thus not forced but invited.

3.4.1.3 The cross our joy

Yet another symbolic interaction concerned the use of flowers at two different times of the year, that of Pentecost and Spring (See Media 3.1 *The cross our freedom*). In the week of Pentecost 2003 we requested people to bring flowers with them to the evening service. We had not told them what we were going to do but did make a connection with the CAM community intention. We asked them to bring the flowers to Berna just before the commencement of the service.

Apart from aesthetic reasons this enactment of meaning served as a metaphor for what God wants to do and rightfully has already done in the lives of believers. As people entered they had the opportunity to give their flowers to Berna from our arts team. She then decorated a very large cross during the service, which she has prepared before hand for this reason. At a pivotal moment in the service this cross was raised. On a theological level this enactment visually explained what the function of the Spirit is in the Bible. The cross is now not a rugged wooden structure upon which our saviour hung. The idea that Pentecost succeeds Passover indicates that the story of Christ in our lives should not stop at the events at Golgotha. It is through the Spirit of God that our lives can become fruitful, fresh, and joyous as the colours and smells of the flowers. This

enactment was presented as a testimony to what God desires for us as his children.

By and large it is our experience at the CAM community that congregational members do not really want to engage in in-depth discussions on their experiences and interaction with such symbols and rituals. In a sense these symbols that could also be understood as enactments of meaning is of sacred nature: Maybe the silence testifies to some extent to the deeply personal nature of participation in these experiences. Informal remarks of what these enactments mean are generally speaking of importance in light of the absence of in-depth discussions that are hard to come by. Another hypothesis has at times in the CAM community surfaced that there might be a significant number of people that accept the reality with which they are presented; that is with regard to the already interpreted meaning of such artworks as the hand, decorated crosses and so on. If this is even in the slightest sense a possibility then it should be noted further that all these works produced and interpreted by the CAM community is about the basic elements of the Christian faith.

Keep in mind that this reiteration of basic faith elements is not necessarily in the first instance due to the physical artwork that resembles something of these faith elements. The reiteration of basic faith elements is to a large extent an enactment of meaning ensuing interaction with the work of art. These are enactments of faith elements such as trust, surrender, devotion, thankfulness and so on. It is therefore through these enactments of faith that the story of Christ is reiterated in the faith community through the *arts*, but more specifically through peoples' *interaction* with the arts.

I would even look at these enactments as theology as in *words* or thoughts about God as the word in Greek suggests. It is a type of artistic theology since these enactments are expressions of how people interpret God's presence in their

lives. It is furthermore a proclamation of their understanding of a relationship between themselves and God through Jesus Christ.

3.4.1.4 In God we trust

At our Spring service people were also requested to bring flowers to the evening service. The arts team provided a meditative, multi-sensory participatory space in the chapel throughout the day. People could go there and pray, touch, smell, see, and listen to certain things. In the morning services it was suggested to the congregation what this enactment could symbolise. Hereafter they could bring their flowers to the chapel to add to the aesthetics and speak to God about faith, trust, and sacrifice. These themes were suggested since the CAM ministry intended to emphasise these informed by the season of the year. As the first buds and flowers can be seen in spring while not knowing if it will rain, so children of God can bring before God their first spring offerings, and flowers not knowing what the future holds but trusting that God will accompany the journey. It was exactly these flowers that congregants had placed in the chapel throughout the day that were used during that evening spring service. At this service an environment was created in which people could react to the principle of the goodness of God in song, making that evening the climax of their individual journeys of the given Sunday.

3.4.1.5 An historical journey

The weeks leading up to Passover have become a significant time of the year in our congregation to a large extent so due to the contribution of the arts. Throughout the year colours are used to signify to congregants the period of the church year calendar we are in. However, Passover is the time that our arts ministry decided to put some effort in to.

As a basis for what we have decided to do in this time of the year we took notice of Vos (1997:276-284) referring to the Dutch Reformed Church Lynnwood in Pretoria following the theme of the seven phrases that Jesus spoke on the cross.

This journey of the seven weeks prior to resurrection Sunday makes use of fine art, ample symbolism through candles and ornaments true to the reformed tradition.

During the last week, on the Thursday that Jesus supposedly had his last supper with the disciples the Christ candle is put out to indicate that the immediate sequence of events subsequent to the supper has to do with the disciple Jude, Peter and the people that eventually cries out to crucify Christ (Matthew 20:17-19). On that Thursday evening people were also asked to leave the auditorium from the doors that lead to the church garden. In the garden a space were recreated to represent the moment of Jesus' capture. It is with these events in mind that their experience comes to an unfinished close. These seven weeks result in resurrection Sunday where all the candles burn again.

3.4.2 CAM Reflection in action

I include, in its entirety, the following letter written on 2004/05/28.

This letter mainly contains reflections of the Creative Arts Ministry that I had transcribed. In this regard they had to on a previous occasion (2004/03/17) reflect on the following:

- A reflection letter that I had written (2004/03/11) to Learning Theatre about their involvement with a certain South African bank and,
- I had also asked them to reflect without me being present on the role that the arts could play in therapy.

This subsequent letter consists of their transcribed remarks as well as personal interpretations, which have been in this instance sent back to them and to other participants.

Current personal remarks are inserted for clarification in square brackets. I have in a previous chapter (chapter two) alluded to the reflection process and therefore I only translate the bulleted remarks.

Consequently the reflection letter:

Dear Reader,

The CKKB or in English CAM is the Creative Arts Ministry at Pierre van Ryneveld community church. This group of people are irreplaceable to this ministry of which I am the head of department. Their skills and competencies consist mainly of the arts although Berna is also a Narrative counsellor at the congregation. Their value to this research is important to me personally seeing that this is a research project undertaken in the department of practical theology which in the end has everything to do with the Christian faith community”

Aan die CKKB span, [Addressed to the CAM community]

Tydens ‘n paar vergaderinge het ek julle gevra om terugvoer te gee a) oor die moontlikheid van om die kunste in terapeutiese prosesse te gebruik, 17 Maart, b) om te reflekteer op ‘n refleksie wat ek geskryf het op 11 Maart oor die Learning Theatre se betrokkenheid by Bank SA bank. Hierdie brief is ‘n samestelling van wat ek daarop by julle gehoor het:

[A. Reflection on arts in therapy]

42. Prente teken het julle gevoel werk met kinders: Dit kan as aanknopingspunt vir berading gebruik word deur die kind te vra om die gesin te teken./ *Pictures could work with children. One could use it for a point of discussion. Children might for instance be asked to draw their family.*
43. Daar is baie terapie in blomme wat ook as aanknopingspunt gebruik kan word. In die selfde asem meen julle dat berading eintlik so passief is maar dat om iets fisies te doen soveel meer impak het omdat daar genesing is in rituele./ *There is also therapeutic value in flowers that could also be used for a point of*

discussion. Normally therapy is so passive one could aim to do something physical (like flowers) since through the ritual there might come healing.

44. 'n Familie kan selfs (in berading) betrek word by die maak van 'n kisruiker/ grafruiker wat op video geneem kan word. Hierdie video kan 'n jaar verder weer gekyk word om die lewensverhaal van die afgestorwene te onthou. (Span julle praat hier van dat dit, die praat oor die gebeure, drama kan wees? Ek wonder of mens dit verder eerder die dramatisering van gevoel sou kon noem want dit gaan oor die vertolking van die herinneringe deur middel van die gesin se emosie en nie die fisiese vertolking daarvan nie?/ *The family of the deceased could all be involved in making a flower arrangement to be placed on the grave. This session could also be video-taped at looked at a year later in commemoration of the person.*
45. Mense voel hy is goed genoeg om iets te 'produce' (soos 'n kunswerk) (Gee dus 'n gevoel van eie-waarde)/ *Doing something, creating something makes one feel that you are good enough to produce something.*
46. Die mening is ook gegee dat iemand met huweliksprobleme weer sou kon ontdek hoe dit was deur verantwoordelik na die trou-video te kyk. Dit sou by mens gedagtes kon los maak van 'wat dan nou eintlik fout gegaan het' Mens sou dalk selfs die beeld kon gebruik van 'uit edit' – dit wat die videograaf doen voordat hy die video aan die bruidspaar verskaf./ *In marital therapy one could use the marriage video in a discussion. One might also use the metaphor of 'editing out' certain bad events.*
47. Die video sou ook positief kon inwerk tydens 'n revisiting/ celebration van die huwelik oor 6 maande. By hierdie geleentheid sou mens weer al jou vriende kon nooi om na die video te kyk. Jou vriende raak 'n 'audience' wat 'n belangrike rol speel in die 'revisiting' van jou troue./ *The marriage video could also be used*

as celebration after 6 months after having gotten married. At this event one could invite all one's friends.

48. Maak 'n collage (montage) met fotos (gelukkig en ongelukkige tye uit jou lewe) wat dan op 'n CD gesit word as 'n vaste bewys. Bv. Die collage of montage sou van iemand kon wees wat tot sterwe gekom het juis om die gesin te help met 'closure.'/ *One could involve someone in making a montage of significant times (good and bad) and put these photo's on CD.*
49. Doopvideo's wat ons doen kan vir kinders later in hulle lewe wat deur een of ander probleem baie waarde hê: dit sou kon bevestig dat hy/ sy wel spesiaal is (eie invoeging: vroeër jare was die moontlikheid nie so beskikbaar nie)./ *Nowadays one makes baptismal video's that might later in one's life be a significant memory; a testimony to being special.*
50. Hou 'n celebration om die oorwinning oor die probleem te vier en neem dit op video. Die video dien dan as kragtige getuie en help om die storie van oorwinning in die toekoms in te dra./ *Have a celebration with friends because you have beaten Problem. A video of this celebration could help carry the story into the future.*
51. In berading kan mens musiek, 'n CD of spesifieke liedjie gebruik wat mens weet vir die persoon positiewe gevoelens uitlok. Mens sou dan musiek vermy wat jou laat sleg voel./ *One might in therapy used music that one knows the person has a positive connection with.*
52. Mens kan musiek gebruik tydens berading en dan vra wat met die persoon gebeur wanneer hy/sy so luister./ *Music could be used in therapy wherein one asks the person in therapy about what happens to him when listening to the music.*
53. Mens sou kinders ook agter instrumente soos dromme kon sit en vra dat hulle hulle gevoel 'uitspeel.'/ *Children could be asked to play out their emotion on certain instruments, like drums.*

54. Tydens die montage van vroeër kan mens ook musiek in 'record' wat betekenis vir die persone het./ *During the earlier mentioned montage, significant music could be included that one knows has meaning to the person.*
55. Op die punt het julle vermeld dat elke persoon het 'n verlede, huidige en toekoms verhaal: Die video's, musiek, foto's ensomeer word gebruik om die goeie te onthou en die slegte te help verwerk. Die negatiewe word juis gebruik in die herformulering van 'n sinvolle toekomsverhaal sê julle./ *You have noted that every person have a past, present and future story. Video's, photo's, music and so forth help bring the positive in remembrance while helping deal with the negative.*
56. Mens sou ook die seer kon weg dans, of 'n dans choreografeer bv. Dans na 'n toekomsverhaal. Marie vertel ook hoe sy by 'n gawe kursus haar hande teen 'n ander s'n moes sit terwyl hulle beurte gekry het om op die maat van die musiek met die oë toe beweeg./ *One could deal with sorrowful times through dancing or through choreographing a dance. Marguerite notes she was at a gifting workshop where they had to place their hands on someone else's hand make movements with their eyes closed.*
57. Daar is selfs gesê dat om 'n koek saam te bak kan terapeuties wees. Dit sou kon wees omdat hulle dit doen soos oorlede ouma (as voorbeeld) dit altyd gedoen het maw (herinnering) of terapeuties agv die proses. Die eindproduk sou simbolies saam geet kon word. Mens sou ook meer op 'n interpretasie vlak kon werk deur te vra: Wat is (emosioneel) in daardie koek? Kos maak is insigself vir sommige terapeuties./ *Baking a cake together could even be therapeutic for two reasons: Granny baked it like we did (memory treasuring) or the process of baking could be therapeutic. The final product could then be eaten together. One could also*

function on a more interpretational level by asking about what is in the cake.

58. Die bogenoemde sou ook met 'n skildery of prent kon werk./ *The abovementioned could also work with painting.*
59. Mens sou iemand kon vra om 'n kort autobiografie te skryf./ *Writing a small autobiography might also be worth while.*
60. Julle meen ook dat dit vir iemand dalk makliker sou wees om deur drama 'n karakter aan te neem wat sy emosies uitbeeld omdat dit dalk te persoonlik is om dit self te vertel./ *It may be easier for a person to take on another character through which it is easier to communicated.*
61. Iemand anders sou ook 'n storie kon vertel van die persoon in terapie se probleem. Die persoon hoor dit dalk op 'n ander manier./ *Maybe somebody else can tell a story about the problem of the person in therapy. The person may be hearing it in a different way.*
62. Mens kan iemand vra om as 'peer pressure' 'n storie te vertel./ *Somebody could assume the role of Peer Pressure and tell the story from the view of Peer Pressure.*
63. Vra iemand om sy eie storie te vertel dmv 'n bekende sprokie wat hy/sy self kies. Hoekom kies jy om die storie so te vertel? Hoekom kies jy hierdie sprokie?/ *You can ask a person to use a well known fable and tell his own story by using this fable. One can furthermore inquire why the person chose to tell the story in a certain manner and why he chose that particular story.*

[B. Reflection on Learning Theatre's involvement with Bank SA]

64. Berna se eerste vraag was hoe het Learning Theatre en BANK SA besluit wat hulle gaan doen? Berna het gevoel dat die teikengroep/ fokus groep moet bepaal wat hulle gaan doen/ of darem 'n aandeel hê in om te besluit wat op die tafel is./ *Considering Learning Theatre's involvement with Bank SA Berna inquired first about how*

the two organisations decided what they were going to do and she then emphasises that the people to whom it all is directed should also be able to give input on what is considered.

65. Talitha het in die algemeen gesê dat mens moet versigtig wees om drama te gebruik om net probleme uit te wys./ *Talitha noted that in general one should be cautious to use drama to pin point problems.*
66. Berna het hierby gevoeg dat mens ook nie die antwoord moet gee nie./ *Berna augmented by saying that one should not give answers.*
67. Sy stel voor dat die gehoor dalk die oplossing moet gee en dat die akteurs dit dan uitspeel./ *Berna proposes that the larger audience might give the answers and that the actors could stage those answers.*
68. Die gehoor kan ook in die drama self wees./ *Some audience members could even be in the dramatic sketches.*
69. Om die gehoor nie by 'n oplossing te betrek nie mag tot gevolg hê dat hulle nie 'connect' met die oplossing wat aangebied word nie./ *Not to involve the audience in the answer may have the effect of the audience not connecting to the problem.*
70. Mens sou in die drama van 'n 'stop frame' gebruik maak wat die gehoor vra wat om volgende te doen./ *One could use a type of 'stop frame' whereupon the audience is asked what should happen next.*
71. Talitha meen dat dit is soos 'n fliek wat tot ses, of verskeie eindes kan hê./ *Talitha agrees and says that it is like a film that could have six or seven endings.*
72. Verder sê sy dat mens in terapie, of die groep in terapie kan vra om selfs die storie te verf. Dit wat hulle verf kan dalk as aanknopingspunt gebruik word vir gesprek deur te vra: Hoekom het jy gekies om dit so te verf?/ *One may in therapy ask the person or*

group to paint their story and then inquire about why they have painted what they have painted.

73. Die slegte dinge kan ook uitgebeeld word en dan verbrand word daarna./ *Negative things could also be painted and afterwards one could burn those.*
74. Wat is die einddoel van drama het Berna gevra?/ *Berna was wondering about the purposes of drama (the desired outcome).*
75. Iemand wat sukkel om 'sy' humeur te beteuel kan gevra word om 'n brief aan humeur te skryf./ *If someone has troubles with anger that person may be asked to write letters to anger in his life.*
76. Die kunswerk, drama ens. kan 'n 'witness' vir verandering wees, of getuig van oorwinning of hulle kan totaal en al besluit wat se persoonlike waarde 'n sekere aksie of aktiwiteit het./ *The artwork, drama etcetera could stand as a testimony for change or victory. People could also themselves decide what the worth of a specific activity was.*

In conversation with the team and individuals of the team I came to realise that to them the word process is the key feature in the interaction between the Arts and Therapy. Being involved in the process helps people to work through issues in that the activity in itself is healing. The final product of art in therapy, as an outcome of the process, might be that self-worth is re-established which I will call a sense of self.

I was wondering if we can explore this notion of process in more depth. Berna at one stage referred to a workshop that she attended concerning pottery in which the process of creating had a strong religious pastoral/therapeutic undertone.

With regard to the process I would like to briefly refer to a project that we've done. The main theme for 2004 at our congregation is "In U hande

Here...” The arts ministry created ‘n huge hand from material, wire, material etcetera. There is also a light that entirely illumines the hand from within. At one service we facilitated a time of re commitment to the idea that God indeed keeps all of us in his hands. During a worship song with the words: “In U hande gee ek my lewe oor want Here troue God, U het my vrygemaak” members present could write a letter of anything that they wanted to say/ give (worries/ doubt etc.) to the Lord. Although this event probably meant a lot to a lot of people it was said that people also benefitted from the process of seeing the hand being completed week by week: This had the meaning for some that God is also active, sculpting, giving form to their lives in the process/relationship that they have with Christ.

(Reflection 2004/05/28)

3.4.3 A silent photo montage

It was on 2004/08/05 that I had compiled a montage from primarily faces and animals (See Media 6 *Media montage*) and presented it to the CAM community. I chose these photo’s as they had communicated something to me. What exactly it communicated to me at that time I did not want clown the viewers perceptions with it. I was curious about the possibilities of such a montage in narrative practise and decided to test this at our weekly arts assembly of whom two participants are familiar with narrative ideas and counselling.

I asked them to just look at the photos on my notebook computer as I had them automatically moving from one slide to another using an ordinary presentation program. I also asked them not to spend a lot of time thinking about any specific photo, asking for there immediate feelings put down in not more than about five words. These comments could be a question sentence, phrase, or a word, anything that resonated with them from those few seconds looking at the photos. The following answers came as I had asked them to write it down numerically whilst keeping from discussing it during the montage presentation.

Slide	CAM community member 1	CAM community member 2	CAM community member 3
1	Blydskap <i>Happiness</i>	Hartseer? <i>Sadness?</i>	Gelukkige hartseer <i>Happy type of sadness</i>
2	Verwonderd Amazed	Sorgeloos Care free	Lekker Fun
3	Vryheid <i>Freedom</i>	Release <i>Release</i>	Oorgawe <i>Surrender</i>
4	Gesamentlik <i>Jointly</i>	Eenheid <i>Unity</i>	Eenheid <i>Unity</i>
5	Wat is die prent? <i>What is this picture?</i>	Drogbeeld <i>Phantom</i>	Agressie <i>Aggressiveness</i>
6	Kan geld vlieg? <i>Can money fly?</i>	Wat bring jy? <i>What do you bring?</i>	Wat bring jy? <i>What do you bring?</i>
7	Kans waag <i>To take a risk</i>	Ontspan <i>Relax</i>	Waar gaan ons heen? <i>Where are we going?</i>
8	Hoofpyn <i>Headache</i>	Samelewingsverval <i>Societal decay</i>	Garbage <i>Garbage</i>
9	Skepping <i>Creation</i>	Klein <i>Small</i>	Ongelooflike God <i>Amazing God</i>
10	Liefde <i>Love</i>	Hoe kry ek dit reg? <i>How do I achieve that?</i>	Lewensvulling <i>Life fulfilment</i>
11	Natuur <i>Nature</i>	Gril <i>Repulsed</i>	Jig <i>Repulsed</i>
12	Kameraadskap <i>Comradery</i>	Leierskap <i>Leadership</i>	Bevoorreg <i>Honoured</i>

Table 3-1 Silent photo montage

Hereafter we realised how different these photos communicate to each person, or as described in Weiser's (1993:15) concept of projective process: "Much of what we think we see is instead actually coming from us. This, in a word, is the

projective process that happens in response to photographs, things, or people – known and familiar to us or never seen before”

Some photos that I have shown conveyed neutral feelings but for the most part something was triggered that in a facilitative or therapeutic process one could explore. Unknowingly this whole idea touches upon Weiser's (1993:15) projective technique in that the projective technique uses photographic images to elicit emotional responses, whether or not accompanied by verbal description Weiser (1993:16). It is noted that any type of photo can be used, including the client's personal snapshot or someone else's, or pictures found in magazine pages, postcards, calendars and so on. “As we try to figure out the photograph, we mentally scan it, instinctively deconstructing it to get it to make sense. In constructing our naming of it, our inner representations of that photo, our personal construct, will be the only reality that we will ever be able to know of it” (Weiser 1993:16). The subsequent remarks from the viewer's correlate with Weiser's (1993:16) further remarks saying that when reminded of something or someone else; it may bring up associated feelings; it may start us thinking. We use it not as a finished product but as a beginning, a stimulus, or catalyst for our projections of meaning. What we find is a projection of ourselves and our uniquely personal interpretations onto the photograph (Weiser 1993:16).

In this sense, the projective Phototherapy process is similar to numerous other traditional projective instruments used in psychotherapy and art therapy, such as the familiar Rorschach inkblot test, the Thematic Aperception Test, or various draw-a-person or house-tree-person projective drawing assessments. However, [it seems that this is where phototherapy diverges from psychoanalytic theory; *own insertion*] there is no interpretation manual provided for evaluating projective responses to photo stimuli; they are accepted for their content rather than their correctness.... [I]t is...important to keep in mind that a response doesn't automatically mean something significant in diagnostic terms; there must

be repetitions or patterns in clients' responses before any significance can be supposed

(Weiser 1993:16)

Weiser (1993:16) says that the therapist should be more aware of the *why* and the *how*, than the *what* of the pictures as they are primarily used as a tool for self-awareness and self-empowerment. It seems then that the power or knowledge is still situated with the conversational partner as opposed to the knowing therapist.

At our montage presentation I noticed two things: One person at the montage presentation remarked that it was *astonishing how different pictures can tell stories* when you focus on it as part of a process. This was the first thing I noticed; pictures telling stories in a process. Seen in this way the story is more or less experienced as the artist (in this case myself) intended. The second thing was even more interesting to me: That same person also stated the inverse of the above remark and said that it's *astonishing how one can tell stories from these pictures*. This implies that any story although it has a first-degree intention also stimulates other stories. Put another way: Every story is also a story about something else. The first idea accesses the imagination within the givens of the story; imagining how those people got there, where has the photo been taken, how have their lives been and so forth. The second idea is that of a reaction to, or a personal history that a picture brings to life again. So then an interesting dialogue seems to take place between the past and the present, connected somehow to a certain emotion or feeling felt at that moment. There is thus a dialectical tension between imagination that the picture-story stimulates and the act of interpretation.

A person uses both imagination and interpretation simultaneously. Subsequently we had a conversation on how, when one rearranges the order of the photos in which they were initially presented, different stories seem to develop. We

thought that people might arrange the pictures themselves or even bring photos to a therapy session for this reason. This very idea I later discussed with Christo when showing him the montage. He then arranged the photo slides in an order to depict his journey. Upon asking him what the story is about he said that it caused him to reflect on his journey. The way in which it is arranged he says depicts the idea of being stronger than before.

3.4.4 Berna on the arts

Berna, a narrative counsellor on the CAM community replied (2004/19/07) in the following manner – English summary below quote – on a letter they had received from me concerning the research:

Hi Elmo, Dit maak my regtig baie opgewonde om te lees wat jy alles skryf. Veral dat jy sekere algemene opvattinge in die kunstewêreld so bietjie uitdaag.....veral om weer te gaan kyk na wat die doel en uiteindelijke uitkoms met die aanbied of opdis van kuns in ons samelewing en global is. Dat daar 'n soort uitdaging aan entertainment gestel word, oor hoekom.....Die posisie wat christelike kuns kom inneem. Die moontlikheid van kuns as helende proses. Ek is self besig met my gevalle studie om van kuns gebruik te maak as kommunikasie middel eerder as die gesproke woord. My klient se denkvoorkeure laat dit toe. Bloot dialoog of die vertel van die probleemverhaal sou nie op eie stoom kon oorgaan in 'n heleingsproses nie. Dit het ek reeds met die eerste sessie besef. Die proses wou net nie vorder nie. Ek het met hom onderhandel oor al die moontlikhede, spesifiek om kuns in verskeie vorme te gebruik. Om die probleemverhaal in collage uit te beeld, vanuit hierdie memories, wil ek werk na hoe dit kan lyk in die die toekoms of selfs nou reeds. Die hedeverhaal in ontwerp en dan oor te gaan om dieselfde ontwerp aan te pas of te herontwerp, na die alternatiewe storie toe, om dit deel van die toekomsverhaal te kan maak. Die toekomsverhaal in iets soortgelyks as 'n drama, meer 'n eenman vertelling met 'n audience van sy

keuse. Hieroor dink ek nog 'n bietjie. Hoe die Christenkuns hierby inpas, is nie so 'n issue nie, want die ou is 'n Christen en leef en funksioneer in die eerste plek vanuit sy verhouding met die Here. So dit gaan 'n spontane deel van die skeppings proses word. Kuns gaan beslis nie hier los kan staan van sy verhouding met God nie, anders gaan ons met halwe waarhede sit en genesing beperk, in boksies sit, voorskryf en interpretasie in die wiele ry. In hierdie geval is en moet pastoraat 'n wesenlike deel van die proses uitmaak. Dit ge-jel met kuns in een of ander vorm. Dit is tog hoe hy sin van sy wêreld maak, eerstens deur kuns deur godsdiens en dalk laastens deur gesprek.

Lekker explore, groete Berna

(Berna 2004/19/07)

In this part she touches on three themes relevant to this research. She feels that the arts serve a purpose beyond entertainment a concept that we also encounter in Henk's reflections. According to this the arts benefits the process of healing. Secondly she touches on the idea that sometimes-verbal communication is not enough. This deficiency, inhibiting the therapeutic process is in part motivation for this study as it has been mentioned earlier at the outset of this chapter. Consistent with this motivation many therapies, yet also narrative therapy is strongly positioned in the participant's ability to express himself/ herself verbally. In line with what Berna describes herself doing in therapy with this person it seems that the arts can propel the process forward considerably. As a manner of speaking she uses the metaphor of a steam locomotion saying that dialogue would in this case not have had the same effect as did enhancing it with the arts (drama and collage). Lastly she negotiated the idea of art involvement with the person. The participant is therefore always in a position to choose whether the arts should be part of the process and also given the preference as to which art forms is to be used.

3.4.5 The Iconoclastic Controversy

In respect of the expressions/ creations of the CAM community, I believe some might still think of it as graven images, as for example a larger than life representation of the hand of God, flowers on the cross, depicting images of Christ through multimedia and so on. This is by no means a new debate and can theologically be traced back to the image of the golden calf (Exodus 20:4; Deuteronomy 5:8; Albertz 1992:vol1).

Throughout the ages some Christians had a lingering distrust of these images.

They fear that by having an image of the thing before them, vision and devotion might attach themselves to the image, and fail to press on to the thing for which the image stands. This viewpoint was maintained by the image-rejecting 'iconoclasts' in the Orthodox church for hundreds of years, with fluctuating success. It has always been alive in some part of the church. Some Protestant traditions show a similar trend, playing down the visual.⁹² This is just one aspect of the problem that Christians face in finding ways, both visual and verbal, to express God's mysteries adequately.

(Howard 1990:39)

Latourette (1953:292) expressly mentions this controversy, referred to as the iconoclastic controversy by saying that to one's amazement the major dispute in the Greek or Byzantine wing of the Catholic Church after the seventh century was not over the nature of Christ, but over the use of images in Christian worship.

In this the West also became involved, although it was not as badly divided as were the Greeks. The controversy broke out in 726 and raged,

⁹² Atkinson (1990:372) mentions that the Calvinists went further than the Lutherans in their opposition to traditions which had been handed down. They rejected a good deal of church music, art, architecture, and many more superficial matters...."

with intervals of comparative quiet, for over a century, until 843. It was concomitant with the recovery of the Byzantine Empire from the internal disorder from which the realm suffered near the beginning of the eighth century and was the result of the religious policy of the Emperor Leo III, who brought a fresh access of strength to the waning Byzantine power.

(Latourette 1953:292)

Objections by Christians to the use of images and pictures – icons as they are technically known – were by no means new. Pictures of Christian subjects, even of Christ himself, had been made long before the sixth century (Latourette 1953:293). Official church councils before the year 1000 in both the East and the West had proclaimed that Christian image making was permissible (Howard 1990:39). Yet there had also been opposition to them on the ground that they smacked paganism (Latourette 1953:293).

However, Christians have always differed about the arts (Howard 1990:39). It is said that a bishop of Massilia (Marseilles), in the sixth century was reprimanded by the Pope for ordering the destruction of the images in the churches in his diocese; while agreeing that they should not be adored, the Pope held that they were a valuable means of instructing illiterate Christians in the faith (Latourette 1953:293).

3.5 *Staying close to my theological home*

Danie du Toit and I had our first conversation on 2004/03/25. Before I had sent him a reflection letter on 2004/05/11 I had spoken to various participants who had informed my thinking. This led to our first consideration of being sensitive to faith communities to which Danie and I belong.

3.5.1 Considering community

I remember that following a remark that Danie made we talked about the idea of having to create an environment wherein people might learn and want to learn

more about the arts. This does not involve education in the sense of authoritative statements but there is an educative task that awaits the ministry leader or minister that wants to use the arts. Through such 'education' people may derive maximum potential and pleasure from what the arts could offer. This is done by exposing people (in the context of our discussion, members of our congregations), subtly and steadily to certain ideas and works of art. The more knowledgeable people are the greater the worth they derive from the art. That what people might benefit from a better understanding of the arts we reasoned is situated on an aesthetic but also a conceptual level. This means that art might not only be aesthetically pleasing but also could mean something to people in their faith.

In our educational task we have to be subtle, meaning sensitive, to the audience and their level of understanding and exposure to the arts. Bolte and McCusker (1987:18) reaffirms from their experience in working with the medium of the creative arts in the Christian context that whatever you try to do "...you'll step on somebody's taste buds." Although people in church differ largely in their exposure and artistic experience – or one may refer to tolerance levels – there is something to be said about the ability to judge where any given group, such as a congregation, is in relation to the arts. Thus, if the arts is to play any role at all in the story of a church, corporate firm or any community those that orchestrate the contact between group/art will have to be keyed to the story of the community before they can answer the relevant question about what might be appropriate for a community or audience. In drama for instance this would entail also knowing what type of drama will effectively get the message across according to what you know about the people and there communal story. For drama one should be able to make a judgment about type of drama: Should it essentially consist of tragedy, straight drama, melodrama, or fantasy; also, what style should be used; something realistic, abstract, impressionistic, or romantic? These questions encourage the narrative practitioner to at least try to match the style and type with the person or organisation in front of you. To the degree that it is

possible such a match between conversational partner and arts should always be a choice executed locally; together with the people and naturally to their benefit.

It appears that one will have to realise that the passageway through the trust threshold lies straightforward. By this route safe passage should be obtained from the threshold guardians themselves. These threshold guardians might be signified by leadership, the central committee, but in the context of our conversation, the tradition, and development of the community. In this regard Danie explained that if, as was the case, one wants to use a painting of Jesus clothed with a sailors outfit one should first consult an artist to explore the impact and communicative function of such a work.

Danie and I considered that people might be more receptive to fine art since it is not as imposing as performing arts, which bear a connotation with entertainment. Since conversations with Danie was informed principally by fine arts I saw it fit to allude to conversations with Hagemann on performing arts. Consequently we discussed how the physical qualities of some forms of art differ over others. In this respect a painting for instance, is a permanent work of art (unless off course destroyed). Drama is only, figuratively speaking, a painting for the duration of time that it is performed. The audience will have to rely on their memory of the experience of the event in order to evoke emotion that might effect change. When a painting is painted, say as a 'declaration of freedom' in a therapeutic context, it becomes more than a memory. It becomes a vivid reminder of that which a person stands for. It is over time pervasive in nature over against the momentary imposition of performing arts.

Bolte and McCusker (1987:18) caution spiritedly to consider why we are or want to be using drama (the arts) in church. They ask this irrespective of the dispute of what might be considered Christian art (theme, values portrayed, communicative function etcetera). This question is asked for reflective purposes. One needs to account for one's own reasons of why something is worth anything

in the setting that it is placed. According to Elna and Berna at our CAM community discussions (2005/09/15) the arts rarely serve only entertaining purposes. For them the arts (supposedly Christian or not) should be put in service of the glorification of God if it is used in the church context. Bolte and McCusker (1987:18) state that drama merely for the sake of drama can be all right in some circumstances, but if it remains spiritually void, in common lingo your church leadership will probably shut you down. They ask why we should bother using church time and money for something that won't challenge or edify believers or bring outsiders into our assemblies for an encounter with God (Bolte & McCusker 1987:19). This argument re-sounds the voice of my high school arts teacher: There should be *method in your madness*. For the above authors then creative arts in the Christian environment should *predominantly* serve the purpose of offering or presenting a message or truth.

3.5.2 Church and art; unity and growing scepticism

There was a time in the life of the body of the protestant church when it might not have been far off to describe art as having been a declaration of what the church stood for. Nowadays, in contemporary western society Clouse (1990:294) pronounces that there is no generally accepted coherent system of goals and values, and the language of art is largely personal (In relation to the *personal* see Addendum O; classicism/ romanticism). As a declaration of beliefs 'religious' art flourished in the fifteenth/ sixteenth century. In these times the places of worship could almost be referred to as art exhibition museums hereby portraying something of the relation *church/ art*. In the words Bolte and McCusker (1987:20), concerning drama specifically, till a "...few hundred years ago drama was embraced by the church and nurtured there. It was incorporated into services and displayed in courtyards. Drama carried a certain degree of excellence in message and medium." However Danie and I share the opinion that this is not in the least so in the Protestant churches anymore. If 'truth' be told, until recently still art were swaying on the far side of the pendulum from where the Protestant church exists. We are now rather dealing with the

impoverishment of especially what might be referred to as the *classical arts*⁹³ in the Protestant tradition. Again referring to drama it is said by the above authors (1987:20) that the secular realm began to taint the idea of drama in church: Actors and actresses often doubled as prostitutes, and the stage became a place for messages that proved to be... well, less than Christian.” This carried on to such an extent that most churches it is said gave up on drama.

Bolte and McCusker (1987:20) maintain that ‘sin by association’ is the main reason for what seems to be the disappearance of the arts in the religious sphere and conversely the hesitation of the church to utilise the arts in ministry. To illustrate this point they refer to our own century with all the technological advancements in communication and how many mainstream churches have dealt with those advancements. If we think of motion pictures, television and certain styles of music; due to sin by association churches have been slow to use what has been developed – attributing good and evil to such things because of the world’s abuses. Howard (1990:42) states that at the end of the ancient world, drama had reached such a low point that it could only be viewed with alarm and disgust by the church. Christianity was assumed to be, and indeed was anti-theatre for some hundreds of years. Before the year 1000, however, short dramatic elements were introduced into the church’s liturgy. They were called *tropes*, one of the earliest and most familiar being the *quem quaeritis* (‘Whom seek ye?’). As time went on, more and more of the gospel story was dramatized. By the fourteenth century we find long, elaborate play-cycles of biblical history being staged by the craftsmen of such cities as York and Chester (Howard 1990:43).

In contrast to the effects of sin by association Howard (1990:43) asserts that the most productive period in English drama was in the sixteenth century, with Shakespeare at its peak. Little explicitly Christian expression was coming from

⁹³ Referring to, and especially so when talking about the classical arts such as paintings, sculpture, architecture and so forth.

the theatres at that time. Subsequent to the sixteenth century there has been a widespread feeling in the church that, although drama ought to be a useful method for portraying Christian interpretations of existence, it is not easy to arrive at an understanding between church and theatre. Howard (1990:43) indicates that T.S. Eliot, in *Murder in the Cathedral*, *The Family Reunion*, and other plays, has come as close as any poet or playwright to writing drama that is at one and the same time good and specifically Christian. Of all the arts, the one most unambiguously celebrated and nourished in the Christian West has always been music (Howard 1990:43). Howard (1990:43) invites to imagine what Western music could have sounded like without Christian influence since from the hymns of the early church, through plainsong, motet, oratorio, and modern hymnody, we find the Christian imagination expressing its response to existence (Howard 1990:43).

White (1997:8) directs our attention to the relationship between painting and the Christian faith. This relationship has been at times strained and at other times relaxed. At one extreme has been the view that all images of a religious nature should be forbidden because of the commandment in the Decalogue not to make any graven images or idols (Exodus 20:4; Deuteronomy 5:8). This view was particularly strong in many Protestant denominations after the Reformation. At the other end of the spectrum are those who see such images as holy, as mysterious reflections (or icons) of the supernatural world.

3.5.3 The survival of arts

Conversations with participants and also above-mentioned authors, specifically White (1997:9), helped me to realise that the arts has never been totally absent from the church and life of believers. Certain art forms were advocated or disapproved of on the basis of theology and the distinction between the nature of corporate worship – between private and public. Protestant churches reacted⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Latourette (1953:923) proposes that the two hundred and fifty years between 1500 and 1750 be seen as the "resumption of the world-wide spread of Christianity". Christianity was having effects over more of the surface of the globe than in any earlier era. Judging from the standards of the New Testament Latourette (1953:967) suggests that this expansion was for ill and not for good. In this era Christian themes

against what they deemed the "...idolatry in the use of images, sculptures, paintings, and stained glass windows..." in Roman Catholic churches. As a result Protestant churches were made severely plain (Latourette 1953:989). However among Protestants, too, the Christian impulse also inspired architecture, which adapted pre-Christian classical forms to Christian worship (Latourette 1953:989). Furthermore, the reformation, both Catholic and Protestant, called forth superb music, like Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 - 1750), a Lutheran, "...who devoted most of his genius to the service of the Church," also George Frederick Handel (1685 - 1759) whom in spite of much secular music and operas will best be remembered for his oratorios and anthems, mostly so his *Messiah* (Latourette 1953:989). Therefore it is not hard to believe as White (1997:9) says that whatever the tradition or theology the human spirit longs to shape, make or create things of beauty in one way or another: If not paintings, then music; if not music, then preaching and so on. "It is as if the stones themselves would cry out if this spirit were completely suppressed!" (White 1997:9).

In light of this discussion on the relationship between church and art I am overjoyed with the courage of my own congregation to appoint someone exclusively to the arts – encompassing the whole spectrum of art. That which we are weary about is what seems to me and Danie du Toit as a tendency of some Dutch Reformed churches to work according to a 'five year' notion/ time span: For five years we have *Youth to Youth actions*, then for the next five years we jump on the band wagon of *Strategic planning and management*, thereafter *Church growth*, then *Renewal* and maybe thereafter the arts.

Others in the Reformed tradition like researcher professor Leonard Sweet thinks otherwise. In some lectures, which I have had the privilege of attending in 2004

in art and music were not so prevalent as in the Middle ages although Christianity has inspired some of the greatest painting, sculpture, architecture, and music ever produced (Latourette 1953:988). The construction of Christian churches continued to call forth the genius of architects into wanting to be visually accessible referring to the mass in Roman Catholic churches and audibly clear with the Protestant prominence on preaching (Latourette 1953:989).

it, was stated in prophetic fashion that although there was a time that the church it seems had saved the arts, a time will arise in which the church will be saved by the arts.

However, what does this mean? Does it imply that arts will again be dominated by religious art in order to have this alleged saving ability? Can one even speak of Christian art?

3.5.4 The Christian art debate

3.5.4.1 Introduction and historical deliberation

Following the framework for a hermeneutical exegetical model contended for (forthcoming: from heading 3.5.5) one might argue that a work of art is Christian by drawing on one of the three aspects in consideration in exegesis; that is the writer (or eyewitness/ storyteller), secondly the reader, or thirdly the audience (direct or implicit). This suggests that art may be Christian if the artist is a Christian, when a Christian theme is presented or when the audience is situated in Christian beliefs. Yet, if any of these are given as primary reason for art being Christian, then I believe none of the three are. I say this since I promote the view of the individual whom is always situated in a community of some sort. The community alluded to above may not view art Christian based on theme or artist beliefs. If theme was to be a consideration I would rather propose we speak of *religious* art instead of Christian-art. It is however not as uncomplicated as I put it here. A linger a bit more on this theme in the following paragraphs.

Artists themselves have asked theme/topic questions of whether they should paint religious subjects (annunciations, nativities, crucifixions and saints' lives), or celebrate ordinary human life, without tackling these religious topics (Howard 1990:39). Howard (1990:39) suggests that Christian art from the early centuries up to the Renaissance tended to choose the first option.

However, medieval artists, far from ignoring ordinary life, brought the whole of everyday life into service. We find tiny farming scenes decorating the borders of devotional books and, in cathedrals and churches, wooden carvings of craftsmen at work. On the other hand, with the cultural and theological shift of emphasis in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, we find the artists busy celebrating plain domestic, community, and professional life. Northern artists such as Rembrandt, Vermeer, van Ruysdael, and Cuyp are prime examples.

(Howard 1990:39-40)

The discussion as to what signifies Christian art is surprisingly also related to architecture: Sefton asks and argues:

How do you know a church building when you see one? Is there a distinctively Christian architecture? Many would say that pointed windows and arches are signs of a church – and it is true that most existing churches, whether in York or New York, Lisbon or Lagos, have these features. However, a building with pointed windows and arches may well be a museum or guildhall. On the other hand many older churches have round arches and round windows, and many modern churches have flat roofs and square or oblong windows.

(Sefton 1990:44)

In this quote Sefton refers to the diversity of styles, followed by an acknowledgement of the styles, shapes, methods and materials used in church construction. Still it is noted that it would be wrong to deduce from this that there are no guiding principles in church architecture (Sefton 1990:44). In spite of diverse outward appearance, churches have the same basic purpose – to provide accommodation for Christian meeting and worship. Narrative principles, such as attention to local meaning, reverberates in this statement about the variety of forms of building: Variety has arisen, in the first instance from the

multiplicity of emphasis and beliefs among Christians, and the different periods in which the buildings were constructed (Sefton 1990:44).

Howard (1990:40-41) comments that when we consider the relationship of Christianity with literature – poetry, fiction, essays and drama – some of the same considerations arise. From Howard (1990:40-41) then the following remarks are notable: For the first few centuries of Christianity most Christian writing was in the form of theology. To an extent all writing was supposedly Christian. The writing of sermons⁹⁵ from the early centuries right on through to the Renaissance, owes much to Augustine of Hippo. Augustine is said to have rigorously subordinated considerations of style to the service of truth and moral instruction. Likewise in Poetry, it should be used to help us towards God. In addition “...western writers were hampered by an austere sense of the moral uses of poetry, and an almost paralysing worry about the laws of rhetoric” (Howard 1990:41). Despite this, Western writing did flourish, in prose, poetry, history, sermons and lyric, that is up to the thirteenth and the fourteenth century.⁹⁶ All writers, whatever their talent, were officially Christian during these centuries. Their works are said to be wrought with Christian assumptions, implicit or explicit (Howard 1990:40-41).⁹⁷

Christendom was so prevalent that although the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are often thought of as the period when the Western imagination broke free of Christian dogma and began to assert its autonomy, consciously non-Christian literature does not appear widely until well into the eighteenth century (Howard 1990:41). This is, to the contrary of what has been said in the above paragraph not to say that all of literature before that was religious in its concerns. In this regard mentioned, is Shakespeare, Rabelais, Cervantes and there is said to be hundred others whom were not writing Christian drama and fiction. How come is

⁹⁵ Mentioning such men as Isidore of Seville, Bede, Alcuin and Rabanus Maurus.

⁹⁶ See Howard (1990:40) for examples relating to the various fields.

⁹⁷ Chaucer's poetry is presented as an example.

the date for the appearance for our right non-Christian art set as late as in the eighteenth century? Howard (1990:41) emphasize that the Christian view of the universe was still generally accepted. This provided the moral backdrop against which these abovementioned authors wrote. However, since the Enlightenment people have attempted to begin afresh, and shape human communication and culture on the assumption that humankind is autonomous (Howard 1990:41).

3.5.4.2 A three-fold view on what might be called Christian art

Danie, whom is a renowned speaker on art mentions that what people sometimes refer to as Christian art does not necessarily need to portray a Christian theme. This is also true for any other art form, such as dance, drama, and so forth. I situate my understanding in a remark I have heard at the Cape Town conference (2004/08/24-26). I judge this to be a *Reformed Theological stance*. This stance is positioned in the concept of the mercy of God. God bestows upon us mercy in that he can use any art to serve his purposes in different circumstances (This relates to the third under mentioned contention; see relevant remarks under heading 3.2.4). God works in spite of our notions of faith or doctrine or beliefs. We do not have to have hallows, sing hymns or speak Hebrew for God to use whatever he wishes to transform in his glory. This has been proven to me from the stories of the co-participants in chapter three and throughout; stories in which God moves gracefully even if his ways are not obvious.

Informed by correspondence with Danie I position myself in saying that I doubt that there is indeed such a thing as Christian art: Can this word by which we call ourselves, that of being a *Christian*, in as far as Christianity signifies a *relationship* with someone, really be transferred to anything material and called Christian art? I therefore see the word *Christian* as signifying a relationship in the first instance and not as many (including myself) sometimes use it as a descriptive noun.

Moving from one side of the argumentative continuum closer to the middle: Couldn't anything that within the criteria of stemming from, finding its inspiration and expression from within this *relationship* with God be called Christian art. If this latter contention is argued then anything that flows from the brush of a person with a living relationship with God, no matter the theme of the painting might be called Christian.

Yet a third viewpoint lures me into declaring that every form of art, even art created outside the relationship with God, can be called Christian art as the possibility of its existence stems from the creator God that endow some, not only those with a relationship with God, with the ability to create (See under theological positioning, heading 1.3.1.2). In our discussions Danie referred to the Jewish artist Kentdrige. He shares that at an occasion Kentdrige projected images of various people on screens, portraying them as carrying some kind of burden. The artist had then asked a black South African to sing a familiar Christian song complimentary to the work. This artwork which had to him carried a very distinct Christian connotation with the burden of Christ would have been entirely lost to us he says if we had been uninterested in it due to the artist's religious beliefs that differ from Christianity.



The Three Men in the Fiery Furnace (Daniel 3)
Wall painting from the Priscilla Catacomb, Rome
3rd century approx.

In augmentation of this third way in which to consider whether art is Christian or not, White (1997:8) while in the process of compiling the artworks for his book *The Art of Faith* (depicting only religious themes) has useful insights with which I'm in accordance:

At times it has become apparent that an artist is using a picture to demonstrate his own skill or virtuosity. The

simplicity of the catacomb painting of the fiery furnace is a useful corrective here. It was not painted as a beautiful thing in its own right (art for art's sake), but to remind believers of God's mercy and power. Any human endeavour can become idolatrous in drawing attention away from the proper focus of our worship and affection. The visual arts are perhaps particularly susceptible to this temptation. On the other hand if the world is created by God and reflects his handiwork how can anything be ruled out as a potential vehicle for the expression of the divine? Nothing will be divine in its fullness, but everything may have something of the Eternal in it.

(White 1997:8)

3.5.5 Reception theory and a hermeneutical model

The question of; is there something as Christian art paves way into considering what professor Hagemann refers to as *reception theory*. In the Christian-art debate all kinds of considerations is at play: Who does the artwork? Does this person have a relationship with God? Did this person want to convey a Christian message? Is the theme specifically Christian? Does the artist want to evoke a certain responsive in terms of the audience; for example, giving praise to God? Our considerations has to do thus with artist, medium, audience and message. These questions also relate to reception theory.

Professor Hagemann reflects on reception theory as having had a tremendous influence in contemporary and modernistic linear understandings of the arts. I understand this as relating in part to the juxtapositioning of Classics and Romanticism in art (See in this regard Addendum O). Reception theory is presented by professor Hagemann in the following manner:

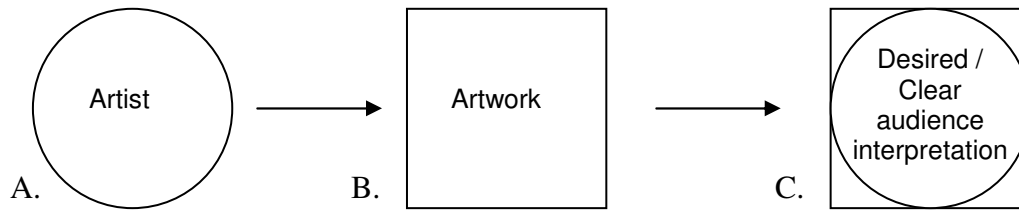


Figure 3-1 Reception model

The artist, A. wants to communicate something. S/he does so by creating artwork, B. that consequentially leads to the correct understanding, C. in the receptor audience. Professor Hagemann answers to this by saying that there are people (artists and viewers) that start to relate differently to art. Increasingly it is artists experience that as they start to work they feel that the work at some point starts taking on a life of it's own whereby the work itself guides the artist to some kind of ending. An audience cannot therefore anymore inquire as to the right interpretation since artists acknowledge that art speaks differently to different people.

In social constructionist fashion a conversation takes place between the artist (whether s/he intended some interpretation or not), the artwork and the viewers' complex world of socially constructed realities. When, it seems that viewers come to related interpreted conclusions, it might be that their lives are constituted and informed by related cultural scripts (such as language, race, political events, core narratives/ beliefs and so on). Over against this the radical postmodernist or construct-ivist will say that every individual interpretation is valid while the modernist might imply that we can only understand a work of art if we know what the intention of the artist and his understanding of it is.

It is the opinion of this research following Hagemann and other participants that meaning is an emergent collaborative act (whether conscious or incognisant), and not at once understood. Thus I propose that meaning is enriched by helping the participant, client-organisation and so forth to understand something of the

world of the artist, his/ her intentions, cultural realities, and technical aspects of whatever art form is appropriated.

It is not in the scope of this research to do an elaborate survey on the hermeneutical communication model. Yet, let me formulate significant remarks that do relate to the research.

This reception model relates in twofold manner to our discussion. Firstly there is some kind of *hermeneutical jump* that takes place in looking at the artist, medium, and possibly an intended message (or initial desire as to what the work may encompass, include, or exclude). Secondly narrative practise is very much a conversational practise whereby realities are constructed through language as noted in chapter one. This conversational primacy invites me to reflect on communication theory as advocated in a dialogical model of the worship experience since I view that the worship experience is in itself a form of art.

3.5.5.1 Hermeneutical journey

3.5.5.1.1 Rediscovering hermeneutics and epistemology

Hermeneutics has always been integral to Theological inquiry. There has been thought extensively about how the biblical scholar is able to at all relate ancient texts to contemporary life. Van Huesten (2005/08/01) directs attention to the rediscovery of epistemological concerns in the social sciences, theology, and philosophy. In this rediscovery, which is in part a consequence of a perceived move away from modernity hermeneutics, was rediscovered in the sciences.⁹⁸ Consequently, the scientist may acknowledge that any discovery is an interpreted discovery.

3.5.5.1.2 A fusion between hermeneutics and epistemology

⁹⁸ Note that an important source with regard to hermeneutics is the writings of Paul Ricoeur. In our study the empirical generated data is privileged and therefore we will hear from Ricoeur via professor Demasure's expertise on Ricoeur's ideas. Professor Demasure gave a lecture on Ricoeur (2005/09/27) in which the notion of action stood out to this study as of importance. For further reading in English see Ricoeur (1991), *From Text to Action*.

Van Huyssteen (2005/08/01) notes that he has learnt a great deal from contemporary philosophers about hermeneutics,⁹⁹ even those that have no concern with theological issues. The modernistic heritage divided hermeneutics and epistemology in distinct categories. In the reading of texts for instance hermeneutics was everything but in the sciences theories about knowledge and general epistemological concerns were the most important considerations. Philosophers now argue that they are really fused together, that they are like a coin with two sides; once you've made the hermeneutical move, it has epistemological implications and the other way around.

3.5.5.1.3 *Artistic/ interpretive exegesis*

I have at times in my theological studies considered that hermeneutics does not only apply to texts but also to art or people. Indeed Paul Ricoeur as explained by professor Demasure (2005/09/27) extends the hermeneutical arc to the concept of meaningful action. The notion of hermeneutic inquiry if it relates to texts only fills me with suspicion since it could be wrongly understood in thinking that we *can* find ourselves in a position to discover the truth of a text; thus, an epistemological concern.

What we are in effect talking about is the *art* of exegesis or hermeneutics. Hereby I draw on the acknowledgement in the arts communities that our judgements are always situated in an interpretive framework. Hermeneutics and exegesis cannot be separated from the interpretive enterprise. I find myself therefore aligned with Paul Ricoeur that speaks of a process of active interpretation when referring to mimesis 1.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ He mentions in this regard German philosopher Wolfgang Iser.

¹⁰⁰ The hermeneutical arc is explained in three stages called mimesis 1 to mimesis 3: This is the movement from prefiguration, to configuration to reconfiguration (Demasure 2005/09/27 on Paul Ricoeur). See also Addendum P.

3.5.5.1.4 Hermeneutics and exegesis as subjective focussed inquiry

Notwithstanding the role of interpretation, our inquiry should still be that of focussed inquiry (or otherwise called informed inquiry).¹⁰¹ The reader may remember that I spoke of research as focussed inquiry. It is thus not merely any question that amounts to research. The same principle applies to reading ancient texts. Deist and Burden (1980:1) speak of “bewuste inspanning,” in an attempt to be accountable to some form of focussed inquiry that translates to the process of exegesis. Still closer to our research; the reason for including these paragraphs on exegesis relates to what professor Hagemann referred to as a *skills* period in using the arts in narrative practise. Certain skills might well help us to focus our inquiries about things, texts, art etcetera. The assumption is that although meaning is not derived at through skill per se, skill offers a richer journey in *meaning making* than without it. The art of exegesis, of taking into account the various positions of the original speaker, the contemporary context, literary genres and so forth stimulates our thinking in the line of questioning we could embark on when experiencing the arts.

Works of art in the poetic genre (that is poems) is possibly one of the best examples: Often the poet build's into the poem metaphors, conscious choice for certain typography, alliteration, rhyme, and so forth may be noticed. While one reader is ignorant of these the other might be thoroughly aware of it. In conversation with each other they may arrive at an entirely new interpretation and consequent meaning to them both. In social constructionist fashion one could say that an unimaginable amount of people take part in this *meaning making* between the two poem readers: Our education, teachers, family, friends, culture, indeed society and discourses, distinct events in lives, beliefs, inherited values and on and on we can go. These certainly inform our choices and bring us back to epistemological considerations. The consequent derived at

¹⁰¹ The reader may have noticed that I use the concepts of hermeneutics and exegesis together. I don't view these as interchangeable but where the one is mentioned the other is implied. It seems in thinking about the arts they belong together. To me hermeneutics alludes to the movement by which we try to make sense of the world in broad terms. This will become apparent in its use. Exegesis signifies the actual form of focussed inquiry or considerations in the hermeneutical process..

interpretation is the result of focussed hermeneutical, but subjective inquiry. It is in this fusion of horizons that we derive some sense of meaning.

3.5.5.1.5 Exegetical considerations

Drawing on professor Hagemann's idea of a skills period; I contend that there are indeed many similarities between that which happens in the readers' inquiry to the text, as in exegesis, in relation to other inquiries such as considering what happens between a viewer and a painting, audience and stage, social pianist or listener and an orchestra, viewer and film etcetera.

The idea that I work with here is that hermeneutical considerations and exegetical inquiry also relate to asking about the meaning of a play, the intention of the artist and so on. Surely people does derive benefit from seeing a film, or going to an orchestral performance without considering intense exegetical questions. Yet in light of what professor Hagemann refers to as a skills period people could derive so much more from these experiences.

What I'm after is not a type of rational explanation through exegesis but the broadening of the interpretive horizons of the participant. In narrativity it will be the subjective interpretations derived at through informed inquiry that is valued.

There are at least two ways in which a person or audience relate to a text, art, or artistic performance (see also forthcoming: heading 4.6.3.3, Audience identification). Firstly this process of deriving significance from a text - read, artwork, or artistic performance – happens *incognisantly* (forthcoming: Higgins 2005, Over-hearing). This might relate to conventional psychological concepts such as projection.¹⁰² In drama therapy it relates to transference (also a form of projection) but within the preferred language of this research (informed by

¹⁰² Jordaan and Jordaan (1989:646) situate projection in defensive behaviour and also allude to defensive behaviour such as compensation, reaction formation, sublimation, and rationalization. These are explained on the basis of the differentiation between id, ego, and super-ego (1989:645) which results in ways of explanations, diagnosis and so on where I, as a narrative practitioner would not likely, or in the first instance dwell.

participants), what happens between reader and text is a matter of resonancy. Something (text, art, and etcetera) seems to speak to us by way of resonating with something in our lives. Secondly, we derive worth consciously through acts of interpretations. It is on this level that the narrative practitioner wishes to work. For this reason we consider the use of exegetical hermeneutical considerations.

Shortly this hermeneutical journey could be represented by the following views on: 1, the text 2, the world behind the text 3, the world in front of the text 4, critical self-reflection, 5 a spiral of understanding and 6, the current context.

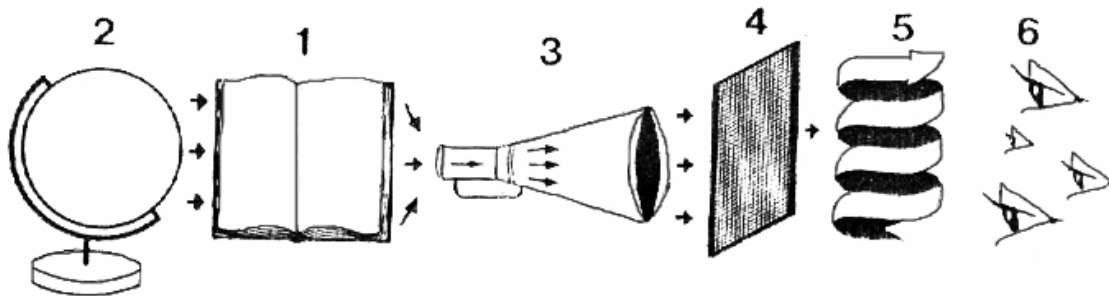


Figure 3-2 Hermeneutical/ Exegetical process (Smit 1987:47)

Take note that we are referring to a type of artistic exegesis in which the viewer or performer could either be a professional or a recreational artist. This implies that we could be viewers, or participants to the arts on which we do our subjective exegesis. Subsequently then find an exposition of the most important considerations in exegesis:

3.5.5.1.5.1 Text

Our first stop in the hermeneutical journey concerns the text itself. The notion of text should for our purposes be broadly understood inclusive of artistic texts: drama, dance, audio-visual media, and art.

With regard to a written text this entails acquiring the physical text; the original, correct, and complete text (Smit 1987:19). Likewise it would be of little artistic

value if we only have a small piece of painting or see half of a play. It might have happened to you as well that you go to watch a movie and to your dismay to screening stops due to a technical error. The refund that you might get does not make up for the sense of frustration. This frustration is possibly due to the fact that the story has already involved you in its world, introduced you to interesting characters and so on. So unless of course a play or film is designed to leave the audience with a hanging feeling or the painting commissioned with some defect the text should be whole. This is obviously not important when the worth of the arts is therapeutically situated in the process rather than the unity of the work.

Furthermore it may be that this text is in another language and a translator will be necessary to translate the text, in the first instance literally. Keep in mind that every translation is already an interpretation (Smit 1987:19). Going to see an opera might be a good experience in spite of the fact that it might be sung in Italian. However, if one wants to derive the most meaning from the opera as a story one should do justice to the experience and at least read the accompanying translation beforehand. The same applies to a movie with sub titles. Often the choice of language is not the result of the inability of the actors to speak the language of the audience; it's often there for a reason, to add to the feeling of the film and so on.

The next question is whether the original writer intended this specific understanding of the text (Smit 1987:21). This may be largely reliant on the aim of the writer in writing the document. In written texts, if the apostle Paul intended some outcome then surely the translation and interpretation of it seems important. In a facilitative or therapeutic environment the interpretation of the creator is of importance but her/ his intention will be a voice among those interpretations from where an individual or group derives meaning.

Apart from inquiring about the intended aim of the writer, we could also ask about the eyewitnesses the editors and original speakers since it may not necessarily

be the writer that had given the public address, teaching and so on. One would however prefer that in respect of arts a person be directly involved with the originator of the work. With regard to texts one might easily understand the original public address as being an artistic representation, which the reader does not have direct access to. However I judge the document in itself to also be art. These are all historical considerations. The first three inquire about the history of the text while the latter is about the actual events behind the text, or the history behind the text (Smit 1987:21).

In the contemporary journalistic endeavour the process of interpretation through editing till we arrive at the final text could look like this.

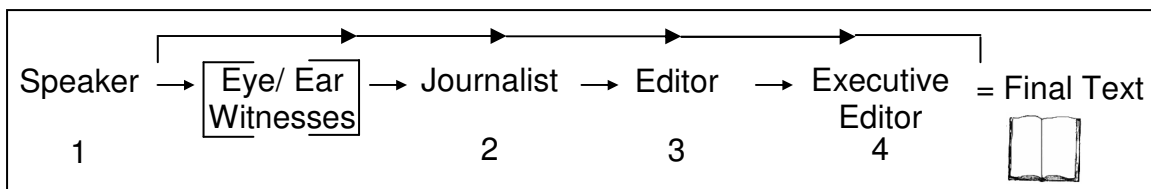


Figure 3-3 From interpretation to final text (adapted, Smit 1987:21).

Apart from looking at these historical considerations one would want to further inquire into where the text fits in the larger document it might be situated in. To illustrate this Smit (1987:22) refers to the contemporary press/ paper. The kind of literature that is printed on the Sunday paper cover page should be viewed in a differently to say comic strips, advertisements, and so forth. Here one might consider whether a painting is part of an exhibition that depict a theme, determining what the significance of a song in a contemporary musical is in relation to the story and so on. In this regard the historical questions along with who the original writer was is said to be less significant. One should rather inquire into the type of implicit rules that govern these texts or genres along with asking what they want us to do. The meaning of these texts is also less confusing when reading it within a certain genre. Accordingly the aim of these

texts does not lie in the correct use of words and sentences but in what the text want to convey. One needs to understand the total of the document/ text, its genre in order to understand its rhetoric, dramatic styles, and oratory manoeuvres. This also applies to the Shakespearian play (old English type drama) in relation to a Pantomime (humoristic and contemporary), in relation to classic Chinese theatre (richly symbolic) which does not make sense unless viewed within its context. Lastly there are also texts, such as most poems wherein neither the historical construction nor the historical events or situatedness nor who the author was or what his/ her intentions were seems important. I personally feel that these are important but I agree with Smit (1987:24) again alluding to the insignificance of these inquiries in light of the fact that contemporary readers might read a poem and still largely understand. He notes further that this understanding does not necessarily imply that everyone will understand in the same manner. In Afrikaans again nicely said: “Die teks begin as teks ‘n eie lewe van betekenis open” (Smit 1987:24). I find this to be true for most of the arts where the purpose is not explanatory, directed at teaching etcetera. It is probable that still arts: photography and fine arts such as sculpture and paintings fits this understanding best. The reason for this might be that the artwork’s currency is primarily a visual currency (Sweet 1999) and not reliant on verbal factors as in contemporary film or drama to get across a message. This relates with professor Hagemann’s idea that sometimes a work of art start taking on its own life and is almost guiding the artist to completion.

Succinctly, we need to consider three different types of questions with regard to the text itself:

i) Historical considerations

Is this the original, correct, and complete text?

Is it possible to get to know more about the actual events; to know about its birth, its growth, and its purpose?

ii) Grammatical considerations

What do the words, expressions and sentences mean?

iii) Literary considerations

What genre is this text?

What is the context?

What is the structure of the text?

Are there apparent desires or effects the text point to?

3.5.5.1.2.2 The world behind the text

Our next stop on the hermeneutical journey concedes that there is indeed a world behind a text; that the text (artwork etcetera) did not just fall from heaven as a finalised word of art.

Consequently one would further want to inquire about the world behind the text: when the speech was delivered (or text written), who the audience was and possibly get a richer description of the speaker or writer, asking about the social, cultural, economic and political environment, if possible also get to know the discourses of the time, getting to know cultural practices, values and so forth. (Smit 1987:28-29). From reading literature on community music therapy (Stige & Kenny 2002:24) I borrow the word *situatedness*. Accordingly a work of art is always situated, either directly or implicitly presented from its local, communal, or societal womb. Furthermore, drawing from the practise of theatre sports (in conversation with professor Hagemann) the arts is always situated in the three p's that a story/ drama cannot do without; people, a place (setting) and a predicament (things that had happened or have been influential).

3.5.5.1.5.3 The world in front of the text

Implied in this stop of the hermeneutical journey is asking questions about the story of the text as we have it: Thus, the context in which we receive it. Possible questions are: What is the route/ or traditions that this text has gone through up till this moment that I read it? What effect has this text had from the time of being

written? What is the history of the effects of the text? What traditions had input in its final state? The world in front of a text could be seen as a type of megaphone that amplifies certain aspects of the text informed by the story of the text. (Smit 1987:30-33)

These considerations are always at play when inquiring about the effects of the arts that had already happened. It results in the re-visiting of the story and the experience up to the current moment. In this re-telling the story told serves as an amplifier for certain events and effects.

3.5.5.1.5.4 Critical self reflection

This is about trying to see, acknowledge, and eventually question our own presuppositions about, why we choose certain methods over others, why we choose to be busy with this specific text, interrogate our natural associations with the text and what we see as supposedly universal or true. In this regard Smit (1987:36) states: “Om ‘n voor-verstaan te hê is nie verkeerd nie, dis onvermydelik!” As a matter of fact he goes further to assert that without presuppositions nobody would be able to understand or communicate anything. This self-critical reflection also relate to the understanding of the tradition through which the text is also ideologically filtered. (Smit 1987:34-37)

At this point in the hermeneutical journey we would consciously take in question our assumptions that relates to the arts. In as far as this is possible we need think about the way we think and feel. Why do I, or our community see dance in this or that light? How come contemporary is more appealing to me than traditional dances? What am I not seeing or understanding in abstract art that makes it meaningful to others?

3.5.5.1.5.5 A Spiral of understanding

This is where a true dialogical position should be embodied. True dialogue harvests the seeds of change: being able to hear, be comforted, inspired by, challenged and so forth. Smit (1987:40) says that one really only understands

when one no longer tries to exegete the text but when the text, so to speak starts exegete the person (“...jy nie langer die teks probeer uitlê nie, maar op die oomblik wanneer die teks begin om jou uit te lê”). It is due to this spiral of understanding that we can say that a text is never completed or done with (Smit 1987:38-41).

The greatest risk there is in the radical appropriation of objectivity with regard to texts is that according to Smit (1987:43) it becomes a monologue. In contrast what needs to happen is referred to as a hermeneutical circle “Voor-verstaan word in gesprek met ‘n teks nuwe verstaan, wat nou weer geld as nuwe voor-verstaan in ‘n nuwe gesprek, wat weer lei tot nuwe verstaan...” and so forth (Smit 1987:41).¹⁰³

The arts could be merely aesthetic and this should be enough validation for existing in the first place. However, meaning and purpose are possible treasures to all groups or individuals that truly enter into conversation with the arts. We hold the keys to the arts’ therapeutic use via our attitude of participation. In professor Hagemann’s language the arts effects change through movement. If we are not open to being moved, physically, emotionally, and intellectually we might miss the opportunity to be enriched by the arts.

3.5.5.1.5.6 Context

What is implied here is that there is a specific context on our side, as secondary audience to the text. This is however very tricky since it is very easy to make generalisations about ‘our’ context. This is where the narrative focus on the local experience helps us to be circumspect of statements that govern our realities. Thus the fallacy has been to offer thin descriptions of context negating the context of a specific time to a singular need: Accordingly; The biggest question for the first century Christendom related to immortality, or cosmic powers; The

¹⁰³ Referring to a continual process of understanding, then new understanding, then new new understanding. Every frame of understanding provides the basis for the next inquiry.

Medieval era was plagued by feelings of guilt; In the nineteenth century people exemplified above all a ungrounded optimism; The twentieth century goes hand in and with nihilism, and so forth. These kind of generalisations result in one-sidedness (Smit 1987:42).

Smit (1987:42-47) notes at least two common problems in this regard. Firstly it is very difficult to describe any context since above mentioned generalisations can be very misleading, offering an impoverished description of a context. A second important problem concerns the interaction between the text and the context. What exactly is the role of the context ('our' context) in relation to the text? In literary genres this is called affective fallacy that implies that all of the meaning of the text is locked up in the associations that the text brings to mind in the audience. While the appropriation of objectivity results in a monologue the same happens when every viewer derives benefit and meaning solely from a subjective point of view. This is also a monologue; maybe not so in relation to other viewers but in relation to the text or writer that might just wanted to take part in a discussion.

As viewers or participants in the arts we declare that we have a context even if it is difficult to realise exactly what this context is or what assumptions we could make of it. From a narrative point of view the art (read skill) does not lay in portraying our context correctly, as in objectively true, but the art lays in portraying it according to socially constructed perceptions or realities, according to truthfulness as apposed to truth.

Another useful introductory source for Biblical exegesis of Deist and Burden saw its first impression in 1980:

They remark about,

- i. Type of text,

- ii. Background information, alluding to implicit and explicit information as well as presupposed background information
- iii. Literary devices, genres and competency of the exegete
- iv. Context of the exegete, the listener and the original speaker

With regard to the context of the original speaker, the speaker's intended message, the motivation for this message, the primary audience to this message and a chosen method of sharing this message is important (Deist & Burden 1980).

3.5.5.1.5.7 A Creation informed conclusion to the exegetical pursuit

The notion of people as art reconnects with our theological positioning in chapter one: If God is the creator we are his creation and to a great extent thus his work or works of art. Ontologically speaking he is the artist the viewer and the participant. The miraculous artistic design of life infers an artist's touch. To a certain extent God is also the viewer in that theologically speaking the idea of free will 'dictates' that God will not be rude and control us like pawns on a chess board. The quality of being a viewer should thus be ascribed to the patience and grace that God has extended us. God is also the participant to the ongoing creation and rejuvenation of our lives but only in the sense of us being active participants in this relationship. This requires the realisation that God is also on the stage, in our environment; amongst the props of the set that we have chosen to surround ourselves with God are thus co-director, co-actor, and co-audience member.

For this reason, our argument in chapter could be extended by maintaining that it is because of these ways of relating to God that we are also creators that we relate to our and other people's art as creators, viewers, and participants. It is as creators, viewers, and participants that we embark on artistic interpretive exegesis.

In as much as we are living breathing works of art, from a narrative position hermeneutics is most definitely at play. Thus, we should not try to understand too quickly and remember that knowing does not imply reading the manual that God gave with every human model. Naturally, this has been stated satirically and is directed at the type of modernistic understandings of life. Such a manual does not exist. The closest we might get to this notion is to assert that we as humans are participating in creating chapters in this manual through our interactions. This act of writing a manual is transitory as if writing on the sand of the beach.

Applied to our hermeneutical journey it could be explained as follows: Our *text* or artwork is thus ourselves. The *world behind the text* refers to the people, places, and predicaments in the current moment, the spaces we inhabit in recent time. It is about the action, the arena, or stage on which we act. The *world in front of the text* is the story told of how we got here which involves above else people and their underlying significant cultural perceptions and discourses but also noticeable incidents. *Critical reflection* directs attention to interrogation of our interaction, of our awareness of who we are. It is omni-directional in nature and proceeds from us in respect of everything else. Inversely the 'everything else' exudes pressure on us to reflect on ways of thinking and feeling. It is only via the *spiral of understanding* that we can truly move from being motionless art (paintings, sculpture etcetera) to the performing arts (dance, drama, music) or moving art (audio-visual media). In being susceptible to the implications of critical reflection, engaging in discussions on our presuppositions (incognisantly or consciously) brings us to move, to change, to grow, to learn, all being related concepts in the context of this study.

3.5.5.2 Reception theory and a communication model

Drawing on the above notion of applied hermeneutics, having as vehicle the exegetical process I contend that communication is an effective part in this hermeneutical journey.

Vos and Pieterse (1997:13, 20) state that liturgy is being advocated as “kommunikatiewe handeling” (communicative act) in their book *Hoe Lieflik is U Woning* (translatable to *How wonderful your dwelling place*)... They claim that it is important to realise that interpersonal communication is only experienced as true dialogue (relating to our *spiral of understanding* concept), when conducted in the following manner:

Intermenslike kommunikasie as ware dialoog geskied in vryheid en op gelyke voet; deur die deel, die meedeel en die vertolking van idees en standpunte op ‘n heen-en-weer basis kan daar tot onderlinge begrip beweeg word; en dat alle deelnemers vry is om te ontrek en weer in te skakel in hierdie voortgaande dialoog met die oog op onderlinge begrip oor waardes en norm-formulering, die beslegting van onderlinge verskille en strydpunte, en die koers wat so ‘n gespreksgroep of gemeenskap moet inslaan.

(Vos & Pieterse 1997:20)

Naturally, from a narrative practise point of view these qualities of ‘true’ dialogue are also promoted; they were speaking on equal terms, speaking in freedom, reciprocally sharing and interpreting ideas, free exit, and entry to the conversation. This is also the type of dialogue that from a narrative point of view one would want to promote in respect of individual and group interaction with the arts. Furthermore, this is the type of attitude augmented by the EPIC acronym of Professor Sweet (1999:185-240) that fits postmodern culture best. Dialogue, as described above-mentioned relates to an *experience* of being heard, *participation* that secures collaborative *meaning making*, not so much applicable to being *image driven*, but again promotes *connectedness*.

Take into consideration that Vos and Pieterse (1997) do assert that the notion of dialogue is situated in a broader understanding wherein not all of the

congregants participate only explicitly at a given moment (such as song) but also implicitly and doing so simultaneously (Vos & Pieterse 1997:22). Those to whom there are being communicated are not only seen as receptors or carries of information but as equal partners that gives meaning to the message themselves by drawing on their various social contexts (Vos & Pieterse 1997:23). It is thus more than a dialogue in the strict sense of the word. This dialogue takes place on a societal, cultural and familial level but never an individual level since the individual is always informed by multiple voices (As explained in chapter one). In this broader understanding of dialogue, one finds a dialogue with regard to faith (“geloofskommunikasie”) taking place wherein there is understanding, salvation, conviction and so forth (Vos & Pieterse 1997:24-25).

However eloquently Vos and Pieterse (1997) describe such a dialogical approach in relation to the congregational environment and specifically a sermon, I doubt when listening to Professor Sweet that this model of Vos and Pieterse (1997) is fully adequate. The problem seems to be situated in the *medium* of communication that they elude to (pages 26, 27). Themes relating to this have been noted elsewhere when referring to Ewald van Rensburg (forthcoming: heading 4.10.2 and earlier heading 1.2.3.1). Thus, I will consequently only make these remarks:

From a narrative point of view (acknowledged so a narrative *therapeutic* or facilitative point of view), I am guarding against the delivery of a sermon which is often used as objective truth proclamation, done so in propositionalistic fashion without the minister/ or presenter really questioning his/ her own presuppositions. If room is then given to take part in a dialogue, it is all too easy done only to achieve the normalising effect that one finds in arts in connection with corporate work. Secondly, reformed scholars might know well that the intention of the liturgy has to do with the broader understanding of dialogue as for instance song and music; these then have a dialogical function on the part of congregational participation. One will however need to take into account that, if understanding

Professor Sweet correctly, dialogue for the most part of a postmodern culture even in church seems closer to the exchange of real dialogue. This does not imply that every sermon or worship service should be presented in-group work or bible study format. It just refers to a possible void, in approach. Who knows maybe even congregational attendance numbers if our attitude to worship is kept to the strictest Reformed tradition.

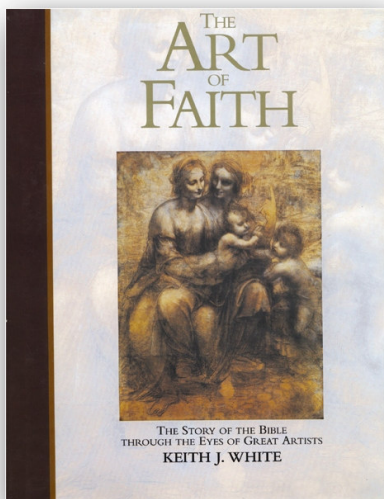
I propose here that such a potentially ailing predicament could change to some degree when a sermon is not seen as communication per se, whether this refer to direct dialogue or within a broader understanding thereof. This could happen if to the contrary we start seeing the worship service and sermon on a practical level as a subjective, humbly presented participatory works of art. In fact, the more the audience get to be part of the creation of the process or the sermon for that matter the better.

When the audience then reacts with the work of art, they do not do so in the first instance to the exegesis of a text, as historically interpreted information, which is often being proclaimed as the only truth. Rather, grace is extended to the audience; grace meaning giving the participatory audience *space* or *freedom* to come before the work of art with their complex social realities and truths; to enter a space in which transformation is more readily possible. In truth, the whole of the worship service becomes an experience of transformation, as it might have exactly been par excellence for attendees of the Reformed church after the Reformation and still to many people today.

What this is in effect saying could be summed up partly with Clinton Rossiter, American Historian (Cited in Bridges 1997:32, referenced to me by a research participant): “Conservatism is the worship of dead revolutions.” The question then, are we trying to trade through the currency of Dollars in an increasing Rand global village?

3.5.6 The Art of faith

A specific book is being considered, that of White (1997), called *The Art of Faith*. This book is to all intents and purposes a representation of the story of the Bible through the eyes of great artists. It has been said that art does not need to portray biblical themes in order to be regarded as Christian art. Still, this book consists in its entirety of biblical themes represented through the arts. In similar fashion, organisations could commission artworks that reveal something about the story of the organisation according to a theme victory, courage, and so forth. Art could contribute to the story and not be treated as tools in the hands of facilitators, therapists and so forth in this way. The movements of The Writers Journey could just as well be taken as a point of reference for this.



In the church environment, the church year is a good example of how one may use arts in the broader narrative of the church and not as a tool. We have often felt in the CAM community that we are commemorating our faith through the arts as it is used to flesh out the various experiences in the church-year. In conversation with Danie we also considered the contribution that the arts could make to the church-year.¹⁰⁴ Danie says that the church-year is really the only reciprocal theme that unites a variety of denominations. These festivals held throughout the year commemorate the life of Christ and are indeed a great opportunity for the arts to contribute to the transformative story of Christ as it is celebrated or revered by thousands of churches. On occasion, the CAM community discussed how this special arena for the contribution of the arts could lose its entire meaning if ministers do not support or advocate this idea of a

¹⁰⁴ The church-year is commemorative of events such as Easter, Whitsuntide (Pentecost), Lent, Christmas and Epiphany.

church-year. How sad it is when the arts manages to magnify these Christian experiences exceedingly but it passes almost unnoticed either due to trying to depict too many themes or getting too little exposure. It is vital in considering the worth of the arts in this regard that leadership and ministers embody this idea of a church year by collaborating with the arts by means of sermons, approving financial resources, allowing church bulletin space, and so forth.

Returning to the book in consideration I believe reflection on this book is important, as it has been given to me for perusal by one of my colleagues. This study wishing to reflect something of the local church on some level is receptive to input concerning our research theme. It is furthermore a good example of taking a broader unifying theme in the Christian faith and portraying artistically. One might even make large representations of the forty paintings and in a specific worship service (evening or otherwise) use it as a connecting theme. Children in Sunday school may use this theme and produce pictures. It presents us with an over arching theme and metaphor of God being the big painter of millions of works of art or then even millions of images of God (Van Huyssteen lecture following an embodied notion of the imago Dei).

It is White's (1997:7) wish that his book might stir in the direction of enabling transformative encounters through the stories and events in the Bible, depicted through the eyes of artists. The forty pictures have been chosen and arranged in narrative order conforming to their source references in Scripture. "These works have been selected from many thousands of pictures; some because they are universally acknowledged as masterpieces, others to provide contrasting approaches and styles" (White 1997:7). These works include canvasses, frescoes, altarpieces, murals, and frescoes, a book illustration, a tapestry, and woodcuts, of very different sizes and designed for completely different settings and purposes. It is said that the variety helps to demonstrate the many ways in which art has been used to illuminate and portray the Bible stories (White 1997:7)

It seems probable that most people would be able to allow themselves to be drawn fully into the world of the artist: The author explains throughout, helping us to understand technical aspects of fine art. References to this *understanding of* have especially been made by Danie and professor Hagemann's notion of a skills period.¹⁰⁵ The author, White (1997:7) suggests that maximum benefit will derive from looking at the book together with someone else. One person might read the reflection while the other keeps focusing on the art he says. The intention of the book it is said, seeks to recreate the sort of encounter and conversation one might find by reflecting on it together. "The commentary is not intended to be authoritative or didactic, but to provide a starting-point for conversation" (White 1997:7).

White (1997:8) declares that we might not find any great insights into technique or art history. However and herein lies the true worth of this literary voice new relationships and themes may emerge from the juxtaposition of these particular pictures (White 1997:8).

The author himself declares that some of the works of art have spoken so profoundly to him that his own personal pilgrimage of faith has been both challenged and enriched. Hence, it is no surprise that images have had such a significant effect on the development of the Christian faith (White 1997:9). White (1997:9) noticed in selecting the images that artists might at times have taken the biblical background for granted but to the contrary, words without such images can be very blunt and inappropriate instruments (White 1997:9).

The next illustration will give the reader a feel for the layout and worth of the book:

¹⁰⁵ One of the first quotations in this PhD study reflected something of the value for the viewer in experiencing a work of art within its context: "The expressive power of an artwork is more keenly felt and understood when its formal characteristics are seen within the context of the setting in which the object was produced" (Tucker 2002:59).


<p>Artwork title</p> <p>Artist/ Time</p> <p>Artwork specifications</p> <p>Place of exhibition</p> <p>Artist/ic background</p> <p>Biblical background</p> <p>Opposite page reserved for photograph of painting</p> <p>Reflection on painting</p>	<p>Christ before the High Priest</p> <p>Gerrit (Gerhard) van Honthorst 1590-1656 c.1617, 272 x 183 cm. National Gallery, London</p> <p>Artistic Background Honthorst was a Dutch artist who was very popular in the courts of Europe. Although his works were seen representational and unexceptional to modern eyes, in their own time they were revolutionary. Following Caravaggio, he painted directly from models and observation. Like Caravaggio he also used artificial lighting to heighten the dramatic effect of his work. In fact, due to his use of light and dark he was nicknamed 'Chiaroscuro della Notte' (Gerhard of the night). The canvas is lit from the left and this is vital in understanding the powerful effect the picture has on the viewer. The medium is oil.</p> <p>Biblical Background (See Matthew 26:57-68) Jesus had been arrested in Gethsemane at night. His popularity with the crowds meant it was not politically expedient during the day time. The religious leaders were determined to have him put to death. To this end a 'trial' was hastily arranged during the night before Caiaphas the high priest. No reliable evidence or witnesses were forthcoming and so two false witnesses were produced. They misinterpreted Jesus' 'musing about his own death and resurrection (John 2:19) and claimed he was talking about literally destroying and rebuilding the temple. Caiaphas sought a response and stands up in his frustration. When Jesus remained silent he demanded: "Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." "Yes, it is as you say," replied Jesus. This was enough for those present to conclude that Jesus was worthy of death. (Later they persecuted the crowd and threw stones toward the crucifixion of Jesus, the Christ.)</p> <p>Reflecting on the Painting Honthorst has chosen the most dramatic and pivotal moment in the trial, Caiaphas is</p>	<p>demanding, under oath, that Jesus declares whether or not he is the Messiah, the Son of God. Behind him are the two shabby-looking witnesses. Behind Jesus are those who have arrested him, armed with weapons. But the candle at the centre of the picture draws attention to the two main figures and the contrast between them could not be greater. Caiaphas is dressed in a rich gown, Jesus is wearing a simple torn smock; Caiaphas is seated, Jesus must stand; the finger of Caiaphas is free to point, Jesus' hands are bound. Caiaphas rests on a table and chair, Jesus has no support; Caiaphas has the backing of witnesses, Jesus has only captors behind him; Caiaphas has an open book of the Law for reference and authority, Jesus is his own authority.</p> <p>And yet as the viewer's eyes move from the face of Caiaphas to the finger, then to the face of Jesus, to the candle, and back, a deeper contrast emerges. It is Caiaphas who is seated, Jesus who is propped and composed; the hands of Caiaphas are anxious, the bound hands of Jesus are completely relaxed. And it isn't long before the robes are reversed: Jesus is the one who is asking the real question. He is looking into the heart of Caiaphas revealing his motives, like a searchlight cutting into the darkness. In his humanity the Light of the World is revealed. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. The hypocrisy and duplicity of the prosecution blind them to the truth, but there is a hint that one of the soldiers might be beginning to understand who Jesus really is. By the tilt of his head and his expression it looks as if he, at least, is honest and open to the truth.</p> <p>To be the truth is a by chance; it points towards Jesus, the Word became flesh! Is it there for a writers confusion? The barrenness of words and the Law, if so, are contrasted with the living Word. Perhaps Honthorst has left this for the viewer to decide.</p>	
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Figure 3-4 the art of faith (White 1997).

Of all the arts, Rookmaaker avows that Protestantism found its supreme expression in painting (Rookmaaker 1990:430). It was around 1600 in Haarlem that a new art emerged rather different from the baroque of southern Europe. The Dutch painters were mainly based in Haarlem, Amsterdam, Delft, and Dordrecht. Calvinist refugees from the southern Netherlands settled in Holland in the late sixteenth century. It was here that after a while a new art emerged, with biblical and Calvinist roots. Many churches were built in this tradition, for example by Hendrick de Keyser in Amsterdam, and many older churches were given new furnishings. In answer to this, in Germany the Protestant spirit expressed itself mainly in music (Rookmaaker 1990:430).

The Dutch painters concentrated on depicting the reality in a variety of ways; in the house, the fields, the tavern, landscapes, seascapes, and still lives. Historical and biblical scenes were quite rare. Amongst the most noticeable artists, we find Rembrandt whom was the exception in painting many biblical subjects. (Rookmaaker 1990:430)

Amongst biblical/ faith inspired paintings a deep love for reality was expressed. However, it was not a mere naturalism.

Through their use of 'emblems' and other kinds of visual metaphors, through their carefully constructed compositions, and through their choice of subject they were 'preaching' in their art. They were pointing morals: the vanity of everything; redemption with its full cosmic and human implications; the positive and negative sides to life, and the beauties of the created world. Their art was imbued with the wisdom of the Bible and of commonsense.

(Rookmaaker 1990:431)

In contrast to art that were informed by Protestantism and Reformed theology the Baroque art is recognized as the art of the Counter Reformation expressing the aims and serving the goals of the Catholic renewal (Rookmaaker 1990:431). The baroque church had to overwhelm the visitor, designed to impress him with its display of riches and power, convincing him of the value, importance, and truth of the doctrines upheld (Rookmaaker 1990:431).

Realigning with our consideration for themes Rookmaaker (1990:431) asserts that a great deal of consideration was presented for the means of salvation as dramatic representations. This includes the Madonna, the saints and revered relics, the mass and the host:

Baroque churches displayed many images. Some showed Christ the Redeemer. His suffering on the cross was often directly linked with the host on the altar. Other images stressed the Trinity. However, above all, the images exalted the Virgin, as the Madonna, as Queen of heaven, as the Immaculate Conception, assumed up into heaven. Other images portrayed the mystic fervour of the saints, whose piety and asceticism

provided examples for the faithful. The great events of the Bible and of church history were celebrated. Finally, allegorical figures and scenes in more general terms spoke of theological truth or more directly of human and natural reality and values....

(Rookmaaker 1990:431)

It is said that Baroque art built on the style of the Renaissance, but added the effects of light and darkness (Rookmaaker 1990:431). It can be called a *naturalism of the supernatural* in that it stressed that we live in an open world, where communication is possible between earth and heaven, with the Virgin and saints interceding (Rookmaaker 1990:431).

It is interesting that Rookmaaker (1990:431) dubs one of his titles the *death of an era*. He does not explicitly state why but it would be safe to assume it is due to two reasons. The first would be based on the content. He speaks of how it seems baroque art had a more or less abrupt or decisive end which consequently suppose the death of a certain style or artistic expression. Secondly, quite literally the theme of death was very prevalent in this art. In this regard, he writes that a visitor to baroque churches will often find the dead body of a saint, exposed on or under the altar and that death seems to be at the centre of concern in baroque style informed churches (Rookmaaker 1990:431). In these churches, the Counter Reformation, with its exalted piety and worship, found its ultimate expression (Rookmaaker 1990:431).

Not knowing about the type of context or theology that informs Rookmaaker's (1990) remarks, I still share his opinion found in the following excerpt:

These shrines are often too much geared towards a superstition in which the saints and their relics play a magical and protective role. The system – the rich and powerful church – rather than Christ is at the centre. Sometimes there is a feeling of light and of beauty – but at the same time

a sense of superficiality. The inner spirit disappeared from this eighteenth-century baroque art, leaving behind a more worldly emphasis. The beautiful forms were becoming a façade. This may explain the sudden end of this art. Around 1780, just when the best works were completed, the tradition stopped. Nothing more was attempted in this style. Neo-classicism, with its 'rationality' and almost very secular expression, took over. The age of reason and the Enlightenment had won the battle. Soon the revolutionary wars would bring about the suppression of the monasteries and closing of the monasteries and closing of the churches. The Roman Catholic Church would lose its power.

(Rookmaaker 1990:434)

3.5.6.1 Art versus Pictures from the Unconscious

I would now like to direct the reader's attention to the rather interesting comparison from Furth (1988:12) between arts versus pictures.¹⁰⁶ I do so, so that the reader might experience something of the underlying worldview that informs a great deal of arts approaches to therapy.¹⁰⁷ These approaches are often the result of enmeshing the arts with the popular psychology of the time, which to us has lead to many Jungian informed practices. Narrative practitioners are severely circumspect of these ideas since it could often be situated at the other side of the continuum from narrative practise where it relates to epistemology, objectivity, truth, valid interpretations and so on.

Following Furth (1988:12) then one should indeed differentiate between pictures from the unconscious and art as produced by the world's great artists. They are however similar in that both creations, derives content from similar layers of the

¹⁰⁶ In our consideration of what paintings are (aesthetic or otherwise as opposed to unconscious expression) Wentzel reminds us that we should not look at rock the paintings of Spain and France in terms of western art. Rather think of this contextually as prehistoric image. Our categories of western, male, female have been tacked. Firstly, it's not western art, it's not art and simply not the first of the kind (more like half way mark). Prehistoric imagery is important for our understanding of what it means to be human.

¹⁰⁷ Chodorow (1991) provides an historical overview of Jung's basic concepts, as well as most recent depth psychological synthesis of affect theory; the prior mentioned having had a significant influence in the use of the arts in psychotherapy.

unconscious. “Pictures from the unconscious represent primitive, raw material taken directly from the unconscious, undeveloped, yet filled with the unconscious content closely connected to the individual’s complexes” (Furth 1988:12). Some of these pictures may rightfully be great masterpieces. However, artists creating their works of art use their creative power in conscious fashion and unconsciously (Furth 1988:12).

I agree though that for the artist, the masterpiece is the culmination of conscious and unconscious development – unconscious in our study meaning things that had affected the artist’s life that he does not necessarily ponder over regularly. This is not to say that s/he won’t remember if interviewed about them. The artist’s skill is acquired through years of observation and study of artistic technique, in addition to personal experience that may or may not be consciously remembered... Furth, (1988:12) then extends the sentence to include in the artist’s influences the “...innate psychology of the artist himself, and of course including his connection to the collective unconscious.” Thus, the masterpiece is said to be speaking not only for the ‘individual psyche,’ but also, in unconscious ways, for the ‘collective psyche.’

Furth’s (1988:12) deterministic approach can be seen in the formulation of the concept of inner necessity: “Both the artist and the patient drawing pictures from the unconscious may be prompted by inner necessity. What would Michelangelo, Picasso, or Dali have done had they been forbidden to paint? Perhaps society would have had to institutionalize them.” I’m in accordance with Furth (1988:12) that it *seems* that most artists feel compelled to paint, or rather that they seem incapable *not* to create in normal situations. However, I do not agree again, when Furth (1988:12) extends this *opinion* of ours to *all* individuals. Ironically, he then states that *few* (which are contradictory to the notion of *all*) can

refrain from doodling in meetings, during long telephone conversations, and so on (Furth 1988:12).¹⁰⁸

Underlying these assumptions is the notion that productions of a kind are always representative of the individual's psychology and that one can deduct from the productions arising from the unconscious material useful for analysis and diagnosis. Furth seems to approach this issue from a slightly different angle:

When pictures emerge from the unconscious, they bear a tremendous amount of psychic information. Through the picture, we can follow the journey of the psyche and where it is now of the picture's inception. The idea is not to decipher with accuracy what is within the picture – in order to predict the person's future – as much as it is to ask concise questions as to what the picture may be communicating. This communication lays bare the unconscious and its energy. If we want to follow the unconscious, we need to consider its suggestions and enlightenments, and so bring the individual into a greater state of consciousness.

(Furth 1988:13)

A gross distinction is made between the elements of a drawing/ painting – aesthetics, technique and that of feeling tone – and that in relation to an artist versus a 'non-artist' (Furth 1988:12): It is said that the artists are interested in aesthetics, technique as well as a drawing or painting's feeling tone with which I concur. In pictures from the unconscious all considerations *but* that of feeling tone are *irrelevant*. The reason for this he says is that the value of the pictures is in the psychic expression itself. Although I cannot say that this is, entirely untrue I would just wonder about the respect and integrity of the artist if he or she were to attend a therapeutic endeavour of such nature. According to the voice of this

¹⁰⁸ I believe that I am further sensitized (apart from narrative informed ideas), to generalisations due to Edward de Bono's book (2004) *A Beautiful Mind*, referred to me by a research participant.

study, an immense amount of wealth would be missed if a collaborative *meaning making* experience were to pass the moment.

There are however times when a therapeutic participant cannot take part in the art itself. I cannot imagine that Michael Angelo, Rembrandt and others would have allowed a friend to paint part of an artwork for them. For Furth (1988) however, his concern is not the artistic quality of the professionally painted painting but the mere drawing, spontaneous and impromptu that matters (Furth 1988: xix). The worth of the professional artist is in the therapeutic context negated to the supposed manifestation of the unconscious. This seems to be in direct opposition to the multifaceted artistic exegetical process described above.

The difference in a professionally painted work versus an impromptu drawing resembles the difference between a professional sculpture and clay work made by people organisational facilitation. Both have its therapeutic uses and to realign myself with my theological foundation I now in this regard refer to Dutch Reformed minister but also local professional artist Nic Grobler.

3.5.7 Tribute to Nic Grobler - Sculpture

I find it amusing to think what psychoanalysts might see in sculptures, in the way that it is made, what this might say of a person. I say this intentionally because in sculpture we find spatial concern, a three dimensionality instead of a drawing



Nic Grobler
*Hand met die spyker: Dit het ek vir
jou gedoen; Wat doen jy vir My?*

that only has the dimensions of height and width. How far would psychoanalysis's go; would they indeed use architecture as well to deduct something of unconscious needs and desires? Three-dimensionality is to me a good metaphor for people's lives. We derive depth from people's lives in the multiplicity of narratives that could be told over against a two dimensional cause and effect relationship.

Marguerite, graphic designer and CAM community member, and I visited Nic Grobler at his residence (about 2004/08/22). Elsewhere (preceding: heading 3.2.6) I have alluded to the congregational educational task in respect of the arts. For this reason, we invited Nic Grobler to give a sermon on the arts and his involvement therein.



Nic Grobler
*Hand met die spyker: Dit het ek vir
jou gedoen; Wat doen jy vir My?*

Sadly, Nic Grobler could not be part of this research in an ongoing manner. However, he has told me about incidents where his sculptures has had significant therapeutic benefit to individuals. In this regard, he refers to the *hand of the cross* sculpture saying that it has had a powerful impact of many people's lives. These are just some of the sculptures

that he presented that night, and I regret having to say that I could not engage in thorough discussion with the artist about his works. I also regret being able to provide all the titles. The rationale for including the work anyway (even without titles) is that it has to do with providing an example of the kind of exposure that a minister or ministry leader in the arts should provide for the congregation. Our educational task is not only one of preaching but one that engages the senses



Nic Grobler

and requires story telling; this means that effort was made by the artist and myself to move the artworks to the church for exhibition and secondly it entails that Nic Grobler shared his journey not share artistic concepts or theories as such.

These are photographs that I took prior to the worship service and screened on the data projector.

Note that I left the dates on most of the photographs to impart a sense of situatedness in real life (Some dates I have indeed edited, out as with the above work, for aesthetic purposes). Note that these photographs almost constitute a new work of art in that given the three dimensional nature of the art I had to make a choice for angle, spatial feeling etcetera. I naturally framed what had appealed to me, but I also several photos of most works (More examples are presented in Addendum Q). I think that this choice for framing certain angles is a good metaphor to explain to people (in a narrative context) that we are re-framing events, also looking from different angles in their lives.



Nic Grobler
Vertroue: Die Here is my toevlug

We now turn to non-professional artists to learn from their knowledge and skills on how the arts could function in narrative therapy/ practise. We will follow up on numerous conversations that I had with individuals as co-researchers. These conversations have been subjected to transparency practises informed by narrative research and have been presented to participants for perusal and approval.

3.6 On Bianca's interaction with the arts

3.6.1 Practical exposition of Vogler's model in Bianca's involvement

The following presentation of Bianca's story will be told with the aid of Vogler's (1999) story movements and characters. In *The Writers Journey*, Christopher Vogler (1999:xiii) suggests that one will find elements of the following story movements and characters in most stories across all cultures but expresses the concern that these story movements should not be used as a formula. Consequently, I will be led by Bianca's own temporal sequencing which is embodied in the characters and movements that Vogler (1999) suggests.

Note the reason I use this model: The idea about the use of story theory, in this case Vogler's (1999) model was instigated by conversations with professor Hagemann. It has helped me in thinking about participants' stories in terms of sequence, characters, events, and so forth. Whether this was helpful to Bianca, was for her to decide.

3.6.2 A Story of survival – call to life by Bianca & Elmo

3.6.2.1 Act 1: Meeting the mentor

I have noted earlier that someone approached me after the sermon about Problem in an adjacent church. This young lady is part of my Creative Arts ministry back at our church. This whole idea of Problem, hearing him speak so strongly resonated with past experiences that she felt she just couldn't keep this resemblance in emotion to herself. I wholeheartedly welcomed her on the research team, discussed her involvement and we scheduled weekly meetings for the future.

The difference between me and Bianca's interaction and that of Christo is that Bianca allowed me to come into the inside circle of trust by sharing a journey already begun with me. The resemblance to Christo's story lies in the experience of what Problem does how he/she/it operates and has done so

previously. Problem had Bianca also in front of the open and closed door at the end of last year. Problem in the mask of Suicide up to now could not beat Bianca although she admits that there were times that she felt she couldn't go on. For her the idea of *baggage*, the allies to Problem is also true. She has a time honouring relationship with Depression in which Diabetes plays a prominent role. She thinks that that which is in the *baggage bag* is like the faces of Problem ("gesigte van die probleem").

To her the audio presentation was the magic potion that *mentor* figures in folk tales often give to their *heroines* on the journey. This had caused her to see Problem clearly for the first time, and for who he really is. In subsequent conversations, we talked about the notion of externalisation. Bianca referred to externalisation as a clay; as the clay takes shape so the face of Problem takes shape with the arts (like the audio production Media 5.6.1 *Voice of Problem*)

Seeing (hearing) Problem like this, being exposed was to her a sparkling event since it now became possible to talk about Problem, understanding the tactics and strategies that Problem has hidden from her for so long. Problem's power was situated its obscurity playing the make belief he does not exist game. Bianca says that the voice of Problem was a significant moment in her journey, she says, "Dit het my gehelp om finaal deur die barrier te breek." She says that it has caused her to snap out of the *mode* of which we hear later on. I have asked her what the benefit of this audio presentation of the voice of Problem is, she wrote in part of a letter about the unmasking of Problem (personified) as the benefit of such an audio disc. The following translated account of Bianca's comments may not do justice to her expressions but I recount for it in Afrikaans also (See Addendum K).

While attending your sermon on Sunday evening I had an exceptional experience. Like many others, I also have problems. It actually felt as if Problem was talking to me. The sound clip you played, the voice and

music in the background made the experience real. Even only, the fact that I could literally hear the voice of Problem made me realise what Problem has done in my life. I have a little depression and need to fight against it everyday. Whenever I would have one of those days again; wherein everything gets too much, when I'm tired of fighting, then I would listen to Problem's voice on the audio disc and the day will be a little easier.

I think that hearing the voice of Problem will also help other people to realise that Problem exist; that it is not them that think certain things. You see Problem is very sly but Problem forgets that there are ways in which s/he [it] can be unmasked. The *Voice of Problem* is one such way. Problem will come second, no wait, last!

(E-mail received 2004/04/08)

The moment that I started journeying with Bianca on this might be called her Ordeal with Problem. In Vogler language this audio disc was to her the *seizing of the sword* that she judge will help her outmanoeuvre Problem which then would pose the *elixir*; the continual knowledge of her own abilities and strengths.

3.6.2.2 Act 2: Threshold to life

Vogler (1999) suggests that prior to the *Ordeal* a second threshold can be found running parallel to the *Approach to the Inmost cave*. The *Ordeal* takes place in the *inmost cave*. The onset to this ongoing fierce battle literally between life and death was to Bianca this Threshold to life and it seems only fair to have her tell the story in person:

Since I can remember I have had times wherein I felt that this is it, I've had enough. At one time, I had for three months considered suicide. When standing up in the morning felt that life was just not worthwhile. I just did not want to anymore, I was tired of everything and everybody.

I describe this feeling as going in to some kind of *mode*. In this mode everything happens in slow motion and get become sensitive to sounds and things I hear. Objects and surrounds become so sharp. I am aware of everything and yet everything is out of reach. In this mode, I cover myself with a blanket of: “You just don’t have the drive to carry on living” and “Nobody likes you” and “You’re worth nothing” and “Your life sucks” and “You’re not good enough”; so the blanket gets thicker. Unconsciously I make more plans everyday as to how I am going to do *it*. I call this specific day *Milkshake day*. On this day, I would overdose with pills in milkshake.

I can tell of many things that I have already tried and considered some more stupid than other. I have never told my parents though, I suffered in silence. I would shiver tremendously. The feeling that runs through your body is inexplicable. I am emotionless while tears run down my cheeks. Some have told me to phone them when I suffer but the feeling is incapacitating that I’m not able to pick up the phone. My soul was busy dying and then all of a sudden comes the thought that saves my life: “What about Cathy my younger sister?” She probably does not know this but she is my little life saver, every time!

One morning my reason for living failed me and then I lost it completely. I sat on my bed crying and shivering for an extended period. The one reason that that hinders me from doing what I wanted to all along has turned against me. What to do now? I sat there for I don’t know how long. I realized that if something does not stop me then it is through with me. It was a warm sunny day, my windows was open wide so that a cool breeze came through my room. My mom walks around in the garden. The grass cooled down from the watering, the pipes of the swimming pool that run past my room. I then laid flat on my bed as tears still rolled down my

cheeks and I hear every leaf as the wind rushes through the palm tree. I looked at the sharp edge of the cabinet alongside my bed while having heard the little voice that reminds that I am nothing. I drifted away to somewhere I don't know; far away from anything right, anything normal.

Still somewhere in my head, I could hear another voice faintly. I call him Hope. I could hear him scream something, but what exactly I do not know. "Speak louder, I can't hear you Hope. Hope help me, I don't want to die." The next moment I heard Hope loud and clear. I can still remember just how loud it was; louder than any other did voice. He is saying: "Sleeping bag, camera, pillow, grass!" I jumped up still in the *mode* grabbed these items and went to lie down on the green grass. There I took pictures of everything that could possibly be worth living for: the grass, our beautiful colourful flowers, our three dogs, my sister, and our swimming pool.

After that day, I spoke more readily to people about Problem. Problem did not like this very much but he knows until today that I will be the boss of him. I still do get days in which I feel down but I also find some reason to keep on fighting.

(Bianca 2004-07-27)

3.6.2.3 Act 3: Return with the Elixir

What impressed me most in my conversations with Bianca is her ability and commitment to share her testimony. She is determined to help other people with their struggles in life. This led us on a journey, an exploration of people's emotional landscape that might bring about the consideration of committing suicide. The possibility of attempting suicide is according Bianca a common idea for a lot of teens.

I was curious about what might cause teens to take the further step beyond depression to commit suicide and what could make it better. She replied by raising the questions and inner feelings that others might not speak for some reason: “Ek is die enigste een wat sukkel. Kan niemand dit sien nie? Kan niemand my help nie?” (Translated to: Am I the only one that suffers? Can no one see this? Can no one help me?) On the other side, she says that someone understanding and listening would indeed help. She referred to different types of thinking, maybe even different types of people concerning suicide. Part of the *elixir* is that her life story enables her to notice people that suffer thereby being in a position to listen and understand. She says that people need to be more observant of people’s cries for help.

Bianca’s sister is very dear to her and in a lot of instances a motivation for living. When it seem that injustice in the family may be at the order of the day, they will take refuge in each other. Their relationship offers the incentive for survival. It is Bianca’s wish that little sis will learn from her mistakes. It means a lot to Bianca to feel worthy in her sisters eyes to be looking up to.

The things dear to Bianca is that which keeps her going, especially her friends. Having to face the previous year not doing tertiary education was an ally to Depression for this to some extent would imply loosing her friends. That year took on the form of the *Ordeal*. In this battle, she discovered that she indeed still has friends who care for her very much signifying her *Reward*, allies to her journey.

3.6.3 Images of hope

You’re down in the dumps; your life seems not to be going the way you want it to. You’ve considered giving in to suicide on so many occasions. Recently...you’ve all ready worked out everything. A milkshake with an overdose of diluted pills will do just fine you think. Outside your room, life goes on; mom’s working in the garden, ‘sis’ is around and it’s a sunny day. However, where you sit on your bed

it's dark and lonely, and you're afraid, afraid and committed; committed to the almost unspeakable.

By the grace of God, a shaft of life sparks up through your spirit. You grab the digital camera and join the rest of the world outside. You start taking pictures, as many as you can. You take pictures of everything and everybody, mom, the dogs, the grass and then of course...sis, dear sis!

These are the pictures of the things worth living for. Then for now, you live!¹⁰⁹

Bianca then loaded the photographs onto her computer, which she has kept as a reminder of 'the things worth living for'. These images and even after they have been deleted, the memory of the event serves as a testimony to that which is important to Bianca.

The modern technology of digital photography has made the idea of capturing images greatly accessible. Not only is it cheap, it's popular. Everybody can now become 'trigger happy' and simply delete that which does not work. One does not need to have a degree in photography to enjoy the benefit of this medium that fits nicely in the framework of Media, which is one strand of the arts mentioned previously. After listening to Bianca's story around this incident, we became aware of the potential of digital photography to save lives. Above all, to think most teens have one incorporated in their cell phones nowadays, even more so in the future.

3.6.4 Stepping over the edge of the world

I recall that in the CAM community we had often talked about how we as humans can only really relate to God, or make sense of God literally through our senses. God has given us the awareness of self and environment. We perceive the world through our senses. It is interesting to note that we sing songs asking God to

¹⁰⁹ This is Bianca's story reinterpreted for the purpose of this discussion. See heading 3.6.2.2 for the extended account.

open our eyes or help us to hear Him clearly, asking Him to embrace us. Apart from this figurative speech, we even refer to ideas that are more abstract in terms of our senses when we say that something gives us a *sense* of security or a *sense* of peace. The arts in our congregation have therefore linked up with this idea in terms of ministry vision in choosing for its vision, “Tot volle sintuiglike belewenis van God!” (Full sensory experience of God). In so doing, the arts would like to help us see or experience God ever clearer. Not only do the arts help us experience God better. However, God helps us experience his work of art better through our senses.

I refer to these cursory ideas about sense above as it also surfaced in an account that Bianca gives pertaining to a weekend youth outreach with *MES-aksie*¹¹⁰ in Hillbrow Johannesburg. The all girls group were exposed to a variety of art activities that the people at the shelter does. Together with the shelter children, They had done some drawings. Other art activities include making *stress balls*, *clay cattle and painting on material*. Bianca explains to me that this is how the people of the shelter get to interact with each other, through the art, furthermore through doing such art activities people get the chance to show their emotions. For others art is there means of survival by selling their talents, decorative painting, and so forth. I then asked Bianca how this relates to art in her own life. She explained to me that through the arts that the crossing of worlds took place. She then makes the link between arts and senses by referring to all the things that she experienced (including art) through her senses. In a sense, one might say that through the arts Bianca has stepped over the edge of her world to the people of the shelter. Inversely, the shelter children stepped in to Bianca’s world (that also of the congregation); through the outreach girls taking on a Christmas project. For this project Bianca’s digital camera again came in very handy when she had cut out of the digital photographs she had taken the faces of the children at the shelter. These were then hung on the leaves of the Christmas tree in the

¹¹⁰ Middestad Evangelisasie Sentrum (MES) is translatable to inner city evangelisation center.

church foyer where everybody could, bring Christmas presents for the children behind the faces in accordance with the idea behind the project.

Bianca testifies that through this experience informed also by the arts she could look past the all the loneliness, and dejection and just see the person, the human being. In the tradition of the book the *Writers Journey* I asked her, what the *elixir* is that she brings back, to which she replied that it is her testimony: “God is already there.”

3.6.5 Rhythm is a Dancer

I remember back in my high school years after I had started getting into the dancing thing, the song entitled “Rhythm is a dancer” was a big favourite. This contemporary, partly rave/ rap song to me personally makes me think about scripture such as John 7:34; 10:10, and so forth speaking about having life in abundance, enjoying life to the max. I thought of times in my own life recently ensuing conversations between Bianca and myself concerning music. On one of these occasions, I asked her if she wouldn’t like to go and think about the role of music in her life. At this stage, she had already indicated that music is a big part of her life.

The next week she placed a little pink paper in my hand with seven songs that at that time, some of which still does play an important role in her life (Listen to these songs in Media 5.3.1 *Songs*). “Rhythm is a dancer” as performed by the artists called *Snap* was one of them. This song Bianca says exude a sense of energy and life, which is exactly that which Problem wants to steal from her. The group *Tweak* has a song called *House Party* that reminds her of past things that had happened. When she feels alone she will at times listen to *Britney Spears’* song *Every time*. The 2003 rendition of *Dolazi Oluja* from *Colonia* imparts a sense of summer and freshness. When there is a sense of discouragement and sorrow she might listen to *Five for Fighting’s* song *It’s not easy to be me*. Lastly, two songs from Steven Curtis Chapman radiate a sense of victory titled,

Declaration and *Bring it on*. Let me here just briefly note that none except the last artist is a self-proclaimed, specifically serving the Christian audience artist.

At one of our meetings (2004/09/13), Bianca had just then bought a CD from Christian artist Jason Upton; I quote her on her experience on listening to this *free worship*¹¹¹ music genre. This she had written in English:

When I listen to Jason Upton's cd, it's like there is a presence around me and in me, so big that I can't really understand. It makes me feel that God wants to change the world through me. In addition, when it plays I can feel that God is holding me in His WONDERFUL arms and that makes me feel SO, SO, SO safe. Safer than any protection the world can ever offer! It's like I can feel the presence of the angels He sent to protect me. Like God orders them to in Psalm 91:11, "He ordered His angels to guard you wherever you go." It's like having God's presence on a CD

(Bianca 2004/09/13)

At this stage, I should also note that this is how she sometimes would interact with the art of music, by sitting in front of her computer and start writing words: She really makes the song her own by writing out the words of the song so that she can interact with it better. In addition, she writes what she feels because of the music. She states that music is not just about the lyrics but also about the rhythm and/or melody. To her it's about the combination between music and words. Through this combination of words, music gives expression to her feelings. If typing out the words is one way in which she reacts to the lyrics, then dancing is how she sometimes reacts to the rhythm or mood of the song. She dances with the angels she says. She carries on from the above paragraph to write the following prayer as a response and testimony to her emotion.

¹¹¹ Free worship could most often be described as an expressive moment in the praise and worship experience where the band repeats a certain harmonic progression while the congregation is given the opportunity to sing their prayers aloud; thus, giving life to their feelings towards God in a very explicit manner.

All honour and GLORY, Power and Majesty belong to GOD. I love YOU JESUS!!! Thank You for never letting go... Thank You Jesus... I pray Lord that You will use me, take all of me, and do what You see fit and what is in Your will. Don't ever again let it be about me, but about You. Because you are all that I need, You are all that is worthy of all the praise in the whole galaxy and more!! Thank You Jesus what I may have the privilege to know You and the privilege of Your GREAT mercy and love.

(Bianca 2004/09/13)

For Bianca music aids her in living in the presence of God. This to her as a Christian, knowing that she has a long-standing relationship with Problem is very important. She admits that there might be tough times but in the presence of God she will survive, or as she states: "Al voel dit ek kruip op dorings rond weet ek ek is in nie alleen nie. Dit help my om beter beheer oor Probleem te hê."

3.6.6 Simulating life

The following week (2004/09/21), we informally started talking about how our weeks have been. She then mentions that she's gotten the latest version of a new computer game that she really likes. However, sadly she does not get it to work on her computer.

I've heard the name of the game a lot, *The Sims2* (Sim City) but did not really know what its about. Cursory stated it's a game that simulates real life. Being able to control people was the reason Bianca figured its one of the most popular and best selling games on the market. Somewhere in our discussion Bianca dropped the idea of relating it to what we are busy doing. My curiosity caused me to question Bianca, as a cunning *Sims1* veteran player, about the possibilities of this game. I became so intrigued that I borrowed the game from her, which on my computer specifications only just worked. How much fun it was responding to people that I'm playing a game for my PhD study?

The player gets to instruct characters and families to execute specific tasks relating to a variety of spheres relating to being human: hygiene, romance, recreation, work, raising a family, how to become smarter etcetera. It's a very sequential game in that one won't for instance be able to buy a house if you don't have any money etcetera. On the other hand, there are things that the player cannot rule over. One object of the game is to care for the characters, for them to have a healthy balanced life style; characters could for instance die earlier than they're suppose to as a direct consequence of the player's negligence).

Together we discussed what the positives of such a game might be in relating it to especially therapy. The gaming experience could be a form a externalisation: As externalisation most often creates a safe blameless environment in which people can talk openly about volatile issues, so the gaming experience creates an environment wherein it is safe to explore the world and relationships. Apparently, it is possible to create characters and scenarios more or less similar to what one might find in certain therapeutic situations. In this sense, Bianca says that one can experience life without having to get hurt. A great deal of causality is built into the game. Consequently if you want to explore what your parents might do if you do something displeasing, you'll find the effects to be that they will indeed get angry or sad and so forth. Imagine asking a child to save the game at some point where the situation is even only vaguely similar to the issue at hand. Then telling her/him to go explore the possibilities of what might happen if they choose to take another course of action in the future and play that out. Then maybe following up with asking them which actions best matches there hopes for their relationship with their mom, dad and so on.

3.6.7 Problem's voice on compact disc

I've mentioned earlier about the sermon in which I used the CD of the voice of Problem as experienced by Christo. The young lady that came to me afterwards

was Bianca and that which she has shared with me in respect of Problem is found in heading 3.6.2.1 a few paragraphs above.

About a week after this on 2004/08/10 we had gotten together to explore the voice of Depression in her life. We've discussed how Problem looks different in everybody's life. In her life, she refers to diabetes, depression, her big fight in hospital, and all the generally bad times in her life as the *faces* of Problem. Listening to the voice of Problem for the first time helped her to brake through that certain mode that she had described, like moving through a barrier, a threshold (in *Writers Journey* language) that keeps one from life

This form of art (media) had Bianca and myself realise anew (as evident from what Bianca says in the aforementioned passages), that there is a certain power in Problem if he/she/it goes around masked as our own personal negative truth. It seems that the cunningness of Problem should be met with things that unmask its voice in our lives.

3.6.8 Story as art - A survivors journeying testimony

As with all the co-participants in chapter two, a story could be written by following the guidelines of a *Writers Journey*. One of the ways in which narrative practise (story as structuring metaphor for human experience) interact with the arts in this research is through story as a subjective interpretive tool. In this sense story becomes an art form: Story as a tool (art) starts playing a part in the grand narrative experience of human emotion: Art (story) becomes part of the narrative. So then, in Bianca's story, a story that can be described as a survivors journeying testimony, we present the outline as follows:

In the world of common day, the *ordinary world* Bianca the *hero* has struggled enduringly, extensively with Problem. In this battle for life and death, she could not tell whom she was up against as Problem evaded her time and time again.

This evasive nature of Problem had her *refusing the call to adventure* at numerous times.

In a sense, Bianca sought me out as a *mentor* and *ally*, by responding to the audio CD that she had heard. This relationship of *mentor-hero* is not one in which the mentor knows exactly what to do next. It's a relationship of dual discovery. This relationship signifies her acceptance of the *call to adventure*. She had accepted the call to adventure the moment Bianca had seen a glimpse of Problem's strategies.

The only thing that struck accord with the hero in terms of the *potion* idea in mythical storytelling is the audio disc, serving as an encouraging potion to the hero on her journey. The *first threshold* that the hero, Bianca, had to overcome (in terms of this telling of the story) was when Bianca started breaking the silence by telling about the suicide attempts (referring to the stories behind 'Images of hope').

That whole previous year when Bianca was removed from her friends and so forth served as the *approach to the inmost cave*, wherein she was scouting for meaning and hope. The *ordeal* took place over the period that she had heard the voice of Problem for the first time. In this ordeal she had gotten a grip on Problem by unmasking him for the first time, being able to call it's obedience to her will to survive.

The *elixir* that she had acquired as a result of facing Problem's unmasked appearance was the elixir of testimony. Included in this testimony is how she now knows that God (as she experiences Him largely in music) has been her biggest *ally* on the journey.

On *the road, back* she is now in a position to help people observe Problem in their lives. This journey had made her even more sensitive, to be able to notice suffering, to listen and try and understand.

This scheme could also be made applicable to specific incidents: As we would meet week after week, we would just sit and talk about the past week's hi-low. In relating it to the *Writers Journey*, it became evident that the story structure provides a conceptual framework for things that happen. Therefore, a received phone call becomes the *ordeal*, or at other times the *reward*, friends and circumstances becomes *allies or enemies*. Doctors and parents sometimes become *mentors* as you try to make sense of what had happened. Letters or emails become *heralds* announcing the good or bad news. Therefore, we can go on and on.

3.7 Christo's crossroad with the arts

3.7.1 Practical exposition of Vogler's model in Christo's involvement

The following presentation of Christo's story will be told with the aid of Vogler's (1999) story movements and characters. In *The Writers Journey*, Christopher Vogler (1999:xiii) suggests that one will find elements of the following story movements and characters in most stories across all cultures but expresses the concern that these story movements should not be used as a formula. Consequently, I will be led by Christo's own chronological sequencing which is embodied in the characters and movements that Vogler (1999) suggests.

Note the reason I use this model: The idea about the use of story theory, in this case Vogler's (1999) model was instigated by conversations with professor Hagemann. It has helped me in thinking about participants' stories in terms of sequence, characters, events, and so forth. Whether this was helpful to Christo, was for him to decide.

3.7.2 A Story of victory – outgrowing disappointment by *Christo & Elmo*

3.7.2.1 Act 1: Setting the stage

The roots of me and Christo's interaction can be traced to a couple of meetings we had a year or so back. Christo showed the courage in approaching me with regard to the negativity that had wormed its way in to his life. From there he joined the drama ministry for some time that performed in the Sunday services every now and then.

These encounters paved way for Christo's participation as co-researcher also owing to the fact that he does not experience me as a typical pastor, more so as he does not experience a friend as a typical pastor, Consequently I will start my telling from the incident that had set of our joint research venture.

It was, up to that point of the afternoon an *Ordinary day* till I received a call from a *Herald* nearby their family residence stating that Christo had tried to commit suicide earlier that morning. This was my *Call to adventure* to which I have answered by visiting Christo twice in hospital to just extend a hand of ¹¹²friendship.

Weeks after this incident I was curious to find out what it could mean to Christo and to the research if he were to be part of the research team. After discussing what this would entail we agreed to meet weekly. This to Christo served the purpose of joining the research adventure, although I would not say that this was his own personal call to adventure as I will illustrate later. We set sails with the

¹¹² I should note that I felt out of place in the hospital, strangely different than what I would imagine some of my colleagues would. Being a minister dedicated to the role of arts I hardly ever, from a traditional ministerial role get to see the inside of a hospital. Christo mentioned that he would have thought of an excuse if it were any of the other ministers. I wondered about the perceptions that people have about ministers and the church that could especially cause young people not to seek help at congregational ministers. This theme was however not a dominant theme in the research.

main idea of retelling the story and exploring the landscape of meaning behind what had happened.

As with many of us, the *Ordinary world* that Christo found himself in prior to the suicide/hospital account and till well into our research discussions was that of a certain understanding of himself and life. In this *Ordinary world*, a character by the name of The Problem struck hard and unexpected. The Problem was labelled the main villain in the story of victory. Problem stood right in the way of what Christo seemed to be wanting for his life. Christo told me that the feeling of disappointment opened the gateway for Problem to surface. Part of Problem's big strategy was to convince Christo to take his own life. Christo said that it was 'disappointment' that caused him to drink poison just after 24:00 that week morning in his 'one man apartment' a phrase by which he refers to himself as somebody that feels comfortable with being by himself. A while after being persuaded by Disappointment to drink poison Christo started to feel bad. Realising that he had done *'n dom ding* (translated to: a stupid mistake) as he says he woke up his mom, were taken up into the intensive care unit. Through that morning, he had experienced two heart attacks.

The previous evening literally mere hours before the battle for Christo's survival against Problem, he received the instigating phone call from Nadine braking off the relationship. She mentioned that she is in effect what she calls a 'player' that has had a second relationship for eight months at that moment. She even said that she went to London with yet another guy, neither you nor the person with whom she has been with for eight months. Of the four months, that they were together Christo suspected that something was wrong already two months prior to this hospital incident referring to a symbolic wall that has come between them. Even though one of his good friends from Cape Town told him to brake up their relationship before Nadine does, Christo mainly reasoned that he was over reacting.

The 'player' mentality of Nadine shone through even stronger with the immediate betrayal of his broken heart with Jaco. The following Friday Nadine phoned and sought his forgiveness where after they have watched movies together. At this meeting, Nadine asked for Jaco's number.

The betrayal seems even bitterer in the light of events; for Jaco one of his friends was the first whom Christo notified of the incident and first to visit Christo in hospital. Jaco was the one that phoned Christo and told him about his 'fling' with Nadine asking Christo if they could still be friends. This further disappointment led Christo to erase Jaco's number from his phone thereby symbolically deleting him as a friend.

While still in hospital one of the nurses offered to phone someone upon which Christo requested that she phone Nadine.

Asking Christo about what he might call this whole episode, he referred to it as *die dom ding*. He also mentioned a book that he recall is named, *Is jy slim of is jy dom?* (translated to: Are you clever or are you stupid?). If Christo could write a play about what had happened he said that it would aptly be called – not like Jim Carrey's movie *Dumb and dumber* – but *Dumb dumb and dumber*.¹¹³ "What would you want to say through this play," I asked him. "It's not worth while to do it" came the answer.

3.7.2.1.1 Insert act 1: Description in terms of The Writers Journey

This whole sequence of events relates in a very prominent way to a phase that Vogler (1999) deems *tests*, *allies*, and *enemies*. They form an integral part in the development of the over all story. It is here that Christo physically overcame the test of the main villain, plainly named Problem. Jaco took on the roll of a *Shadow* character while *Nadine* fits the archetype of *Trickster* like a glove.

¹¹³ Naturally *dumb* is not the right word but it sounds like the Afrikaans word *dom* and could be translated to stupid although the latter has a very harsh feel to it.

3.7.2.2 Act 2, The True call to adventure

At this moment in the research, we've come to a position of stuckness. It was at this moment also that I introduced what professor Hagemann spoke about in our reflecting conversations concerning The Writers Journey. Simultaneously Christo did a bit of thinking about the process and the way forward. It was not that he experienced the journey up to now as bad. However, only talking about the incident of suicide were not opening up space for an alternative story to develop. I fear that up to now Christo in part experienced negative reinforcement on his interpretation of self. Luckily, the process was open enough for him to decide where he wants to go, what he want to talk about and so forth.

We entertained the idea of what it would be like writing a book about what had happened. I then asked what he would want to do with it. He would keep it to himself he said being afraid of what other people and so also the research team would think about him doing the "dom ding." He explained to me that this book would be a *Thriller* while a book that contain more than the initiating incidents would be a *Drama*. Christo said that he would feel comfortable with having people experience him in context. The difference between a Thriller and a Drama we explained as such: A Thriller to him is about *something* that happened while a *Drama* is about *somebody* with whom something happened as part of somebody's life story. This reminded me about what I had heard on a documentary about how people create movies. In a Thriller, one of the main traditional tools in creating tension is *isolating* the character. With this in my mind, it became clear to me how Christo had experienced these feelings. Up till now, the telling had isolated Christo. This is isolation from the rest of his life, from his parents, childhood, and characters that could otherwise have significant influence in shaping the alternative story.

We spoke about the notions of The Writers Journey and how that might be helpful with this newly directed path, he suggested. From here on, we talked much more about his life in context of the different stages in his life. I consulted

him on how we should go about and this resulted in dividing his life experiences in pre-school, primary school, high school and lastly where he is at now, post school. Although we wouldn't leave things unsaid, about what had happened this seemed to have breathed life into our conversations and interpretations of self. In a way, this *Call to adventure* for Christo signified the beginning of the real journey. We then spent time on planning the journey. We've done so drawing inspiration from professor Hagemann's pirate example, how one would go about planning a journey (See heading 3.10.1.2 on the notion of conflict). He specifically referred to a book *Eenkant kind* (translatable to: degrees of lonesomeness, introverted or even being unwelcome etcetera) in which Jana Cilië¹¹⁴ was the main character noting that she reminds him of his own life story. He then said that she had a happy ending.

I told him that I wonder what my role in this writing up of his life story would be. We then discussed how he is in effect the storyteller. My role as researcher to him is that of a storyteller helping him write his story. After asking him to elaborate he said that I will be physically writing his story but in third person. He further answered that I am actually seeing the story from his eyes ("Jy sien die verhaal uit my oë uit").

During this time, I asked Christo to draw a genogram that would reveal family ties affinities, dislikes, significant incidences in the families life etcetera, and encouraged him to make use of his own symbols. Conventionally within a therapeutic context, I should have done that myself but I felt that by asking him to do it for research purposes runs closer to the use of art in the process. Interestingly Christo had a brother that also fought against Problem but sadly lost the battle to Suicide. I asked Christo about the influence of all this on his story. He did not think that its entirely the same so the process of social constructionist

¹¹⁴ Throughout our conversations Christo made mention of a couple of books that they had read at school which indicated to me that our decision of using the *Writers Journey* is quite suitable. We later also exchanged thoughts on Barry Hough the writer of numerous Afrikaans books including *Verkdans*. Barry Hough did sadly around the time of conversation with Christo commit suicide.

research required of me not to proverbially scratch where it does not itch. On the path of *The Writers Journey* are many characters with different functions. In Christo's story, they became local characters incarnated by those whom he has mentioned in the genogram. In this movement, we were able to re-member Christo so that the story can be experienced as an unfolding *Drama* and not a *Thriller* in which the main character is eventually isolated.

It was in this movement that the problem was externalised to Problem and although sounds more or less the same it opened up a different way of speaking. This was especially true in bringing Problem into the *Writers Journey*. Suddenly Problem was a character, the main *Villain* with a physical and psychological function in the story. In story language, the *dramatic need* of the main villain of Problem is the destruction of the *Hero*. This is accomplished primarily by Problem binding himself to the Hero. Christo said that the advantage of this type of 'binding' relationship between the Hero (Christo) and the Villain (Problem) is that the person who's Problem it is will ultimately be the only one that truly knows what the Problem is, who the Problem is what he's/her aim is and how he/she operates. We have discovered that a story can be told from the villain's perspective as well; that the villain also has tests, allies, and enemies.

Christo mentioned a sermon that he had heard one evening about *baggage*, those emotional things that people carry along with them in life. He realised that these things in the bag are all Problems allies. In Christo's story, Problem's allies consisted of the things that Christo says and thinks about himself. This is exactly the kind of language we then realised that Problem would want to hear from Christo's mouth. Christo mentioned that its not that Problem became too big (Problem in this sense relates to the narrative of Christo and Nadine) but that they became too many and that it is this ability of Problem to almost multiply that sometimes causes people to underestimate the power of the villain.

3.7.2.2.1 *Insert act 2: Description in terms of The Writers Journey*

To a large extent, this whole cycle of conversations can be understood as *Crossing the first Threshold*. It was only after this threshold that we were able to really get a hold on Problem through a process of externalisation. It also seemed that it was here that amongst other possible *Mentor* figures my role as artist was accentuated.

3.7.2.3 Act 3, The Road back & Rebirth

After having exposed the true colours, the human qualities of Problem it started to become easier for Christo to talk about things. The true *Hero's* test was when Christo had to face Nadine once more, shall we say in a final battle in which it was evident in his reflection that he felt the victor. This moment, passing the final test was like the realisation that Christo was reborn (relates to Vogler; *resurrection and rebirth*).

It was also on this *Road back* that we realised that stories are always linked somewhere. On the *Road back*, we came across other paths relating to the post-school phase I was referring to. Having to fulfil what Christo calls society's expectations is one of the first big Thresholds that one has to overcome after school. In a way, the actual story that relates to the research fulfils the role of a *Threshold Guardian* in what Christo calls the story of growing up. According to the *Writers Journey*, the best way to approach a Threshold Guardian is to align yourself with it/him/her to gain a safe pass. He explains the realisation of this Threshold by relating to the phrase, "Ons was nog klein toe's ons groot" (Translated to: We were small and all of a sudden, we are grown up).

3.7.2.3.1 Insert act 3: Description in terms of The Writers Journey

In a sense, our effort at *meaning making* could be termed the *Ordeal* wherein the *Reward* that was taken back in the *Inmost Cave* was that of having to face Nadine again. She suddenly appeared out of the blue after seven months trying to make amends. For Christo the *Reward* was the feeling of nothingness. He wasn't at all angry as he thought that he might be. No underlying emotions stirred up in him from seeing Nadine again. Not reacting emotional to him was a

direct consequence of our conversations. He realized in that unexpected final *Test* that he was the victor, that he was stronger, have more confidence, and was more mature now. He also mentions that he now feels more comfortable and positive about himself. He says that he now knows that he can survive. The *Return with the Elixir* is embodied by the realization of a different self and in the cathartic movement that had taken place in his own mind. This notion of an acquired elixir is further reinforced by Christo's knowledge that dismantled the tactics and strategies of Problem whom in this story took on the form of suicide.

In this stage of Christo's life, the post-school era he thinks a lot about what to do and accomplish. It is evident that the acquired elixir has something to do with his choices. He was wondering whether to do a service year for Christ ("diensjaar vir Christus") or just a Christian outreach program. Obviously this is not the only choices but if the first mentioned were to realize I asked him how this new knowledge or experience would benefit those around him. He stated that he is now in a good position to talk and listen to people that had at some stage thought of committing suicide or running away from home. Precisely how he would go about would depend on how Problem looks and operates in that person's life. It is like Christo said that every Problem has its own effects and every person have their own escapes from these effects ("Elke Probleem het sy eie effek en elke persoon sy eie uitweg"). I started to realize that although we have been speaking about only two dominant choices, that of the open door and that of the closed-door people have different connotations, and ascribe different meanings to both these doors.

3.7.3 Closure

I gave Christo the opportunity to reflect on what I write here and not only on our conversations. After I have read the story as a whole back to him, he said that it reminds him again of everything that has happened. He says that he now thinks before he does something. Listening to everything it makes him wonder again, why he would do such a 'stupid thing' not knowing what he wanted to accomplish

at that time. Maybe it was just a position of stuckness he proclaimed. In retrospect the choices that was made does not reflect the Christo he now know he is. The research has offered him the opportunity to move past the position of stuckness by developing an alternative understanding of self.

The phase where Christo is currently in can be understood as *The Road back* (Vogler 1999) in which I am simultaneously busy writing up the research making this also the road back for one segment of the research project.

3.7.4 Creative interaction in Christo's involvement

Most notable in Christo's story is the compact disc with the voice of Problem we had created. Other than this, our thoughts also consisted of the use drama, the use of books (inclusive of Vogler's journey model), the genogram, and two multimedia presentations. These will now be presented consecutively.

3.7.4.1 Problem, an audio media presentation

This audio presentation about the voice of Problem was part of a sermon that I presented in a nearby congregation specifically on Problem's influence on the life of Christians. The Christian tradition and God himself is the big ally for the Hero on his journey. This experience at the church me and Christo hailed as part of the 'Resurrection' experience in Writers Journey.

Playing this audio presentation in public space, in the church was part of with what the Hero eventually returns, being the *elixir*. I asked Christo about what he had felt while in church. He answered that the people around really listened and that it would not have had the same effect if somebody would just have read the script. I wondered who would have benefited the most from listening to the undisclosed voice of Problem. Christo said that it could undeniably mean a great deal for both parents and children. This audio presentation functions as a reality check for people asking them not to underestimate Problem in their lives. People might now realize what they are up against. Christo had also heard this audio presentation, as a final product in church for the first time. He explains that this

has been a differentiating moment for him. For the first time he has heard Problem speak loud and clear. He states that he understood the choices he had made better. After this evening, one of the youth congregants from my own church came to talk to me about Problem and relating her story of attempt to suicide with what she has heard. Christo was glad that this had opened up the way for someone else to approach me. On the one hand, he said it helps me in my research and on the other hand, it makes him feel good that someone could benefit saying that this could be a growing experience for this person. After that evening, Christo wrote me a letter based on his experience of the context of the evening, which included various art forms. I shortly provide a translated account:

First, I thank you that I could go along Sunday evening. It had made me realise that suicide is not the way, that there are people that can quickly help. [He then refers to a small drama sketch in the sermon]. I don't want to be like the netball player that never practises with the team and just sits on the side watching the team play. I want to choose the closed door. I want to do something to try get rid of Problem. I realised that I cannot do this on my own though, that I need help.

I include the following translated script for the voice of Problem as it serves as a good overview for what we have felt; the tactics and strategies of Problem consist of:

3.7.4.1.1 *Problem, the personification*

Problem: I am Problem.

I am going to convince you that your life falls apart in my presence.

I know that you can't make the right decisions for you're a sissy and you cannot stand up for yourself

Normally I would anyway team up with so many allies that I put on bag around your shoulders that I know you can't face *me*.

I know that you know what the right choice is, but I am here to tell you that you only have two choices. Alas, I have to be honest about this:

They are. The open and the closed doors. Now I know that you would want to choose the closed door; that this is the right thing for you to do.

However for as long as I am Problem, over my dead body will I allow you to even attempt opening the closed door.

For this reason, I am eager to tell you exactly how difficult the closed door is. So, take the open door, it's the easy way out, then you will show them. They will be sorry. You should do this alone for you are capable of this, or aren't you?

If you had only known that I flourish, that I get stronger and you weaker when I get you so far as to ignore me. I get stronger still when I get you to underestimate me.

I must say, I am often successful in getting you so far to say things about yourself that makes you think even less of yourself.

"Ag shame," you think. Well this is actually my voice.

"There's no way out!" It's my voice.

"I'm stupid," This is my voice.

I am the villain in your story some might say but according to my view, I'm always right. You are actually my villain.

So if you feel bad, I feel good.

If you cry, I laugh.

If I can convince you that you're no good, I get more status!

If you die, then I live.

However, if you live then I die!

3.7.4.1.2 CAM community on Problem

In one of our creative arts, ministry meetings I played the audio disc of Problem to the team and asked about what it does to them? To give an overview: There

was the experience that it was a manifestation of Problem, following with, the mere fact that one is able to hear it's voice releases one from it's power. Goosebumps were felt from the realisation that it (Problem) speaks to them and that often people does not realise it. Problem is now out in the open as one said: "Dis nie meer 'n suggestie nie." There is also a certain power given back to the person that experiences Problem in this way: One can simply just press stop whereby Problem is symbolically shut up.

One of the narrative counsellors asked if she could use the disc. Not minding at all, but I replied that I should just ask if it would be okay with Christo. To run things ahead of the research at that stage but I also noted that this presentation was based on Christo's experience and that one should rather be not-knowing about how Problem operates in somebody else's life.

At this meeting reference was also made to the media presentations that Marinus and I had compiled for the launch and marketing of the different ministries in our congregation. One particular media compilation stood out, one that the youth minister and Marinus compiled that had therapeutic value. This presentation that also to a degree reveals Problem was incorporated in the Quest Care youth counsellors course (See Media 4.1 *Quest youth ministry presentation*). This course is run by Berna and is informed by narrative principles.

3.7.4.1.3 *The making of Problem*

From all the discussions, that Christo and I had on Problem I compiled, from the reflection letters that I had written, the effects of Problem on Christo's life. The content was not something that I had derived at from the blue. It contains phrases that Christo himself used in our conversations. It also contains interpretations on my part of what Christo had been saying. Therefore, I presented the script to Christo to verify the content asking him for anything that he would like to add or subtract from the script. After we were satisfied with the layout, phrasing etcetera I recorded (at my home) Christo's voice reading the

script. Christo was comfortable reading the material himself. Prior to the recording, I told him that I would mask his voice a little, and played a piece back to him on how it would eventually sound when it was masked. I also had him listen to the background music that I felt I would use to support the idea behind who Problem is. Christo was in effect giving voice to what Problem (in first person speech) had been up to in Christo's life. Hereafter till the next day evening I spent time on editing, synchronising speech and music (atmosphere), and finally cutting it to compact disc (CD).

This whole process was to me a very enriching experience. For the first time I could really feel the power of music for reasons other than aesthetic pleasure. This experience resonated strongly with my whole life music story. I must admit that the digital music technology course I had done proved to be very worthwhile not only for my own pleasure.

3.7.4.1.4 *The road back*

In act three, the first movement in *Writers Journey* is called *The Road Back*. It is at this stage Christo's journey that we meet up with him again. The beginning of this stage of the journey was signified to us by an event that Christo told me about. He had seen Nadine recently, the lady that had caused so much heart ache several months ago. On the day that Christo shared this with me, we started to talk about gardening and planting as I had recently moved to a new residence and were seeking input from anybody on the subject of gardening. It's not surprising then to think that this being on our radar would influence our discussion 2004/09/16.

The incident with Nadine after so many months had made me curious about what the effects of our journey might have been. Embedded in this journey as a crucial part of course was the previously mentioned audio presentation about Problem.

He had mentioned that to his surprise he did not get angry at all. “What do you make of this?” I asked. He then explains that this can be ascribed to the influence of the journey;

the arts and our discussions about everything in relation to that. He remarks that the ability to stand tall was an enjoyable feeling. Somehow he would have reacted differently he says, he recall that he would have been emotional if he had not embarked on this journey.

In the following set of conversational exchange, the metaphor of gardening was established. He refers to himself as a plant, a succulent to be more exact. All our conversations had served the purpose of watering the plant. He thought a lot about what the ground might be before assuring me that the ground is the knowledge that now he will be able to survive, as he says “Nou kan ek oorleef!” This survival include that he knows there will always be tough times but that these times will make him stronger.

3.7.4.2 Dramatic action

Being part of the church’s drama ministry for a while served for Christo as an exploration of the alternative story to being the lonesome child (“eenkant kind”).¹¹⁵ His participation in the drama ministry leads us to consider ways in which drama could be healing. Writing a script on his life in which the attempted suicide event would be recounted would serve the purpose to him of reliving the experience.

This reliving the experience would be different in that it would serve as a symbol to having changed. Whilst being a mirror of events the drama would also be a mirror of change. The drama would in other words not be a spot light in which we only find the illumination of the negative.

¹¹⁵ Christo says that he has always been a loner, someone able to keep himself busy. The term *eenkant kind* is the name of a book as the reader will note shortly.

The act of physical play would be a way to him he says in which he would get the stones of his back. The drama would direct the unconstructive energy that the negative feeling of attempted suicide reminds him of. Seen in this way to Christo the advantage of drama over a book would be the situatedness in the moment.

3.7.4.3 To book or not to book

Often when referring to the doctoral thesis and his part in it Christo had spoken of “your book.” From a narrative participatory point of view, I always tried to speak in a way as to include him in the equation, speaking of our book. Somehow, to the contrary he derived a sense of worth in *helping*, although then with *my* book. The narrative way of speaking instilled a sense of worth in this case and not as I had thought, ownership. In the bigger picture, certainly, research is *my* responsibility and Christo had helped me in keeping a balance between much needed and valued participation from his involvement and ownership of the research story on the other hand.

Christo did not prefer one manner of interaction with the arts over the other but he does view that books have the distinct benefit of being something tangible. “’n Boek hou verewig... [thinking a while] tot mens hom verbrand,” he says. Besides the tangibility of a book, Christo connects a book with stories and stories in books describe a beginning, how it was, and how it could be; “...’n begin, hoe dit was en hoe dit kan wees” he says. A book is to him the carrier of a story, a form of externalisation if you will. Furthermore, it is a transferable object or container that one could put away for as long as one needs to.

With regard to a book being a carrier of a story he spoke about Jana Cilië’s *Eenkant kind*. This book carries a story and characters that Christo not only relates to but in a sense lives through. The primary character presents a journey that Christo embarks on for as long as he needs. He noted that the story did have a good ending and that this is in a way a call to adventure.

His second view on the use of a book is that of what I call a transferable object. This entails the writing up of a personal journey as we started out to do. Here we did not use Vogler's model per se although I should add that its influence could be noted in the questions I asked in relation to Christo's preferred story. I asked him about the structure of a possible personal story book. He then divided it into four significant times in his life. For a few weeks, we fleshed out the story by way of things that he could find that came from those times. We never got to physically write the book. Nevertheless, I asked him what he would do with it. He answered that he would hide it away. In conversation about this answer, we realised that his story would have been transferred to paper. He notes that the tangibility of the story would enable him to get closure on a time in his life.

3.7.4.4 Vogler, the ultimate solution??

At our very last conversational interview (2005/09/26), I encouraged Christo to be frank about what had worked for him or not. Here it should be noted that Christo did not derive much worth of Vogler's model in the manner Moré for instance found it helpful did. When probing into the reasons why, I realised that it has nothing to do with a particular dislike in the model. The primary reason for its apparent insignificance has to do with not getting behind the gist of the model. I realised that different people need to interact on different levels with such a model. Some like Christo would like to thoroughly understand Vogler's model before they feel that it would be of benefit. Others like Moré or Marinus (CAM community members) are more comfortable perhaps in interpreting it for themselves and then use it. I also realise that we had started using Vogler in our CAM community discussions every so often. We probably, through our social interaction developed a shared understanding of the model whether this was congruent with Vogler's intention or not. Christo, not being a CAM community member did not share this socially instigated familiarity with the model.

I conclude that the criteria whereby one might use Vogler's model has to do with local consideration. How does the person or organisation relate to the model?

To what extent do they own the terminology through which they ascribe their own meaning? These are possible considerations. Vogler could therefore be very helpful but will surely not be the ultimate solution... that is if one could speak of 'solution' at all.

3.7.4.5 Genogram

The genogram is one of many devices that according to my understanding have been relied on greatly with those who practise family therapy or have been involved in narrative therapy in the times when most therapists were informed by systems theory.¹¹⁶ The way in which it is often used is by means of the therapist asking questions about the family and then draws what resembles the idea of a family structure accordingly.

Partly for my own understanding of Christo's story and the characters involved, I asked him if we could do something like this. The reason that I shortly include this in the study is that the manner in which I proposed to him that it could done differs from usual genogram practises. I showed him what I meant but then I asked him to give his own meaning to this exercise and do it only and in a manner, that pleases him.

He chose to stay with the usual ways in which one present a genogram (circles, squares, several lines). However, he presented it much more colourful and also on coloured paper. It is not customarily but I suppose one could also draw a genogram with pictures, which was what I had hoped for. I thought that if pictures were involved as medium it resembled something of Furth's (1988: xix) notion of impromptu or spontaneous pictures. Hereby one could then engage in discussions about art therapy as it is specifically found in Furth's application, and so forth.

¹¹⁶ See Müller 1996:151-157, for various examples.

Christo said that it was useful in one way only; it reflected something of his family in a way, which he had not considered. Apart from this, he did not ascribe any meaning to it and said: “Dit het nie veel beteken nie.” Although it was not significantly useful to him, still to me his line drawings helped to position myself in the story of his life. In addition, an interesting relationship emerged between Christo that tried to commit suicide and his brother that did commit suicide when Christo was young. I did not pursue this for two reasons: First, I judged that this would situate us in a therapeutic context instead of a research context and secondly narrative therapists are circumspect of therapeutic authoritative interpretations. I felt the correlation between Christo and his brother was more interesting to me than to Christo. Christo noted that this incident of his brother does not relate to his situation. I accepted his answer for various narrative practise informed reasons but psychoanalytically informed research wouldn't have.

3.7.4.6 Media Presentations

There were two PowerPoint presentations that I had presented to Christo specifically in respect of this research. The first one I remark about is one that the CAM community had to build for presentation in the congregation drawing on an excursion to home for the disabled, *Phyllis Robertson home* (See Media 4.3 *Phyllis Robertson home*).

3.7.4.6.1 Informed by disability

It was in the weeks prior meeting Christo on 2004/08/19 that the topic of disability was on the radar of the CAM community. Berna, Marinus, Martje (the church outreach coordinator), and I went to Phyllis Robertson house for the disabled in Pretoria to compile a marketing video and do some interviews. This video was scheduled for release that Sunday service.

I took the opportunity to ask Christo what he thinks of the presentation since I was hoping to possibly acquire his insights on the use of art in the congregation. However, this propelled us into a discussion on disability. With this piece of art

(media) as backdrop to our discussion, we ended up exploring the variety of ways in which disability can be understood. Therefore, we said that there are individual physical disability, mental disability, and functional disability in all families, situational disability, and so forth.¹¹⁷ Why this differentiation was helpful or unhelpful, I can't really say. We figured that it might be helpful knowing that one of the effects of Problem in ones life is that he/she/it instils a kind of emotional disability in a person's life. It's emotional disability that leads us to believe that things are not worth while, or as we would say in Bianca's story, lead us to believe that there are no *Images of hope*. This could be very unhelpful outside of narrative practise in the sense that the belief that one is disabled emotionally might contribute to a problem saturated story.

We also discussed how Afrikaans writer Barry Hough that at that time had committed suicide could have done what he had done. The media art presentation paved the way to talk about disability but it was mainly this incident of Barry Hough that had caused us to wonder if suicide attempts are the consequence of some kind of momentary disability in our lives.

3.7.4.6.2 Framing life, a silent photo montage

What stood out to me was the manner in which Christo could frame his life through rearranging the photos in the silent photo montage.¹¹⁸ For him the meaning of the exercise was to create a picture of his life, of how it was and how it could be. One could determine a progression in the rearrangement of the photos. This progression was informed by his own views on his story and was determined by what whichever segment or incident he chose to portray. He noted that one could also zoom in on a specific part of someone's life for instance, only looking at the attempted suicide incident that instigated his involvement in the research. Since, as elsewhere noted this notion of focussing on the problem incident was depressing to him. This is the reason why he chose

¹¹⁷ For more discussion on this see reflections on Gladys Agulhas.

¹¹⁸ Please see the section on *A Silent photo montage* under the CAM community's involvement for background information.

to depict something of his life story. It was very creative that he not only did this according to some theme whereby drawing on the content of his life but according to the colours of the pictures and the emotion behind it. Partly this resembles Moré's manner of expressing her feelings through the colours of the beads.

The idea of being able to arrange the photos resembles the intention of narrative practise that participants should themselves be the primary author of their lives. In Christo's case I did partly play a directing role in selecting, the initial photo's but we discussed how we could have used pictures from his own life. These could then be scanned and rearranged, have music put to it, be projected onto a 3X3 meter wall and so on.

Drawing on Christo' remarks it is the social logic by which the pictures are arranged that is important. Psychoanalysts on the other hand might have sought for hidden meanings in the pictures that in some way are representative of the unconscious psyche.

Presentation programs such as PowerPoint are very user friendly and this has the benefit of being manoeuvred easily. It could be presented in extremely creative ways. A few digital projectors could make an emotionally piercing moving exhibition on gigantic walls. Informed by this research the choice for digital media would be my preference over drawing or painting. Naturally there are important considerations in the choice of medium such as participants' preference, age, aim of using a specific medium over another, the desired input that the participant might require of the therapist, whether the arts in therapy is viewed as process or product and so on.

3.8 Moré's interaction with the arts

3.8.1 Practical exposition of Vogler's model in Moré's involvement

The following presentation of Moré's story will be told with the aid of Vogler's (1999) story movements and characters. In *The Writers Journey*, Christopher Vogler (1999:xiii) suggests that one will find elements of the following story movements and characters in most stories across all cultures but expresses the concern that these story movements should not be used as a formula. Consequently, I will be led by Moré's own temporal sequencing which is embodied in the characters and movements that Vogler (1999) suggests.

Note the reason I use this model: The idea about the use of story theory, in this case Vogler's (1999) model was instigated by conversations with professor Hagemann. It has helped me in thinking about participants' stories in terms of sequence, characters, events, and so forth. Whether this was helpful to Moré, was for her to decide.

Christo leaves his involvement in the research with a sense of closure about what had happened in his life. He is happy for being done with helping me in what he refers to as my book ("jou boek").

3.8.2 A Story about Spring by Moré & Elmo

Moré and her parents started coming to our church not many months ago. Soon hereafter, she decided to join our creative arts ministry. Through her, I met Mark, her fiancé at that time. Moré approached me with regard to her relationship with Mark. Not long hereafter I saw Mark separately and both of them together before they ended their relationship. Their *Ordinary World* was one in which they truly enjoyed each other's company in the previous three years gone by. In their *Ordinary World*, it seemed that they had a lot in common. That's why their betrothal moment made sense as a natural development of their friendship and love.

In general, Vogler (1999) notes there will always be a *Herald* character to set a story in motion. It was Moré's perception that in fact it was since their betrothal that things started taking a downward spiral. In Moré's story, it was their betrothal that set everything in motion. She argues that she and Mark have been fighting a lot about many things since the betrothal. Consequently, she decided to bring me in the picture and thereby react to the voice of the *Herald*-function in her story.

The Herald spoke of concerns about especially how Mark and Moré's kids would be raised. Mark has been a practising Roman Catholic devotee and Moré spend most of her life with her parents in progressive Dutch Reformed Churches. Another point of concern to Moré related to where they would stay after they have gotten married. Moré still stays with her parents and has high values concerning standing together as a family, which to her meant certainly staying close by her parents. Mark on the other hand work and stays an hour or so away from Pretoria. Mark largely insisted that the kids be raised Roman Catholic which would require them to move to the vicinity of where Mark attends church.

I expressly acknowledged their commitment to each other in allowing me to join their journey at this point in time. However, this meeting served more the purpose of what would be expected of a *Trickster* type character in a story. Their expectations were that of wanting to work towards the resolution of that which the *Herald* spoke of. However, this conversation produced the seeds from which a *Call to Adventure* would be born soon.

In was to a large extent due to our conversation and what happened there that they broke off the betrothal and therewith their relationship. Braking off the relationship was Moré's personal call to adventure. It was only during the following weeks that I was curious to know what it could mean to Moré if she would allow this research journey to sojourn with her story about Spring.

Spring in this context serves as a metaphor for faith... a type of faith that knows it will be all right. It is this faith that allows Moré to keep on going on, knowing that the rains of spring will soon appear. It is also a symbol for growth.

This does not imply that every thing is okay. Moré do experience moments of *Refusing the Call* to adventure. This is times that she feels immensely sad about how things had worked out and wonders if she and Mark should not try to reconcile. In this story, the research serves as a *Mentor* wherein the healing properties of talking everything through lies; the aid that the *Hero* figure sometimes acquire from a *Mentor* figure. Surviving the ensuing days would then also be the movement in the story signalling the *Crossing of the first Threshold*.

Up till now, Moré has tried to delete Mark from her life. She has put photo's of them away, stopped her hobby of scrapbooking, gotten rid of the parrot that Mark gave her and doesn't make contact at all. She and Mark even danced Ballroom competitions together which she now started doing with an instructor. She has been using her creative talents such as cross stitching, beading, writing her life story, keeping three diaries mostly to forget about Mark. She has also been going to gym, doing her dancing, and going out with friends a lot lately. She expressly mentions her home cell at church that means a lot to her.

Other significant people, old friends, parents, home cell, but also dancing, going to gym and so forth she says fulfil the role of band-aids to the pain. These abovementioned people are her allies on the journey while her gifting, talents are potions that the great Mentor himself, and namely God has given her.

Moré especially uses diaries on her journey. In the first one, she writes down daily living things, in the second all the bad things and in the third all her dreams. So far she has written up to grade eight. It became clear to me that the notion of deleting someone from your life, as we have also learned in Christo's story could

become a metaphor for handling the immediate pain. This suggests a way of thinking that will enable a person to carry on through suffering. Moré admitted to herself that forgetting is not a good thing and that the art of this journey is surviving our memories. This is why we have used Moré's creative side actively, in particular beading, as a reaction to facing the *threshold guardian* motive, that of handling the immediate days ahead without Mark.

Moré's experiences on the arts are perhaps the best to illustrate the purpose of the arts in structuring or storying lives, well her life. In one of our latter informal discussions I asked her, why art? She went on to explain that to her the arts (beading, journaling, writing stories, stitching and some others) was a way in which she organises her life, making sense of it all. It was interesting to remember after this remark from Moré, Gregory's comments (1997:132), referring to Mali culture that music is believed to harmonize the forces of the visible and the invisible world. Moré's story seems then to touch the Mali culture and I'd even say most human beings in that we seem to long for a sense of harmony, peace and structure in various degrees. All these being activities through which we make sense of the world. For Moré her creations, whether beading or poems connects her to her own story and people in her life. This resembles the ever more importance of relationships, connectedness being one of professor Sweet's contentions as earlier mentioned. According to Tillman (2000:10), most religions show a love of peaceful connectedness. Or, closer to Moré's story: Music has the central power to make "...connections – within the body, human being to human being, humans to the natural world, human beings and the natural world to God or the spiritual" (Tillman 2000:9-10). This sense of connectedness is a direct consequence of the arts' influence in Moré's life. What I have noticed with Moré is that she really lives in and through creativity. Art is almost not a medium it becomes her. This way of being carries her. I commend her for participating with zest in this study through which she later in our final interview 2005/09/21, avowed that she had the realisation of just how important the arts are to her.

3.8.3 Moré's interaction with the arts

It was astounding to see how the arts and crafts could help story her life. On the one hand we used Vogler's model (1999), sometimes more explicitly than other times. On the other hand, the arts played a significant role in illuminating parts of this story. Specific detail of her Vogler informed story was augmented by for instance beading. Later she augmented her experience with writing poems and short creative paragraphs about certain beads (or characters) that had significantly influenced her life. She also noted how valuable Vogler had become to her in her personal writing of fairytales letters and so on. As a result of the influence of Vogler in discussion with Moré, I would quickly like to revert to her story in relation to Vogler (1999).

3.8.3.1 Story as art

As I have stated elsewhere the story in itself (that of Vogler's model) becomes a work of art in its own right. Thus, all of the individual participants' stories has been partly also rewritten with this model in mind. There are however, various possibilities of what in a story could be seen as an Ordinary world and so on. These possibilities are determined by both the participant and my involvement. The following is a cursory account of one possible telling of Moré's story in Voglerian terminology.

The *Ordinary world* or the *world of common day* as it is also referred to in Moré's story is a world in which was generally happy with how things have been going with Mark and her relationship. Their betrothal marks the period in their relationship to her where things have started to unravel, the announcement of the voice of the herald, was heard her initial hunch that things started going off track, their fighting and so on. The initial meeting between Mark, Moré, and myself served as a *trickster* event: This event they had hoped would bring them on track. To the contrary, this event informed their later decision to part ways. This realisation that something is terribly wrong the shadow a her *call to adventure* that they would eventually be driven to the point of braking up. Obviously,

adventure in this sense signifies the unknown. *Refusing the call* resembles times in which she thought that they should get back together and give their relationship another chance. Surviving the following weeks mark the idea of *crossing the first threshold* and indeed she had done so significantly with the aid of all the discussions, we had and artwork that she had done, these serve the purpose of *mentor* phase. Indeed, she is on *the road back* with better insight, true allies, and *hope* as her *elixir* for a better *ordinary world* to come.

3.8.3.2 Crossing the threshold

Moré is a very creative person with personal resources enabling her to survive. It is this creative streak in her that comes to her aid. In Vogler terminology, the arts help Moré to cross the thresholds in her life. Therefore, it has also happened in this story.

She had tried deleting Mark from her life and we had spend time on the concept of deleting someone from one's life. It seems that in the end this does not really help. It is not a lasting solution to discontinue scrapbooking (as this contained a lot of photo's of Mark), get rid of the parrot, stop dancing and so forth. The harder road seems to be the one worth while being busy with, integrating this time in her life as part of her personal story. In this regard, she can recall all the good times that she and Mark had together. She crosses this threshold by spending time with friends, going to the gym but also through the arts: She writes in three diaries, one for day to day life occurrences, two for bad things that had happened and three, writing down her hopes and dreams. She actively writes her life journey, and does cross stitching and beading. The role of the arts in her story seems to be a contradictory role. On the one side it helps her forget, which is an immediate short term solution to sustain her in the now. I specifically remember us talking and her saying that in the long run to forget is not the best thing to do and that the idea is that of surviving our memories. On the other hand, it helps her to frame experiences that she indeed would like to remember like making and naming a porcelain doll after someone that she had to take care

of at one stage in her life. This person served as an affirmation of her self worth resulting in the doll becoming a reminder of this feeling-good emotion.

3.8.3.3 Moré on Beading

In the suite of Moré's creative skills as referred to above, one form of art stood out above the rest, the craft of beading. The way in which the craft of beading assists narrative conversations to me was just incredible.

There is a remarkable resemblance, practically speaking, between beading and the description of story being events, linked in sequence across time according to a plot (Morgan 2000:5). Beading makes memory concrete. Moré chooses specific gems and stones to be representative of people, past experiences, phases in her life and so forth (*events*). Beading gives Moré a handle on the *sequence* of events in her life: She can take stones out, add others, and change order, therefore plotting them *across time*. In all the beading that she did during the weeks we talked, there was a pivotal icon, a cross in the middle of every necklace that formed part of the *great plot* of her life. This middle icon represents the place that Moré's relationship with Jesus takes in her life. By placing the cross in the middle, she illuminates some of the reasons behind the tension leading up to the plot of the story of Moré and Mark. Indeed, it was obvious in our conversations that through all the times in her life, her personal relationship with God carried her through, as it is being reflected in the necklaces.

She made several bead works. The first, tell the story about her relationship with Mark. The second elaborates on the story of her life: mainly focusing on the greater movements. The third is specifically about the people in her life. It was this third bead necklace that she enjoyed the most as it revealed to her that there still are significant people in her life. Lastly, on her own accord she beaded one about a very good friend that she knows from primary school. Even after completing our specific research interviews, she tells me she is still busy with other beadworks. In the last work that she had done for research purposes, the

one about a long standing friend, every stone signifies something of her friend as a person. We noticed how one might use the beadwork by reaching into a specific area of interest in Moré's life. For example, it can be seen very clearly that the beadwork about her relationship with Mark fits in to a greater part of her life. Each stone can be augmented with people, places, feelings, and meaning. One could also cross reference from one beadwork back and forth to the beadwork on the story of her life.

The possibilities in beadwork seem endless. It is something that one can physically interact with. One may decide to wear it for a time in order to come to grips with the story of the relationship. Wearing it together with the beadwork of the influential people in one's life re-memembers one to powerful positive feedback from special people. The 'story of my life' beadwork reminds us that the total of one's life does not amount to certain bad incidents. Interestingly Moré relates differently to different colours: When she puts in a black bead it is to her a symbol of getting closure on some bad experience, "Dit is om dit vir God te gee" she says while the opposite is true for especially blue beads which signifies something that she treasures. When I asked, her how this revisiting of the good with the bad made her feel and she notes that often she would cry when busy with darker colours. About this, she feels comfortable: "Al is dit sleg is die bead 'n manier om te help ontlaai" (translated to: Even if it is bad it still helps to unpacks/ expresses/ get rid of...).

Furthermore, beading reveals patterns and ways of interacting with the world. She would look at the work or areas of the necklace and notice how certain things in her life kept reappearing, or she would say this or that time (generally moving her hand over part of the work) was a good or bad time in her life.

Bead work seems even more fascinating when considering the custom amongst some Christian young people wearing beads that tell the story of salvation: Yellow signifies heaven, green for growth, red for salvific work of Christ and so

forth. Alongside this wristlet developed with the various acronyms F.R.O.G, *fully rely on God* and W.W.J.D, *what would Jesus do*. Randomly asking people about it, it generally seems to indicate an expression of something important.

Ultimately, it becomes a declaration of who we desire to be in this world. In keeping with this idea, beading in narrative practise sustains our preferred identities and it may provide us, as for Moré with a sense of Mastery over her life.

3.8.3.4 Moré on music

There are interesting similarities between beadwork and the way in which Moré interacts with music. She expressly mentions two audio discs of Leon Ferreira (See Media 5.1.1 *Songs*). The song *Sonskynkind* directs her memory back to a time in her life when she had to take care of several children in a foster home. Particularly four year old Chantelle made an impression on her, leaving her with vivid, lasting memories and feelings of affection. In what way does this relate to bead work? As every stone directs Moré's memory to a person or time in her life, so does particular songs. The song connected with the memory evokes powerful emotions. Stated above, this particular song and the memory of Chantelle radiate the feeling of affection and appreciation. Being able to assist this child in some way made Moré felt appreciated. Moré coined this memory by fashioning a porcelain doll, which now is referential to this sense of appreciation.

Different songs speak to Moré differently. She reacts to certain negative feelings by exposing herself to positive musical input. She will listen to *My pa is die koning* (My dad is the king), a song declaring that God is our father, that he is our king and that we are his children when she feels subjugated by a negative self image. She connects Stefan to a song called *Die wenner in jou* (The winner in you) a song whereby one is encouraged not to blindly trust one's feelings. When upset she's likely to listen to *Al reën dit nou* (Even though it rains) in which it is said that our suffering is temporary and that God will let the sun shine on us again. In general, for reasons other than entertainment purposes she describes

the effects of music in her life as cleansing her from the inside (“Dit maak my hart skoon van binne”).

3.8.3.5 Elementary school teachers and narrative therapists

In our conversations, an interesting analogy developed between the role of the preparatory school teacher specifically between Moré’s perception on elementary school teachers and that of a narrative therapist. This came about through exploring the role of arts in Moré’s profession as a preschool teacher. The use of stories is vital to Moré. It is through story that her children are taught. This takes a tremendous amount of creativity as should be noticed that she develops her own stories. Naturally, this appealed to me as a minister and I reminded myself that the bible says that Jesus did not teach people unless it was through parables (Matthew 13:34, and throughout chapter 13). The *Multivertaling* bible (2004; *Matthew* translated by Joubert) interprets the greek text even more beautifully in referring to *beeldryke verhale* (image rich narratives). Sweet (1999:203) reminds his readers of this fact by saying the communication style of Jesus were a narrative style in which the truth lies in the telling, literally. This telling says Sweet (1999:203) was dominated by mental pictures that conveyed more than words. This narrative style of communication included parables, analogies, figures of speech, and startling metaphors to stir the sediment of people’s hearts and open their eyes to the deeper meanings of life (Sweet 1999:203). Paul Ricoeur (1975:29-148, according to Sweet 1999:203) has shown us that parables combine metaphoric process with narrative form. In other words, a parable is a narrative metaphor grounded in experience and carries heavy symbolic cargo (Sweet 1999:204).

Narrative therapy has always struck me as a very open sort of therapy, open to creativity and creative communication. What is therapy other than a learning experience or facilitation of growth? The difference in this regard with teaching as a profession is that the therapist does not work with a set curriculum or hidden agenda. The idea of growth speaks to me: Biologists might say that any

organism, which is not growing in some sense, is a dead organism. Any living thing therefore grows. I asked Moré about what her reward is in working with children. She said that helping them to develop sufficiently, helping them grow and develop so that they will be ready for the 'big' school physically, cognitively but also emotionally and spiritually gives her tremendous pleasure. We spoke about how she handles children that get hurt and that in relation to emotional growing. Eventually we said that the concept of growing emotionally is a never ending concept. In this sense, Moré is growing through a difficult time in her life. With reference to the idea of growth in the preparatory school context, she mentioned that the beading to her that week (2004/09/22) was especially upsetting and difficult to do. She did however pursue and finished up the bead necklace of which we had spoken the previous week. By doing this, in spite of the upsetting experience had enabled her to get a grip on the greater story of her life, to grow as her elementary school pupils grow. She was in effect, as I had heard professor Hagemann say with regard to movement, telling her story from a different perspective.

We concluded by remarking that Moré's personal teaching philosophy relates to narrative practise: Moré seeks out children's potential, their special abilities. She focuses on children's uniqueness. Narrative practise is local practise looking at the uniqueness of people, that which to people constitute their world, their realities. In the same way, we also want to reinforce, through people's own skills and abilities those realities that significantly render their lives meaningful.

I asked Moré if there is anything she would like to add to what we have already discovered about how art contributes to her growth. She reflects on our conversations saying the arts make things interesting, at times; it was a safe haven from reality. Ultimately, she concedes that it made her felt good, enabling her to get things out of her system and that doing something physical/ concrete aided her in expressing herself.

3.8.3.6 Various other crafts and its therapeutic use

At one of our later discussions, I asked Moré to mention all artistic things that we have been busy with. Apart from the above mentioned she noticed cross stitching, Stories and Journaling, Dance, and Porcelain. I then asked her these might have been therapeutic to her since she had on previous occasions alluded to its therapeutic use.

I will not attempt to write at length about these. They are however significant in differentiating between the use of different types of involvement with the arts (crafts in this sense). It became a very prominent idea in later discussions that the specific medium that is used opens different ways of thinking. The act that is of least significance to Moré in so far as we refer to arts therapeutic use is cross-stitching. This comes as close to a recreational activity or hobby as it might get for Moré. Even still, cross-stitching serves to her as a metaphor of getting things done. As she works at stitching to get to the big picture once the work is done, so it strengthens something that she stands for; being someone that persists in what she does so she can eventually stand back and look at a beautiful picture that had emerged through her persistence at some or other task.

She mentions that she had made a porcelain doll that resembles a little girl that she had looked after who has been deserted by her parents. This porcelain doll reminds her of the worth that she embodies, being able to mean something of worth to someone else. When I asked her, she noted: “Ja ek sou graag die porselein poppie vir haar wou gee as ek kon.” Sadly, she had made the doll only a while after the girl had to move to a foster care facility intended for bigger children. She noted that giving the doll to the little girl would have communicated something about reassurance, promising the girl that she will always be thinking about her. “What is different in making having a bead for the girl and having made a porcelain doll?” I asked her. The beading had a specific connection with reminding or assimilating feelings while to her the porcelain doll had a strong connection with the feeling of love situated specifically in utterly fragile medium of

porcelain. She relates another example by saying that only recently a girl at her elementary school whom had given her chocolates previously had given her a paper flower at this occasion. While the chocolates connote the idea of saying “I like you,” the paper flower says, “I know you like me.” Moré took this gift as saying that as the child needs only love not water since a paper flower does not need water. In her own words: “Die blommetjie is dalk op ‘n manier ‘n refleksie van die kind deurdat die kind sê dat ‘n papier blommetjie het nie water nodig nie, net liefde.”

Writing stories and doing journaling to Moré seems almost like breathing. She does this regularly. “Dit gaan oor my dag tot dag gevoelens. Ek sal dit opskryf en vergeet en net soms weer daarna kyk” she notes. Even if she were a very outspoken person, she says she would write. Often this happens before she engages in sorting things out verbally. As noted earlier this is the means by which she structures her thoughts. If for instance she would not have time to write prior to having to sort out some personal issue with someone she would still write afterwards. She would then merely include by way of reflection what the person has said. What is important here is to note that the arts is not necessarily an aid to verbal ways of expression, it becomes the adequate expression for Moré. The difference in stories and journaling is that stories often find its way in public expression without reference to the instigating experience while journaling is much more a private matter. Even more private is writing poems she says. I respectfully include these very private poems in this study with Moré’s much appreciated permission. She would like us to realise however that her poems reflect her deepest desires. In her own words: “My gedigte is my diepste hartsbegeertes, normaalweg sal ek dit vir my self hou want gedigte is wortels wat diep in jou hart geplant word.”

3.8.3.6.1 *Resonancy with Charlene*

I had planned to have Charlene on the research team. Jo spoke of Charlene and her quilt work that she does. Jo then invited me to listen to the story that

Charlene was going to tell one evening at a counselling course. I attended and afterwards discussed things relating to this study with Charlene. I had also written a reflection letter (03/09/2004) wherein I recounted our conversation. Although we had spoken a couple of times, Charlene could not throughout take part in the study.

Quilt work has made a significant contribution to standing tall in Charlene's life through extremely difficult circumstances. She tells of how she weaved the memories of significant people (See Moré's beadwork on significant people) into her quilt work. Somehow all the good and bad makes a picture in the quilt work.

It is interesting though that for both Moré and Charlene their craft helps them to forget. The discourse suggests that one needs to work through some bad experience; face it, so to speak. This does not seem to be the case. Meaningful remembering and active forgetting aid the healing process of these women.

3.8.3.7 Moré and dancing

At the CAM community discussion 2005/09/15, we briefly entertained the idea of dance therapy with a twist; the twist being that we referred to couples dance therapy as in social dancing, or accepted Latin and Ballroom dancing. This idea was extended by Moré on 2005/09/21.

One need not only think of dance therapy as in accepted dance therapy practices. This line of thinking surprised me and I was intrigued about the manner in which Moré as dancer of note says that she consistently relate to certain dances. I will only briefly mention these relations here but note underlying these connections lies a great deal of time spent in interviewing.

Tango: When she's feeling cheeky. (This is her favourite dance)

Waltz: Has positive connotations.

Boogie: Corresponds with feelings of excitement. ("Opgewondenheid")

- Foxtrot: General happy to neutral emotions.
Rumba: She relates this to the waltz but mentions its connotation with love.
Samba: Exuding aggressiveness.
Cha-Cha: Handling discontentment or angry feelings.
Eastern swing: No specific connotation (“Net ‘n lekker dans”)
Mambo: No specific connotation (“Net ‘n lekker dans”)

Most of these dances have a twofold function: It could be danced as an expression of something, as she would dance the Samba, or handling or directing an emotion. These might seem similar but the first is used to *dwell* in the emotion (forthcoming: Hagemann on *swelling* the moment; heading 3.10) and the second, a way of *getting rid* of or trying to do away with emotion. The latter also has a significant connection with technique and I asked Moré about technique since this was also a theme in my conversations with Gladys Agulhas. A certain emotion encompasses a certain technique; or rather, it assists the dancer in having the right attitude towards a specific dance.

Besides the difference between dance as *dwelling in* or *directing emotion*, it should also be noted that emotion can aid technique as much as technique can bring on certain emotions.

“How come one experiences certain emotions with certain dances?” I asked Moré. According to her, this has a lot to do with the *music* (including rhythm of course) that has come to be associated with different dances and the type of *movements* that is required by these dances. The cha-cha requires sharper, faster movements, which is accompanied by lively music and staccato like rhythms. The waltz has a pleasing effect on Moré since this requires more flowing and eloquent movements.

We laughed when I asked Moré on how she thinks these dances could be used in therapy. She notes that one might start with a dance that resembles the

feelings of the participants at that time and then along the way change the music and the dance. This doing, would also encompass talking about what happens.

Concerning all the creative things that Moré was busy with over the months she attests to the doing part and not the talking part that has been of more significance to her. However, she notes that the talking part was also important and that the doing needs to be brought into relation to the talking.

3.9 *Marinus and the Multimedia landscape*

3.9.1 Practical exposition of Vogler's model in Marinus' involvement

The following presentation of Marinus' story will be told with the aid of Vogler's (1999) story movements and characters. In *The Writers Journey*, Christopher Vogler (1999:xiii) suggests that one will find elements of the following story movements and characters in most stories across all cultures but expresses the concern that these story movements should not be used as a formula (Vogler 1999:xii). Consequently, I will be guided by Marinus' own temporal sequencing which is embodied in the characters and movements that Vogler (1999) suggests.

Note the reason I use this model: The idea about the use of story theory, in this case Vogler's (1999) model was instigated by conversations with professor Hagemann. It has helped me in thinking about participants' stories in terms of sequence, characters, events, and so forth. Whether this was helpful to Marinus, was for him to decide.

3.9.2 A Story about a Multimedia dream by *Marinus & Elmo*

Marinus' *Ordinary World* consisted of being an IT manager at a grocery store. Upon an open call to join the arts ministry, he then responded. From the story of an arts ministry perspective Marinus climbing on board refers to allies on the arts journey. However, as far as his own story goes this involvement takes on the movement of accepting the *Call to Adventure* not knowing where this would lead

him. On this journey, the environment of the church in connection with the arts ministry fulfils the role of a *Mentor* figure. It is here that his passion and experience along with feedback on the journey is the teacher. His journey crosses the arts journey where we realised that he became a friend and sojourner to the arts and the people involved in the arts team and the congregation.

Along the road, all the different projects fulfil the role of tests; people in the congregation who might not appreciate this art form, *Threshold Guardians*, rather than enemies. The growing realisation of a feeling of discontentment at work along with the realisation that the things he does at church is actually, what he wants to do, provide for a strong villain type energy in his story.

This intersection between discouragement at work and the fulfilment of a multimedia dream serves as the *Second Threshold* prior to the *Ordeal*. It is at this junction that Marinus decided to come and see me. Out of this feeling of discouragement, we realised that some reconnaissance work would be required in terms of financial and emotional perseverance and strategy. This reconnaissance work is in most cinema stories a natural occurrence in some or other way in the movement *Approaching the Inmost Cave* after which the *Ordeal* follows.

Neither¹¹⁹ the outcome of my own, nor his journey is secure but it's a battle in which we are determined to see each other through. In very real terms, the *Reward* for Marinus would be that moment in which he would realise two things a) that he is in a position to fulfil his dream and b) living the consequences of this dream.

¹¹⁹ This dream of a multimedia company or ministry is something that I share with him. The company that we had started, *eminent multimedia productions* is directly related to this research; it has its roots in considerations and discussions revolving around this research and the arts, but also having had compiled and aesthetically attended to the multimedia disc and some of its content.

Marinus, heading the multimedia ministry in our congregation became involved; responding to a church bulletin invitation I had placed. As time went by, he became increasingly consumed by his passion for multimedia, a passion that I share with him primarily from the possibilities that multimedia offer as an art form to be used in narrative practise. He developed to such an extent in skill and enthusiasm that he seriously considers leaving his current post as an IT (information technology) manager for the multimedia industry.

The above mentioned involvement with the arts department can be seen as his call to adventure. At this stage, the first threshold has to do with financial and time considerations. He would like to do more of what he does at church, making presentations, doing digital videography, editing and so forth but his job simply does not allow this.

The primary theme in our discussions concerning multimedia has to do with the question: "In what way is a presentation, video etcetera used in the church" For instance when listening to White (1997:9) there is an interplay between words and images. Biblical art especially would not have been speaking so effectively if it was not for the biblical narratives on which they are based. Listening to professor Sweet one should be cautious not to step into the trap of the image being an add-on to words. While speaking to someone from a sister church at professor Sweet's conference she 'points' out that PowerPoint in most churches is still power 'points' referring to the ways in which in a modernistic framework media would be used.

3.9.3 A Multimedia journey

I was curious about how Marinus would go about using multimedia to say something about his own journey. After a few weeks he presented me with a video (See Media 5.2.1 *A multimedia journey*) and the following descriptions that I had translated to English (See Addendum K3.):

My initial inspiration for the presentation came from Vogler's, *Writers Journey*. The reason for this inspiration is found in that I saw my own story in the movements that is described.

The video presentation starts with an *ordinary world* that I try to depict. Something was missing though in this ordinary world: I came to the realisation that without God and prayer in my life, I am in fact almost nothing and I get nowhere. I knew that I had to start listening to what God wants to tell me. In this, I found my *call to adventure*. The Lord through his Holy Spirit guided me and I begun to see where he wanted to use. This is a difficult road that I have to take full of fear and enemies. Still, by trusting and continual praise, I experience his almighty power and do I keep on going.

Then it is as if one enters a dream world. God sometimes works in peculiar ways that one doesn't understand immediately. Yet it doesn't take too long before noticing and then one is filled with amazement. We are God's children for whom he cares greatly. He will always keep his protective hand around us. Embraced by his protection he sends us into the world to spread his word.

I realised that every person has his own way of being a witness. Through multimedia, so also I can witness and spread his word. Sometimes I try hard on my own to solve my problems and then I just make things worse. However, when I sincerely pray and put everything in his hands I receive the guidance and power needed and even miracles happen. It doesn't matter that not everything is always okay. Just keep on trusting. The Lord don't want us to go through life alone. He wants to share each moment and always be with us. It does happen that we stray and give in to temptation. He has already overcome Satan and the world and through the Holy Spirit, he breaks us free.

I cannot cease to give him praise for what he had done in my life and are still busy doing. He has brought the most wonderful people on my road through which he then also works. Even if I go through dark valleys, [and Marinus now quotes a song we sing in worship, which I will transcribe shortly] you are there in my times of need. Your arms embrace me and carry me. Through the cold of winter, nights or the dry desert my cup overflows because you are there. You hear my voice when I call on you and your peace fills my heart.

(Marinus 30/09/2005)

When reading this, one can see how Marinus sees his life and interaction with multimedia as a journey. On this journey, God is ever present although not always noticeable. It is through the journey, through trust that God becomes visible. His reaction towards God is that of praise, but then specifically through multimedia. Multimedia becomes praise in Marinus' life despite the content of the video. The performance of the art through intentionality becomes part of a reciprocal relationship between God and Marinus.

He is of tremendous worth to the creative arts ministry and consequently contributes greatly to the congregation's discovery of the ability of multimedia to direct attention towards God.

3.9.4 A Multimedia congregational story

Marinus, Bianca, and I have worked extensively from the arts ministry side, in introducing and using multimedia in the daily life of the church. Surely, we have made mistakes but my personal aim has always been the augmentation of the larger story of the church.

Our church has opted for a network model as opposed to a hierarchical business structured or pastor centred approach. To a large degree, the core ministries of

the network are also the core of the church. These ministries at this time of the journey are referred to as i) Youth ministry, ii) Outreach ministry, iii) Family care, iv) Arts and Creativity, and v) Equipping ministry.

In an effort to accentuate and market these ministries the arts ministry was requested to help in this regard. Marinus and I decided to use movies and story movements to bring about understanding of these ministries. On the media disc, we have included an example we have used for a promotional presentation about the Creative Arts ministry. We did not see it fit then to elaborately explain the analogies between the film *What dreams may come?* to the Creative Arts ministry. Here too suffice to say that the Creative arts ministry is about entering a world wherein the impossible becomes possible, dull becomes colour; sorrow becomes joy (See Media 4.2 *Creative arts ministry presentation*). Undoubtedly, so there were voices of discontentment succeeding some media presentations. Most of those of whom we know experienced it very positive.¹²⁰

Most important information is also referred to in the digital bulletin/ diary that Bianca and Marinus prepare. This digital bulletin is screened prior to the service and sometimes in the offering. This serves the bigger purpose of connecting the congregation with the story of the church as it breathes in and out from one week to another.

There are also a team of volunteers that assist the preacher in compiling a visual presentation of the most important movements in the sermon. Lately however I've come to realise just how modernistic this notion of presenting sermon 'points' really is. For my own sermons I have started moving away from illustrative 'points' to rather using images in a postmodern paradigm (See Media 2. *Points versus Images*).

¹²⁰ For interest sake: For the Outreach ministry we used the film *Pay it forward*. For the youth ministry although edited for the narrative youth counselling course we used *Lord of the Rings* (See Media 4.1 Quest youth ministry presentation), for our skills ministry we used the concept of the opening and closing of doors in *Monsters Inc*.

3.9.5 Describing multimedia

When thinking about multimedia we not only refer to everything that could be done on a computer. The term is inclusive of television, videos, photography (printed or digitally preserved). In this regard, Minette Vari's art is multimedia as well as Bianca's use of digital photography, and so also the printed photographs from the Arts and Reconciliation conference. Media more often than not requires the use of some form of recognised technology, mechanical or digital. I regard photography (phototherapy) therefore more as being situated within multimedia and art therapy as situated within visual or fine art irrespective of final content.¹²¹

3.9.6 Following up on Photography

Bianca's interaction with photography was especially interesting. Her creative resilience is what seemed to have saved her from the taunting voice of death at that time in her life. Quite unexpectedly, this led to my first encounter with phototherapy; amazed I was to find that there is such a thing: There has been since 1975 when professional photographer and therapist Weiser was asked to come up with a title for this process of using clients' pictures in therapy. Six months later saw the birth of the first International Phototherapy Symposium in Illinois (Weiser 1993: xiii).

Elsewhere I have referred to the influence of depth-psychology in the arts therapies. So also according to Weiser's (1993) reference, it might be traced in the use of photography and even drawings in art therapy. She states: "Some theorist-authors [by names of Akeret and Lesy: *own insertion*] base their entire practice on the assumption that they already know what people's photographs are about, and that they can instruct readers to decipher a photograph much like a book" (Weiser 1993:xvi). "Similarly, many postmodernist art theorists and critics suggest that it is possible to decode and mentally take apart the visual

¹²¹ This is a helpful distinction as appreciators of art might know recall movements such as realism and photorealism in modern art where it was aimed to reproduce objects and photographs as realistic as possible (See Arnason 1986:23).

“texts” of photographs according to pre-established rules for interpretation” (Weiser 1993:xvi).

I do concede with Weiser (1993: xvii) that it may be possible to at least partially explore some embedded meanings in this manner. She refers to advance guidelines and mentions amongst others a specific awareness of the privileges of power, culture, gender, race, and so forth that will enable one to understand and translate according to those given rules. “Nevertheless, in such case, your “truth” will still be only relative to the reality of the person who authored those guidelines – and thus may be totally irrelevant to someone else whose values system is altogether different” (Weiser 1993:xvii). This strongly resonates for me with a social constructionist approach wherein truth is *situated* truth that might not be applicable to different communities. It is for these reasons that she says that her book (1993) does not give reasons on how to read meanings of someone else’s photographs for them. She advocates what she describes as a *collaborative therapist-client approach to the journey* where the image can permit people to bring to light their own associations and feelings about the picture (Weiser 1993: xvii). The framework in which these associations are brought to life corresponds to each position a person might take with regard to a camera: “...as the *subject*, having a picture taken of yourself by someone else (who arranged or chose the moment to capture); as the *photographer*, doing the picture-taking (of others, scenery, objects, or whatever else catches your eye). As the *photographic director*, posing for a shot of you, but making all the choices involved (including control over the moment the shutter pushes). As the “*curator*” of the photos in your own personal collection that have special meaning for you, such as those found in albums, on desktops, or on the walls of your home. Finally, as the *reflective viewer* looking at photos of your own, shown to you by others, or “found” in magazines, gallery exhibits, in greeting cards, and the like” (Weiser 1993:xvii-xviii, *italics*; own insertion for emphasis). The five techniques of phototherapy however relates more directly to the possible relationships between person and camera or person and photo: “These are (1) photos taken of the

client, (2) photos taken by the client, (3) photos of the client by the client (self-portraits), and (4) biographical snapshots, often of groups of friends or family, in which the client may or may not be included (parties, weddings, family gatherings, and so forth) (Weiser 1993:13). The fifth technique is what Weiser calls the projective technique (as in projective onto photographs), in that it deals with the ways and reasons that a person gets any meaning from any photograph in the first place (Weiser 1993:13). Weiser (1993:14-15) lists numerous ways of working with photos and even related media such as video therapy that entail the use of multiple techniques in one process.

3.9.7 The return of The Good the Bad and the Ugly

Often one finds sequels to films: *The Fast and the Furious*, resulting in *too fast too furious*. Matrix, Star wars, The Lord of the Rings, Harry Potter all serve as examples. Themes are often picked up in prior films. This entails the notion of reincorporation (Kopett 2002:85) which according the theory of story is a good device. So then, it is also throughout the writing up of this research project that we mesh past present and future. Here we consciously return to the abovementioned heading as it relates to photography.

It was interesting to encounter this idea in the phototherapy techniques as described by Weiser (1993). She begins her book by acknowledging this view of the unity of experience, stating its evidence of the past, present and a possible future:

Photographs are footprints of our minds, mirrors of our lives, reflections from our hearts, frozen memories we can hold in silent stillness in our hands – forever, if we wish. They document not only where we may have been but also pint the way to where we might perhaps be going, whether we know it yet or not. We should converse with them often and listen well to the secrets their lives can tell.

(Weiser 1993:1)

She brings this in relation with how meaning is formed. She asserts to the strong visual component to our experiences, and to our memories of these experiences. In this re-visioning [own interpretation of her process] of experience through primarily visual stimuli establishes a *meaning making* process. In this regard, "...meaning doesn't really exist "out there" apart from us, but rather in the relationship between the stimulus object and the perceiver" (Weiser 1993:1). She further underscores ideas put forth in chapter one by following that it isn't just beauty that is in the eye of the beholder; our idea of reality itself is based on our perceptions. If we notice something, it is because it has some kind of meaning for us. If we don't notice it, it hasn't stood out as distinct; in some ways it doesn't exist for us at all. When we first perceive an object, it is already etched with our personal meaning (Weiser 1993:1). A meaningful present and future is therefore under construction, informed by things and people of significance in the past.

Informed by Bianca's experience I admit that it is quite plausible that most of us think, feel, and recall memories not in words directly, but rather in iconic imagery: inner, silent thought-pictures (sometimes accompanied by kinaesthetic or other cues), and visual codes and concepts" (Weiser 1993:3).

This significantly relates to Bianca's digital photography experience: Life once might have been good, it became bad (diabetes, depression, social unconnectedness) in this informed her of an ugly future. However, she said that now when Problem overwhelmed her she could decide to take a blanket lie on the grass and take digital pictures of everything (people and things) that she recognised as worth living for. I would describe this as making a statement in favour of life; a statement in favour of a future in which she wishes for ongoing significant connectedness or relationships with things and people she does love or espouse as worth living for.

3.9.8 Responses to Photographs

Weiser (1993:4) relates how in her experience people respond to photographs¹²² being a curious thing, a thin piece of paper. This piece of paper people perceive three-dimensionally, as if alive, as if existing in the moment: “The moment we look at, inside its borders, is *now*; we are *there*, within the space and time of that image, as if really physically there ourselves (Weiser 1993:4). A photograph becomes a transitional object that a bridge without our even realizing this is happening. “Looking at a photo of our relatives of a hundred years ago, we conceptually process the image as if we are seeing them alive in front of us at that moment, and we are right there, across from them, looking on. Our mind achieves a cognitive leap that equates looking at the photo with being in the actual scene (Weiser 1993:4).

This sense of being in the scene, the transference of the self into the photo has for Weiser to do with emotion:

Someone once told me a photo was paper with “emotion” all over it; of course, he meant emulsion, but the malapropism stayed with me. Photographs are emotionally charged, as if electromagnetically etched. Indeed, we can never view our personal photos dispassionately. In fact, these small pieces of paper are empowered far beyond their apparent value; their significance resonates to and from people, over the past and into the future.

(Weiser 1993:4)

A photograph she concludes has the special quality of being simultaneously a *realistic illusion* and an *illusory reality*, a moment captured – yet never fully captured. She explains it in the following manner:

¹²² It might be worthwhile for the reader to have a look at some of the photographs included under the Fatherhood project, heading 3.13.7.1 or see Addendum F. For best viewing see the enclosed multimedia disc (Media 7.2).

We use film to stop time, which cannot be stopped. These aspects are crucial for an understanding of why (and how) Phototherapy works: it permits the complex examination of a slice of time frozen on film as a “fact,” and it also allows an endless variety of “realities” to be revealed as each viewer responds to it differently. Every snapshot has stories to tell, secrets to share, and memories to bring forth.

(Weiser 1993:4)

Extending this argument she notes that frequently the meaning of a snapshot, as interpreted by the viewer turns out to be far less significant than their explanations of *why* what they know is true and *how* they know that it is true (Weiser 1993:5). A conversation about a photograph then consists of interpretations and remarks on two levels, what a photo is about emotionally as well as what it shows visually. It is apparent that meaning seems to grow from the interaction with the photograph. This growth says Weiser (1993:5), is related to the exploration of the context of the picture. I would like to extend the argument of *contextual influence* to its plural form. What I mean by this is that meaning seems to grow in relation to the exploration of the *contexts* involved. This relates to the notion of re-figuration becoming pre-figuration for the next inquiry that extends through configuration to refiguration, which is again pre-figuration for the next inquiry and so forth. See Addendum P and heading, 3.5.5.1.5 on exegetical considerations. Weiser underscores this idea when saying: “No matter how large the photograph, it is never more than a detail of an even larger picture of life in space and time. Its significance grows as we learn more about its context” (Weiser 1993:5).

3.10 Professor Hagemann on the arts

Throughout our discussions professor Hagemann referred to different kinds of theatre such as Playback theatre and Echo theatre, these relate to Forum theatre. This had me thinking about the term Industrial theatre that I have heard in my conversations with Henk from *The Learning Theatre*. Professor Hagemann

felt that drama in Industrial Theatre more often than not merely have a normalising function, to rather ease the way for leaders within a hierarchical structure to state their leadership intention. This use of theatre amounts to brainwashing the audience. Previously he had been involved in Industrial theatre. He refers to an incident that he had with a big recognised organisation. Upon learning of some of the dilemmas within the organisation wanted to stage the conflict and wanting the employees take part in whatever solution might present it. This to the leadership was no option for they wanted to propagate their own solution. According to this idea or paradigm of leadership (that of a top-down approach) theatre would then take on the function of softening (normalising) employee's emotions. Professor Hagemann felt that Industrial theatre is very much a non-dialogical approach. It's used almost like given someone something to eat in order to silence him or her. However, professor Hagemann corrected me (2005/05/19) in saying that my account of his words is a bit over defined. He explains that "Industrial theatre is usually very didactic in its nature but it doesn't have to be. So what I'm saying is not that it's the nature of the theatre that's at fault but the way in which it is used." We were then of opinion that this is probably most, often the way in which Industrial theatre is used. He elaborates by saying that this is probably the context in which Africa and particularly South Africa is finding itself, referring to the new shifts in power; structures that capitalism has brought with it. "Since the borders of the country has opened up there's new imperatives, and globalisation I think is disturbing many people; the way it doesn't regard borders, and it washes across countries." In the context of his comment we noted that Forum theatre would most likely be the type of theatre that narrative practise would use; which is open to different voices and not easily used in a didactic, moralizing fashion.

Over against this top-down approach, we encounter Forum theatre in which the idea of theatre is not misused and reduced to having mainly a normalising function. Professor Hagemann told the story of Boal Augusto's use of Forum theatre. In Rural Greece, there once was a young woman whom according to

custom could not go and walk about in public without the permission of a male, a girl's father. With her father being permanently absent she faces a dilemma for the only other male in the immediate family was her little brother. Consequently, she now has to ask her little brother's permission every time she wants to go about in public.

With the use of Forum theatre, this whole scenario was sketched in the community. The actors played out the scenario up until the moment of choice, to where the young nineteen-year-old women needed to appear in public. At this point, a joker person turns discussion towards the community and the different opinions were played through. Soon one could see how ridiculous the situation really is. It was granted the young woman to in the future ask her uncle instead of her little brother to appear in public.

This story had me thinking about the criteria for narrative practise in corporate organisations. This would certainly imply that the narrative facilitator adhere to its own paradigm by which he might lose valuable clients in the corporate environment. Following these thoughts I realised that *The Learning Theatre* would not fall strictly solely in the category of Industrial theatre.

In our exploration of the interaction between Narrative and Drama I at one time asked professor Hagemann why 'drama' and not just help people tell their stories. This led us repeatedly to the idea of movement. Professor Hagemann is of opinion that we have in our urbanised way of living started to deny ourselves the bodily experience in relating to each other. Non-urbanised people it seems most of the time act things out such as would primitive or non-westernised cultures. Merely speaking to each other is very much an academic pursuit. Accordingly the things that we say and the way in which we say it asks for a logical arrangement in order for it to be experienced as true. In this sense, causality is very much the inheritance of a modernistic paradigm. However, through stories as an art form in its own right it is possible for even conflicting

moralties to coincide. In keeping with these ideas to professor Hagemann the arts incorporates the whole body in the same way as the body experiences a dream as real. However, a dream may be very bizarre and we'll find that in the telling of the dream a critical reflection kicks in meaning that we need structuring which relates to helping people tell their stories. In this example, drama serves the function of thickening the moment and Professor Hagemann commonly used the word, the 'swelling' of the moment. In all this, the telling of the story is not true to the experience of life but is an act of plotting our memory. Through the use of drama story becomes a 'body experience' that of 'being in the moment'. The use of drama in this way as explained by professor Hagemann ricochet, catches up, and pulls together experiences.

I asked professor Hagemann what his life might have been like without drama. This to him was a difficult question at first replying that he has no idea. He then explains his fascination with drama:

My fascination with drama is the exploration, of others, of stories, of events of why do people do things like that, can they do things differently. The way in which I've walked into the world has always been *why* and I've spent a lot of time looking before I move or act. I think I would have still asked those questions and found other ways of answering them. Drama is quite nice though because you can pretend and go through the experiences.

(Professor Hagemann 2005/05/19)

Although many case studies could be told, I have chosen only one that is found at heading 4.9.1. Apart from this one, which I regard of importance on the interface between story and drama, note that it, is the local stories that is of importance in the first instance.

3.10.1 Conversational Interaction

What stood out to me about our discussions was the idea of movement. As the research process was augmented with other interviews and voices, I began to understand more of this notion of movement. *Movement* in conversation with professor Hagemann related to inward movement such as having a cathartic experience based on for instance stories. It extends further however to *how* inward movement effects physical movement and vice versa... This is also a dance therapy perspective. Our conversations did not just encompass movement themes. Following is thoughts on memory, conflict, creative thinking, story theory, quality of art (relating to professional skills) and interpretation.

3.10.1.1 Selective Memory

It stood out to me that professor Hagemann affirmed the narrative idea that any given story does not reveal/ tell all there is to know. It's almost as if it is part of our memory to have to forget. This resonates with what I have been referring to in chapter one that a metaphor obscures almost proportionately to the amount that it reveals or discloses. Consequently, the arts used in a metaphorical sense will always shut out certain happenings.

3.10.1.2 The notion of conflict

"Drama survives on conflict!" professor Hagemann says. This is an interesting statement. We then talked about conflict in therapy and he imparts the idea that one would supposedly try to postpone conflict as long as possible. Conflict should here not only be understood as, for instance, two people quarrelling. Professor Hagemann explains himself in the following illustration of how conflict could be postponed to the benefit of a therapeutic co-participant: The therapist might start by saying: "Well I want to be a pirate. Okay, lets all be pirates. What do pirates wear? How do they talk? If we are to attack another ship, what do you suppose we do first when we get there, draw our guns or what?" This serves the purpose of engaging the imagination first prior to letting the conflict take

place, creating energy that might instigate change. Conflict seen in this way is similar to the Action phase narrative research the follows an ABDCE approach.

In a previous part, I referred to Boal Augusto's work following professor Hagemann's reference. The notion of conflict is also evident in working with Forum theatre especially referring to the example of societal values. Professor Hagemann was relating this to the idea of *multiple possibilities of moment of choice*. According to this idea, a scenario could be acted out using Forum theatre until the critical moment of conflict. By pausing, the act it now becomes possible for people to see multiple possibilities in that moment whereby better choices could be taken.

3.10.1.3 Six thinking hats

In the following part, we will look at the *Six Thinking Hats* of Edward de Bono. Although we arrived at this from our discussions on conflict professor Hagemann considered this to be of value in considering how it relates to conflict in corporate meetings. I have mentioned to him at times that I find narrative therapy/ practise in general to be a creative practise that always tries to explore possibilities and alternative helpful realities. He then remarked that Edward de Bono is certainly one of the greatest creative thinkers of our time and that one can't afford to overlook his work regarding anything creative whether this be in regard to a creative therapy (as narrative therapy), corporate facilitation and so on.

In the CAM community discussions, participants commented on how it is interesting to note that family members display an inclination to one or the other way of thinking or feeling. Elna noticed how this was especially interesting to realise that she uses a certain hat while her husband mostly another.

I provide the following summary as a background to the six thinking hats:

Early in the 1980s, Dr. de Bono invented the Six Thinking Hats method. The method is a framework for thinking and can incorporate lateral thinking. Valuable judgmental thinking has its place in the system but is not allowed to dominate as in normal thinking... The six hats represent six modes of thinking and are directions to think rather than labels for thinking. That is, the hats are used proactively rather than reactively.

The method promotes fuller input from more people. In de Bono's words, it "separates ego from performance." Everyone is able to contribute to the exploration without denting egos as they are just using the yellow hat or whatever hat. The six hats system encourages performance rather than ego defence. People can contribute under any hat even though they initially support the opposite view. The key point is that a hat is a direction to think rather than a label for thinking. The key theoretical reasons to use the Six Thinking Hats are to: encourage parallel Thinking, encourage full-spectrum thinking and separate ego from performance.

(Sylvie Labelle¹²³: <http://members.optusnet.com.au>)

The biggest contribution of the six thinking hats to our discussion concerns its use as externalisation. Through this, people are given the freedom of expression without being labelled as a dreamer, judgemental and so forth. Thus, the apparent reason for its use in therapy, as the reason for its success¹²⁴ in organisations could possibly be that it creates a safe/ unthreatening environment for participants' experiences. Herewith one might better engage in discussion and explore ideas, feelings, or beliefs concerning delicate problem saturated topics.

¹²³ See References for full website details.

¹²⁴ "Organizations such as Prudential Insurance, IBM, Federal Express, British Airways, Polaroid, Pepsico, DuPont, and Nippon Telephone and Telegraph, possibly the world's largest company, use Six Thinking Hats"

It seems that a prerequisite for this type of being together is the commitment or to the process or at least contentment to the basic agreed upon values of the specific community.

The White hat

White is said to be the neutral hat. While wearing the white hat we ignore arguments and proposals. We examine that which is understood by the community, organisation, and family as the facts, figures, and information that we have, and identify what information we don't have, and how we might get it.

Examples

What information do we have here?

What information is missing?

What information would we like to have?

How are we going to get the information?

The Red hat

Red connotes feelings, hunches, and intuition. It allows people to freely put forward their feelings without the need for apology, explanation or attempt to justify them. Intuition may be a composite judgement based on years of experience, and it can be valuable even if the reasons behind it cannot be spelled out consciously.

Examples

Putting on my red hat, this is what I think about the project...

My gut feeling is that it will not work.

I don't like the way this is being done.

My intuition tells me that prices will fall soon.

The Black hat

The black hat is the logical negative. It is the hat of caution and critical judgement. It is the most used hat, and perhaps the most valuable hat since mistakes may be disastrous. At the same time, it is very easy to overuse the black hat; it is easy to kill creative ideas with early negativity.

Examples

The regulations do not permit us to do that

We do not have the production capacity to meet that order

When we tried a higher price the sales fell off

He has no experience in export management

The Yellow hat

The yellow hat is for reasoned optimism, wilfully seeking the logical positive view of things. While wearing this hat one looks for feasibility and how something can be done rather than just saying that things are not possible. It looks for benefits though they must be logically based.

Examples

That might work if we moved the production plant nearer to the customers.

The benefit would come from repeat purchases.

The high cost of energy would make everyone more energy efficient.

The green hat

The green hat stands for creative thinking, new ideas, and additional alternatives. Putting on the green hat makes time and space for creative effort. This is where we engage in lateral thinking and other creative techniques. This signifies a collaborative effort and commitment from the group to inquire from each other different possibilities.

Examples

We need some new ideas here.

Are there any additional alternatives?

Could we do this in a different way?

Could there be another explanation?

The blue hat

The blue hat is the thinking overview or process control hat. It is usually used by the chairperson, facilitator, therapist, and so forth. This hat sets the agenda for thinking: It suggests the next step for thinking. This hat asks for summaries, conclusions, and decisions

Examples

We have spent far too much time looking for someone to blame.

Could we have a summary of your views?

I think we should take a look at the priorities?

I suggest we try some green hat thinking to get some new ideas?

At a CAM community discussion (2005/09/15), Berna noted how Jo (a narrative therapist on the research team) used hats and scarves at a previous workshop to reflect something of where they were at, at that certain moment of the workshop. People could choose which hat they want to wear. We wondered if it would be possible to use this type of method of Jo together with the coloured hats. Hereby a certain character that is played would also assume a specific thinking pattern (colour) that could eventually even be acted out.

Talitha remarked about how the coloured hats allows for the free expression of emotion. It provides the safety in which one could explore different emotions. The six thinking hats could therefore run parallel to role-play or drama. For Berna's next workshop session with Jo they need to dress *in character*; the character should reveal something of where they are at emotionally, at that moment.

Whether it concerns acting or putting on different hats, Talitha is of opinion that it might some times be useful to be *out-of character*, taking on a role or hat that one would not usually do. In this sense, again she asserts that the hats provide a safe place from where to explore feelings, attitudes and so forth.

3.10.2 Quality of art in narrative practise

At some stage, I had a compelling concern for the integrity of the artist and art form if one were to explore its possibilities narrative process. It is very easy to say one employs what arts therapies have to offer without respecting the art form or the artist that underwent extensive training in her/ his craft. Consequently, the artist might feel belittled and feel that her craft is not used in excellence.

From this, the question arise with regard to what is more important, the process (such as a therapeutic process in which the arts might be used), or the regard for the skill in the arts that is being utilised. In my experience most therapists, facilitators and so forth exhibit a certain disregard for the full potential of a specific art form. As long as the process is a good process, they are happy with the lesser form of skill in art. For instance, as long as having a child drawing a picture serves some or other purpose they might never consider using a real painter. Therefore, it becomes a trade off between the process and the skill/quality of art. If by now, the reader still thinks that this research is only about having children drawing pictures and how this might work in narrative therapy, or using clay in organisational facilitation this part will hopefully clear up that grave misunderstanding. This study wants to take the artist and his work seriously.

The desire that this study expresses towards the credibility of the arts and artist was acknowledged by professor Hagemann. He championed this idea by clarifying from his experience that the better the quality of the arts (and measurement of skill thereof), the better the therapeutic process. Certainly, it is not said that skill is a requirement if the arts were to be used in any type of

therapy. However, as professor Hagemann says one should try to “embody character with skill.” Consequently, the more skill embedded in the process, the fuller the experience. Quality and skill result in a more compelling experience for the participant. This point is illustrated by professor Hagemann from the world of cinematography: When watching a movie one’s whole body is accessed in the sense that although we know an event is not real, our bodies still reacts to it physically as if it is for that moment real. Professor Hagemann proposed that embedded or parallel to the therapeutic process one might have a “skills period” that might instil a sense of realness. Furthermore, this would also make it safe a person to express him/ her with confidence in the art form. This makes sense, since for many people the use of the arts creates a sense of anxiety and it is thus experienced as threatening although they will consider going to arts therapists.

Professor Hagemann exclaims that in our western culture we have become uncomfortable in expressing ourselves in bodily fashion. Hereby, our comfort zone has decreased to the spoken language, from where the discourse of the importance of verbal communication is sustained. It seems that for some the only magic potion in the world, the final answer to any problem is the ability to communicate, a discourse that is being somewhat¹²⁵ deconstructed in my own life ensuing from being busy with the arts.

It is indeed also felt that the perceived primacy of the spoken language should be respected and that one should be very careful in using the arts in any therapeutic practise, facilitative processes etcetera. It is also in this context that the aforementioned *skills period* was mentioned. Professor Hagemann states that when considering to use the arts in any transitional growth period (be it therapy or facilitation in corporations) one might be making a grave mistake “to engage people in action without preparation.” He supported this argument by illustrating

¹²⁵ I do think that we will always need verbal communication but indeed to some degree. Verbal communication is not the alpha and omega of therapeutic practise. Stated somewhat lyrically but interpretations can be painted, reflections can be danced.

that some people might be more comfortable dealing with “imagery of their life” as used in sand or play therapy as they would be with bodily expression.

To summarise these paragraphs then: Skill enhances the quality of the process. A skills period will help people get comfortable and confident in expressions through their chosen art form. In aspiring to skill in any process, whether it comes from outside (like a skilled artist participating in the process, such as *Learning Theatre* involvement) or internally through a skills period or modification of the idea one should be sensitive to peoples preferred manner of expression. While some might risk dancing others will prefer stationary art, painting, sand play, sculpture, music, and so forth.

3.10.3 Interpretational

All our discussions, also those with other participants made me realise that as a creative arts minister I should ask better questions. I should help people interact in more significant ways with any given artistic representation in the congregation. It is not enough to merely theoretically approve of allowing people to interpret. Informed by Professor Sweet one should also try instilling a sense of participation (Sweet 1999, *EPIC*: participation). In a sense, although not the aim, this is what narrative therapists, ministers and facilitators do; help people interact better with their preferred realities, hopes, and desires.

This enhanced interaction could result from specifically asking more creative questions. Professor Hagemann, in reference to any art form remarks that instead of merely asking “What is there?” one should extend the interaction to “What could it be?” These questions resonate strongly with the six thinking hats and the idea of parallel thinking advocated by Edward de Bono (2004). Following the language of the *six thinking hats*, the first question is an observational question (statistics, figures, perceived facts – typical white hat thinking). The second question exemplifies green hat thinking or creative thinking, seeing alternatives and possibilities.

This line of thinking positions the arts in an interpretational framework that is very comfortably attuned to narrative practise and social constructionist ideas. Professor Hagemann shares his thought on interpretation. He alludes to the idea of *reception theory*. It was not uncommon in the past that the artist wanted to communicate X in doing a certain work, making artwork Y then serves that purpose. Success is then achieved if audience group C understands the content of what Y says about what X's intention was. Professor Hagemann explains that nowadays many artists acknowledge that any given work of art speaks back to us while working on it as if to guide us on how to complete it. Furthermore, the work is open to interpretation as soon as it is released in public, whether this public is knowledgeable or not with regard to the work and the medium. Herein lies a distinct difference in utilising the arts in therapeutic or facilitative practises over against "art as semiotic fact" as it is introduced by Mukařovský (1934) in his paper of the aforementioned title as translated by Titunik (1976:x).

Mukařovský (1934) arrives at the conclusion that the objective study of art must regard the work of art as a sign involving (1) a perceivable form created by an artist (i.e., signans), (2) an internalized signification (i.e., signatum), and, moreover, (3) a relationship of an oblique kind, metaphoric or other, with the social context to which the binary character of sign refers (i.e., designatum). Thus the work of art is viewed as an intermediary between the creator and the community capable of meaningful interpretation of the artefact. Mukařovský (1934) warns that failure to recognize the semiotic nature of art, with its indissoluble structure of signans and signatum, subjects a work of art to potential distortion or loss of meaning.

If its semiotic properties are disregarded, a work of art may appear as a mere design of formal constituents or, at the other extreme, a kind of psychological or even physiological case study or a piece of evidence about ideological, economic, or social conditions. The work of art,

Mukařovský' insists, precisely owing to its semiotic character, stands in a special relationship with its social context, and only after interpretations of that oblique relationship can the work's "documentary value" be properly assessed.

(Titunik 1976: x)

Professor Hagemann and I talked about the idea of art as *semiotics* (See Index sub voce *metaphor*). Our views can be discerned from this following reflection letter I had written to him:

Let me just conclude by saying that I'm also uneasy about the concept semiotics if understood from a structuralist point of view to which it is mostly attached, whereby everything is put into nice little boxes of understanding. From a post-foundational point of view I would just understand semiotics to imply that every work of art says something, it can never *not* communicate. What exactly it stands for is open to interpretation.

(E-mail to Prof. Hagemann 2004/07/17)

We were in accordance with this abovementioned ideas on how we perceive the notion of semiotics. Relating to this, art can be detached from its creator or social function; it depends on the meaning arrived at by the person connecting with it. The work of art as is stated above results in having a life of its own brought to life by any viewer. Through different perceptions and interpretations the meaning of art becomes fluid.

It was a surprising encounter when meeting artist Johan Conradie, a master's degree student at the faculty of visual arts at Pretoria University. Johan's work is also exhibited in the Reconciliation exhibition (2005) though not included in this study. Yet our encounter presented valuable material that is of relevance.

I went to the visual arts department (2005/09/26) with the intention to speak to Dr. Elfrieda Dreyer, curator of the Reconciliation conference exhibition to talk about how to reference works of art since this is presumably not something that one may find often in the department of Practical Theology. There I bumped into Johan also waiting to see Dr. Elfrieda Dreyer. While we waited we soon found common ground in the arts and started commenting on the notion of interpretation. Based on that which is written in this thesis I asked him how reserved or valid he is about his own interpretation of his work in relation to that of other people. He notes that with art one can never restrict an interpretation only to that of the artist. He did however emphasise that it is important to him that the viewer is thoroughly familiar with the artist's interpretation or desired intention to communicate something. That which a work of art is a sign for (reconnecting with professor Hagemann's conversation) is thus determined by the viewer as well as the artist and consequently has social constructionist integrity in the sense that the interpretation is not radically derived at by an individual. The latter way of working with art would be constitutive of a radical postmodernistic approach and relativistic at that. This study does not promote such an approach.

In Titunik (1976) we find reference to various systems of signs, literary, pictorial, sound, and so forth and these systems are spoken of as resulting from common knowledge within a large part of a culture or social group. This common knowledge is of course informed by shared interpretations. Something of this could be seen in Chinese theatre:

Chinese theatre has devised a complicated and precise system of signs carrying a large and categorically diverse range of meaning. The emergence of the system was made possible by the nature of the repertoire; the number of plays is relatively small and they are familiar to most of the audience. The Chinese play is of little significance from the literary point of view; performance is paramount. The components of the

structure appear simple enough, but individual elements within the structure carry numerous obligatory signs standing for referents that are often very complex.

(Břusák 1939, in Titunik (ed) 1976:60)

The elaborate system of signs evolved has enabled the Chinese actor to give a comprehensible portrayal of the most varied actions without having to re-create reality on the stage. He is able to manage with a few props, chiefly relying on his own performance. For example, to act riding on horseback he uses a whip that represents the horse. The colour of the whip denotes the colour of the horse. Thrown at random on stage, the whip represents a horse grazing. Riding by carriage is indicated by an assistant carrying a banner on both sides of the actor, usually a yellow banner marked with a circle, the sign of a wheel; to indicate alighting, the assistant raises the banner.

(Břusák 1939, in Titunik 1976:64)

It could happen that the system of signs becomes detached to its meaning by bringing the arts into a context totally different from its intended audience. Still an uninformed person might or might not derive meaning from such an artistic experience based on a system of signs from within his/her own culture, familial story, personal history and so forth.

3.11 Informed by Henk - A Learning experience

Having had Henk on the research team benefited this research in that he is situated in the interface between the arts and organisational life. Thus, I will first reflect on the fieldwork I conducted in their company's organisational involvement. We will also venture into themes such as considering *dramatic intervention as externalisation*, inquiring about *artistic focussed intention*, and

remark about the *awareness wheel* used to explore stories and eliciting information of use for dramatic representation.

3.11.1 The Learning Theatre

I was given Henk's business card through one of my colleagues. Learning that he is involved in a company called *The Learning Theatre* my immediate interest had to do with in some way expanding the expertise of the Drama track in our congregation. The more I spoke to Henk the more I realised that we are sitting at the same dinner table feasting on related ideas about Drama and Story. From this point of view it seemed that Henk became interested in what I was busy with, a PhD study in the field of narrative practise. I became intrigued about these ideas and I was suddenly relieved that I did not decide on focusing the PhD study solely on a single strand within the arts. To the contrary it was at that time that I started to entertain the use of different concepts in the PhD topic, such as extending the research to include organisations and not just therapy and also use the term the arts and not just a single strand within the arts. I feared at that time that this was too broad a topic until I realised and explored the idea of narrative *practise* as opposed to narrative therapy. It was on account of this movement in the research that I started thinking in terms of the values of narrative practise although my frame of reference thus far had to do with therapy and narrative research. In thinking in terms of values in narrative practise and also core metaphors it is possible to extend the scope of narrative to other practises (See chapter two).

Relating narrative ideas to what Learning Theatre does and the type of values that they use had me entertaining the thought if what Learning Theatre was in fact doing could be deemed narrative practise in some ways. What specifically instigated these considerations had to do with the ideas behind externalisation and that of an inquisitive attitude to story development that they use with clients. In considering with the clients what to do (how the story goes) determines how

actors might portray certain ideas that in the end might become a form of externalisation.

To explore this idea of similar views between Henk and me I asked to attend one of their projects. I devised a letter that explains my participation, which they presented to the specific people in the organisation with whom Learning Theatre was consulting. In a first phase they were consulting and interviewing management with regard to what the idea behind the whole two-day meeting was and how these could be addressed. It seemed that the organisation wished to take the managers of a specific region on board in taking a look at what the future might hold. Also there were concerns about the conflict and competition between certain distribution channels.

During these two days of fieldwork I had ample time to chat to Henk, the actors they used as well as the meeting attendees and off course see first hand what Learning Theatre is all about.¹²⁶

Broadly stated, I understood from Henk that they were giving visual representation of ideas and issues and that they are addressing emotional barriers such as fear, resistance, and perceptions. Rica practically referred to the fears of some like mothers with children that had to leave their families for the two days. She further noted that having learning Theatre present will give both the more experienced and new manager's equal chance to be heard.

Attendees were to be seated at certain group tables conducive to team work. Each individual group had a facilitator and were asked to negotiate ground rules.

The actors were asked (through theatre sport games and improvisation) to amongst other themes put the values of the company on the table. These short

¹²⁶ I should acknowledge that there are much more to Learning Theatre than that which I have witnessed. However, my attendance had helped in keeping our conversations practical.

specifically humoristic drama sketches served as the basis for the group discussions throughout the conference.

Conflict between distributions channels were addressed by Learning Theatre through the means of using the metaphor of a pizza diner with a call centre. Different scenarios based on the company's slogan, Today Tomorrow Together were acted out or as Rica unknowingly in narrative fashion stated that Learning Theatre will be helping them to explore their company values. The organisational leadership and the possible future environment had to do with integration. Each group were asked to draw a picture for how they perceive, relating to what they have experienced in the drama sketches the future might look like be.

The audience or attendees were allowed significant input in some sketches through deciding a setting, an argument or scenario and specific characters for the three actors present. One of the values were called fairness and so the sketches were based on how a typical scenario might look like with and without this value using the setting, argument and characters that the audience proposed.

Attendees were also asked to write a story of which they are the main character. Although the desired outcome was already provided it was up to the individual to decide how the company would get there and how the discussed values could make a change. Some of these stories were also later published in an organisational letter. At this stage, attendee's could consult with the actors on how to write a meaningful story.

Day two of the conference was kick started with a short humoristic drama reflection on the previous day. Organisational leadership and Learning Theatre used the previous day's emotions, high's, and low's to reflect on what they were busy with up and till then. It was also this notion of reflection by means of drama

that triggered my curiosity. I was intrigued about how this relates to narrative reflection and what might come of this.

Throughout the conversations I had with Henk I was wondering whether Learning Theatre was in some way busy with narrative practise. Although it is not easy to tell, for them to be doing business with a certain viewpoint, relating to ideas in narrative practise such as reflection, externalisation and making use of story, connects our journey inescapably.

This had caused on the one hand for this research to be strongly influenced by the world and ideas of drama and storytelling and on the other hand narrative practise were in some way formative to Henk's ideas. Henk for instance made use of narrative literature amongst other books in writing an article for their website. It was my contact with Henk that opened the door to use literature in his possession. In narrative, social constructionist fashion these books were in principle not accessible to me until the research partners paved way by introducing me to their world.

3.11.2 Introductory fieldwork remarks

On the 11th and 12th of February 2004 I conducted fieldwork at a conference at which Learning Theatre was involved with Bank SA on a strategic planning weekend. I was an observer to the way in which Learning Theatre were part of the conference. The following remarks I obtained from four sources, Henk, the Organisational Developer, the actors involved and employees of Bank SA that attended. I recount the comments in approximate translation. (See Addendum K4.1 and K4.2 for Afrikaans transcripts).

Henk remarks...

1. The drama helped on an emotive level to address concerns (anxieties), resistance, and perceptions.

2. The humoristic approach in drama caused conference attendees to relax and be more susceptible.
3. The drama was conducive to small group discussion.
4. Drama helped to secure the concepts of core values, strategic and intended integration
5. New ways of understanding conflict was presented through seeing what takes place from an audience position.

Rica (OD) asserts ...

6. Learning Theatre caused people to be susceptible to the direction the organisation is taking.
7. Emotionally, fears were addressed.
8. Drama served an explorative function pertaining to what our values mean.
9. Drama's advantage in the organisational level over other arts is that it functions at a behavioural level.

The actors

The actors involved noted that the purpose of drama for them in the corporate environment has to do with...

10. participating in creating an 'awakening moment' or 'wow moment'
11. it is "making people receptive,"
12. "its illustrating,"
13. In addition, "it's entertaining."

The conference attendees

I specifically and informally spoke to different groups that were representative of different races, and sexes. I asked them for comments on the drama experience:

14. "They keep us awake."

15. From “This is what we will remember” to, “This is the only thing that we will remember” to (humouristically stated) It’s all that we look forward to (“Dis al waarna ons uitsien.”)
16. “We can relate to this.”
17. “The actors were spot-on with their lingo and,
18. ...also with the content of the acts.”
19. It “appeals to our senses.”

I asked whether it would have been different with some other form of the arts. They answered that...

20. It simply would not have been that much fun.

My comments to Henk consisted of opening a discussion on possible congruency between narrative epistemology and Learning Theatre practises. In this regard, I inquired about:

21. Externalising and probed as to what the similarity between theatres as externalising might be in relation to what I had explained to him narrative externalising means.
22. narrative being situated in a paradigm as opposed to being handled as a tool; that this paradigm dictates that the problem is the problem and not the person
23. The seeming comfortability that the attendees spoke about issues.
24. the idea of reflection as a narrative stance in relation to drama as a type of reflective practise

I then asked about...

25. my impression that I still experienced a very hierarchical structured approach and I wondered
26. whether this had anything to do with Learning Theatre being told to do things in a certain way and the relationship between the two organisations in what and how things are being said

27. Whether the skills and competencies of the employees could have been used more.

(Compiled and sent to Henk on 2004/02/25)

I was particularly fond of this part of the research seeing that conversations on drama and narrative were stimulated greatly by the intersection between Henk, from Learning Theatre and professor Hagemann at the drama department. From discussions with Henk, I thought extensively on narrative practise trying to differentiate between narrative and story as a tool as it might function in corporate situations.

Initially my hesitation in whether Henk's ideas about narrative and my own are similar was informed by the idea of what a non-directive approach really entail. The corporate firm in which the participating company works as interventionists determines a great deal of what happens and on what grounds Theatre or story is employed. Simply stated, if a corporate firm (hierarchical leadership) does not like a type of non-directive intervention the participating company is 'out of there'. As Henk says, if they work with a company they are standing on that companies stage. This to me clashed with essential narrative ideas; being non-directive and not knowing. The participating company it seems is expected to be knowledgeable and directing. However, I came to see things different on grounds that no therapist, facilitator, company, and so forth cannot, not be influential. Even if we employ Echo theatre, which is said to only mirror back a certain scenario, value system etcetera, it is still influential in that the audience base their interpretation on what they see. Sometimes standing outside the 'chaos', for the first time. In a sense, every representation is asking the audience to either agree or disagree with the lenses that has been given to them.

Theatre does not sell the answer but the problem according to Henk. The problem is one that evolved from interviews that a company such as Learning Theatre does long prior to any performance. In this interview, descriptions of the

problem, reasons, interpretations will surface that is useful in dramatic representation. For this interview in organizations, he reminds the interviewer that he or she should get the story and not necessarily the facts. Learning theatre by doing these interviews seeks to address the issues from the right angle. In reference to the ideas that surface in the interviews, Henk refers to a type of collective memory in the minds of people that are employers of organisations. Henk in an article on their website it in the following manner:

Theatre provides a three dimensional and comprehensive representation of the truth. Story, as building block of theatre, offers the flow of events, emotions experienced, mindsets, beliefs, and assumptions about the relevant business strategy in a concise format. Clear illustrations for fresh insight, powerful images to mobilise people and compelling learning events can be provided, and that can often make or break the successful implementation of business strategies.

(www.learningtheatre.co.za)

Our conversations had also impacted on Henk's views as is evident from a publicised article on their website wherein they list narrative therapy amongst their, described as *key methodologies*: organisational development, emotional intelligence, (cognitive) psychology, narrative therapy and performing arts (www.learningtheatre.co.za).

It is evident that drama could surely play a role within narrative practise as indeed can be seen in the following quote from White and Epston in Freedman and Combs (1996: Narrative therapy – *The social construction of preferred realities*) that Henk uses:

White and Epston explain the rationale of narrative practice as follows;
'The success of this storying of experience provides persons with a sense

of continuity and meaning in their lives, and this is relied upon for the ordering of daily lives and for the interpretation of further experiences.’

(www.learningtheatre.co.za)

In a copy of this article, that he had sent to me on 2004/05/26 drama is considered as a valued adding business partner to other approaches. In this article it is said that drama is an affiliate member but are not accepted as a full member of, as he calls it the *Chamber of Value Adding Business Tools*. The problem discourse around drama in the business world is a discourse that seems to relate to all the arts. It is as Drama (personified), in this article says to Cell [phone]: “I am frequently used to educate low level staff – in your terms Cell, standard functions – about general topics such as HIV/Aids and Safety. Often I am not even considered for more complex applications such as Transformation that involve integrating diverse methodologies” For this reason affiliate members of the *Chamber of Value Adding Business Tools* feel: “...disempowered, manipulated and angry” by these business discourses.

3.11.3 Dramatic representation as externalisation

Throughout our conversations, Henk revealed a specific interest in externalisation. Somehow, this resonated with what Learning Theatre was doing. I remember that from my earliest reflection letters to Henk (2004/03/11) this was a reiterating theme. Henk answered that they do not make use of externalisation consciously and then propose that there are levels of externalisation in what Learning Theatre does. He differentiates between the way in which representation of certain ideas are played out on stage ensuing themes from interviews and the way in they would personify abstract ideas like lust (Lust) and control (Control) in HIV related theatre. The first thought connote the idea of the arts providing an externalised environment to which someone can react, and in the second place the arts (through dramatic representation) becomes the externalised object such as a dramatic characterisation of an idea, belief or practise.

3.11.4 Art's focused intention

Henk makes it clear that he works with several partners in Learning Theatre and that his contributions draw from a business psychology background. He has teamed up with drama as an organisational transformative tool convinced by its ability to address emotions about eight years back. Since then he has realised that their partnership with corporate firms does not only serve an emotional purpose.

Thus, for Henk from an organisational perspective the arts (specifically drama), has a specific focus, other than entertainment or aesthetic logic. This corresponds with the CAM community's views (2005/09/15) on arts in church, as serving a purpose other than entertainment. Obviously the right to the arts; existence does not stand or fall by whether it serves a purpose outside of the pursuit for aesthetics or entertainment. The specific focus of the arts is to a large degree directed at the "social fabric" (as Henk refers to it) of society: It has the ability to attend to concerns that are truly vital in society, really making a difference. To illustrate the contrary to this Henk refers to the program *Yiso Yiso*. In this program, the story is merely a reflection of the world. A program like this might be popular due to the idea that it is something people can relate to, it is sad however that that is all that it does, mirror negativity, establishing society's problem saturated story. To do well, the arts may entrench itself in having an informative voice, maybe even a corrective voice to the social injustices. I liked the manner in which Henk explained that to him there are two different energies relating to theatre, one that uplifts, and one that offers a bleak future to its audience. Too often in the past Henk states that Industrial theatre has merely been "skok-teater" (translated: shock theatre) especially when there is no facilitation or space for interpretation given to the audience. In narrative terms, one might say that no opening space questions (Freedman & Combs 1996) are being asked. To add from the mouth of professor Hagemann: Industrial theatre is a very non-dialogical approach. Hereby the audience are forced to see only

one truth that of the director in which no room is left for alternative story development.

In what follows one finds how theatre (acting and drama) were used in facilitative work by Henk on the research team. It is interesting to see that Ted Wharam (1992:82-96) in a drama therapy book alludes to what he sees as the building blocks of drama, not only in therapy but also in *organisations*.

3.11.5 Awareness wheel

Henk, from Learning Theatre uses what he refers to as the *awareness wheel*, in conversations with employees of companies prior to any theatrical involvement with a company. The awareness wheel presumably originated in the field of marital therapy about the 1960's he says.

Accordingly, our awareness is stimulated by 1) our Senses, 2) Thinking 3) Feelings 4) Expressed needs and 5) Action. In the first instance, this is related to the *hear and now*. I mention this here since it resonates with the process of the six hats, which allows for different modes of expression in a safe environment.

The five spikes of the awareness wheel could be rewritten in question format: 1) What did you see or hear, 2) What was going around in your head. Do you think it was good or bad? (Evaluative) 3) How did you (they) feel about it? 4) What do you need or want? 5) What might happen because of having seen or experienced what you have?

Our accounting of Learning Theatre's involvement in organisations paves the way to now consider the facet of facilitation in organisations in relation to narrative practise.

3.12 Narrative practice and organisational facilitation

On the 18th to the 21st of October 2004, I attended a course in facilitative leadership, presented by the Church and Community Facilitation Network (CFN). After viewing the invitational content, I was intrigued about the apparent congruency between narrative practise and facilitation.

3.12.1 Introductory CAM community remarks

I asked the CAM community what they think a facilitator does, and what they might suppose the possible similarities or dissimilarities are between facilitation and therapy. Elna said the facilitator is someone that give someone else a space of safety to live in (“...iemand wat vir iemand anders veilige ruimte gee om hom uit te leef”). Talitha went further to note that the facilitator stimulates the process by presenting new ideas and opportunities for growth (“...hy help die proses aan, verryk die proses deur nuwe idees te gee en geleenthede vir groei te bied”). Moré noted that the facilitator has a significant role in helping people express their emotion (“...om hulle emosies uiting te laat gee”). Berna notes that a facilitator should give basic guidelines, background and expectations and that he could take part in the process herself/ himself (“Hy moet tog basiese riglyne, agtergrond en verwagting gee, hy kan selfs meedoen”). According to Fransien a facilitator does not take part, s/he is also not directing. S/he does however set group interaction and process goals and help achieve these. This however does not relate to content of discussions or answers. A facilitator is also as Fransien describes it a diffuser (“ontlonter”) who releases tension or conflict and furthermore determines the confines of the discussion. Hanneltjie states that the facilitator’s role is very much like that of my own as an interviewer. The facilitator is in addition the person that plans the process, gives guidelines, and creates space for initiative. The facilitator helps the group to keep within the context and purpose of the reason for facilitation. Lastly, this person should make sure that everyone knows what to do.

According to Elna's perception, a therapist is someone that gives answers and a facilitator is someone that helps you sort out your own issues. However, most of the CAM community is to a greater or lesser degree informed about the differences between narrative therapy and *perceptions* of conventional therapy as giving answers. Accordingly when I asked them about the dissimilarities between facilitation and therapy as they have come to know it they could not think of any differences. Berna noted with regard to therapy and facilitation that these processes should not be one in which the participant becomes the *looked at*, it should involve action. ("Die proses moenie een wees waar iemand die bekykte is nie. Dit moet 'n gedoente wees"). Hereby, she signifies that neither the facilitator nor the narrative therapist is passively or overly actively involved. In narrative fashion the therapist – and drawing from this discussion 2005/05/15 – also the facilitator is described as having a decentred role but unavoidably influential. Hannetjie agrees with this from a narrative point of view; the facilitator and the narrative practitioner create a platform for conversation.

3.12.2 Exploring the relation between narrative practise and facilitation

The notion of the facilitator being essentially non-directive with regard to content but knowledgeable about process resonates with sayings in narrative practise/therapy, as for instance: The client is the expert and assuming a not-knowing position (Anderson & Goolishian 1992). This idea of a not-knowing position relates in turn to the following description of facilitation: "To facilitate means to enable people to discover how much knowledge they already have, generate their own further learning, explore their potential, and consider the options they have open to them (Rooth 1995:9). In addition, the idea of a problem-saturated story corresponds with the notion of stuckness. In their study guide, material Newby and Smit (20004:11)¹²⁷ describes stuckness as a particular situation where people experience an inability to make progress with things such as problem

¹²⁷ Note that at times I will refer to CFN (community facilitation network) instead of the facilitators Smit and Newby.

solving, conflict resolution, future planning, broken relationships etc. It can be experienced by any entity be it individuals, families, groups, organisations, communities or nations (2004:11). In their advocacy of a facilitative leadership style, they assert that outcome focussed solutions often lead to conflict and one should shift focus to a participatory process. This latter focus is said to be slower but that a deeper level of reflective participation increases ownership.

With regard to the roll of the facilitator, Newby and Smit (2004:11) argue for listening as the primary activity of the facilitator. They advocate attentive listening which involves constant rephrasing and clarification of understanding. This listening activity is important in light of their next contention.

CFN prefers a process that is emergent in nature (as does this research). Hereby they do not favour the enforcement of strategic blueprints and/ or ready-made models on a community. Newby and Smit (2004:77) speak in unison with narrative practise then when saying that they further prefer to come to a deep understanding and to stay in touch with a community's story, identity, culture, and dynamics while they discern the way forward collaboratively.

This idea of stuckness relates to the way in which we try to solve the variety of problems with which life confronts us (Newby & Smit 2004:11). Note however that the mere existence of the problem is not stuckness but the way in which people get together makes it stuck. The course attendees described their experience of stuckness with words such as abstract, relative, situational, interpretive, and personal. (Newby & Smit 2004:12).

3.12.3 Facilitation, basic points of departure

Underpinning the hopes for a life beyond stuckness lies the facilitator's basic points of departure which reveals commitment to developing processes, steering away from helping people to make plans and manage programmes (Newby & Smit 2004:76). The points of departure in developing a process concerns:

- i. *A Systemic focus*: This entails working in a holistic and inclusive way. To the best of her/ his ability the facilitator exercise the discipline of being sensitive to and aware of all the people and environmental dynamics at play in a given situation and to use that to the benefit of the process.
- ii. *Process-oriented*: Providing that people are able to adopt and foster a learning attitude and culture it is CFN's belief that each group of people has the potential and capacity to deal with its own particular situation. Therefore, we learn from what we do and we do in the light of what we have learned.
- iii. *Dialogical*: Listening and sharing are essential ingredients of communication in order to maintain a culture of open dialogue. The nature of "...communication and conversation in facilitation processes should be of such a nature that the discovery of new meaning becomes possible. Common ground is found and new visions are discovered when real dialogue starts to happen"
- iv. *Biblical*: It is CFN's hope to uphold an approach that is rooted in the faith community's story and vision as conveyed to us in the biblical narratives

(Newby & Smit 2004:76-77)

3.12.4 A four-fold perspective on process design

Considering the relation between facilitation and narrative practise, I allude to their recommendation that a process be viewed from four different but complementary angles. Furthermore, apart from the proposed link facilitation/ narrative practise, I regard it a worthwhile exploration since it seems thoughts on process design bring the arts closer to possible use in narrative practise. I summarise the four angles on process in table format: (please see next page for table)

A. The process from the leader or facilitator's point of view.	B. The process as it dynamically unfolds for the client, community, or organisation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Becoming aware of the need for facilitation ▪ Gathering information about the need ▪ Gathering information about the community ▪ Develop a strategy to address the need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preparing for the process ▪ Growth in knowledge and understanding ▪ Growth in discernment and vision ▪ Clarity about priorities, process and strategy ▪ Implement and maintain the change
C. The process <i>dynamics</i> as an experience of emergent understanding with lenses.	D. The process as a <i>guided journey</i> through the application of methods, tools, and techniques.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Story-telling ▪ Stuckness ▪ Roller-coaster ▪ Force field ▪ Size transitions ▪ Polarities ▪ Triangulation ▪ Emotional Space ▪ <i>Imaginative Bible study</i>¹²⁸ ▪ <i>Clay</i> ▪ <i>Jenga</i> ▪ <i>Nails</i> ▪ <i>Video</i> ▪ <i>Metaphors for conflict</i> ▪ <i>Inventory</i> ▪ <i>Trust walk</i> ▪ <i>Conflict escalation</i> ▪ <i>Body representations</i> ▪ <i>Writing visioning</i> ▪ <i>Gallery walk</i> ▪ <i>Case studies</i> ▪ <i>Appreciative Inquiries</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The ability to design a process ▪ Sensitivity for the flow of an emergent process ▪ The means to gather relevant information ▪ Tools to help with the sorting of information ▪ Techniques to promote effective decision-making

Table 2-2 four angles in process design (adapted, Newby and Smit 2004:80)

¹²⁸ The italic additions stem from personally having attended the course. These are not found on Newby and Smit (2004:80).

The above scheme, which is concerned with the design of a process, starts out with the facilitator's point of view.

3.12.4.1 A facilitators point of view (Table 3-2, Column A)

The facilitator is the one that through personal interviews and techniques develops an understanding of the need for facilitation. S/he would want to find out more about the authorities, decision-making processes, and leadership structures of the client (Newby & Smit 2004:81). Often the client organisation may expect a written proposal that needs to be approved formally by a representative authority. Such a written proposal will give an indication of costs involved. Most importantly the flow and structure of the *process*: restating the need for facilitation (as agreed upon in initial negotiations). The outcome that will be pursued, what methods, and instruments will be used? Providing a preliminary timeline for the process, and an indication of the people that need to be involved.

3.12.4.2 An unfolding process (Table 3-2, Column B)

An elaborate journey with a client organisation will involve five stages that take place:

3.12.4.2.1 Preparations and organisation

Phase one consists of preparations and organisation: The process is announced and communicated in the organisation. Support is raised, motivation is done, questioning and criticism are being dealt with, and arrangements are finalised and communicated. Vitality, a strategic work team and/or working groups are selected. The composition of these teams will be inclusive of the following: status (different levels of responsibility); racial and gender diversity; various age groups; beliefs, which include people with a sensitivity for the tradition and people keen to explore the future; people with skills regarding communication, strategy etcetera. (Newby & Smit 2004: 82-84)

3.12.4.2.2 Analysis, diagnosis and interpretation

Phase two marks analysis and diagnosis: Narrative practise is circumspect of so-called objective analysis the idea of diagnosis and so on. However, Newby and Smit (2004:84) assert that the client organisation is involved in descriptions and interpretations. This might take place through questionnaires, story-telling exercises, partaking in focus groups and the conducting of personal interviews.

Helpful in deciding who to involve in the process is considering the following questions and I include these here since they might as well have been research considerations. Take note that these considerations extend to people beyond the team of people mentioned in faze one. The questions that Newby and Smit (2004:84) put forward are:

- Who knows? Possibly people with experience who can help with diagnosis but also those who know what is going on, who can provide valuable information.
- Who cares? Possibly people who identified the problem, who bear the pain, who care about the outcome.
- Who can? Possibly, people controlling resources or who are in a position of authority.

Near completion of this phase the strategic work team ensures that all information is properly documented and in a state to be analysed and interpreted. It is again at this point that from a narrative lens there is sensitivity to: Who makes the analysis; and if this analysis – even if it is acknowledged as an interpretation – were to be conducted by one person (the facilitator), will other participants be able to reflect on this interpretation.

3.12.4.2.3 Discernment and vision

Phase 3 involves discernment and vision: The key task is to facilitate a dialogue between the current realities as investigated and interpreted and the community

or organisation story and vision (Newby & Smit 2004:85). If the community is a faith community, as opposed to an organisational community this phase is about making spiritual meaning of the concrete circumstances in which the community finds itself. “In the broadest sense it is about asking about the presence and activity of God in contextual human realities. And it is about studying, praying and discerning about the calling of the congregation, about finding a place in God’s redemptive work, about participating with God in his Reign” (Newby & Smit 2004:85).

3.12.4.2.4 Priorities, process and strategy

The preceding phases might have renewed clarity about issues of mission, vision, and identity. From these questions about current practices and the necessity of new priorities will surge key questions marked by faze four (Newby & Smit 2004:86):

- Focus areas: What do we need to work on?
- Process: How do we translate these priorities into workable processes?
- Structure: With what structures or patterns of organisation do we need to support and promote it?

This phase might be an ambiguous period in the process. In turn, a heightened level of excitement about a renewed sense of purpose may be noticed. Yet, anxiety levels may soar because of the unlearning of old practices that need to be undertaken. This phase may also unexpectedly enter the danger zone of stuckness again.

3.12.4.2.4 Implementation and maintenance

Phase 5: Implementation and maintenance

Unequivocally Newby and Smit (2004:86) state that the process often fail at phase five due to a lack of follow-through. It is crucial that responsibility is

accepted for implementation and maintenance. Whoever manages the process at this point should take care of the following (Newby & Smit 2004:86-87):

- Regular feedback
- Monitoring of progress
- Making the necessary adaptations

At the course, I asked about the seeming linear nature of the approach. According to Newby and Smit in (Newby & Smit 2004:87), the approach is in reality not linear at all. They remark that it should be seen as circular in nature. This can be related to the simple drawing of a fish and tail.

Initially the scope is broad (like a fish's tail). After which it becomes narrowed down to a clear focus or sense of direction. (Like the zone between the tail and the body of a fish), to be broadened again when new priorities are considered. (The body), just to zoom in again on the processes and capacities needed to maintain the movement (the fish's head).

(Newby & Smit 2004: 87)

3.12.4.3 The use of lenses (Table 3-2, Columns C & D)

Angle three (C) and four (D) relate both to the use of lenses. Angle three is directed at process dynamics and four at process as journey. I do not pay attention to the difference since various lenses are used under angle three and four. Our concern is with lenses and not journey versus dynamics. Prime in the use of these lenses is trying to understand a faith community within its own particular context. It was my experience during the course that these lenses were not used solely as tools since they were always embedded in the larger group process and story.

“Some of these lenses are appropriate to be used publicly during a process, e.g. story-telling and the roller coaster. Other lenses are there to enhance the facilitator’s understanding of the dynamics, e.g. stuckness and emotional systems” (Newby & Smit 2004:88). The basis on which ever lens is used is that facilitators would want to learn the skills of bringing people into a process with the optimal level of trust and cooperation. Some of these lenses are also very useful to narrative practise, several of which relate strongly to the arts. I will now elaborate briefly on only those that are found to be very useful and relates to narrative practise in some or other way.

3.12.4.3.1 Clay work

We were asked to use clay work to portray what we see as our vision for facilitative leadership and we were given a half an hour for this. This happened in a very specific way: It was imperative that we feel guided by the clay in some way. This guiding happens by keeping on moulding and not making the first thing that comes to mind. It was thus not suppose to be only some kind of creative expression of a preconceived rational idea. Since we already had, small groups we got the chance to exhibit each person’s work: One person would put his work in the middle of the circle. Each person would then get the chance to creatively guess what it is and what it might stand for. I personally found this input vary validating of myself as a person. After each got the chance to reflect on the work in the middle without talking to the creator of the work the creator now got the chance to explain his work and relate his experience of listening the other people in the group’s reflections. It was important that someone in the group should explicitly ask the question: “Is this a valid and useful metaphor for facilitative leadership?” upon which everybody was to affirm this aloud by saying yes. Then someone in the group would pray for that person. After everyone in several small groups had the opportunity to reflect in their small group a gallery walk were done whereby one person in a small group stayed behind to explain consecutively to each small group that came passed about what all the works was. Each round a different person from a small group would present her/ he’s

group's works. Apart from being a fun exercise, it really helped people to listen attentively since they know they are going to be accountable to the small group for portraying each person's work in the right way.

3.12.4.3.2 Body representations/ sculptures

This relates in some ways to my experience also with the drama therapy workshop at the Arts and Reconciliation conference.

Under girding this simple illustration in body representations lies is the idea that not everybody are equally articulate about problems, stuckness etcetera (Alluded to in the research gap). In a big open area workshop, participants were asked to reflect in their body something of their attitude towards conflict. The facilitator would then stand at a certain place calling himself conflict. People need not be actors for this and everyone is in a position to commit to whatever level of sculpture or acting with which s/he feels comfortable. Afterwards a discussion would be facilitated about some body sculptures with people that feel comfortable doing so. The way in which people portrayed their attitude towards conflict was fascinating. Some stood arms crossed facing the Conflict, some didn't even really sculpt anything; just by their distance from Conflict they already portrayed something. Others went to sit in the shade saying something in the likes of seeking a safe place; still others looked elsewhere whereby some kind of avoidance is again portrayed. Personally, I found the notion of externalising the problem useful as this physically directed emotion away from persons to Conflict as having a life and standing in a relationship with people.

3.12.4.3.3 Games

Games were also incorporated; sometimes with an outsider witness that just observed the interaction of the players. Of particular interest was the game Jenga. Jenga is a game consisting of small rectangular wooden blocks. Each person in the small group could get three chances in taking a block from the piled stack and repositioning it on the top. The third chance must be executed. The group that holds out the longest until their stack fall are the winners.

Interpretations were then provided from everybody in the group about how people interacted. The interpretations from the observers were often most interesting. Interpretations ranged from people that withdrew, others being to directive, some were blaming and so forth.

3.12.4.3.4 Story wall

A story wall is an interesting lens that could be used rather early in facilitation or therapy. It relates to practises in family therapy wherein one uses drawings, maps etcetera to plot and interpret events, view relationships, and so forth. This could be helpful in providing a picture to people about the broader stories involved in the life of an organization, family etcetera.

The story wall consists of various levels or tracks. In our workshop, the first track was used for the global story, the middle track for the national story and the bottom track for the familial story. The story wall covers a certain time span dependent on various contextual factors. It was not said that it is imperative that the story wall consist of three lines. I suppose there could be more although one might not want to clutter too much. One could also choose that each line signify something different than mentioned above. Yet, it should be noted that it should not be seen rigidly: On the bottom familial line it may well be that it portrays some personal feeling that an individual had at the time. How this is represented is with nine small cards on which a person may right a legible word or phrase. The canvas is prepared with an adhesive spray so that participants could attach their phrases easily. The spray also allows one to move your input to another place without tearing the paper (story wall). The primary idea of the story wall is that it helps us to see the things that might be influential on a personal level. It might stand out to a family or group that certain incidents relate to what happened to their community at an approximate time and so on. Important: It is not the objective observation, as it is the subjective interpretation of how things are connected that matters in narrative exercise.

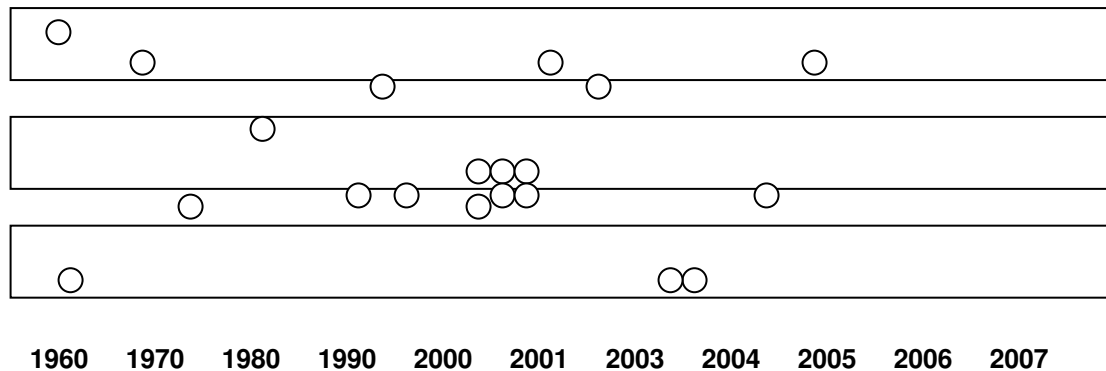


Figure 3-5 Story wall

A useful differentiation is made by Bridges (1997:3) suggesting that the concepts of change and transition does not imply the same thing. Change is said to be external often situational such as a change in demographic distribution of a community or change in organisational structure. Transition however signifies a psychological process people go through to come to terms with the new situation, what is experienced to be the consequences of the external change (Bridges 1997:3). In this sense the notion of narrative and in this case, the storyboard helps us make informed interpretation.

Through participating and the ability to afterwards stand back and make sense of the big picture that emerged aid the *meaning making* process. The assimilation of meaning will (speaking from a narrative paradigm), result in the storying of an alternative narrative.

3.12.4.3.5 Theoretical concepts artistically redesigned

Over against practical 'tools' such as the story wall there are numerous lenses that are more of a theoretical nature such as the roller coaster, force field analysis and so forth. Without much effort, these could also be represented artistically and participatory. Newby and Smit (2004 2004:26) mentioned that concerning the roller coaster that has to do with understanding and positioning oneself, family, organization within changes that take place one could lay out a

big bell curve with appropriate material. People in the organization could then be asked to stand at a place that represent in some way where they view themselves in relation to the change-taking place.

Newby and Smit (2004:28) align themselves with Rendle (1998) that took Kübler Ross's model for grief and adapted it accordingly to a model for change in congregations. Just remember that this might better be described by way of referring to transition as opposed to change. The following representation is presented as another example from a narrative point of view assist people in making sense of changes taking place.

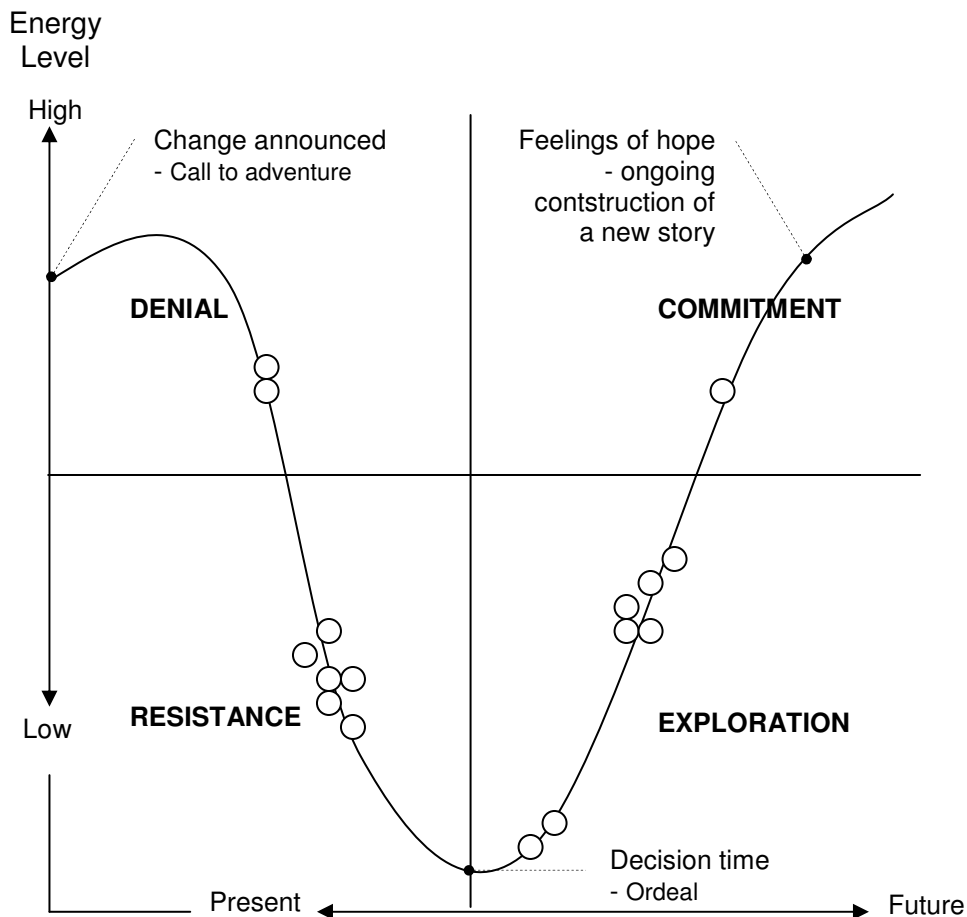


Figure 3-6 the roller coaster of change (adapter, Newby & Smit 2004:27, 30)

3.13 Arts and Reconciliation conference, 14-20 March 2005 – a reflection

It was strongly proposed by some on the research team that I should attend this conference. Personally, I also felt this way in wearing two hats, head of arts department in the congregation and researcher on the arts. Sadly, one could not attend all the tracks as they ran parallel to each other. I therefore had to make the choice to expose myself in a greater extent to some. While story and drama came forward in having significance in this study, I chose the tracks and workshops accordingly: first attending drama and film being one track, and in addition dance, video art and few others I judged to be of worth.

To me the notion of reconciliation relates to this study's broader semantic field namely growth, healing, learning, and wholeness etcetera. For our purposes, I would like to work with the word reconciliation in a somewhat detached form, from its South African, 'apartheid' stricken political connotation. I prefer to first think of reconciliation in a religious informed sense since this is my ultimate reality. In this sense, reconciliation is close to concepts such as wholeness. God restores us humans to wholeness through Christ, growth; through reconciliation with God, there are never ending horizons of growth potential in our relationship with him. Learning, reconciliation enables us to enter into a learning relationship wherein the Spirit guides us in learning more about God and his grace extended to us through Christ. Naturally healing, it is only through reconciliation that healing in an emotional and spiritual sense can ever take place, whether this is through the metaphor of reconciliation or in a spiritual sense.

I will consequently only refer to those things in the Reconciliation conference that is related to this study and not wonder of in political remarks of what reconciliation could mean in the South-African context. Where it is of importance I will briefly render account of the South-African context.

3.13.1 Tuesday 15th March, session one

Presenter and theme: Professor Lynn Dalrymple from the University of Zululand gave a lecture on *Dram Aide: Arts for Social Therapy*.

3.13.1.1 DramAidE: Arts for Social Therapy.

Professor Dalrymple acknowledges the possibility of the arts in having learning, entertaining, and healing properties. It's her opinion, which I share that even more the cut boundaries between disciplines are disappearing (forthcoming: heading 6.2.3: Dissemination of boundaries). This is in part related to the voices of people on what the arts is about or should supposedly do. She refers to the one side of the continuum where one finds *art for arts' sake* and on the other the disappearance of arts, engulfed by arts as *cultural expression*.

In using the arts (drama) as social therapy the importance to her lies in art as process and not as product. This reminded me of what Hon. Justice Albie Sachs said at the official opening of the Art Exhibition, Arts and Reconciliation conference (2005/03/15), that reconciliation is always a process and not a destination. In this alluding to the concept of process professor Dalrymple says that the benefit of arts as process is situated in peoples' ability to see more clearly that their choices have consequences. This process of involvement through the arts is coined as a process of becoming (forthcoming: heading 4.4.1.2: Notions of character).

It is important to note that drama therapy for some might relate to certain psychological models such as social skills behaviour modification. It has also been noted intermittently that Jungian psychology exerted influence in arts therapies. However, while setting out to enable the same kind of behavioural adjustment to behavioural approaches, drama therapy works in its own characteristically drama therapeutic way (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:219). Other examples are the meaning-orientated drama therapy and personal history approaches that the above-mentioned authors discuss in

chapters six and seven. These deal with the same kind of subject matter as, respectively, cognitive behavioural intervention and personal construct therapy. Chapter four, on masks looks at the therapeutic effect of drama in a way that is comparable to, but quite different from, psychodrama (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:220).

Professor Dalrymple (2005/03/15) underscores that the word performance should be re-defined. Hereby it moves from its connotation with skill and relates to power. Performance is defined by through way in which we present ourselves. We are therefore able to transform ourselves through role-play and from there the connotation to the idea of becoming. In the process of becoming people, gain a sense of power. In this regard, she relates forum theatre with power. Power is spoken of in a positive sense as in 'empowering', as opposed to implying authority. Power she says is *expressed* and *created* whereas authority comes from a top down position and stifles growth. Ultimately, authority expresses itself as a monologue whereas power expresses itself in dialogue and interaction.

Professor Dalrymple (2005/03/15) mainly works with groups as in a school context. For the facilitative role she fulfils she emphasises the importance of trust in creating opportunities for learning and healing and refers to the necessity of icebreakers to ease everybody into a session. She states that she expressly draw on methodologies that are theatre based, interactive, and entertaining.

The idea of distancing is furthermore very important. She illustrates by saying that when working in a community with some contentious issue one might ask: "Does x happen in your *community*? Why?" Then move closer with "Does x happen in your *family*? Why?" Only lastly one engages in discussion on change by asking: "How should it change?" With such questions often, strong emotions are elicited. She contends however that it's through real emotions that are elicited through drama/ role-play etcetera, whereby people had better experience

the consequences of their actions. It is therefore to her important that participants should understand what is happening in the session and get closure.

3.13.2 Tuesday/ Wednesday 15/16th March, afternoon sessions

Presenter and official theme: *Drama Therapy in Group Context*, presented by Kirsten Meyer

3.13.2.1 Drama Therapy in Group Context

The aim of the workshop was

...to review some important working methods of drama therapy, by focusing on the therapeutic processes of distancing and projection, as well as storytelling and playing with objects. The facilitator, Kirsten Meyer, holds a post-graduate diploma in drama therapy from the University Of Hertfordshire (UK) and is a registered drama therapist in both South Africa and the United Kingdom.

(Arts and Reconciliation conference guide 2005:33)

The idea of the group as with professor Dalrymple is important to Kirsten Meyer. This is one of the obvious differences she notes between drama therapy and psychodrama. The concept of learning from a drama therapy point of view is in turn dependent on group interaction. Andersen and Grainger (2000:219) as elsewhere mentioned augment the understanding of healing by shading it with the concept of learning which takes place in-group interaction. The notion of learning fits well in a social constructionist understanding of how we create our realities. Knowledge is emergent in nature as it emerges from a learning process which is always a co-constructed approach. Again, this relates to the subtle deconstruction of therapy as the reader might find in this study. The blurred boundaries from what is conventionally understood as healing or therapy is, looking back on the research one of the reasons I was attracted to Learning Theatre. It now makes sense that change and learning relates to each but that

can also add within the sphere of this study extend its meaning to incorporate therapy, growth healing and so forth.

Pertaining to healing, learning, and hereby relating its understandings within the group then the following remarks from Andersen-Warren and Grainger (2000:219):

[F]or 'healing' read 'learning'. Drama therapy helps us to understand its healing comes via its ability, at all levels, to teach us about the ways in which our personal worlds meet and interact. Just as it works against any kind of systematic reduction of individuality, so it militates against a solipsistic interpretation of life. Drama therapy teaches us who - and where— we are. Again, it does this by opening the door to discovery of self and other, setting the scene for enlightenment.

Owing to the concept of learning Andersen-Warren and Grainger (2000:219) asserts that the ideas and practises, to some extent all its tools are relevant to teachers, group leaders, community workers, mediators, social enquirers and facilitators of all kinds, managers as well as nurses, doctors and therapists of every description. Inclusively speaking it is for anyone who's purpose, professional or not, is the promotion of personhood as it offers a way of opening up a *shared* universe.

We now embark on the exposition of a foundational base for group work, as is often the case in drama therapy. In reflecting here on the primacy of group work in drama therapy (also dance therapy) one cannot help to think of the idea that the relational process is central to the understanding of the social constructionist process. In an in-depth discussion between Theology and Social Constructionism, Gergen says in his reflecting paper: "For me the pivotal concept in the constructionist movement is *relational process*. The significance of social

construction largely derives from its replacement of the individual as the fundamental atom of cultural life with relational process" (Gergen 2002b:286).¹²⁹

This pivotal aspect is in drama therapy seen in-group work. In a group work participants are "involved in a network of personal relationships whose meaning is drawn from their individual histories, to be lived over again in the specially protected – and protective – circumstances of the group" (Andersen-Warren 2000:226). The difference between drama therapy group work in relation to related group work practise lies in the basic nature of drama - that it is something done, *acted* out. Drama therapy group work does not simply allow past things or people to imaginatively be present; it actually presents events encompassing different people as if they are happening now.

The source of drama therapy's power to heal is not located in a psychoanalytical sense of talking, but in the dramatic action itself, the realisation of relationship in imaginative settings consciously created for the purpose by the people taking part (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:227). Andersen-Warren and Grainger mention that writers that write about group therapy from the 1960's onwards have seen much more in the experience than simply an opportunity to analyse the psychic processes of individual group members. They therefore position themselves accordingly in that group healing for them lies in the affective sharing of ones inner world, but more so, this personal experience is maximised by theatre and drama which they assert to be the most powerful and more essentially human ways of communicating the reality of our personal experience (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:228).

This embodying of our imagination is what Moreno had in mind when inventing psychodrama (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:228). There are however significant differences between psychodrama and drama therapy, the first being

¹²⁹ In conversation with the articles in the reader (2002) that Gergen's theological colleagues had written it is interesting to note that (Gergen 2002:273-289) chooses these three points for consideration, Toward morally generative practices, Resistant Realisms and the Self, and The Relational Real/ization of the Sacred.

that psychodrama uses drama in a much more direct and intensive way. So then drama therapy will not in the first instance, if at all focus on the circumstances of an individual's personal experience, harnessing the imaginative potential of everybody present for the purpose of creating a living autobiography of the protagonist (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:228). Although the dramas and scenarios that drama therapy works with emerge from the imaginative life of those present, just as they do in classical psychodrama their subject matter is unlikely to be conceived as an individual's personal story. They assert that many of the people whom drama therapy aims at reaching and helping would be greatly alarmed by such an idea, and probably refuse to take part (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:228).

Andersen-Warren and Grainger (2000:228) refer to the experience of 'like me but not me'. This is what makes drama therapy work since it allows for resonance of one's own story in the expressions and experiences of another person. This involves imaginative identification with some other person or situation *in* the drama, not imagined as is sometimes the case in narrative therapy. This identification also referred to as appropriation calls directly on our imagination and empathy rather than being engineered into it in accordance with some set of original specifications (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:228).

It is Andersen-Warren and Grainger's (2000:228) experience that drama therapy's effect can at times be as powerful as psychodrama. The upside however is that it is always free (not too direct or personal) and more authentically theatrical. It is certainly true that psychodrama clients are shielded from drama therapy's kind of public exposure, but they assert that the emotional impact of the psycho dramatic experience can be overwhelming for very vulnerable people. Allowing yourself to get involved in things that are happening to somebody whom you perceive as 'like me but not me' is much less threatening and may be equally effective. (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:228)

The 'like me but no me' experience infers that drama depends on the ability to identify with other people. This 'like me but not me' idea may be described in a number of ways, some of which may permit it to be explained according to a particular psychological model as, for instance, social learning, reinforced behavioural response (in which the imagined scenario provides the conditioned stimulus), psychological modelling or a distributed form of psycho dynamic transference (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:228). Yet, in light of the actual experience of drama therapy, none of these explanations quite fit the bill. This is because all of them tend to regard dramatic structure as a way of providing opportunities for learning new patterns of behaviour (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:228). Hereby drama is simply a convenient tool for learning by conscious association, or unconscious identification.

From the perspective of drama therapists, these latter explanations are not sufficient. Drama is stated to be more than this:

The conscious action of identification, which identifies genuine dramatic experience, is neither intentional nor automatic. The drama invites this kind of understanding but in no way imposes it. The learning that takes place - or does not take place - in drama is learning by discovery. We discover that a situation speaks to us or that a person reminds us of someone we know. It is not so much a matter of the assimilation of a new learning - although that certainly happens - as the recognition of old understanding.

(Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:229)

Shortly stated the authors emphasize that we see ourselves in a play because we choose to do so, for no other reason (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:229). The 'like me but not me' appearance might not even be anybody that remotely resembles. Furthermore, the 'like me but not me' which may be people but also incidents or circumstances may be circumstances that we have never

faced, and could never imagine ourselves facing; never, that is, until now (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:229). “The reason why drama ‘heals our emotions’, as Aristotle puts it, is because it leaves us free to respond to others - and ourselves seen from another viewpoint, understood in another context” (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:229).

We now turn to some important concepts relating to the workshop. The principal idea to distancing entails that a safe environment is created for a ‘client’ in reliving incidents or expressing emotion whom might otherwise be overwhelmed by emotion. The entire process of drama therapy is said to contribute to the idea of distancing in the same manner that externalising practises in narrative therapy should not be used as a tool. The distancing process provides participants with an opportunity to look back on an experience they have recently undergone. This type of looking back at incidents is said to take place with a degree of calmness and objectivity, which people often cannot manage when up to our necks in things, stuck right in the middle of the action. Apart from this distance providing people with confidence they need to become involved can also encourage them to sit back and reflect on what being involved actually felt like, and how we and the other people present reacted to the situation. Related to this discussion professor Hagemann remarked about the swelling of the moment that could be a possible contribution of the arts in therapy as shown in this instance (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:223).

A metaphor or story with connections to the client’s problem could prove to be a safe enough distance to explore feelings. I remember each of us in a group had to choose an object of value from a period in our lives. We needed to then imagine the object as physically existing in the now time and put it on a chair in front of us. Group members could then ask questions about the object without the group knowing what the object is. Once it has been established, what the object is the person who the object belongs to would go and sit on an open chair beside the object and then become the object. The next line of questioning

would be directed at this object about the role it played in the owner's life. We then moved to the larger group and took turns in guessing what we might think our object would want to say to us. It is in this larger group that I experienced the *meaning making* process the strongest. Remarks served as affirmations of self-worth, some were reminded of skills they had thought they lost while others were moved towards some kind of decision or action with regard to relationships with significant other (Meyer 2005/0315-16).

The therapeutic process of dramatic projection "allows a connection to the unconscious and emotional processes by externalizing the confusion... [T]he client actively engages in making sense of their inner life and the relationship to the outer world" (Meyer 2004, workshop notes to Meyer 2005/03/15-16). In-group format (four per group); we had to do silent moving sketches on three questions. "Who am I?" "How did I get here?" and "Where am I going?" It was required that all the small group members partake in one person's journey at a time. These were presented to the larger group again in our small groups but not by the person whose sketches it was. The moving images or sketches served as projections, which again cannot be disconnected, to subjective interpretation.

In, *An introduction to Drama therapy* Meyer states (2004, workshop notes Meyer 2005/03/15-16), that the premise of Drama therapy is *not* that all art is therapy. It does not preclude art made primarily for creative, political, or financial purposes. It does not seek to pathologise the artist or artistic activity. However, it does recognise that artistic processes and products have healing potentials and that if worked with in particular ways in specific contexts, drama can be a therapy (Meyer 2004, workshop notes Meyer 2005/03/15-16).

Following Landy (1994), Meyer (2005/03/15-16) states that Drama therapy has its roots in the following areas: a) Play and play therapy, b) Ritual, magic and shamanism, c) Psychodrama and sociodrama, d) Psychoanalysis, e)

Developmental psychology, f) Sociological theory, g) Performance theory, h) Theatre history, and i) Educational drama and theatre.

In a description on what drama, therapy is Anne Seymour writing the preface to Andersen-Warren and Grainger (2000) tells about an incident where some people who while being blindfolded had to say what this object in front of them is, naturally by way of feeling their way around. The first person running up into its legs stated that it is a tree. Another stretched out her arms and touched its body, proclaiming that it must be a wall. A third person touching the ears noted that it must be a windmill whilst the trunk resembled a snake to the fourth person. So each had a different description based on their *exposure* to the elephant (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:11).

We think drama therapy is like this. If we stand back and look at the whole, we see something, which is made up of many different strands but in itself, forms a very recognisable unity. The unity of drama therapy lies in drama-theatre. When we speak about theatre, we are using a word, which encompasses a whole range of activities – from the Vienna Opera to glove puppets, from ancient Greek tragedy to French farce. When we speak about drama, we mean a form of communication, which all human beings use in all sorts of ways, all the time – something very fundamental indeed. In this book, we have set out to illustrate some of the essential strands, which make up drama therapy while preserving its unity as a form of dramatic creativity. This particular elephant is a talented animal, capable of imagination and sensitivity, and exceptionally good at adapting its skills to the needs of particular situations concerning people. In terms of this book, this means. None of the exercises or processes described is to be transferred from the page to the situation of an actual client, group or an individual client without carefully adapting it to meet the special needs of the people concerned...All situations involving people are different, all are unique. Therefore, you will always have to find your own way of

making sure that what we describe here will speak to the individuals and groups you are trying to help.

(Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:11)

In Seymour's preface to the book (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:7) drama therapy is situated in participation rather than clinical detachment:

The theatre is sometimes seen as the pursuit of the bourgeois classes but this book demonstrates how it may be regarded a necessary art in the process of healing available to everyone. An essential democracy about the approaches described here allows space for exploration and development. Drama therapy as examined in this book does not assume that life can be compared with a play where there is a fixed role for each person, where enactments reinforce the prevailing hierarchy, or where outcomes are inevitable. The ethic of this book sees drama as part of being human, about truth, not deception, and most importantly about choice. It is clear then that, while scripts exist for life and plays are already written, in the drama therapy space new 'plays' are created wherein endless possibilities for experimentation lies and the outcome is always unknown.... [D]ramatherapy certainly involves role play, but it is a very different thing from using drama as a way of teaching set patterns of interpersonal behaviour or the correct formulae for what somebody else thinks is the appropriate kind of verbal response within a particular situation.

(Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:7, 28)

It has been noted that one of the differences between drama therapy and psychodrama is situated in the distinction group versus individual (or private experience). There are several important differences between drama therapy and psychodrama,

the most important one being that the latter presents its material as straightforward autobiography, whereas the former tends to be more circumspect in its approach to the real lives of those taking part. Psychodrama's 'plots' are actually true in all their dramatic detail. They aim to present a realistic picture of the protagonists' actual experience of the relationships, which most closely and intimately affect them (Blatner 1997). Drama therapy's characteristic approach, however, is to leave the crucial business of focussing on individual lives to the persons most intimately concerned. The processes described in this book are all ways in which individuals are encouraged to discover their own truths from their own angles. Drama therapy deliberately chooses to approach these things circumspectly, setting the scene for personal healing without prescribing the treatment for it. It prefers fictional stories to straightforward autobiography, allowing those taking part to 'sit more easily' to what is unfolding around them, choosing whether or not they want to take it personally by becoming involved to the extent of identifying with the men, women and children, animals, gods and mythical creatures who inhabit the imaginary world created by the group.

(Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:15)

Drama depends on being *self-proclaimed* fiction, whether it takes place in theatres, drama therapy sessions or simply in the reader's imagination. Consequently drama could be viewed as a transitional practise (forthcoming: chapter five, heading 5.3.3.26) in that its relevance to us is not immediately obvious on purpose. Its significance come more to the fore in realising that its greatest therapeutic asset lies in *being* performed. Through the performance, we ourselves come forward in the attempt to understand it. "In other words, we have to work at it in order to see it from the inside," meaning is "...hiding from us as a story about someone else; and this encourages us to come a little closer, explore a little more deeply" (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:16).

The above directs attention to the idea of distancing and to recapitalise on this theme the following remarks: Drama's refusal to be explicit about its personal relevance to the local has the effect of inducing the participant to relax her/ his vigilance with regard to things one is willing to think and feel about oneself. Over against this psychodrama could be very threatening (Meyer 2005/03/15-16). An environment of safety is possible considering drama's honesty about its fictional nature and its willingness to be seen as a play. This also defends drama against the charge of being a trick, a way of getting under people's guard without asking permission to do so. Drama (as do narrative practise) always asks permission: it always manages to get across to us the crucial fact that it is only a play. This play and one might even say freedom to participate in playfulness is a way of encouraging vulnerable people to look more courageously at the challenges and rewards of becoming more involved with life. (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:16-17)

On how exactly drama therapy works Meyer (2005/03/16-17) in the workshop quotes her own interpretation of Jones (1996:7):

Clients make use of the content of drama activities, the process of creating enactments, and the relationship formed between those taking part in the work within a therapeutic framework. A connection is created between the client's inner world, problematic situation or life experience and the activity in the Drama therapy session. The client seeks to achieve a new relationship to the problems or life experiences they bring to therapy. The aim is to find in this new relationship resolution, relief, a new understanding, or changed ways of functioning.

(Jones 1996:7)

I learned that drama therapy is not necessarily just about acting as a skill. In the therapeutic or organisational context, it is about relating to objects, space, and time. Most significantly there is to me a great resemblance between all the

techniques in drama therapy and the ideas behind the narrative practise of externalisation. The careful and intentional planning of techniques had left an impression on me. Great care is taken in assuring that something is externalised. It is not, as sometimes is the case in narrative therapy, that an externalised position is achieved by a few questions or a way of talking with co-participants. The way we talk is constitutive of our realities and so externalisation is an important concept in narrative practise. However in a sense I experienced first hand that in drama therapy the connection to the externalised object, feeling, belief is much stronger than talking about it. It helped me accept this reality of the life of the feelings, belief etcetera, and enter into a relationship with it more readily, and thus faster than what otherwise might have been possible.

Drama therapy's credentials is said to lie in the fact that drama itself is a fundamental human experience. Augusto Boal (1992, in Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:17) says it is the capacity possessed by human beings to observe themselves in action. This seeing ourselves in action is pivotal to human beings' ability to be healed (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:17).

If psychotherapy's loosely defined aim is indeed partly to establish some sense of reflexivity, of seeing ourselves in action I would go along with this definition of drama therapy (Meyer 2004) by Read Johnson (1982): "Drama therapy, like the other creative arts therapies (art, music and dance) is the application of a creative medium to psychotherapy."

However, it should be noted that it is rather strange that Kirsten Meyer refers to this definition given that drama therapy's situatedness is found primarily in-group work. This latter view she also promotes. In contrast to psychodrama's often-individual concern, though not exclusively so, the drama therapy approach is not to do things to individuals, but to allow things to happen between people. (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:218).

It is my understanding that as with any social constructionist practise drama therapy takes the ways in which we present ourselves to one another and to ourselves seriously. From a social constructionist informed paradigm where reality and truth is situated in the *in-between*, drama therapy could be noted as resembling the epistemological understanding of our preferred paradigm. As a result, this makes drama therapy the obvious choice of interaction concerning problems involving the ways in which we...

...feel and think about our relationship with the persons and things that constitute our individual worlds. Feelings of hopelessness and inferiority social anxiety and personal depression. Inability to stand up for oneself or the underlying lack of confidence, which leads to over-assertion and aggressiveness. Inability to make cognitive sense of things that are happening and one's own reactions to them. Haunting memories of past failures and crippling fears about the future. An inadequate or almost nonexistent sense of self of having a personal centre, and a lack of confidence in the value and significance of one's own actions and experiences. All these things, and others like them, are the obvious raw material of drama therapy.

(Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:218)

Andersen and Grainger (2000:219) acknowledge that drama therapy has limitations but they assert that drama therapy can certainly help to do many things, which appear at first sight to be outside its range of effectiveness. Drama therapy can for instance be important in the actual intervention of another kind, such as psychotherapy or biological medicine. They are of opinion that before real healing can take place something must be there to encourage our responsiveness and that drama therapy has exceptional value in this regard (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:330).

3.13.3 Wednesday 16th March, session one

Presenter and theme: In this first session of track six on Wednesday, Dr. Gareth Higgins (Irish School of Ecumenics, Belfast, Ireland) spoke about *Fingerprints of Reconciliation in Culturally Significant Films*. It should be noted up front that to Dr. Higgins culturally significant films refers in the first instance to mainstream western box office films as this is his context.

3.13.3.1 Fingerprints of Reconciliation in Culturally Significant Films.

He entertains the idea that there are tools to be found in movies for reconciliation. Admittedly, he mentions that the movies he gets to see are the more popular Hollywood thinking informed movies. We should realise however that no film exist in a vacuum and that it would benefit to learn the tools of watching,¹³⁰ even if it's just to understand a little bit of the context. He further acknowledges his bias towards Christianity (informing his use of the word reconciliation) and being a child of Western civilisation. This notion of acknowledging where we come from sprung out to me again. Aptly everything we see in the movies, television, and so forth is filtered through our experiences. It is acknowledged that once a work of art is produced it takes on a life of its own (See heading 3.5.5. professor Hagemann on reception theory).

He puts forward an interesting reading of what he says he encountered in Kierkegaard's writings (uncited by Dr. Higgins). He alludes to what is called the indirect method. This states that the chances are good that people will not change because of *direct hearing* such as in the art of rhetoric where the aim is often to persuade. A good local example in this regard would be that of a sermon on a specific topic that addresses an issue to which there is a proposed or desired result. In a way, people prepare themselves for what they know they will hear. We change when we *over hear* as he calls it. Thus, *direct hearing* stands in opposition to *over hearing* as far as change is concerned. Movies are

¹³⁰ This relates to professor Hagemann's proposed skills period: The better the quality of the arts, the richer the experience.

said to carry the potential for over hearing in that change is not propagated but internally effectuated.

Movies, Dr. Higgins (2005/03/16) exclaims are an aid to our journey in that it describes but also creates reality. Theology should be directed accordingly to the reflections on society and current matters as encountered or stirred by movies. Often churches is said to have tried to propagate truths and certain acceptable behaviour without listening to the context of its primary audience. Following this notion of over hearing Dr. Higgins (2005/03/16) says that popular culture is said to change in accordance with what they see through media such as movies since they are over hearing ways of being, drawing realities from characters they see on screen. These characters are however to the viewer real as it resembles something of what it means to be human.

Rooted in the abovementioned arguments of Dr. Higgins (2005/03/16). It seems to me that for viewers, meaning is enhanced at the intersection of, on the one hand understanding about the context of the movie, catching the gist of the director's intention. On the other, hand the notion to freely interpret a film from the basis of our own experiences. At this intersection, we should ask ourselves three questions: "What is the artist saying? How is the artist saying it? Why is the artist saying it?"

Dr. Higgins's (2005/03/16) presentation also allude to the notion of archetypical myths, mentioning the Babylonian myth of the creation story, accordingly our human interaction is shaped by for instance the myth of redemptive violence the myth of atonement and so forth. These ideas are constantly mirrored in films of our popular culture. This idea resonates with what professor Hagemann notes on the development of Vogler's (1999) *The Writer's Journey*, resulting from Joseph Campbell's *The Hero's Journey* which is in turn based on Vladimir Propp on the *Mythology of the Russian folk tale*.

3.13.4 Wednesday 16th March, session two

Presenter and theme: In the second session of the morning track Ms Benita de Robbilard from the University of the Witwatersrand spoke on the topic *9/11 and Abu Ghraib: Time, Death, and Empathy*.

3.13.4.1 Performance of time and related considerations

Very briefly, what had made an impression on me, and relevant to this study is the idea of the performance of time (forthcoming: notions of time in narratives, chapter five). She distinctively referred to the notion that “[t]elevision performs time.” Television is being presented here as positioned within the broader context of media and therefore her discussion does not primarily include consciously produced films for instance. In this regard she was referring to the event of 9/11 and the role that the media had played in involving the whole world in that event, especially then through television. She referred to how briefly one could see bodies jumping from building windows and how we horrifically had shared in the final moments of someone’s life through the sense of vision and even tactility. The concept that she uses, when our senses are engaged in this way is referred to as *senaesthetic* experience, implying a sense of immediacy to the incident whereby through media we experience the horror of an incident such as 9/11 almost simultaneously with watching it. In this argument, she refers to Chavera’s (spelling) work, *The Cinematic Body*: Through films and media, it is said that the audience is assaulted, exactly so for not being able to un-see and un-hear what, in a preceding millisecond has been presented. We are willingly or maybe unwillingly being subjected to what we might not have wanted to see or hear. This resonates with what professor Hagemann and I had spoken about regarding the ability of film-media and drama to engage our senses in a way that we cannot foresee. Even in arts therapies this is a concern and thus, such as in drama therapy, the primary consideration of the therapist is that of creating a safe journey, process related thus and not content related (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:19-25). Television is in a sense very unsafe as one cannot un-ear or un-see what some editor had chosen to show us. Herein also lies professor

Hagemann's critique against television, saying that it is very one sided and a very powerful image. Television constructs human narratives for them; it constructs war, the way we see dying and so forth. In this regard, we should develop a kind of critical consciousness if we want to be guarded in some way.

What do I make of Ms. Robillard's presentation as research data? It is a testimony to the ability of visual media to elicit response in the viewer or participant. Notably in the sphere of conventional verbal therapy, it is my suggestion that this response would not have been educed by talking about concerns or problems alone. I'm of opinion that in narrative practise there is enough scope for creative engagement with the use media which might be used in numerous ways to assist in the telling or the describing of life journeys (See Media 5.2.1 *A multimedia journey*), or in this case eliciting responses. Exactly what the function is that it might fulfil in narrative engagement with people, could depend on any number of things. These functions could be those alluded to in chapter five but it could also be anything else. Let me present a recent (at time of writing) example. During Easter (2005), our congregation has had three, let us speak of experiences following professor Sweet as opposed to sermons on Thursday, Good Friday and Sunday. In referring to experience as opposed to sermons, we aimed to present something of an EPIC as explained earlier. Situated in an environment full of symbolism already interpreted in the recent past, we used media to illuminate the weeklong journey that Christ might have undertaken in that last week prior to his crucifixion. In augmentation to this worship experiences one of my colleagues then read from the bible certain passages belonging to the chronology of the week prior to Jesus' crucifixion. These scenes were acquired from the available movies on the life of Jesus. They were edited to loosely fit the reading by the minister. Although the text is in Afrikaans Media 4.4, (*Capture to Cross*) will provide a good idea of how this worked. Take note however that the text you see underneath the video was not shown on the projector. Rather this was read by the minister.

In this matrimony between the *then* (visually stimulating movie clips of the life of Jesus), and the *now* (that which is being heard from the ministers mouth in that instant) somehow vividly brought Jesus' intention (of course interpreted intention) and compassion to the fore. Even if I can only speak for myself this was really an extraordinary moment: Being a minister I find that one could sometimes become so desensitised to the emotion involved in the Christ narrative when faced with it regularly. One almost starts not hearing the message anymore.¹³¹ Still further, when an event such as Easter presents itself in which the CAM community really tries to create an EPIC, I find that I am often so engaged in the logistics behind the worship, taking on the form of a production that often a verbal message don't get across to me. However, in the preceding Easter experiences the arts (multimedia in this case) were presented with such a unity between verbal and visual art that it truly reaffirmed the Christ story and its meaning in my life.

3.13.5 Wednesday 16th March, afternoon session

Presenter and theme: Beyond the Physical Oddity, presented by Gladys Agulhas (Agulhas Theatre Works).

3.13.5.1 Beyond the Physical Oddity

One of the many interesting workshops I attended at the conference necessitated dancing. Of the performing arts, I judge myself the furthest away from dancing. Dancing and its considerations in narrative practise entered the research in a later stage than did story. Although interesting I had found it very threatening. Yet, I decided to partake wholeheartedly to derive as much meaning and benefit from it in respect of the research as I possibly could. Yes, my aim in participation would not fit that of someone going in earnestness to a dance therapist with a real concern; however, from a narrative practise informed view my wholehearted participation was aimed at incorporating my experience in reflexive

¹³¹ This un-hearing and over-hearing relates to Dr. Higgins and Ms. De Robbilard. As a minister due to desensitization I start un-hearing while the congregation perhaps over-hears the message.

conversations. One of the things that had me feeling both threatened (for three reasons) and in a way safe is owed to a racial consideration: A Ministry in inner city Pretoria that consisted almost entirely of African women attended the workshop. In total, I think we were about four white people. I do not view myself as advocating any racist notions, to the contrary. Although, I did at various instances afterwards wonder what the role was of the alleged 'other' factor. The threatening experience for me was also situated in that we had to do improvisations and lastly I believe the cultural perspectives on space played a role: I think that on some level maybe as far up as in Western culture we are much greedier about our space than the African culture. Referring to space, the concept does not preclude physical space in the sense that I felt we had too little space for movement and so forth. In the first instance, space refers to the space around and individual with which s/he feels comfortable with in allowing someone to enter. Our workshop, for instance for most part required physical contact with people. I think I might have felt less threatened in an environment where I had some kind of affinity to the group, such as in team building for instance wherein I stand in some kind of relation to them. With this being said, the reason that I did feel safe on the other hand is owing to the fact that I did *not* know these people in the sense that I are not related to them. One might say it was exactly their otherness that created the space for me to fully take part: I knew that I was not going to be ridiculed in some way by people I know for expressing myself in ways that I never considered.

I did derive a sense of freedom in the movement and for me it was therapeutic. It also caused me to reconsider my racial presuppositions; uncomfortable but a good thing. In my follow up conversation with Gladys, the presenter of the workshop, I shared this information and our discussion was in a sense also liberating; it allowed me to reflect on my own group involvement and feelings, discuss recommendations and so on.

Subsequently, I present the official Arts and Reconciliation introduction to the workshop and then follow the reflection letter I had written to Gladys after our interview about this workshop. In addition, I will present relevant academic voices where thematically applicable to what we have discussed.

The official Arts and Reconciliation conference guide (2005:35) introduces the workshop with the following description by saying that Agulhas Theatre Works is a professional dance company, launched in 1999 by multiple FNB-Vita award-winning dancer, choreographer and teacher Gladys Agulhas. Gladys, who studied integrated dance with Adam Benjamin, has taken her work to Senegal, England, and Switzerland. Her passion is to work with diverse groups of artists with different abilities, bringing professional dancers and the physically challenged together. Her dance company includes two professional dancers with physical disabilities. The workshop focuses on inclusive contemporary dance and aims to move people beyond their own capacity to new places of hope and inclusion (Arts and Reconciliation conference guide 2005:35).

3.13.5.2 A Reflection letter¹³²

On 2005/09/16 I set out to Johannesburg to Museum Africa for a two 'o clock meeting with Gladys Agulhas. The reader might remember that I've met Gladys at the Arts and Reconciliation conference earlier this year (2005). I was also referred to her by professor Hagemann on the research team for dance related considerations.

I arrived earlier than expected in Johannesburg, which was a good thing since unknowingly a one hour meeting extended to two and a half hours; extending consequently to rush hour traffic back to Pretoria. Was it worth it? Completely!

¹³² In this reflection I will speak of disabled persons and not as I might otherwise have done, differently-abled since Gladys used the term disabled in a comfortable, non-derogative, non-categorizing manner.

In conversation with Gladys, I realised anew how fluid the concept of therapy really is. Time and again she notes that she does not want the dance work that she does, to be viewed as directed to disabled 'patients' as a type of receiving audience; 'patient' in this sense meaning the subject of conventional therapy as discourse dictates. Plainly stated her work she says is not therapy. Dance to her is not something she does to people or having people doing dancing as subjects. Rather it is an interactive participatory approach.

She persists that what she does could rightfully be referred to as art. For this reason, she did not want to base her company Agulhas Theatre Works in Eldoradopark. She did not want people to think that her work is in the first instance a type of community work. One finds behind this remark the foundational basis for her work with disabled persons that of a deconstruction of stereotypes. The discourses that inform the realities that dancers inhabit are the following: Dancers, professional dancers should be very thin. "Hulle moet sulke maer meisies wees," as Gladys puts it. Artistic dance discourse dictates that in order to dance, or even be professional dancers one needs to *not* be disabled, and all the more not physically disabled. Lingering around unnoticed in this remark lays the notion of the inferiority of disabled people. The reasoning then: Because of this alleged inferiority dance is not accessible to disabled people.

Gladys growing up in Eldoradopark was sensitised to these types of prejudices: She relates that in her community, while growing up she had several dance instructors. All of them advocated the being thin lifestyle. She's had to hear numerously that sweets, chocolates, and so forth are out of the question in order to become a good dancer. Not only was she admonished but also she relates now that one should acknowledge that different cultures and indeed different individuals have differently shaped bodies. Although a certain look is advocated, it surely is not beneficial to all types of dancing. Having stronger thighs, arms or whatever might be useful for other reasons or for other types of dance. Looking back on that time in her life, she interprets that that which was destructive for her

was not as much the advocating of being thin but not being explained to why some things should be done.

In spite of her saying that, she must have had wrong teachers she is an acknowledged professional dancer having been trained in the strictest sense in classical ballet (other styles certainly not excluded). She's done her Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) exams; also being involved as a teacher there. Her involvement with the Johannesburg Dance Foundation and Theatre (JDF/T) was her first multi-racial dance experience that liberated her to some extent beyond the limitations of the discourses described above. She also danced with the former known PACT dance company. Here she's done a lot of contemporary mainstream work, nationally and internationally.

It is also at the PACT dance company that the idea of improvisational work hooked her. Often in our discussion, I've heard her say that technique restricts a person. The idea of improvisations connotes freedom, being unrestricted and thus a very useful approach in what she calls Integrated dancing. It is not that she has a disregard for technique, which should be quite obvious being an acknowledged professional dancer in the arts community, but often technique especially in classical ballet dancing seems the lifeless following through predefined motions. At the PACT dance company, however they never did outreach work as they would with JDT. This frustrated her since that is where her heart lies. At the JDT, they would go to schools, bringing dance to communities. This fortified her teaching spirit still further. In going to communities, her role was that of teacher, dancer, and choreographer. The void in her, in wanting to be busy with teaching and caring was filled in going back to her childhood community and teaching dance while on the other hand being part of PACT.

Gladys agreed that her work could be therapeutic. Yet, she just does not want to (in the first instance) be categorized as a dance *therapist*. In this regard, she

refers me to Dirk Badenhorst who is the artistic director of the South African Ballet Theatre, whom has studied amongst other things *dance therapy*. To me this was okay seeing that the PhD thesis in some sense deconstructs the notion of therapy. In fact, the ideas behind narrative therapy are in itself a deconstruction of people's descriptions of conventional therapy. It appeared to me that one way in working with the arts therapies assume the disregard for the skill of the artist. Gladys helped me a lot in deconstructing the notion of what art is without disregarding the idea of quality or skill and without the latter being applied too rigidly so that no freedom is felt. Gladys and I considered how one might use a professional dancer in the therapeutic environment. Gladys said that she as a professional dancer would want to know what I as the therapist would want her to do. I replied that this question of what to do would from a specifically narrative therapy or practise point of view be met by a collaborative answer between dancer, 'client' and therapist. Gladys noted that it might be good for her to sit in at a therapy session to experience something of the space in which she would operate; space, in this sense not meaning physical space but maybe more emotional environment. I asked whether her participation should necessarily include improvisation. I asked this for a twofold reason: Firstly, it is my experience that acknowledged dance therapists according to literature utilises this a lot, especially in the type of Jungian psychology wherein the connotation is made between imagery, improvisation and the assumed psyche. Secondly, the CAM community felt that this idea of improvisation is very threatening for someone (like himself or herself) that is not accustomed to dance. Gladys assured me that her involvement could be anything from highly structured to totally improvisational. A graphical representation might look like this:

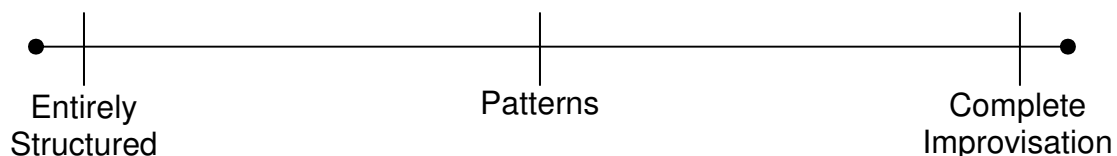


Figure 3-7 Continuum structured/ unstructured

Gladys and I however mentioned how it would probably be best if the participant to therapy give as much input as possible on the movement. Gladys mentioned that what the dancer could also do is loosely structure patterns on the dance floor. There would then be a loosely structure wherein it could be discussed what movement might be used to get to the various places in the dance space. I asked where on the continuum above Gladys will put this semi-structured approach; should it be more to the structured or more to the improvisational side. As you might see above Gladys put this in the middle.

In thinking about therapy, one could also portray the role of the dancer in the choreography on a vertical axis while the question, which does the dance, is answered by two diagonal lines.

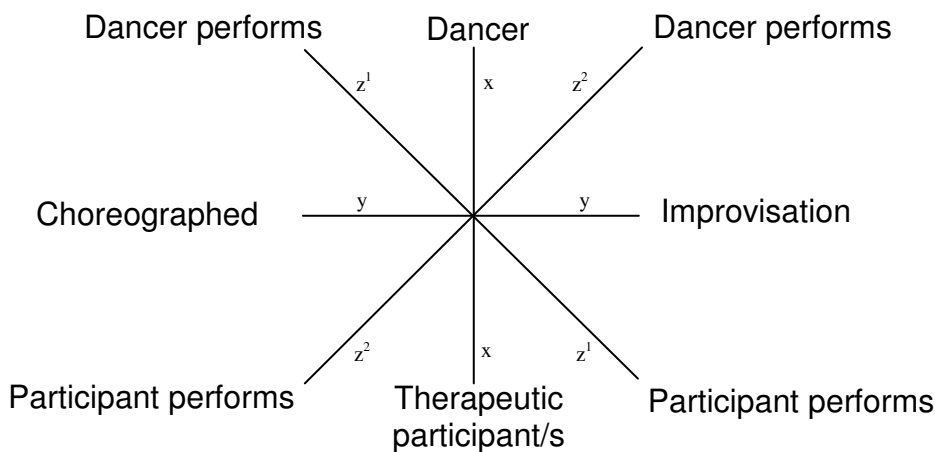


Figure 3-8 Towards role differentiation

Looking at this representation one realises there are numerous possibilities based on the following:

The 'y' axis indicates to what extent any movement is choreographed or improvised.

The 'x' axis then indicates who the person is (a professional dancer or the therapeutic participants) that did the choreography.

The z^1 and z^2 indicates who the performer is.

Consequently, a number of possibilities exist.

- i. A dance could be choreographed by the dancer but performed solely by the participant
- ii. The participant could have provided the material from her/ his life (participant as choreograph) and the dancer then performs.
- iii. A dance could be improvised by the participant or the dancer based on feelings, emotions of the participant or reflections of the dancer. Take note that obviously a dancer cannot improvise on behalf of a participant. Improvisation implies being the creator and the initiator. A dancer could however take as inspiration the life or emotion of a person and does an improvisation accordingly. This results in a bodily interpretation of the person's experiences on the side of the dancer.
- iv. Lastly, a dance could be structured/ choreographed by the dancer with the input of the participant (or other way around) and performed by both or either.

If indeed, a therapeutic conversation is implied this could happen through reflexive outsider witnessing practises as encountered with narrative therapist Michael White.

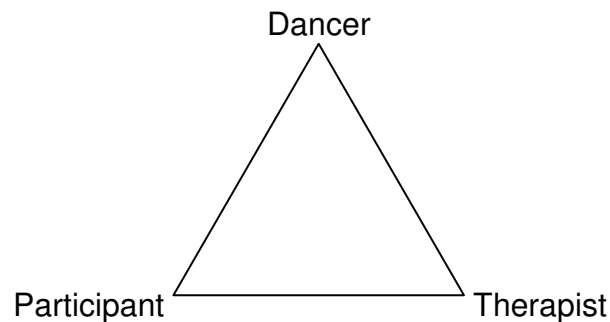


Figure 3-9 The relationship; artist, participant, therapist

Hereby a reflexive conversation could take place between the therapist and the dancer while the participant listens. A conversation could also take place between the dancer and the participant with the therapist being an outsider witness. Lastly, the dancer could be an outsider witness while the dancer and

participant are in conversation. With regard to the content of whichever discussion and relating to the dance experience one could superimpose this triangle over the middle of the previous representation. Remarks could then be exchanged about choreography, performance or the role of the dancer/participant. Conversations need not be restricted to these themes. However, it might be useful to dwell in these themes and explore the emotional or interpretive landscape around the experience of any of the parties involved.

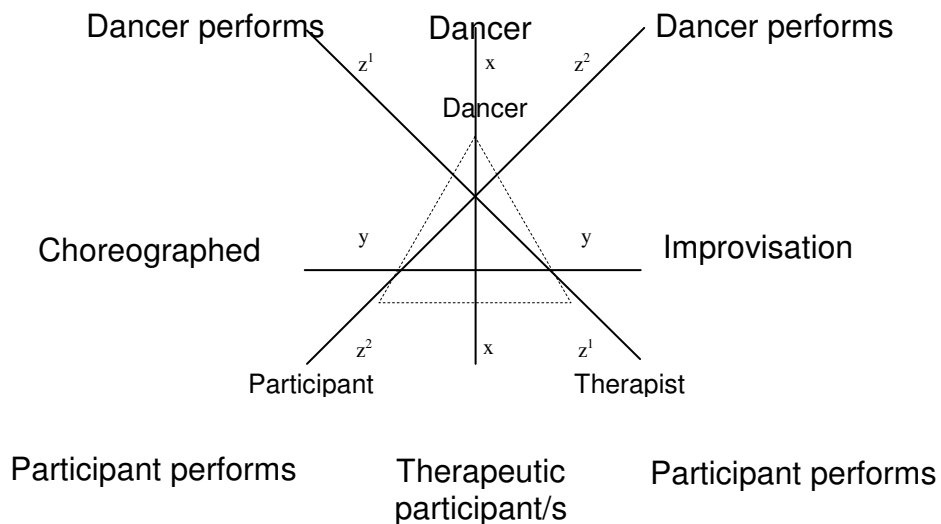


Figure 3-10 Integrating understanding of arts in/as therapy

With regard to the content of a dance, in so far as we assume for the moment that a dance is to some extent indeed choreographed, our conversation lead me to these reflexive remarks. Gladys says that when she dances on stage it should not be just about herself and her performance. As she states in relation to therapy, it should not be a Gladys show. She would want to incorporate all kinds of things, social events, funny incidents from someone's life and so forth. I think of this as the type of social reflection that one might come across in painting, where painters reflect on social injustices, political events and so forth. One might easily say that as understood above Gladys paints with her dancing. One

finds that that type of dance is then situated in life, in emotions and all the things around us that might influence the performer. A dance in therapy could then portray certain incidents and not only attitudes or emotions. Gladys says that she will give the person in therapy homework, doing a bit of research on the things they do, say and so forth. Hence, the person should think and reflect not only on their attitudes and emotions but also on their daily activities. I asked Gladys whether in this regard it would be able to involve someone in dancing a story upon which she affirmed. However, she reveals that it would probably be most significant if one start of with the kind of emotions the person experiences although this is not the sum total of the experience. Relating to emotion Chodorow (1991:3) asserts that dance is engaged with all of the fundamental emotions: Joy, Excitement, Grief, Fear, Anger, Contempt, Shame, and Surprise. These are said to be innate patterns of expressive behaviour. The expressive patterns are at once personal and universal. Whether the emotions are named or not, they motivate and shape the way we move. For Chodorow (1991:3) dance therapy is completely involved with the expression and transformation of the emotions” Chodorow 1991:3). Espenak (1981:13) restricts the extent of what is called major emotions by saying that historically, the dance has served, for dancers and audience, “...as a representation or a direct expression of the major emotional states, encompassing the great many nuances, the shades, and degrees of intensity within the major emotional categories of anger, joy fear, and calm.” There is to Espenak (1981:13) a distinct correlation between reciprocity of feeling and muscular affect situated in the direct relationships of posture, movements, and gestures to the spectrum of emotional states.

Extending the notion of personal research, Gladys situates dance in everyday movement. Accordingly, even kicking a rugby ball is a type of physical metaphor for dance if one according to Gladys just slow down the motion. If a person in therapy knows about dancing Gladys could incorporate this skill in the choreography. Still, she would first tell the person to forget everything they have learned with regard to technique. In the first instance, the dance should be about

the life and movement of the person. She relates that sometimes when dancing at differently places she would look at the lighting in a place and choreograph a dance accordingly. This relates to an exhibition she says: An exhibition uses lighting to bring the best qualities of the work to the fore. Translated back to dancing; the everyday movements of a person is the light that Gladys will use in doing a choreography for or with a participant. As a result, Gladys will be circumspect about technique as technique might either overshadow personal experiences or confine a person to certain expressions. In drama, therapy as such there is also no need for skill or correct technique. Espenak (1981:43) explains:

[W]e are interested in the drive, the mobilization of energy, behind the patient's movements rather than in his muscular strength per se; we are not as much interested in the skill with which he performs certain movements as we are with his willingness and his persistence in the effort. In short, we are concerned with the behaviour characteristics of this movement rather than in any absolute conceptions of grace, prowess, and so on.

(Espenak 1981:43)

The total approach of dance therapy is focused on the dynamics of body and mind in emotional interaction. There is a fundamental biological basis for this, as indicated by the basic cell reaction of the human body in terms of the relation between feeling and movement. In feelings of pleasure, there is a basic cell reaction of expansion. In feelings of displeasure, the reaction is contraction. In awakening, for example, in a warm and pleasing room there is a feeling of comfortable pleasure to which the basic cell structure responds with expansion; the same awakening in a cold, stiff, unattractive situation, with feelings of displeasure, would produce a body cell contraction.

Thus, there is a continuous interplay on the biological level of the mental and the physical.

(Espenak 1981:61)

Dynamically conceived, the therapy is a process of partly effecting change in the personality by modifying physical states, and this modification involves the stimulation and strengthening of muscles, the conditioning of glands, and, in effect, the modifying of the entire neuromuscular system. Large muscle activity is a direct and simple way to stimulate vital processes. Such movement induces increased flow of blood to the brain, stimulates the metabolic and other chemical processes of life, and generally affect the total physical tonus of the individual. While these changes are physiological, they are viewed in dance therapy as interwoven with psychological change, with improvements in ego states reflected in body states, and with improvements in body states reflected in ego states. Therefore, in this view the differences among patients in terms of physical structure, although they may affect certain levels of physical movement, do not at all impede the effectiveness of therapy. In diagnosis, for example, the procedures are designed to focus on the dynamics of interaction between body and mind.

(Espenak 1981:43)

Based on the above psychomotor theory, diagnostic tests have been designed which are based on the common denominators for the dynamics of interaction among all patients, namely, rhythm, tempo, form, and space relations" (Espenak 1981:43). Whereas Gladys would want to sit in at therapy session to experience something of the gist of the participant to therapy Espenak would first want to conduct diagnostic tests upon which an approach to therapy is undertaken since she as experienced something of the physiological and personality aspects of the individual (Espenak 1981:55). Shortly, then these tests, which are grouped into

seven basic areas, comprising, as described by her in both negative and positive components of personality:¹³³

1. Degree of dynamic drive (energy)
2. Control of dynamic drive (rhythm)
3. Coordination (neuromuscular functions)
4. Endurance (toleration of frustration)
5. Physical confidence (courage, reluctance, fear)
6. Body image (self-concept)
7. Emotional state (expressed in improvisation)

Following diagnosis there are several phases that comprise of the therapeutic use of dance: As mentioned *diagnosis* and *assessment* but then also, *restructuring*, and *integration*. The concern in the restructuring effort relating to early bodywork seeks primarily to improve coordination, stimulate realistic body awareness, and encourage body freedom. Dancing is at this stage structured. Giving the person opportunity of specialized exercises. Rhythmic movements to experience his body in all its parts and as a unity and to become aware of such individual factors as strength, tension and relaxation, flexibility, balance, control. All the related elements that constitute movement and that affect the natural harmony of neuromuscular interaction.

(Espenak 1981:80)

During this physically strengthening experience, which represents a departure from the patient's previously defensive behaviours and their accompanying physical restrictions, we have also opened up paths for emotional expression but have not yet sought specifically to elicit unconscious material. Our basic psychological task in the exercises was to liberate the patient from anxiety and fear of his own motility, of his own physical dynamism. It is not motion itself of which he is afraid; he fears the emotions, associations, and the unconscious

¹³³ See Espenak for elaboration (1981:44-55).

conflicts associated with movement in his self-concepts. He fears the power that freedom of movement represents, namely, the power to embrace or to destroy. Rather than experience these emotions and the punishing consequences that he thinks will follow, he has immobilized to varying degrees his vital energies and unconsciously selected parts of his body as threatening instruments of that energy. Within the structure and safety of the therapeutic setting, he can bring these fears and anxieties to the surface, where they can be consciously experienced and intellectually and emotionally assimilated, and either resolved or brought under control so that they no longer affect body image and body movement. (Espenak 1981:80).

The next phase of treatment is devoted to the task of integrating the unconscious fears, repressed emotions, and associations into consciousness and restoring the patient as fully as possible to a unified body-ego state. The major technique used for these objectives in dance therapy is to stimulate authentic feelings through individual dance or improvisations, in so far as they have not already appeared as associations during the first phase of the program. The role of improvisations in dance therapy is of the utmost significance to effective change. (Espenak 1981:80)

Yet another phase concerns expressive movement in-group interaction. The previous phase, the process of self-integration, while it represents the major phase of treatment, is not the total objective of the therapy. It is, rather, the constructive process by which the patient is strengthened to achieve the ultimate goal, which for Espenak (1981:91) is to live more comfortably and productively in the world of functions, tasks, aspirations, and relationships. As the final phase of the treatment, the patient may join the group therapy program. Espenak (1981:91) emphasises that this group dance setting offers an effective opportunity for both continued self-expression and modification of that self-expression in appropriate consideration and adaptation to the needs of others. Communal dance form, are one of the historical expressions of group identity

and group communication. One of the simplest approaches according to Espenak (1981:91) is to unite the group through response to rhythms.

Espenak (1981:91) now remarks on the different personalities that emerge within the group. She notes that within this group setting, leadership may evolve from within the group itself, thus permitting various personalities to develop their own roles within the group. In the context of leader/ follower formations, each personality will at once be revealed; the aggressive personality will seek dominance, the competitive personalities will challenge; the passive personalities will follow; the isolated personalities will tend to withdraw or avoid. The group then becomes a model world, reproducing on its own scale the interactions of personality in the world outside. Being able to function as member or as leader, or alternately fulfilling the respective demands of either role in this model world, will strengthen identity concepts, which in turn will modify behaviour in the real world.

The idea of technique evokes images of structure, which was not a consideration in primitive dancing. Espenak (1981:16) notes the many cultural forms of expression became more sophisticated in the developmental context of earlier societies. New considerations were evolved in regard to the exercise of restraint, choice of movements, and related aspects of shape, form, and content (Espenak 1981:16). The power, wild energy, and spontaneous abandonment of the primitive dances became slowly transformed, along with other cultural changes, into disciplined forms, such as the ritual dances in Crete, in Greece, in Egypt, and in Persia” (Espenak 1981:16).

For Gladys, contrasting all the above-described diagnosis, the challenge would be in translating technique to meaning. Interestingly pertaining to technique, Gladys noted that it is possible to hide feelings in dancing which I thought not to be possible. Consequently, in her classes she encourages people to open up and commit themselves to the movement since others who are in a physical

sense disabled can't do certain movements. The primary consideration for Gladys when relating dance to therapy is situated in trust and communication from where a safe place will be created for expression. One finds in primitive dancing expressive (religious or otherwise), and communicative functions.

In primitive man, the war dances indicate the transformation of fear and anxiety into courage and aggression, the coming-of-age dances are reflective of anticipation and joy. In the ecstatic dances, we see a catharsis, abandonment to the affirmation of life. In the ritualistic expressions of tribal experience, we see dance used as a communal expression along with individual identification with that shared experience, reinforcing a sense of belonging and security.

(Espenak 1981:13)

This also relates to drama and healing since traditions of healing through drama are at least as old as civilisation (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:13). They appear to be as old as community itself relating to non-medical purposes is.

Drama in relation to healing is seen within the context of the philosophy of life, a corporate philosophy inspiring a corporate event. The ability of drama to heal was in classical and pre-classical times explicitly associated with religion, and this has been so from time to time in succeeding ages.¹³⁴ To Andersen-Warren and Grainger (2000:13) there are no reasons why fundamental drama philosophy should be connected with religion. In this regard, they aver that the most celebrated explanation of the therapeutic effect of drama – Aristotle's theory of catharsis – does not mention divine personages or influences. What it depends on they say is *human fellow-feeling*¹³⁵ (Andersen-Warren & Grainger 2000:13).

¹³⁴ See Andersen-Warren and Grainger 2000:30 for illustrations in this regard.

¹³⁵ Espenak whom we will listen to later also situates part of her work in the dance as having a cathartic experience (1981:13).

Espenak notes that primitive dances were utilized in a variety of ritualistic and improvisational ways involving spontaneous movements for mental and emotional transcendence. They were also used for a sense of communion and relatedness to the group (Espenak 1981:15), the latter of which relates strongly with Andersen-Warren and Grainger's remark above about religion and drama.

In therapy, the basic elements of the primitive dance are effective for providing initial release of life energy and anger, without the necessity for formal training of body movements. The percussive quality of the instrumentation and the repetition and rhythmic movements in individual expression produce a spontaneous, nonverbal involvement by the patient in the feeling and in activity (Espenak 1981:16).

For Gladys dance is to a great extent about feeling human, relating of course to both above mentioned authors' comments. She refers to experiences of professional disabled dancer David that says that when done with the dancing he is very aware of other people around him. Gladys also refers to other values, apart awareness or sensitivity to other people that are instilled via dancing, that of creating respect and openness. However, dance is acknowledged to also be able to be about altering emotion since this takes place almost naturally. Although I might not agree in total with Espenak (1981) in some following and instances Gladys' remarks especially about *openness*, resonates in Espenak (1981:91) noting that the person dancing [specifically in a therapeutic group setting] learns to accept or tolerate the attitudes and roles of differing personalities. A person develops increased awareness of the rights and boundaries of others, as well as of his own. Most importantly, he learns how to contain or to release his feelings in socially acceptable ways (Espenak 1981:91).

The notion of homework or research resonates with Learning Theatre's methodology and their involvement with organisations. Henk from Learning Theatre also said that they do research about the people, the way they talk for

instance. Learning Theatre will then recount this way of talking in the acting. Thus, a dance or piece of acting is informed thoroughly in the life of the person or company with whom one works. I now wonder about how Gladys might interact with an organisation in this manner... dancing and portraying the life and issues of the company. Could in the end involve a multi-arts approach to working with organisations and not just dance or drama?

I wondered to a great extent with the CAM community (2005/09/15) about whether someone as myself doing narrative therapy would be able to call what I do drama therapy, or dance therapy (etcetera) if I use drama and dance in and as therapy with a person/s. I would not be able to in the first instance refer to myself as a dance or drama therapist but one might say one does drama therapy if the focus is on drama in/ or as therapy. This presupposes skill on the part of the therapist in respect of the particular art form. Only to a very limited degree would I be able to say I do dance therapy since I hear something of a type of kinetic IQ or cleverness on the part of the dancer. It seems that the dancer, especially the type of dancing physical, in your space dancing Gladys does produce a certain skill, a cleverness; being able to read a person's body language or deduct certain emotions from posture. One might also call this *body* IQ in the same manner that some refer to emotional or intellectual intelligence. I asked Gladys about this body intelligence and from where this comes from. She immediately realised that this must have come from working with children, referring to the community from whence she come.

I mentioned the concerns of the CAM community to Gladys in considering whether CAM members would involve themselves in dance therapy. These are there concerns:

- i. Gaan jy my met iemand vreemd laat dans?
- ii. Gaan daar kykers wees?
- iii. Wat is die terapeut se rol, gaan sy kyk of deelneem (coach)

- iv. Gaan sy jou leer hoe om iets te doen?
- v. Wat verwag sy van jou en jy van haar?
- vi. Wat is die invloed wat mense op mekaar het? (is hulle nie terughoudend nie)
- vii. Hoe effektief is terapie in 'n groep. Is dit nie bedoel vir een tot een nie?
- viii. Gaan ek blootgestel voel?
- ix. Hoe gaan jy my as 'n stokmannetjie kry om te danse en hoe gaan dit vir my terapeuties kan wees?
- x. Gaan die dansers afleidings maak op grond van hoe ek dans?
- xi. Gaan sy my los dat die experience self op 'n manier vir my terapeuties moet wees?
- xii. Gaan sy vir my riglyne gee waarvolgens ek kan dans?"

Shortly these involve thoughts about anxiety in respect of audience involvement, feeling inadequate, and not knowing what to expect.

I've asked Gladys to merely listen to them after which she could respond to any. She noted that these concerns are exactly the type of things that she wants to bridge or is sensitive to in especially doing *integrated dancing*. She thinks of her role as that of a facilitator and not primarily a teacher. As facilitator of the dance experience, she would do icebreaker to help people ease into the experience. She will never expect people to do something with which they are uncomfortable. Yet one thing she expressly mentions is people revealing feeling uncomfortable in being touched, such as when Gladys straightens their postures and so forth. In this sense dancing requires touching. Even still, she is open enough that people will be able to approach her with such individual preferences. She notes that in her way of working she always strengthens the person dancing by positive first remarks. Hereafter she might start making suggestions. However, she says that she will also be straight with a person if she realises that after continual positive feedback and suggestions the person seems to still be holding back. She will encourage the person then to give everything, commit to the dance,

since others (physically disabled people) might not be able to do the things they can.

We also talked briefly about my experiences at the Arts and Reconciliation conference. I said that I felt very threatened since I did not know the people that partook with me. However, I told her that I do realise that it was a workshop environment and that I did not have any common denominator with the people attending. She affirms and says that she is normally for a type of soft entry where people get to meet each other, telling something of themselves and by her thoroughly explaining how things work. I remember that she explained clearly the purpose of the things she asked us to do at the workshop. She speaks of work that she conducted with all the Lions rugby referee's aiming at enhancing communicating and creating better posture towards players on the field.

Gladys holds the opinion that those feeling threatened having to dance are exactly those that should consider dancing. I asked her to what kind of therapy she might go in having personal problems. Since, as stated already, it is possible to hide in dancing she in fact might not go to a dance therapist. She would consider drama therapy as a possibility since it asks for a type of analysing or conversation much in the same manner she asserts as I conduct the interview. If she would go to a dance therapist she might feel very emotional and very involved."

3.13.6 Evening lectures: 17th/ 18th March

3.13.6.1 Archives of the Arts and Culture Communities and the TRC

Presenter and official theme: Ethel Kriger, archivist and researcher at the South African History Archive Trust presented a lecture on *Archives of the Arts and Culture Communities and the TRC*.

Anew this had led me to think about concepts I have encountered in this research such as history, archive, myth, the elapse of time and so forth. She

starts off, quoting Derrida saying that nothing is less reliable, less clear, and troubling today than the word archived. Relying on Derrida she first states what the concept is *not*: It is not just the recording of the past. It is shaped by a selective power and shaped by the future anterior. It is constitutive of the past, and in view of the future is given its so-called final truth. From a narrative therapy / practise point of view, a work of art or dramatic involvement also has this situatedness in the future, which is brought into being by ascribed meaning in the presence. One might for instance refer to people's artworks as archives of meaning. Seen in this way people's involvement in therapy, especially where the medium of the arts is used is not just in retrospect a shaping memory but a performed archive of ascribed meaning. Derrida, according to Me. Kriger clearly distinguishes between memory and archive. Archive is not simply remembering, but is consignment; inscribing a trace in some external location. In some cases concerning therapy art could also be written, as in a life story and is thus a physical archive as Christo attests to the worth of a written book over against a play (See also Danie Du Toit's comments, heading 3.5.1).

Old Testament scholar David Hinson differentiates between three different kinds of story telling in the Biblical records. These distinctions are related to the concept of story in narrative practise and intersect with the lecture in question of me. Kriger (2005/03/18) accordingly then; a) *Myths* are the stories trying to explain life as ancient people knew it. These stories, it is said is not based on *people's memories* of actual events. In the Christian tradition, Hinson (1990:6) refers to the story of Creation, Adam, Eve and the serpent, Noah and the worldwide flood and the tower of Babel. They are of primary value to the Christian tradition as far as they express important truths about the nature of man, and about the ways of God; b) *Legends* are based upon the memories of human beings and preserved in oral tradition before they were ever written down after several hundred years (Hinson 1990:7). Noticeably differences can be detected in the way several traditions account for one event; c) *History* is an account of actual events which occurred in the past, and which were *recorded in*

writing at the time or fairly soon afterwards, while people still living remembered them (Hinson 1990:7, Emphasis in a, b and c belonging to Hinson). It is important to note that every recording of an event is a perspective illumination on an event written in a manner that reveals what was important to the specific writer (Hinson 1990:7). Hinson (1990:9) also mentions the study of archaeology, which is used to verify and supplement written history. Might I add that even these findings (such as art/ functional crafts i.e. pottery) are social interpreted, their meaning legitimised and reiterated from a certain perspective. This is also true regarding what me. Kriger says about the renegotiation of the term archive concerning the apartheid period, 1960 – 1994 in South Africa: National archives in this period are not merely objective recordings of the past but are politically historically influenced. A rearticulation of the concept archive would entail the following description as me. Kriger draws on the work of Derrida, *Archives Fever*. Archive is a "...complex work of memory and forgetting, moving as it does between the past and the future in the space created by the plague of power" (Kriger 2005/03/18). Me. Kriger with Derrida's insights explains that archive affects more than the recording of the past, but is indeed something, which is shaped for the future in a play of selection (This connects with notions of time in narrative, chapter five and heading 1.2.3. on time as the good, bad and 'ugly.')

As she says in her own words: "In recording the past you make a promise to the future" (Kriger 2005/03/18).

Me. Kriger calls the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) one of the biggest archives in South Africa but that the rationale from where it is constituted does not fit the traditional concept of archive. The reason for the constitution of the TRC provides a useful idea for the rationale of using the arts in narrative practise: The TRC in the words of me. Kriger wants to solicit stories, recording unspeakable victimisation and violence in a way hitherto unknown in its specificities, promote national unity, effect reconciliation between the people of South Africa, resulting in the establishment of a culture of human rights.

Me. Kriger also relies on the input of Derrida in the 1990 conference, *Refiguring the Archive*.¹³⁶ The essence of this conference entailed that archival- theorists/practitioners and activists recognised that all archives are politically and historically figured. In this sense, South Africa's official archive was figured by its colonial and apartheid pasts and it included an archive within an archive that of silencing, erasure of the resistance to colonialism, to apartheid archives. In the same manner, one should realise that archives presented or constructed by people in relation to therapy or facilitation is also figured by broader discourses.

Why reference to this 1998 conference is important: The debate around what constitutes an archival record did not stay within the confines of the conference walls. The arts seem to have played an important role in the interrelationship between the process of documentation and interpretation. Exhibitions of South African artists were offered whose works reflected the interrelationship in the process of documentation and interpretation. A Dance performance inspired by San rock art and depictions of trance dancing in rock art offered entertainment, expressing the theme of trance-formations. The choreographer introduced her work with a lecturer on the use of archiving dance and the constitution of dance as archive.

The primacy of the written record over the oral record was interrogated by examining both the limitations and possibilities of oral history in the constitution of historical memory. Me. Kriger also referred to the contribution of the arts in that conference as having an enriching experiencing; thus (in my own words) having a thickening understanding (*Enriching* relates to the concept of swelling, professor Hagemann.) The medium of the arts and culture she says transcends cultural and linguistic boundaries in a way that legal and linguistic discourses

¹³⁶ Hosted by the graduate school for humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand, 1998. Co-hosted by the national archives of South Africa, the South African history archive, the gay and lesbian archive and including the historical papers of the University of the Witwatersrand.

found in the TRC could not do. In this regard, she refers to four activities of the arts and culture, performing arts, audio/visual engagement with the TRC, visual art, and art exhibition.

We now quote Jane Taylor (1998) writer of the puppet show *Ubu and the Truth Commission* (performing art), as expressed through Me. Kriger. She speaks here about the role of the artists in a profoundly challenging situation where global communities have begun to take issues with crimes against humanities and to mobilise themselves to establish peace and justice.

Primarily I want to foreground the role that artists could play in facilitating debates around the TRC; following the premise that artists habitually deal with issues of betrayal, sadism, masochism, and memory. I felt: To ignore what the arts could bring to these processes was to waste an extremely valuable resource. Further, it is my feeling that through the arts, some of the difficult and potentially volatile questions such as, why we betray or abuse each other, could be addressed without destabilising the fragile legal and political process of the TRC itself.

(Taylor 1998 as cited by Kriger 2005/03/18)

In an overview¹³⁷ on *Ubu and the truth commission* performed at the market theatre, it is said that the puppet show was a highly textured and mediated performance of TRC narratives. It's a puppet show in which the unspeakable of the apartheid era is acted out through puppets, the puppeteers, and actors. Hence, the challenge to the artist William Kentdrige,¹³⁸ who painted the animated backdrop, as to how to present violence without violating the representation and abusing the experience of violation of the victims. This says Kriger (2005/03/18) is also the challenge of the archive of the TRC itself. In the

¹³⁷ Not being sure if this is the reflection on the puppet show of me. Kriger or indeed still me. Taylor herself. Thus the paragraph, even without precise quoting still keeps close to the actual words used by me. Kriger.

¹³⁸ Note: William Kentdrige is also spoken of by participant Danie du Toit.

puppet show, Taylor and Kentdridge chose to put selected and edited transcripts of TRC hearings of human rights violations into the mouths of puppets. While the two human actors played the role of perpetrators of gross human rights violations... They did this for no member of the audience would ever think that puppets really did experience the violence that they were portraying. (Note: this resembles strongly with the notion in drama therapy *like me but not me*, heading 3.13.2.1).

In other instances performed in the *Market Theatre laboratory*, the actual witnesses to gross human violations repeated their testimonies in front of an audience. They were aided by professional actors in an attempt to educate¹³⁹ people about the role of the TRC. These actors did not try to represent, as opposed to *Ubu and the Truth commission*, acts of violence, which had not happened to them.

Referring to the above plays, she mentions that it is an always-open question whether the performance of violence and trauma can aid the traumatised society or individual in dealing with this past and consequently be healed. When listening to Christo preferring an actual factual play about what had happened to him as opposed to the use of another story one needs to acknowledge that indeed some sense of immediacy or resemblance might be appropriate. The narrative concern would be for the local attached meaning whereby this consideration is not generalised. Such performances could therefore be helpful in healing but often in my opinion, it might not be.

In the genre of film, Kriger (2005/03/18) refers to Mark Kaplan's, *Between Joyce and Remembrance*. In Kaplan's documentary film, he used seven years of

¹³⁹ Me. Kriger refers to these performances wherein the aim is not personal restoration or healing as non-mediatory performance. Also these types of performances are called docu-performances since they incorporate scenes and words from the TRC hearings into the plays.

footage feeling that there are certain memories that we must strive to keep alive and that the video camera is a way of preserving these memories.

In the genre of visual/ graphic and conceptual art she refers to Cape Town based painter/ conceptual artist writer and cultural worker Sue Williamsen. Williamsen has produced a number of works in response to the challenges of the TRC: *Truth games* are a twelve-piece interactive collage artwork. This work of art includes photos newspaper reports relating to specific cases. Each one of the twelve pieces comprise of three components, the perpetrator, the victim and the act of abuse. Each piece includes moveable slats. The viewers are encouraged to move the slats whereby the words are altered. Hereby the notion of recontextualising truth is portrayed or as me. Kriger says the reinterpreting of consigned memory.

Described artworks, which have been committed to public appearance, is seen by me Kriger as the gift of the artist. It is through this gift that perpetrated families might be able to complete their mourning, 'complete their morning' meaning getting to a place where the family can meaningfully move forward. In this regard, she refers to Freud whom has presumably said that for mourning to be effective it has to have an end.

Lastly me. Kriger refers to the field of exhibition work called *Breaking the Silence*, created and curated by the Western Cape division of Khulumani support group; Khulumani being the imperative of that Zulu word meaning *to speak out*. This is a support group mainly for survivors and victims of apartheid related violence. "The exhibition documents a healing process that originally took on the form of storytelling which was facilitated by the trauma centre for survivors of torture and violence. This developed into more material forms of healing such as the creation of scrapbooks, memory cloths, drawings, story books and film" (Kriger 2005/03/18). These artefacts formed the body of the exhibition. According to the Khulumani, conveners the purpose of the exhibition was two

fold. Firstly, the unacknowledged survivors and victims of the struggle against apartheid are given the opportunity to remember and express their experiences. Even more importantly to me. Kriger, in the second instance to create a record that might honour their sacrifice and educate future generations. In these artworks, Me. Kriger says that we should realize that the archive is indeed more than the remembering of the past, a commitment to the future. However, Kriger (2005/03/18) relates a problem with regard to the artworks that survivors, victims, clients, etcetera create. This is a problem for the definition of archive as well as for the onlookers or the audiences of these works of arts: Victims or survivors portray a certain amount of jealousy wherewith their narratives are guarded. It is said that they have to guard their narratives because of the immediacy of the experience. Unlike the professional artist who is able to mediate with their art forms, victims and survivors need to protect their dignity. Consequently, the problem for Kriger (2005/03/18) is this: The protection of the private story is at once the closing of the archive while the significance of archive is situated in being open ended.

She poses the legitimate question as to the right that we have to insights into personal suffering and memory. Furthermore, the rhetorical question: “Does suffering have to be sublimated into the collective and therefore the vicarious consignment of public space...in order to become archive and therefore to fulfil the imperative of never again?” (Kriger 2005/03/18).

She closes by saying that “...when the arts and culture communities engage with the unspeakable, with the realities of apartheid as recovered by the TRC, they should do so in expressions that assume responsibility for the future, that their representation of such realities is a commitment to the moral imperative, never again” (Kriger 2005/03/18).

In thinking about archive and validity Kriger (2005/03/18) extends the differentiation between truths that the TRC holds: i) narrative or personal truth, ii)

forensic truth being something that one can corroborate, iii) dialogue truth or social truth being truth in experience that is established in interaction, discussion and debate, and lastly underpinning the prior iv) restorative truth otherwise explained as truth that heals. (Note: This relates to heading 1.2.1.5 on the differentiation between different kinds of realities; reality as truth; reality as material, or reality as essence.)

3.13.6.2 In the TRC Translators' Box

Presenter and official theme: *In the TRC translators box*, presented by Michael Lessac and Yvette Hardie.

Four years ago Michael Lessac, from New York had done most of his work in movies and television. However, he had started wanting to do a stage production that would bring the story of South Africa, relating to the theme of forgiveness surrounding the apartheid era, to the rest of the world. The intention is still to take this stage production and resulting documentary film to the conflict zones around the world like for instance Northern Ireland. The aim of this not only situated in the performance but also in shooting a documentary on the interaction between the audiences, children, schools, and churches in Northern Ireland. This then is taken to the rest of the world. In this process, the notions of reconciliation and forgiveness might be translated for different demographic areas. Lessac (2005/03/18) feels that theatre and film is a great medium for carrying the seeds for the translation of forgiveness to different parts of conflict stricken areas in the world.

Initially overwhelmed by the vastness of the topic it was suggested to him that he started to study the workings of the TRC. He gave birth to the idea of doing the story with the main data scripts the translators in the translator's box who had to work as translators for two and a half years. Based on these video shoots and conversations with the translators, he started working with thirteen South African actors.

This idea was conceptualised by his intrigue in the notion of the translators having to translate in the *first person*.

This is extraordinary, a group a translator, always having to say, I, I, I, I; I did this. This was done to me...I, I. Well I come from the theatre. I know what 'I' does to you if you have to keep saying that. Now if I have to say *I did this* and it's the darkest side of my humanity, and if I have to say, *this was done to me* and it's the most victimised side... *I forgive*, or *I don't forgive*, or *I refuse to forgive*.... All of a sudden, it seemed to me that the notion of the translator, their eyes (I's) were the perfect eyes (I's) to tell the story of what happened here in South Africa.

(Lessac 2005/03/18)

He relates the experience as foreigner of having to rethink his understanding regularly as conversations progress. Therefore, a triangular process develops since translation takes place on different levels. He translates his understanding to the performing actors whom lastly almost translates their understanding back to the translators on stage.

In this process of translating, the translators saw themselves as actors: They were told to translate only information and keep their hearts out of it but they were in effect conveying emotion as well. In this sense, they embodied as translating actors, forms of victimisation, the sense of loss and wrongdoing. Michael's comment on this is that whether you look at it from a quantum physics or pure human morality point of view you cannot be merely an observer. The sense of participation even as a mere observer is always imminent. This resounds true when hearing the translators saying that somehow in so far as debriefing is concerned, they fell through the cracks. Michael revealed that it was amazing to him hearing the translators speak about their participation in the

making of the stage production, the conversations informing it, being their first debriefing.

3.13.6.3 Reconciliation Themes in New Media Productions of Selected Cape Artists

Presenter and official theme: Reconciliation Themes in New Media Productions of Selected Cape Artists, presented by Carine Zaayman

Carine (2005/03/18) says that the notion of re-mixing and re-editing found images or found footage is a crucial aspect of New-media. “Re-mixing is not simply stealing...rather it’s a process of re-interpretation, of weaving stories, of finding ways of inserting our own story in the broadband mutter of contemporary media” (Carine Zaayman). New-media art can and indeed consist of just about any medium.

She started off by illustrating students’ work done with the computer program Photoshop. Students were asked to source, cut and paste images and put them together in a collage to make new images, representing their own ideas. Hence, one of the works consisted of mainly three equally large images. The backdrop of the work was Table-mountain in Cape Town, on the left to the front an old colonial style Cape house and to its right across the street a township with people walking along the sidewalk. The street in the middle draws the viewer’s attention through the illusion of depth to the mountain. In reality, this picture, which looks like a real picture taken on any given day, can never be found in real life.

In another example, a master’s degree candidate constructed two suits to be worn in a conflict situation. When one wearer/ player becomes agitated and growls that person’s suit’s offensive pockets inflate, simultaneously this growling sound triggers the defensive pockets of the other player’ suit. The leading student forming part of the working group called *The Millé fiore effect* explains:

The Millé fiore effect started making these inflatable suits in pursuit of particular feelings. How would it feel to be able to express your emotional states through large changes in the shape of your body? They looked for inspiration to animals that could transform their bodies and as a crude metaphor for emotional state; the *Millé fiore effect* used the volume of their voices... Are these suits a gesture towards restoring to humans the bodily weapons they have lost and so allowing them to engage in ritual rather than actual violence? Perhaps if we posture and play instead of striking and shooting we can redirect violence into ceremonial expressions of conflict.

(Insert on video: Zaayman 2005/03/18)

Carine Zaayman says that "...one would hope that artists are able to maintain a critical voice and not simply become spokespeople for the optimism in the new South Africa. Artworks should not exclusively stand as healing personified but should also be the disruption, the pebble in your shoe. This could after all be a way in which consciousness can be attained and change can be affected"

3.13.6.4 Video art

Presenter and official theme: Video art, presented by Minnette Vari

Minnette says that it's most unfortunate that people have come to refer to her as a video artist. Therefore, she starts to explain how she became involved in the medium of video:

Minnette revealed to us that with her travelling, she had begun to take interest in the way in which South African stories, and news of South Africa was being broadcasted to the rest of the world. Foreign news coverage and media attracted and repelled her simultaneously. She notes that this coverage was being broadcasted from a one sided perspective and that it was difficult to relate

to the stories told from that perspective. Therefore, while in a foreign country all she had was a little video camera... that's where it began. She reasoned by saying:

I don't know how many of you have watched CNN, where a big story breaks on the news and says, 'live breaking news' whatever and you know it's not breaking news. It happened twelve hours ago, or twenty four hours ago and it comes around, and around and around and it's the same every time...maybe this time [you think, *own* insertion] I'll have more information, maybe this time there will be more detail about that incident and yet it remains the same. You are kept at arms length through the medium of editing and news being moulded into a specific kind of format.

(Varí 2005/03/18)

This to her was a very frustrating, seeing a place you almost know, you can almost feel it, smell it, touch it but not yet or clearly. She then took her camera and took pictures of a place that may be home.

In putting fourth her world, she thought that it would be best to do it in the same frame as that of television. Almost by accident then she says she began to work with video animation.

She starts by telling us about a work called *Alien*. The background of this work, its inspiration was drawn from being stranded in Detroit. She started taking informal pictures about things happening on the international arena and specifically South Africa at that time around 1995/6 being propelled along the way of becoming a democracy. Then back in South Africa, she revisited other footage from the election and took twelve parts of footage that had been put forth to the international arena. As an artist she says, one is always critical of how people present you. "One has to remain very critical about what narrative they [in this case that of politicians] are telling to the rest of the world"

Further, she says that she finds it difficult to explain her work since she really would like people to make their own connection to what they see. She told that with regard to her earlier work such as *Alien* people had asked her about the use of nudity and using her own body nude. She explains: “This is who I am. One’s own body is your first interface with the world. The way in which you move is as specific as a finger print.”

She also presented *Oracle*, *Rem*, *River run*, and *Mirage*. I will now include Minnette Vari’s remarks on *Mirage* as she described it in the Reconciliation exhibition catalogue 2005.



Mirage (1999)

Video Animation. Dimensions: Variable
Duration: Video – 100 seconds. Looped indefinitely.

Mirage presents in visual language what I would like to call the “heat of history”: events and images coming back to us like a fever, like the flush of heat across your face when you remember something uncomfortable or shameful.

A mirage is something insubstantial, illusory, full of promise, delirious, dangerous.

Out there on the horizon, it mimics our projection and anticipation of a future that we cannot see; still, this doesn’t stop us from visualising and exploring its possibilities.

Mirage uses the visual conventions of heraldry to impart a sense of ritualised and artificial order, an order that is constantly mutating and is therefore hazardous and unstable – the brink of a meltdown.

It represents structures (of society, government, of self) that twist, turn and are dismantled under the pressure of our memory and vision, changing their shape, function and appearance like a mirage in the desert, as time goes by.

It speaks about the inevitable friction and pain in the midst of change and of the illusion of imagined or erroneously represented facts. It speaks about our history; great changes taking place while in many ways things appear to remain the same. It explores the truths and lies of our time and the narratives in between.

(Varí 2005/03/18)

I briefly would like to reflect on my own emotions with regard to what was presented. All the video artworks had literally had a dark, greyish look. I felt it to instil in me a sense of sombreness and depression.

I found some artworks more than others to be very disturbing, so much so that at some stage I felt sick. Having not has told myself that I attend this conference and this specific presentation for the sake of this PhD I surely would have not attended or walked out. In a sense, it clashed with my Christian self-identity or story. I was thinking: “Would my God really want a Christian to look at what I am looking at,” and I don’t have the answer for everyone. However, I doubted, remembering Minnette say that she really wants to communicate to people through her art, if this was the right content to do it with. With me, she missed the mark. I had heard her say, despite wanting people to make their own interpretations, what she wants to communicate with each individual work. Some

of her intentions are positive, wanting people to see victimisation, oppression, inequality, and so forth. Other notions she referred to as 'shifting realities' by the visual and larger than life distortion of her own body. I would just not have realised the above-mentioned intentions or ideas by looking at the work and making my own interpretations.

This reminded me of me and Danie du Toit's conversations: The hat of minister requires of me to really be careful about the art that I present to people. Through Minnette's work, I came to the open conclusion that depending greatly on one's own story that art can inspire or really put one off; stated somewhat specifically that the artist's best intentions, talent, and underlying positive message can in fact disgust and repel an audience. At some stage during her presentations, I even felt aggressive and thought I could not watch anymore. In a sense afterwards, I felt sad that the positive message was lost for the reason of the artist maybe overstating her message. Overstatement desensitised me as an audience member to what I thought the intended message was. The problem that professor Hagemann also has with some conceptual artworks is that often one needs to resort to the written word in order to understand.

Essentially aren't we talking about artist's rape if one is put in a situation where one do not have the ability to block that which is perceived through one's senses?

Professor Hagemann comments on my reflection by situating Minnette's work in conceptual art. Conceptual art comes from the context where the concept is important and to a lesser degree, it's constructing. In order to convey a message conceptual art sometimes shout since it comes from out of a position of protest, it comes out of a position of marginalisation. Viewing conceptual art outside its context may become so overwhelming that one does not hear its message. But then again people that might customarily go to "...look at conceptual artwork is almost half way there I suppose" says professor Hagemann. Professor Hagemann notes that its his understanding, also informed by my experience that conceptual artists have tried to rediscover the body, rediscover the flesh,

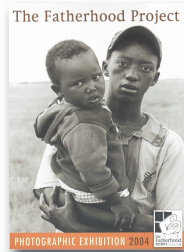
exploring the notion that we are located within a very tangible, fleshy, sensory experiential world.

On track of what I have said earlier with regard to having an educational role to fulfil in church I expressed a concern for the congregation: I noted that I will not be able or willing to take Minnette's work to the church context, no matter what it says about oppression, marginalisation etcetera. Then came the surprise: Professor Hagemann refers to the Catholic Church that had at times commissioned the most horrible images, dying saints with arrows, not to even speak of the horrific cross images. He remembers that during childhood the Christ narrative was to him one of the most awful stories; of a man being hung on a cross and pierced with nails. Even the contemporary movie *The Passion* is exceedingly horrific. Certainly, this is something to think about and I suppose that just as there is truth in having to know the context of Minnette's work one should also take the context of the church in consideration.

Through this, I acquired a fresh appreciation of the narrative approach, respecting people's realities, placing value on the type of artistic content that might work for an individual or organisation.

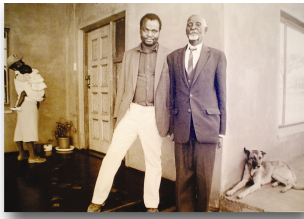
3.13.7 Arts and Reconciliation conference exhibitions

Project director
Linda Richter
Exhibition curator
Julie Manegold



COVER
PHOTOGRAPH
Cedric Nunn
Young father with child

Generations



Gille de Vlieg
Braklaagte Fathers



Suzi Bernstein
Men pushing pram – Jan
Hofmever. 2001



Paul Weinberg
Family ties, Sokhulu,
Kwa-Zulu-Natal, 1983

3.13.7.1 The Fatherhood project

The Fatherhood Project, Photographic Exhibition 2004, curated by Child, Youth, and Family Development (CYFD) at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC).

The Fatherhood Project is built around an exhibition of photographs taken by professional photographers, students, and children, of men involved in caring and protective relationships with children. The photographs reveal fatherhood in its many aspects and moods and give graphic expression to the possibilities and challenges of men's closer engagement with children.

(Arts & Reconciliation conference guide 2005:21)

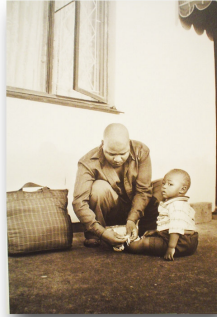
The exhibition was divided into five categories. On the left hand side, I provide several examples under the categories to which certain photographs belong.

“The exhibition consists of approximately 120 photographs, selected from hundreds sent in by photographers from all over South Africa. It features the work of a wide range of contributors, including some of South Africa's best-known photographers, as well as students and children who used disposable cameras to record the people they recognize as fathers. Three photographic essays, each an intimate

The Art of Caring



Paul Weinberg
Rural father, Maputoland



Bongamusa Msimang
Tied Forever



Cedric Nunn
Robin Venter shaves his ailing
grandfather, Herbert Nunn,
Mangete, 1995

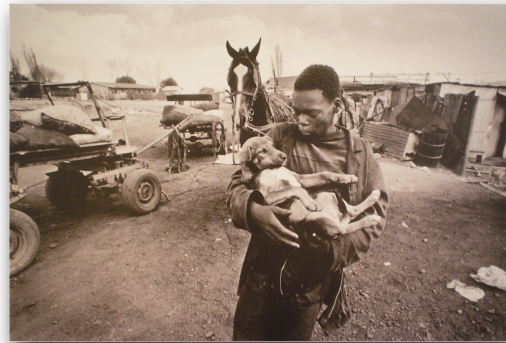


Eward Ruiz
Fatherhood 6

portrayal of the life of an ordinary father, have been provided by celebrated South African photographers Paul Weinberg, Ruth Motau and George Hallet.

This photograph provided the inspiration for the exhibition. A young coal deliverer, dehumanised by his material and social circumstances, is transformed by his caring for this dog-child.”
Linda Richter

PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION 2004



Peter Magubane
Young coal deliverer and dog, Soweto

Amongst the most profoundly affecting images on display are those taken by ten- to twelve-year-old children living in urban and rural environments. These children, none of whom had any previous photographic experience, produced images that are a powerful testimony to the enduring presence of committed fatherhood, even amongst the most

disadvantaged communities. The photographs demonstrate the important



Smokeheads (2004)
Carbon on paper

fathering role played by men who are not the biological fathers of the children in their care (Arts & Reconciliation conference guide 2005:21).

In South Africa men have tended to be dismissed as being the source of problems to women and children – neglecting their duties of maintenance and support, subjecting women and children to violence and abuse, and using much needed household resources of their selfish pleasures. In addition, men have been excluded from programmes aimed at improving the lives of women and children because they are seen as disinterested and difficult to work with.

However, around the world, and in South Africa too, a new drumbeat can be heard. Men are joining in associations to combat the negative stereotypes that surround them, to support non-violent caring behaviour among men, and to influence the socialization of boys to achieve a more humane society for all (Dr William N. Okedi, program officer, Human Development & Reproductive Health, Ford Foundation, Southern Africa, in Manegold (curator) 2004:5)

3.13.7.2 Reconciliation Exhibition



While the Fatherhood Project was a *photographic* exhibition. The following remarks relate to another conference exhibition called *Reconciliation*, displayed from 15 – 30 March 2004.

These works all consisted of selected South African contributions. I will here reflect only on a few that I find significant in relation to this study.

All the subsequent representations could say something about the

narrative practitioner's view of people as it is interpreted here. The technical terminology of the visual and other arts could be a significant augmentation to narrative jargon.

Of particular interest to me was Diane Victor's *Smokeheads* (2004, cited in *Reconciliation* 2005). Underneath small thumbprints are provided.

"*Smokeheads* is a series of 40 portraits made from photos documenting the day clinic users on a single day at the St. Raphael HIV centre in Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape.

The portraits are made from deposits of carbon from candles smoke on white paper; they are exceedingly fragile and are easily damaged, disintegrating with contact as the carbon soot is dislodged from the paper.

I was interested in the extremely fragile nature of these human lives, and of all human life, attempting to translate this fragility into the portraits made from a medium as impermanent as smoke itself. Despite its ethereal nature, it still leaves a residue or definite trace on the page.

My aim was to try to encapsulate the transient presence of the sitter" (Diane Victor, *Reconciliation* 2005)

In recounting it here I wish to translate it to narrative practise according to two interpretations: Firstly, I think using the artist indirectly one might relate to the fragility of the human story. If this is how these peoples' lives look now, I was wondering how they have come to look like this. Secondly I was thinking that this is also a representation of the position the narrative practitioner should place her- / himself in; always seeing not so clearly. We are together on a journey to try to clarify, to attempt to see clearly, although this might never be possible.

The subsequent work is called *Horizons of Babel* (2004), watercolour and digital prints.

“Horizons of Babel are framed against the background of a fascination with the topography of South Africa that dominated the interest of cartographers, illustrators, and artists from before the colonial period up to the present. The site of the project is located on a semicircle between Cape Columbine and Cape Agulhas, with the centre on the hill Babelonstoring near Paarl. The outcomes are an artist’s book comprising a panorama of 1:50,000 maps and a semicircular panorama installation of watercolours.

The project explores the concept of the panorama and the particular relationship between the panorama and the panopticon, as well as the relationships between the centre and the periphery. IN this respect the association between the centre (Babelonstoring or Tower of Babel) and the place names along the periphery (such as Matroozefontein, Niewe Gift, Bakovens Kloof, Touwsfontein and Paapekuils Fontein), as well as the cultural, geographical, botanical, and zoological diversity, acquires metaphorical significance.

Horizons of Babel is informed by medieval cartographic conventions that accounted for the postdiluvian dispersion and diversification of people over the world, as used in the Catalan Atlas and the Ebstorf map. As with the Ebstorf map, *Horizons of Babel* is a map of healing and reconciliation where the body and land are metaphorically mapped over each other” (Keith Dietrich, *Reconciliation* 2005).

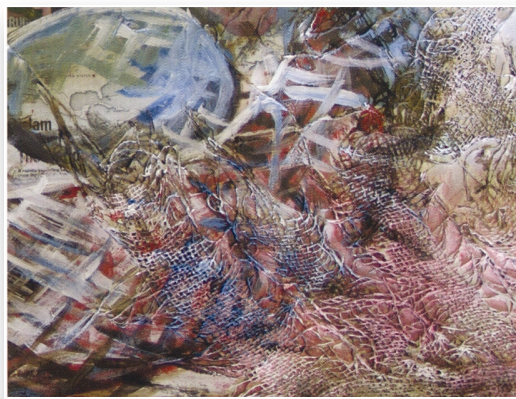


Horizons of Babel (2004)
Watercolour and digital prints

This led me to think again about the world the person, incarcerated by a saturated story or dominant discourses in society, lives in. People often do not see a panoramic view. It is only through re-membering that some frames are put back on the canvas of their lives.

The following work is called *Constructive Nest* (2005), Mixed media.

The following description is not specifically aimed at this work but relates to it also. “Currently, South Africa is trying to construct the multiracial community and the social life structure that was destroyed during the forceful removal of black Africans from Sophiatown (Kofifi) to meadowlands. Here, relocated people started all over again to bring to fame the popular Soweto we know today” (Daniel Mosako 2005, cited in Reconciliation 2005).



Constructive Nest (2005)
Mixed Media

“I work with the concepts of construction, reconstruction, development, and settlements. Some of these aspects form part of the architecture of the South African constitution” (Daniel Mosako 2005 cited in *Reconciliation* 2005).

Mosako (*Reconciliation* 2005) alludes to the *dense collage background compositions*. This caused me to realise again that we live our lives multi-textured. We not only consist of this or that but consist of voices; memories about the past, anticipations about the future, those indeed worlds culminate in my being.

The following work is called *Baggage Arrival* (2001). Subsequently find an explanation based on the artist's, Jan van der Merwe, own remarks in *Reconciliation* (2005).

The installation, *Baggage arrival* (2001) consists of a moving luggage carousel with an array of luggage on the conveyor belt. Everything is made of found objects and rusted metal. Consequently, the objects seem old and 'eaten' by time. The baggage is 'preserved' in rusted tins but simultaneously decayed and looks like archaeological finds. They have 'survived.' The rusted tins reference to the remnants or refuse of consumer society. Yet the rusted tins are also used as an artistic tool of transformation; it is an attempt to make poetry out of ordinary things and out of junk.

Movement of time and history are found in the slowly moving luggage. It could also be seen as a metaphor for journeys. The baggage may be seen as spiritual baggage that we drag along and are forced to acknowledge upon arrival; also the baggage of a personal identity. The rusted surfaces suggest transience and vulnerability.

Part of the installation is a television monitor. As each item of luggage moves behind the partition and becomes invisible, it is 'seen' by a security camera and

becomes visible on the screen. What is seen on the screen has already become history and is represented as second hand experience.

I provide the following description as well since some remarks is still relevant to *Baggage Arrival*.



Baggage Arrival (2001)
Found objects, rusted metal, TV monitor,
security camera, and electric motor.

The encompassing artwork is not visually represented here but I will now refer to it since it relates to the medium used in *Baggage Arrival*. In *Moth and rust* (2005) the pulpit, robe and TV monitor are symbols of power and represent a platform for the spreading of a message of reconciliation or for the abuse of power. The baptismal font refers to water, symbolic of a purification process; a new beginning (Jan van der Merwe, *Reconciliation* 2005).

In this work, contemporary 'history' is 'preserved' with rusted metal, rendering an archaeological quality to the objects. Rust is a chemical process and in the artwork, it becomes a metaphor for the fight against time, vulnerability and transience. The pulpit, robe, TV monitor and baptismal font become a monument to individuals who use podiums and technology as platform for reconciliation throughout the world. This 'monument' is meant to be viewed as a moment for

contemplation, a moment of silence (Jan van der Merwe 2005, in Reconciliation 2005).

While the artist is very expressive about what his art might suggest or portray metaphorically it speaks to me narratively in the following manner:

Since this type of conveyer belt is usually seen in airports my first connotation with it is that of an airport. Now, I am wondering to whom this luggage belong. Did the owners ever arrive at their destination assuming that the luggage might have been sent on an earlier flight? Maybe, they just forgot, if that is at all possible. I am also wondering how the content look inside the rusted luggage. Consequently informed by the questions this luggage could also suggest that people's memories are being rusted. Once a problem saturated story become so pervasive it could be indicative of the fact that people have forgotten their luggage somewhere and that it is now starting to rust. That which they need for everyday business they did not take with them.