

ART THERAPY AS A NON-JUDGMENTAL
ENVIRONMENT:
FACILITATING EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION AND
HEALING

A Master's Thesis

by

ŞEYMA ÇELİK

THE DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNICATION AND DESIGN
IHSAN DOGRAMACI BILKENT UNIVERSITY
ANKARA

March 2025

ŞEYMA ÇELİK

ART THERAPY AS A NON-JUDGMENTAL ENVIRONMENT:
FACILITATING EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION AND HEALING

BILKENT UNIVERSITY 2025

ART THERAPY AS A NON-JUDGMENTAL ENVIRONMENT:
FACILITATING EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION AND HEALING

The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences
of
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

by

ŞEYMA ÇELİK

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF FINE ARTS in COMMUNICATION and DESIGN

THE DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNICATION AND DESIGN
İHSAN DOĞRAMACI BILKENT UNIVERSITY
ANKARA

March 2025

ART THERAPY AS A NON-JUDGMENTAL ENVIRONMENT: FACILITATING EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION AND HEALING

By Şeyma Çelik

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Media and Design.

Marek Brzozowski
Advisor

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Media and Design.

Burcu Baykan
Examining Committee Member

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Media and Design.

İclal Alev Değim Flannagan
Examining Committee Member

Approval of the Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences

Refet S. Gürkaynak
Director

ABSTRACT

ART THERAPY AS A NON-JUDGMENTAL ENVIRONMENT: FACILITATING EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION AND HEALING

Şeyma Çelik

M.F.A., in Communication and Design

Advisor: Asst. Prof. Marek Brzozowski

March 2025

This thesis accompanies and supports my art exhibition work, *What I See When I Close My Eyes*, which I created, in most parts, by drawing while keeping my eyes closed. The main corpus focuses on how I approached art and endeavoured to use it as a therapeutic tool for healing from my mental illnesses, mainly treatment-resistant depression. My thesis looks at art as a means of therapy and analyses its benefits, aiming to create a non-judgmental space for artistic expression. Apart from its therapeutic benefits, art can also be a research tool, both as an enquiry of the self and as a means of providing the data for analysis. The data being examined, in this case, is the scribbles being produced in a ritualistic sense of drawing every day, if possible. These drawings are almost akin to mood trackers, but instead of naming moods with emotion-based vocabulary, the tracking is done by artistically reflecting the mind's content on a subconscious level. The artistic approach of drawing with eyes closed produces the data for the research commentary and provides an enquiry of the self through reflection of the mind. It focuses on battling judgmental art critique and instead, being free in self-expression and partaking in self-discovery. The Jungian psychoanalytic approach, Rogerian humanistic psychology, as well as Deleuzian and Guattarian schizoanalysis are chosen for the theoretical background.

Keywords: Mental Health, Depression, Blind Drawing, Non-judgmental Environment

ÖZET

YARGILAYICI OLMAYAN BİR ORTAM İÇİN SANAT TERAPİSİNİ KULLANMAK: DUYGUSAL İFADEYİ KOLAYLAŞTIRMA VE İYİLEŞTİRMEYİ DESTEKLEME

Şeyma Çelik

Yüksek Lisans, İletişim ve Tasarım

Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Marek Brzozowski

Mart 2025

Bu tez, büyük bölümünü gözlerimi kapalı tutarak çizerek oluşturduğum Gözlerimi Kapattığımda Ne Görüyorum adlı sanat sergisi çalışmamı desteklemektedir. Ana külliyat, sanata nasıl yaklaştığımı ve başta tedaviye dirençli depresyon olmak üzere, baş ettiğim zihinsel hastalıkları iyileştirme çabamı anlatıyor. Bu süreçte sanatı terapötik bir araç olarak kullanmaktayım. Tezim sanatın faydalarını analiz ederken sanatsal ifade için yargılayıcı olmayan bir alan yaratmayı hedefliyor. Sanat, terapötik faydalarının yanı sıra, hem benliğin araştırılması, hem de analiz için veri sağlayan bir araştırma aracı olabilmekte. Bu durumda incelenmekte olan veriler, mümkün olduğunca her gün faaliyet gösterilen ritüelistik bir çizim anlayışıyla üretilen karalamalarımdır. Bu çizimler ruh hallerini duyguya dayalı sözcüklerle adlandırmaktansa, daha çok zihnin içeriğinin bilinçaltı düzeyde sanatsal bir şekilde yansıtılmasını sağlıyor. Tezim, yargılayıcı sanat eleştirisine karşı durarak bunun yerine özgürce kendini ifade etmeye ve öz keşfe odaklanmakta. Teorik arka plan olarak Jungcu psikanalitik yaklaşım, Carl Rogers'ın insancıl kuramı ve Deleuze ile Guattari'nin şizoanaliz yöntemi seçilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Akıl Sağlığı, Depresyon, Kör Kontür Çizimi, Yargılayıcı Olmayan Ortam

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank my supervisor, Asst. Prof. Marek Brzozowski, for his invaluable insight and support throughout the development of this thesis project. I as well would like to thank Asst. Prof. Andreas Treske and Çiğdem Karabağ for their patience in this difficult period of my life. I am also grateful to the jury members for their valuable feedback and the time they have spent evaluating this work. Additionally, I would like to thank doctor Mustafa Aldur for his technical support. I am very grateful to my parents for guiding me toward this path of pursuing art and aiding me in life as much as possible, and specifically my father for the motivation and very valuable aid. To my doctor, Sertaç Ak, for helping me cope better with the hardships on my way. To my friend Ceyda for her valuable feedback and encouragement. To dearest Rica, I thank you for always being there for me. To Çağlar for pushing me to engage more diligently and passionately with my thesis and believing in myself. I thank every person for inspiring me creatively with their beautiful art and content creation endeavours on social media, which all have motivated me. Finally, I thank my doctor, Gülsev Kale, Chair of the Board of Trustees, for her moral support since my childhood.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
ÖZET	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	1
LIST OF FIGURES.....	3
CHAPTER 1	1
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 2	3
LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY.....	3
2.1: Art and Judgment	3
2.1.1: Art of the Mentally Ill Artist	4
2.1.2: Judging the Mentally Ill Artist.....	5
2.2: Theory on Art Therapy.....	7
2.2.1: Jung's Psychoanalysis in Art Therapy.....	9
2.2.2: Carl Rogers' Person-Centered Approach and Art Therapy	10
2.2.3: Deleuze, Schizoanalysis, and Deterritorialization in Art Therapy.....	14
2.3: Applications of Theory in Art Therapy	17
2.3.1: Jackson Pollock's Art Therapy	18
2.3.2: Eun-Mi Lee and Kang-Hee Lee's Expert System in Therapy	21
2.3.3: Person-Centered Art Therapy in the Current Age.....	23
2.4: Similar Studies and Applications	25
CHAPTER 3	31
OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT	31
3.1: What I See When I Close My Eyes	31
3.2: I See Myself.....	35
3.3: I See Loved Ones	39
3.4: I See A Paper Tapestry	40
3.5: I See Your Worries	42
CHAPTER 4	44

POSSIBLE MEANINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF RECURRING MOTIFS	44
4.1: Hands	45
4.2: Columns	48
4.3: Eyes	49
4.4: Stars	51
CHAPTER 5	53
CONCLUSION.....	53
REFERENCES.....	55



LIST OF FIGURES

1. <i>Pollock's Number 1</i> (1949).....	19
2. <i>Pollock's Number 1 (Lavender Mist)</i> (1950).....	20
3. Collage of <i>The Ugly, Deflated and Unbalanced</i> by Zoë Bowman.	26
4. Collage of my scribbles done with keeping eyes closed.....	28
5. Collage of <i>Untitled</i> by Willem de Kooning	29
6. <i>I See Myself</i> [Film still]	33
7. Static images produced by drawing with eyes closed.....	34
8. <i>I See Myself</i> [Film still]	35
9. The exhibition hall	37
10. <i>I See Loved Ones</i> [Fragments].	42
11. <i>I See A Paper Tapestry</i>	43
12. <i>I See Your Worries</i>	44
13. Hand motifs recurring	47
14. Column motifs recurring	50
15. Eye motifs recurring.....	52
16. Star motifs recurring	53

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Art, the embodiment of nature and culture, nurtures the earthen body of what is mundane and dull to create a new sensation that is sublime to behold. With art, we, in turn, turn the crudest manners of materials to form some new meanings out of the raw, the untouched, and the barren (Çelik, 2022).

Art is the act of processing tactile materials such as paint, clay, and recyclable goods into a body of aesthetic value, but the most crucial material that is harnessed to produce this sublime meaning-making machine called art is the mind. Indeed, the mind is the energy that fuels art making, as the thoughts, memories, and experiences become something so meaningful and sensational that it is called an artwork. As far as the connection between art and the mind goes, art can act as a therapeutic tool for self-expression through which the artist heals by harnessing the power of the art and improving well-being. In this light, this thesis aims to use art as a therapeutic tool and discuss its effectiveness on me as the artist, endeavoring to cope with mental illnesses.

The thesis project aims to create a therapeutic approach to distress and depression by drawing with one's eyes closed and focusing on self-reflection through abstract forms rather than opting for representational and figurative drawings. Art therapy can reach its true potential only if the artist can be free of judgment. The critical point here is removing judgment from the environment, whether this judgment is in the manner of taboo or non-taboo subjects or in opinionated feedback in the form of 'good' and 'bad'. This way, art may be brought to its core purpose: expressing any emotion or opinion in

its purest form. The spectator and the artist both shall be isolated from judgment, for they will be so critical of the artwork that they react rather negatively instead of receiving any benefits and healing.

Art, as a product of the mind, can cure the mind's distress that manifests as mental health illnesses. Mental health illnesses are severe complications that affect functioning in daily life. Art, as a way of self-reflection and enquiry, may work therapeutically to battle mental health illnesses by providing a nonjudgmental environment. In this light, the thesis investigates how a drawing method conducted whilst keeping eyes closed can help in creating a non-judgmental environment for both the artist and the audience. The thesis also tries to answer how drawing with eyes closed on a regular and ritualistic basis can act as therapy for the artist.

Hence, the thesis introduction aims to offer an overview of art therapy as a therapeutic discipline, and in the body part of the paper, a fraction of its historical evolution and the principles that underpin its practice are aimed to be outlined. The thesis introduces the central theme of a non-judgmental environment, emphasising its importance in promoting emotional expression and healing. It does so by focusing on my artworks gathered under the name *What I See When I Close My Eyes* and investigating how I created a non-judgemental space for both myself as the artist as well as for those spectators beholding my artworks.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

2.1: Art and Judgment

Art has long been a cradle of civilisations, nurturing cultural identity and encouraging communication, a way of conversing with one another, as well as communicating the need for self-expression. In this communication endeavor, be it with each other or be it in the form of a reflection of the mind's content, judgment is bound to happen. This inevitable expression of judgment is rooted in a person's innate tendency to interpret the art and to assign meaning based on personal experiences and societal conditioning based on cultural norms.

The act of creation, for an artist, is often personal and vulnerable, as the artist molds their own thoughts and emotions into a tangible body of art that tells their interpretation of how they view the world. Because everyone's interpretation and the meanings they attest to art are different, as the beholders of the artwork, the audience and the art critique will judge whether the artwork is beautiful, whether the topic is taboo, whether the artist is a morally good person and in many more forms judgment can take shape.

This section explores how judgment, in various forms, molds artistic practice and perception. From the stigmatisation of artists with mental illnesses to psychoanalytic, as well as philosophical approaches to self-expression, the literature review offers a theoretical basis for conveying the importance of non-judgmental spaces in art creation.

2.1.1: Art of the Mentally Ill Artist

As a product of its time and space, art is an extension of the artist. In other words, art is ultimately tied to feelings felt by the work's creator. Mental health is one component of these evocations and emotions and should be of the utmost importance when evaluating an artwork. As a general consensus on the stigmas surrounding mental health issues and mentally ill artists, it can be stated that creating a non-judgmental art space is rather difficult. This is because of the workings of society in which it is often believed that the mentally ill may equate morally bad.

This section analyses Van Gogh as the archetypal depiction of the mad genius and his connection to the mentally ill artists equating creative power discourse. Even though mentally ill artists' works can be paired with moral ambiguity or corruption, some art critics state otherwise: In some instances, mental well-being, or their lack of such a peaceful state of mind, may be mystified in such a way that mental illnesses can be promoted rather than shunned. As Mota suggests, “the representation of madness in different forms of art has been socially glorified almost in a mystical way” (2021), and henceforth, psychopathology can be closely linked to creative development.

I took Vincent van Gogh as the prime example of the stigmatisation of mental illnesses and the linking of madness with utmost creativity, as Mota views Van Gogh “as the archetypal figure” (2021) for studies on psychiatric disorders and their artful fruition. Van Gogh is quintessential in depicting what an archetype would be regarding the analysis of how mental illnesses may manifest in creative genius. Thus, Van Gogh, as someone thought to be associated with mental illnesses such as bipolar disorder or schizophrenia (Mota, 2021), can be considered an archetype of the “mad genius”, with his emotional fragility and artistic output being intertwined.

Judgment is an essential part of art criticism, and as seen from the van Gogh example, it may have both positive and negative implications. In the light of negative connotations, another complication that comes with societal norms is that the subject matter of the artwork by a mentally ill artist will always be bleak, dire and, in many cases, taboo subjects. As a painter with mental health problems, Van Gogh, in scholarly consensus, has often been paired with the notion of “the poor artist”, and thus, the current contemporary world beholders of his artworks approach them with a certain bias.

Arguably, Van Gogh was, in fact, not suffering from poverty (Van Gogh Museum, n.d.), but based on the consensus that Van Gogh was poor, these audiences hold pity in their spectatorship. Beholders of Van Gogh’s art are seen to comment on how poor Van Gogh was, both economically and mentally, perhaps even believing they should be less critical and kinder in their art critiquing. This approach, which may be regarded as very humane on its own, not only hampers non-judgmental art space but even makes it impossible.

Judgment, when it comes to art, is inevitable whether it holds a more positive bias like pity or a harsher tone, as in believing mental illnesses turn the artworks into crime objects. Such judgments occur more frequently when the forms present within the artworks are closer to reality or mildly representational. Abstraction, in this case, can help create a non-judgmental space for the artwork, as well as the artist, to be evaluated as it is the case with my thesis work *What I See When I Close My Eyes*.

2.1.2: Judging the Mentally Ill Artist

As in the Van Gogh example of art not being judgment-free, with the basis of the beholder of the artwork being focused on the poor mental state of the artist, my works, too, are correlated with mental illnesses. I am diagnosed with treatment-resistant depression, as well as obsessive-compulsive disorder, and my mess-infused, chaotic

state of mind is evident in my artwork done with keeping my eyes closed, for they are dark and untidy.

In this light, I wish to draw a parallel between the judgment attested to Van Gogh's gloomy, mellow art and the external bias I may come across when my audience views my artwork. I aimed to create an exhibition space and an experience that bypasses judgment, whether in the manner of criticism of the form and representational qualities of my works or the manner of mental health topics being taboo as the subject matter.

Perhaps we may not free ourselves from the critique of Van Gogh's psychological suffering being intertwined with his art. This is because art history paints him as "the poor, struggling artist," and he will be renowned as this for the remainder of our mundane mortal lives. Because this knowledge is inevitably passed down through time, perhaps more time will pass, which will erase the traces of the bias Van Gogh's art encompasses. Until then, Van Gogh and his poor mental health will remain a conjoined entity.

As per talking more about the notion of judging the mentally poor artist, I would like to comment on how an audience may react to the art being exhibited, as well as talk about my own thesis project. Before the viewer finds themselves in the exhibition space, it is inevitable that they will carry preconceptions about the artist and the artworks. This is due to sensory reception varying from visuals based on the artist's art style to auditory input like how the exhibition hall's acoustics work and what kind of an impression they create. Sensory reception refers to the physical touch to the tactile material if the artwork is an interactive installation. In the case of my own exhibition, I invited the audience to partake in creating a non-judgmental space alongside me, named *I See Your Worries*. This interaction was created through me hanging a grand size roll of paper on the wall, paired with a pedestal to hold art supplies like charcoal and markers so that the viewer

can repeat the same ritual I myself applied throughout my thesis project journey:
Drawing their mind's content while keeping their eyes closed, whilst freeing themselves from internal and external criticism.

I invite the viewer to focus inward and cleanse themselves of the personal bias they carry about not only whether they are skilled enough to draw representational forms that are clear to understand but also whether the theme they have chosen is taboo to depict. The act and the art of blind drawing blend the naked, pure emotions inside that beg to be unleashed with the myriads of patterns and textures that show up as end results.

2.2: Theory on Art Therapy

I hereby discuss certain psychological and philosophical approaches to therapy and how they are applied to art in general and in the context of my art exhibition, *What I See When I Close My Eyes*. Art therapy has largely been shaped by psychoanalytic theories, primarily Freudian and Jungian, as well as by behaviourism (Bloomgarden, 1997), yet they are not confined to these two theories as I wished to approach art therapy additionally through Rogerian humanism and a Deleuze-Guattarian desire of deterritorialisation. The theoretical foundation of this thesis thus draws upon three distinct yet interwoven perspectives: Jungian psychoanalysis, Rogers' person-centred expressive arts therapy, and Deleuze and Guattari's schizoanalysis. With these theoretical frameworks, I aspire to achieve different ways of understanding artistic expression and its therapeutic power.

Jungian theory highlights the role of the unconscious and archetypes, seeing artistic creation as a means of uncovering hidden aspects of the psyche that may have been repressed. This approach to psychoanalysis, in this case, art, focuses on exploring the unconscious mind, archetypes, and collective unconscious. In my thesis artwork, namely

the pieces, *I See Loved Ones* and *I See A Paper Tapestry*, I saw specific motifs repeated across my ritualistic scribbles: Hands, columns, eyes and stars. I initially sought to find their interpretations, with my inspiration being Jung's collective unconscious, as such motifs could have been seen as experiences common to the whole human population. I broaden this topic further in Chapter 4 of this thesis, yet as a short notice, I would like to mention that I later added a Deleuzian and Guattarian view to them, deterritorialising the fixed meanings I have previously attested to them in my thesis, freeing them from judgment.

Rogers' person-centred approach shifts the focus from the Jungian collective unconscious toward self-expression. Therefore, every individual is unique, along with the meanings they make sense of their art. In this light, *What I See When I Close My Eyes* can be analysed as individual meanings coming from the repetition of the motifs of hands, columns, eyes and stars, working well with Deleuze and Guattari's deterritorialisation.

As for the healing, non-judgmental aspects of this psychological approach, the Rogerian person-centred attitude in therapy and art breaks free from judgment, promoting a space of empathy and positive regard. This gentle, non-judgmental, and healing perspective on art therapy has been my approach in my art-making process for mainly *I See Loved Ones* and *I See a Paper Tapestry*. On the other hand, the audiovisual *I See Myself* features alteration of the visuals and modifies them to fit a single framework of Jungian archetypes as a theme. Because of this, *I See a Paper Tapestry* has been marked by judgment, acting as a warning on what not to do while approaching expressive arts.

In contrast to Jung and Rogers, Deleuze and Guattari challenge fixed meanings altogether, aiming for deterritorialisation as an escape from rigid interpretations and hierarchical structures. Deleuze and Guattari advocating for deterritorialization

allows art to exist in a fluid, free-flowing open-ended state. By bringing these perspectives together, my thesis explores how art can function beyond mere self-exploration, offering a non-judgmental space for free expression, emotional healing, and liberation from imposed structures. Having examined the following theoretical perspectives, it has been highlighted that art therapy serves as more than a tool for self-exploration, as it also a therapeutic healing instrument and an opposition against 'judgment as fascism'.

2.2.1: Jung's Psychoanalysis in Art Therapy

It would only be appropriate to mention Carl Jung's psychoanalytical approach while discussing mental health. In Jungian terms, the psyche, which refers to the whole being of an individual, is a double-sided entity consisting of the conscious and the unconscious, which in turn balance one another (Jung, 1953). This self-balancing makes up the basis of a healthier soul, for without it, and if one of these components overweight the other, the unconscious resurfaces and manifests in visible illnesses. Such an emotional disturbance occurs primarily because of the 'attitude', the conscious side, dominating the unconscious (Lee, 2015). 'Projection', the instance of the unconscious being directed at, occurs in this imbalance. It can be a dire situation, for if the individual projects their misfortunes and misery onto the outside world, particularly the other humans, then social conflicts occur.

In the case of projection, the individuals appear to be blaming others for their own failures, but it is, in fact, the inner failure to cope with the unconscious that yields external social issues. 'The Shadow', in Jungian psychoanalysis, is the manifestation of this very problem of imbalance between the conscious and the unconscious, and it can lead to a 'complex'. Since the shadow is mainly associated with the primitive, feral and even uncultured side of the human mind (Ruby, 2008, as cited by Lee, 2015), its

resurfacing can be considered concerning. The unconscious finds its way into dreams, and as one often does not act upon dreams but rather solely thinks about them, dreams shall not be considered dangerous. However, if the shadow finds its way to human actions and behavioural patterns, such as taking physical fights, it can be rather perilous and requires immediate intervention.

Using Jung's psychoanalytical approach in this thesis ensures that the artwork *What I See When I Close My Eyes* has a theoretical basis in the Jungian framework. As explained in Chapter 3 of this document, Jungian psychoanalysis is the core of the audiovisual component of the artwork *I See Myself*. In this video, Jung's archetypes 'The Persona', 'The Anima / Animus', 'The Shadow' and 'The Self' are taken as the four phases of describing what I, as the artist, see when I close my eyes and draw.

2.2.2: Carl Rogers' Person-Centered Approach and Art Therapy

It is essential to mention Carl Rogers and his humanistic psychology approach, as this theory, like Jung's psychoanalysis, is crucial to the context of my thesis in establishing a non-judgmental environment that fosters free expression and emotional healing. For this kind of aim, person-centered therapy should be introduced, as this therapy type lies in the foundations of person-centered expressive arts therapy, a non-judgmental art arena. Person-centered therapy, created by Carl Rogers in the early 1940s, is a well-established and well-developed therapy approach with a longstanding history, given that it was developed 80 years ago. This therapeutic approach has henceforth had a significant influence on the psychotherapy field, with a foundational role in today's understanding of therapy and counselling practices of the current age.

Like Jung's self-balancing of the conscious and the unconscious, Carl Rogers focuses on balancing the two aspects of the self, the 'real self', which refers to who a person truly is

and the 'ideal self', which is who they strive to be (McLeod, 2023). Incongruence, a sense of incompatibility, between the two can cause distress and is of great concern in person-centered therapy as this is what causes mental illnesses. Art therapy, in particular, person-centered expressive arts therapy, can act as a bridge between the real self and ideal self, making it possible that individuals can express their authentic emotions without interior and exterior judgment.

The pioneer Carl Rogers' person-centered therapy is also referred to as 'client-centered therapy' (Yao L, Kabir R, 2023) since the focus is the patient themselves and their powerful role of leading their lives rather than the focus being their psychological problems and the patient holds the agency of their lives, rather than the trained therapist leading them. This approach in which "the client is believed to be the expert in their life" (Yao L, Kabir R, 2023) fosters a positive, supporting attitude due to the belief that individuals possess an inherent drive toward achieving optimal and desired psychological health. Therefore, it can be commented that person-centered therapy is a non-judgmental approach, which can be a great tool in art therapy practices that correlate with what I have aimed to use during this thesis project.

Uncensored and unfiltered self-expression lies at the core of person-centered therapy, and I find it fitting for my thesis, *Art Therapy as a Non-Judgmental Environment*. I have made such a connection due to my endeavour to create a non-judgmental space for artistic expression combined with uninterrupted self-exploration. Because it is 'client-centered', the therapist is less dominant in the patient's process of self-expression, merely guiding them with "reflecting and carefully clarifying questions" (Yao L, Kabir R, 2023) and thus allowing the patient to freely express themselves without judgment coming from the therapist.

The principles and techniques of person-centered therapy have been eclectically integrated into a wide range of therapeutic approaches (Hill & Nakayama, 2000, as cited by Yao L, Kabir R, 2023) such as ‘person-centered expressive arts therapy’. This artistic therapy type is coined by Natalie Rogers through developing her father Carl Rogers’ humanistic psychology theories and her own creative desire.

Person-centered expressive arts therapy (PCEAT) is a fitting form of therapy for artists and all those with creative outbursts, as it serves as a healing tool via the use of creative self-expression. In my thesis exhibition work, *What I See When I Close My Eyes*, I, too, aimed to heal and lessen the effects of my mental health illnesses, most notably, my treatment-resistant depression, through a healing journey of intuitive mark-making. I partook in this intuitive mark-making ‘ritual’ as I call it, and scribbled while keeping my eyes closed to document my mind’s content every day, if possible, or every few days. This ritual thus allowed me to collect data on my emotional expression and was almost akin to mood trackers, but instead of naming moods with emotion-based vocabulary, the tracking is done by artistically reflecting the mind’s content on a subconscious level.

Expressive arts, as the utilisation of intuition and making sense of emotions through freedom of creative exploration, is most often a non-verbal form of expression, relying on using hands as an instrument. Non-verbal self-expression in PCEAT is done through various media such as “visual art, movement, sound, writing [and] improvisational drama” (Rogers, Tudor, Tudor, & Keemar, 2012). It is vital to highlight the importance of non-verbal expression as it allows individuals to discover and express their inner feelings without the constraints of verbal communication. It is thus an inclusive and accessible approach to self-expression and visual communication, as person-centered expressive art therapy removes language barriers and enables individuals to convey their emotions, as well as experiences, without relying on verbal expression.

The concept of non-judgmental environment is closely tied to Rogerian humanistic psychology and its fruition, person-centered expressive arts therapy, as Natalie Rogers “aims to create a safe, nonjudgmental environment where [fears] can be put aside ... and experimentation and play can prevail” (Rogers, 2011) in PCEAT. In my exhibition *What I See When I Close My Eyes*, I too wished to use a person-centered expressive arts therapy based approach of creating a non-judgmental space for my art to flourish freely without me trying to decide if my artworks are good or not. I as well as aimed to evade the audience’s critique on any possible grotesque subject matter I can come up with, by using abstraction rather than representational depictions and allowing myself to freely release my mind’s content in a subtle and neutral manner without referring to signification. Through a person-centered non-judgmental way of art-making, I endeavoured to draw sans “the fear of failure, and the fear of the unknown” (Rogers, 2011). In the end, I believe I have managed to minimise the incongruence between my real self and the ideal self, as I aimed to avoid an external and, even more importantly so, internal judgmental in my art production environment.

Even though I have applied Jungian archetypes and terminological foundations for my exhibition, Rogerian themes too surface and finds its way to my enquiry of how to approach art and therapy. Afterall, the focus of the person-centered expressive arts therapy is providing unconditional positive regard, empathy, and congruence, all which I have chased during and after my exhibition. Both approaches, though different in focus, complement each other in my work and bridge person-centered acceptance of the self as it is and the Jungian acknowledgement of the secrets of the unconscious. Consequently, it can be commented that in the Jungian approach to therapy, the focus is more so uncovering and integrating unconscious mind’s content rather than stress reduction through compassion, as well as exploring past experiences and what about them has

been repressed. Despite the difference in focus, the corpus of my thesis exhibition artwork apply both Jung and Roger's approach to psychology just as Natalie Rogers states expressive arts to achieve: "The expressive arts are profound in helping people become aware of all their feelings and particularly help them accept their dark or shadow side" (Rogers, 2012).

2.2.3: Deleuze, Schizoanalysis, and Deterritorialization in Art Therapy

In 'Anti-Oedipus', which is a valuable source to attain a different view of psychology and self-expression, Deleuze and Guattari attack Freud's psychoanalysis, in particular his commentary about desire. Deleuze and Guattari (1983) argue that "traditional psychoanalysis [...] reduces all of desire to a familial determination that no longer has anything to do with the social field actually invested by the libido". Through this remark they have made on Freud's limiting and sexually bounding, as well as restraining psychoanalysis, they make sure that this kind of framework is limiting. They henceforth support my argument that Freud's framework imposes a restrictive familial structure on the understanding of desire, as well as equating desire to solely sexuality rather than focusing on other areas where desire can be expressed, such as art.

By limiting its broader and dynamic nature, desire is made to be nothing more than sexual yearning bound by familial ties. In this light, Deleuze and Guattari assert that Freud's psychoanalysis reduces the complexity of desire to familial relations, and I believe this is important to highlight since I would like to connect desire to artistic expression.

Deleuze and Guattari argue that Freud positions desire within the restrictive framework of the Oedipus complex, which confines desire into a sexual yearning rather than it also possibly being a tool of self-expression, in this case, done through art. In this light,

Freud reducing desire to a familial structure, creates a binary boundary where desire is trapped in Oedipal structures. This critique is vital for my thesis, as it stresses the ways how psychoanalysis has imposed rigid interpretative frameworks, also present in Jung's studies on the collective unconscious and archetypes:

We always fall back into the false alternative where Freud was led by Oedipus, ... either, he says, you will abandon the sexual position of the libido in favor of an individual and social will to power, or in favor of a prehistoric collective unconscious—or you will recognize Oedipus, making of it the sexual abode of the libido ... into ‘the purely erotic motive’” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983).

In contrast to Freud and Jung, Deleuze and Guattari's concept of deterritorialisation challenges fixed archetypal interpretations, allowing desire, and by extension artistic expression, to move beyond imposed meanings. By highlighting the ways in which psychoanalysis has historically forced rigid interpretative frameworks, I want to refer to the judgmental structures I aim to move beyond in a non-judgmental art therapy environment and instead create a sense of self-expression with deterritorialised meanings on what motif may otherwise mean in Jung's psychoanalysis in the collective unconscious aspects. Through deterritorialisation, I state that interpretations of recurring motifs in a series of scribbles done with eyes closed are not fixed but freed.

I thus aim to move beyond judgmental boundaries and choose a deterritorialised understanding where motifs in my series of scribbles done with eyes closed are not bound by fixed interpretations but are instead shifting, evolving meanings that are tied to the individual's own creative and emotional processes, along with their unique personal experiences.

Desire, which Deleuze and Guattari see as a form of social repression, can also be analysed in the light of ‘fascism’, stressed quite a few times by Michel Foucault in the

preface of *Anti Oedipus*. Foucault (1983) talks about desire in connection with fascism by positioning fascism as the “major enemy”, which he defines as “not only historical fascism, the fascism of Hitler and Mussolini which was able to mobilize and use the desire of the masses so effectively”, and I believe this statement supports the idea that desire, whether in the form of sexual yearning or artistic expression, can be exploited by authoritarian figures. When it comes to art and the judgment of artwork, certain authoritarian figures create a perception of judgment, making certain topics taboo, restraining themes that can be talked about in the art field, and imposing rigid meanings to forms and representations of the subconscious, hence my definition of ‘judgment as fascism’.

Fascism may conceptually simply refer to an authoritarian way of governing, yet, in the context of my thesis of creating a non-judgmental artistic expression method, I have interpreted judgment as a fascist, authoritarian, alarming presence that is an obstacle on the art therapy journey. This impeding force of judgment influences human behavior in such a way that it is as restrictive as fascism limiting freedom in self-expression, be it in daily social life or in artistic studies.

Judgment as fascism in the form of an authoritarian, destructive force prevents freedom in self-expression, both in art making and one’s social life. Fascism finds its way into an artist’s life as a system of control in the political scene and a judgmental viewing of an artwork in an artistic scene. Judgmental art spaces impose rigid meanings, like how a fascist structure enforces strict ideological control on free expression. An artist, in this light, cannot express themselves freely without trying to fit a certain standard that can be accepted in society. Societies decide on what is a taboo subject or not in an artistic work, and judgment as fascism represses the inner desires of artists. To break free from judgment and fascism, the artist must reject imposed meanings and embrace a fluidity of

forms and meanings, resisting the tendency to control artistic expression through personal and external expectations.

This resistance to fixed meanings can be observed through Deleuze and Guattari's critique of traditional psychoanalysis. Deleuze and Guattari express dissatisfaction not only with Freud's psychoanalysis but also critique Jung for maintaining an approach that relies heavily on symbolic interpretations. These symbolic interpretations and archetypes have been discussed further in Chapter 4, where I seek the meaning of recurring motifs that I have come up with while applying my ritual of scribbling with my eyes closed. Initially, I tried to assign meanings to the repeating symbols of hands, columns, eyes and stars, but I later aimed to explore and explain through Deleuze and Guattarian concept of deterritorialisation.

In Deleuze and Guattarian schizoanalytic approach, 'schizophrenic flows' and 'deterritorialisation' can be connected to creating free-flowing artworks without being restrained by society's rules and taboos, therefore being in tune with non-judgmental art. Art as a schizophrenic flow is "the pure process that fulfills itself, and that never ceases to reach fulfillment as it proceeds" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983), which can be concluded as art being a process that sustains itself along with it being a never-ending journey. Art as a constant flow can be connected to my art exhibition, *What I See When I Close My Eyes*, as I state that healing through art therapy is non-linear and ever-going.

2.3: Applications of Theory in Art Therapy

The following examples and theory applications highlight the importance of customising art therapy for individuals dealing with depression and trauma since personalized approaches, whether through spontaneous abstraction or structured symbolism, enable

emotional processing and healing. As the examples explore how the aforementioned theoretical foundations manifest in artistic practice and therapy, they highlight the ways art can be used for therapy. By examining cases such as Jackson Pollock's unconscious-release-based approach, as well as other customised and specialized art therapy methods for depression and trauma, the examples illustrate how Jungian, Rogerian, and Deleuze Guattarian principles can be used to create a non-judgmental space for self-expression and healing.

2.3.1: Jackson Pollock's Art Therapy

How the aforementioned theory can find its way into art therapy can be exemplified by Jackson Pollock's Art Therapy, which is built around Jungian psychoanalysis. Pollock's engagement with art as a therapeutic and unconscious-driven practice is closely linked to Jungian ideas and his drip painting technique aligns with Jungian spontaneous creation and accessing the unconscious. Pollock's drip painting art creation method offers unfiltered emotional expression, thus his art-making approach can also be associated with Natalie Rogers' person-centered expressive arts therapy and self-expression without fear of judgment.

Around the late 1930s and early 1940s, around when Carl Rogers developed his person-centered therapy, Jackson Pollock endeavoured to treat his alcoholism and depression issues with the aid of psychoanalysts who specialised in the Jungian discipline (Lee, 2015). While working on his art, Pollock believed that he should connect with his subconscious, as this resurfacing of the subconscious would provide more authentic and symbolic works (Lee, 2015) instead of surface-level expression of the self.

Pollock's art therapy approach has been formalised by Eun-Mi Lee and Kang-Hee Lee, with their customised art therapy plan for specific symptoms of depression like

‘aggressiveness’, which can be countered by ‘all-over painting’ in this system, as explained further in section 2.3.2 Lee’s Expert System in Therapy.

One can view Jackson Pollock’s perhaps most famous all-over painting *Number 1*, as shown in Figure 1, and comment that it must have been created to combat mental struggles. Art critics have defined the work as an “arena for action” (Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, n.d.) as this abstract expressionism work indeed looks like a battlefield of paint and pain.

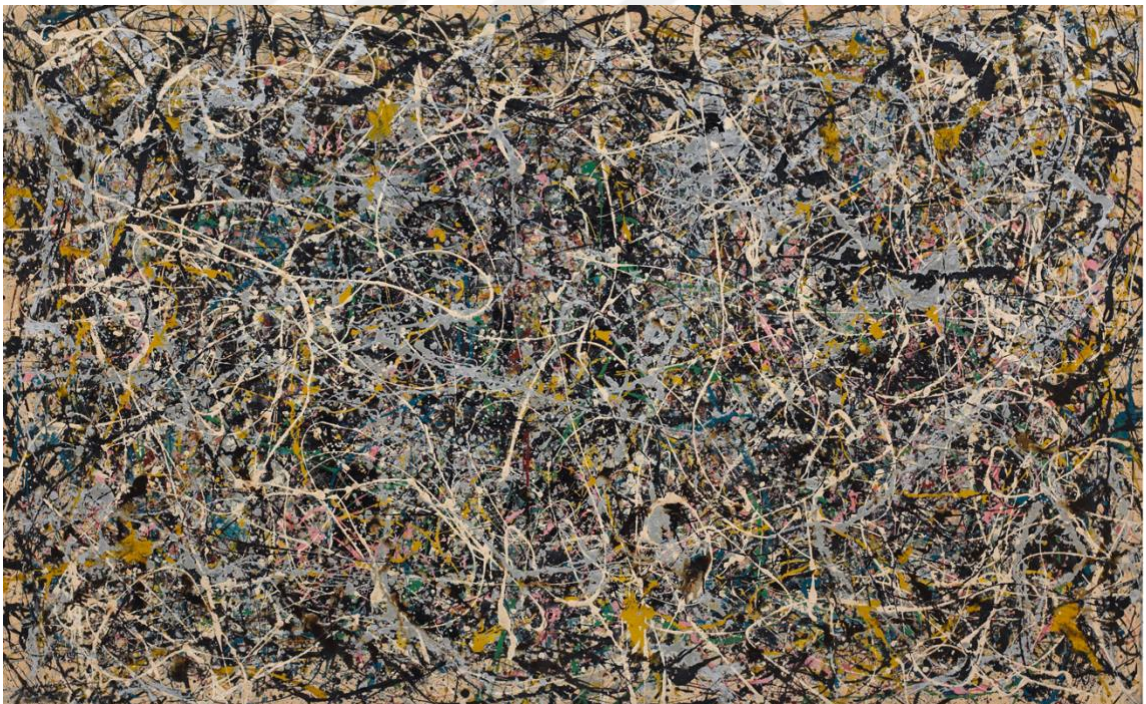


Figure 1. Pollock's Number 1 (1949) by Jackson Pollock. Enamel and metallic paint on canvas, 160 x 260 cm in dimension.

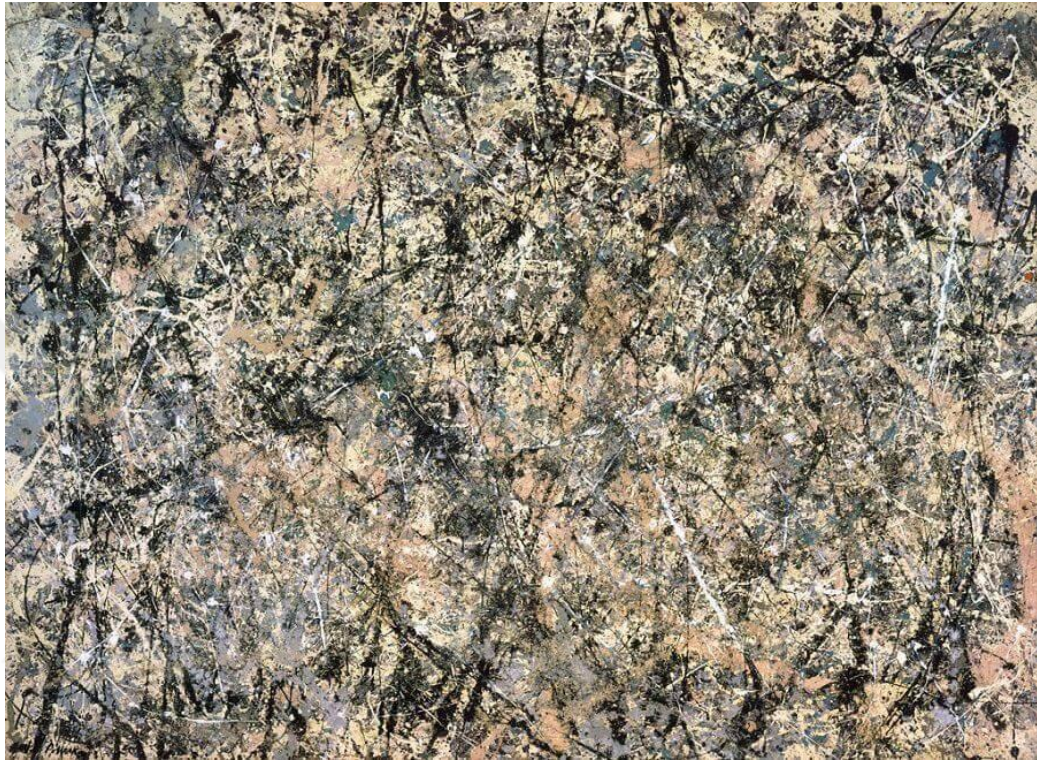


Figure 2. Pollock's *Number 1 (Lavender Mist)* (1950) by Jackson Pollock. Oil, enamel and aluminium on canvas, 221 x 300 cm in dimension.

Pollock confusingly has different artworks named *Number 1*, created in different years, and this second all-over, shown in Figure 2, is also produced as a series of linear forms placed all over the canvas. This similarly done act of splattering paint results in a similar-looking yet different artwork once Figure 1 and Figure 2 are compared and contrasted. Pollock's earlier *Number 1*, done in 1949, is more densely filled with lines of many different colours compared to the more unified and almost monochromatic colour palette of *Number 1*, created in 1950, also known as *Lavender Mist*. The dulling of the colours, as time progresses in this one year, may have implications of bleakness and dreariness being more present in his later life, and this would fit with his diagnosed depressive disorder that he sought to treat through using art as a means of therapy. Such outlets of emotional expression, in the form of all-over painting, are well-suited for the

‘aggressiveness’ symptom of depression in an art therapy program devised by Eun-Mi Lee and Kang-Hee Lee, which is more thoroughly explained in section 2.3.2.

2.3.2: Eun-Mi Lee and Kang-Hee Lee’s Expert System in Therapy

Depression is a significant social issue causing mortality, whether in the form of cardiovascular diseases such as heart attacks or death by suicide, that of which treatment plans include medical interventions such as taking antidepressants, as well as psychotherapy in the formulations of cognitive behavioural therapy and talk therapy. Art therapy, although more uncommon in usage, is another solution for depression treatment. Auxiliary therapies like art therapy, which addresses emotions and issues through art, can be utilised better to understand these complex patterns of thoughts and feelings. Since tastes differ, along with the mental health conditions’ severity and age variations, it is best to customise art therapy applications. However, due to the costs of such sessions along with the lack of experienced therapists available, customised art therapy programs are often out of reach (Lee, 2015).

Customising the treatment plan for depression requires a deeper understanding of the origins of art therapy and how it can be altered and appropriated for various depressive disorders. Eun-Mi Lee and Kang-Hee Lee, with their own expert system built upon Jackson Pollock’s art therapy, suggest personalisation via an artificial art therapy recommendation system. In artificial intelligence terminology, “an expert system is a computer system that emulates the decision-making ability of a human expert” (Pollock, 1998, as cited by Lee, 2015). Lee’s own expert system chooses the best possible depression treatment plan based on the patient's questionnaire results.

As a pioneer, the abstract artist Jackson Pollock recognises art therapy as a means of helping the patient cope with depression, in addition to understanding the core issues

behind mental illness (Wood et al., 2011, as cited by Lee, 2015). By following Jung's analytical psychological approaches, Pollock stands at the very core of art therapy and its origins.

Following Jung's psychoanalysis, Pollock's art therapy approach has been enhanced and customised by Lee accordingly for each patient's differing situations through their *Expert System*. Taking Pollock's painting techniques as the source, it is assumed that each differing painting method corresponds to different symptoms of depression. For instance, shame, as a symptom of depression, can best be battled through portrait drawing, as Lee's recommended system suggests. On the other hand, feeling helplessness is best tackled through performance art.

The formalisation, pairing the key symptoms of depression with Pollock's painting techniques, aims to provide personalised therapeutic approaches for its patients. Lee derives the rules between the depression 'concepts', namely, dignity, activeness, aggressiveness, stability, and extremeness and the 'relations', listed as portrait, performance art, all-over painting, action painting, and dripping.

The methodology for this thesis involves drawing the mind's momentary content whilst keeping eyes closed. Keeping in line with Pollock's Art Therapy, as Lee have further modified, there are certain concepts that can be paired with different art mediums (2015). The drawings done with eyes closed can act similarly to all-over painting in the rules derived by Lee between the depression 'concepts' & 'relations'. Aggressiveness as a 'concept' and the 'relation' component being given as all-over painting in Lee's *Expert System* work together seamlessly (2015). As a pair of describing what key symptoms of depression, such as aggressiveness, can be eased with what art medium, aggressiveness and all-over painting are matching concepts.

In this light, the aggressiveness caused by my depressive disorder should involve an art creation technique that is similar to all-over painting and drawing with eyes closed would very well fulfil this function. The aggressiveness I experience can also be tied to the perfectionism aspect of obsessive-compulsive disorder, and such concerns of perfection are countered with this kind of art creation activity. In my own experience, having an art therapy approach by keeping my eyes closed while drawing improved my patience levels. Such an approach also decreased my severe need for perfectionism concerning forms and techniques. Based on these impressions of how such a drawing method helped me, I would like to propose that keeping my eyes closed while drawing can be therapeutic to some degree. Using art therapy for treatment-resistant depression as a non-conventional means of treatment plan, as well as for anxiety disorders like obsessive-compulsive disorder, involves creating a non-judgmental space for the patient to express and heal.

2.3.3: Person-Centered Art Therapy in the Current Age

American Art Therapy Association, one of the leading organisations of its kind, has been actively providing therapy services ever since its founding in 1969 (American Art Therapy Association, 2017); hence, it can be commented that art therapy as a means of combatting depression, is not a very recent approach nor has the practice faded in the current age. The association aims to train new art therapists and to spread information on how to apply such a kind of therapeutic approach, such as person-centered expressive arts therapy.

Person-centered expressive arts therapy requires human cognition and participation rather than a machine-based methodology and mechanical treatment. The creative human mind builds up the basis of person-centered expressive arts therapy, with its humane, compassionate and soulful touch as opposed to Lee's personalised expert

system. Such a methodology in art therapy as Rogers' person-centered approach, allows imperfections in the representation of reality and the forms the patient will come up with, as it fosters a non-judgmental environment for emotional expression. The focus is, therefore, on expression, not technical skill or perfection.

The active art-making component of art therapy sessions is important to note as one should approach art creation as a routine task, repeated in the manner of a ritual, maybe several times a week or more often like every day. In my thesis, too, I have scribbled every day, sometimes even several times a day, to release my mind's content onto paper; hence, it was ritualistic in that regard. With the application of psychological theory by the professional art therapist raised in this professional field and blended with human experience (American Art Therapy Association, 2017), person-centered expressive arts therapy offers self-discovery and self-expression without the fear of judgment. Further examples of art therapy techniques can be mandala drawing, collages to explore emotions, expressive drawing and painting, and the use of clay and sculpture.

The key benefits of art therapy can be listed as enhanced "cognitive and sensory-motor functions", helping with self-esteem and expression (American Art Therapy Association, 2017), and promoting emotional hardening and resilience to unpredictable unpleasant experiences of life. Art therapy utilises an integrative set of methods to engage with many senses at once, connecting the mind, spirit and body together in a meaningful whole. This referral to different aspects of the self, be it the mental side or the bodily sensations, is far broader and greater than verbal communication alone. In my thesis, I too endeavoured to refer to several senses at once: It is a visual experience to view the scribbles in the exhibition hall as the spectator, true, but the audiovisual component in the shape of a video, refers to hearing and offering a more immersive experience. There is a tactile experience, too, when the viewer can repeat the same therapeutic art

application as me onto a long roll of paper in *I See Your Sorrows*: Grabbing a charcoal stick to draw what they see when they close their eyes. Moreover, in addition to touching upon several senses, the thesis project engages the mind with sensory receptions in such a way that not only the senses are alerted, but also the mind is stimulated. The mental stimulation, however, is done through a stealthy way in which the artist who scribbles on the paper is not supposed to judge what they draw but merely transfer their mind's content without further alterations or judgment whether it is a good representation, a good artwork or morally good subject matter.

2.4: Similar Studies and Applications

If there have been similar studies done with keeping eyes closed, is to be investigated, Zoë Bowman's research paper *Self-portraits Done With Eyes Closed: A Response Art Series* (2018) can be regarded as a means of enquiry done in a similar fashion. Bowman, too, uses a method similar to the blind-contour drawing in which the artist does not look at the drawing surface while drawing the outlines of the form. According to her research, the literature on drawings made with eyes closed is limited (Bowman, 2018), and she uses a different procedure for creating artworks and self-portraiture instead of scribbling what abstractions and representations come to mind, though both her process and mine involve drawing while keeping eyes closed. She also stresses the limitation of lacking many resources "at the time this research was conducted" on "the creation of a series of images as a form of response art" (Bowman, 2018), noting the scarcity of studies being done in this type of a response art set.

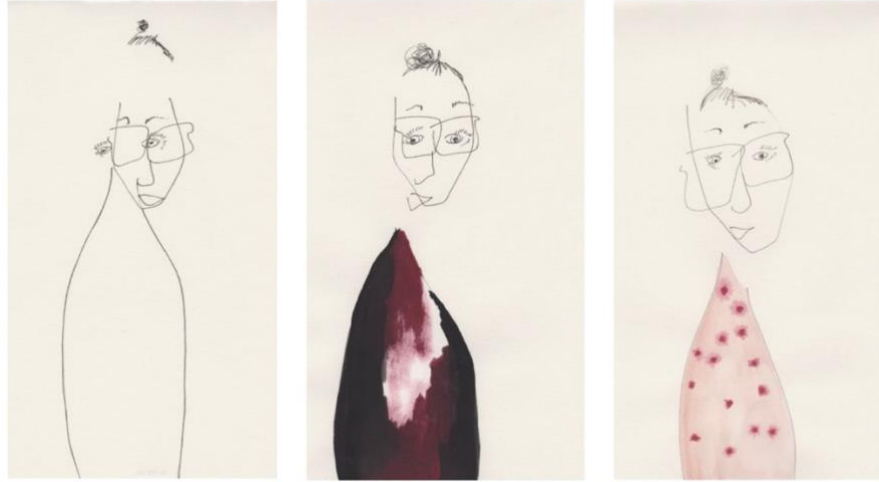


Figure 3. Collage of *The Ugly*, *Deflated* and *Unbalanced* by Zoë Bowman, 2017. Ink and watercolor on paper, 17 x 24 cm each.

I pondered on the question, “How does Bowman explore the therapeutic benefits of drawing self-portraits while keeping eyes closed?” to figure out what she does differently from me. In addition to the art therapy type being different, as one can see in Lee’s expert system based on Pollock’s art therapy, Bowman’s study is different from mine because she seems to deal with different aspects of depression, hence using another type of art creation method. In my study, I focus on the ‘aggressiveness’ symptom of depression and try to resolve it with all-over painting, a method in which the canvas lacks hierarchy or emphasis and resolves the conflict of message delivery by using the whole canvas, hence ‘all-over’.

The scribbles I draw with my eyes closed are reflections of my inner restlessness and aggressiveness, or, relatively so, disappointment with the world and people. This chaos and messiness of how I have utilised each of the canvases is different from Bowman’s tidy and neat self-portraits seen in Figure 3, even though both artists, her and me, draw while keeping eyes closed, not expecting perfection. It can be commented that self-portraiture as a means of fighting the depression symptom of ‘shame’ may have been

countered here with ‘portrait drawing’, as Lee’s Expert System suggests, as a suitable means of combatting depression even though she does not explicitly build a link between her self-portraits and overcoming the feeling of shame.

How Bowman’s approach differs from my own study involving scribbling what I see in my mind as I have with my eyes closed, mainly through the aims and end results of research being different. Bowman uses art as a therapeutic tool for the sake of achieving self-reflection and self-awareness (2018). Her process involves self-reflection also through literal and actual acts of writing reflections at the end of each clinical day to be paired up with her portraits. As opposed to my own study of looking at the bigger picture of how my healing journey looks in the grander scheme, Bowman stresses how her working environment can offer a continuous process of self-discovery and a positive sense of growth since her self-portrait drawings develop “as a visual representation of the accumulation of [her] experiences and learning” (2018). Therefore, we see linear growth and constant improvement as opposed to my non-linear therapy journey, in which I try to express what I see when I keep my eyes closed in a more random-looking manner as my scribbles are abstracted and taken out of their context.

The similarities are, hence, the method in which art is produced while the art formats differ. Another similarity would be that both Bowman and I, in our works, try to foster a positive, relaxing environment that can help emotional expression. While Bowman uses representational drawings of self-portraiture to create an environment that allows professional growth, I do so through mainly abstraction and a few representational forms that I try to convey, such as eyes, pillars, hands and stars. Creating a non-judgmental space for facilitated emotional expression is thus my main goal opposed to Bowman’s main concern of self-reflection. I focus on my treatment-resistant depression, yielding unexpected fluxes in my therapy journey and how healing is non-linear. My works make sense as a whole as opposed to Bowman’s individually placed self-portraits. My

scribbles do not tell a story in terms of timing and when they were created, but instead, there is some sense of a narrative based on visual composition that has moments of being more darkly and aggressively scribbled along with lighter pages. These are components of a concise list of where the strength and uniqueness of both our projects lie.



Figure 4. Process picture showcasing a collage of my scribbles done with keeping eyes closed, around 400 scribble instances

The other closest approach to how I conducted my art therapy journey was taken by the artist Willem de Kooning, who produced a series of images by keeping his eyes closed. As a renowned abstract expressionist known for his dynamic and often disjointed compositions, Willem de Kooning shall be taken into consideration for determining similar studies that have been conducted with the methodology of keeping one's eyes closed while retaining a series of images without sequencing or linearity, just like how

my thesis exhibition work *I See Loved Ones* lacks a coherent series with a fixed narrative.

His innovative approach to art includes creating a series of drawings with his eyes closed, a procedure which “allowed him to concentrate on inner sensations” (Shiff, 2002, as cited by Bowman, 2018) rather than visual input. Similarly, in my art production method of me trying to reflect my mind’s content via drawing with my eyes closed, art produced in this kind of approach focuses more on the senses and how the artist perceives the world rather than trying to portray any representational forms.

De Kooning’s technique has resulted in captivating images that are not true to form, suggesting movement and spirit, capturing vital elements of his models. De Kooning believes that this methodology of a controlled loss of control through “removing the visual input in the drawing process” (Shiff, 2002, as cited by Bowman, 2018) reveals inner energy and sensations through his art, facilitating the expression of emotions.



Figure 5. Collage of *Untitled* by Willem de Kooning, 1966. Charcoal Drawings Done with Eyes Closed, 25.4 x 20.3 cm each.

As a person with obsessive-compulsive disorder, perfect visual output is what I generally strive for while producing my artwork, and I usually want to obtain aesthetic results rather than focusing transparently on my feelings. Because of my artistic attention focusing rather on perfect representation, instead of free expression, my regular approach to art cannot be much therapeutic. In this light, removing the visual input element in the process of producing art “facilitated the expression of inner states or inner energy” (Bowman, 2018), and my art production for the exhibition work *What I See When I Close My Eyes* focused more on my feelings rather than trying to obtain perfect representations. As a result, Figure 4 showcases a collage consisting of the scribbles I did in this method.

As I worked on my exhibition art, I realised that art is an expression of the artist, which does not need to appear flawless or look advanced, instead of being a craftsmanship show that should yield a perfectly looking and functioning product. It was a therapeutic journey as I attempted to free myself from the clutches of perfectionism that are tied to obsessive-compulsive disorder, as having this disorder dictating my daily life prevents me from enjoying what I am doing. By attempting to free myself from perfectionism, I had a more pleasant experience with art production, and this enjoyment felt therapeutic.

CHAPTER 3

OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

3.1: What I See When I Close My Eyes

Creating a non-judgmental space for my artistic creation was essential for this project. Like in Bowman's adaptation of the blind-contour drawing, I endeavoured to prevent cognitive input from influencing how I created the art since perfectionism-based struggles were possible. Despite drawing while keeping my eyes closed and avoiding further manipulating what I drew, I realised I still had to make sense of the data I had collected by scribbling through a blind-contour method. This attempt to make more sense and turn what is abstract to a more universally pleasant-looking result was possible through the audiovisual I produced from my scribbles.

It is important to note that I tried creating a non-judgmental environment, yet ended up judging how my final video should look. Consequently, I believe that even when the aim is to free art from judgment like it was in my project, judgment is inevitable upon trying to combine components to have more unity and impact. This minor judgment, however, was not because of incongruence between how I am and how I idealise myself to be, but because of the incompatibility of visual elements with one another.

My artwork for the thesis consists of a video as the audiovisual component, static images showcasing scribbles done while keeping eyes closed, and an empty scroll of paper devoted for the exhibition spectators to draw on based on my approach of keeping eyes closed while drawing. *What I See When I Close My Eyes*, with a few frames shown in Figure 5, is a meta video showing an attempt to make something meaningful and

beautiful out of the scribbles. It is me forcing myself to make sense of what the scribbles may mean and how they can come together. But that should instead be the task of this particular written component, to analyse and make sense of the data. The video, therefore, attempts to bring the fragmented self's pieces together through outside judgment and manipulation. However, the judgment that the end results may not look so beautiful makes this additional manipulation of the digitally drawn blob look out of place and awkward. Therefore, the viewer is set to seek the story narrative from the still images hung on the walls of the exhibition hall.

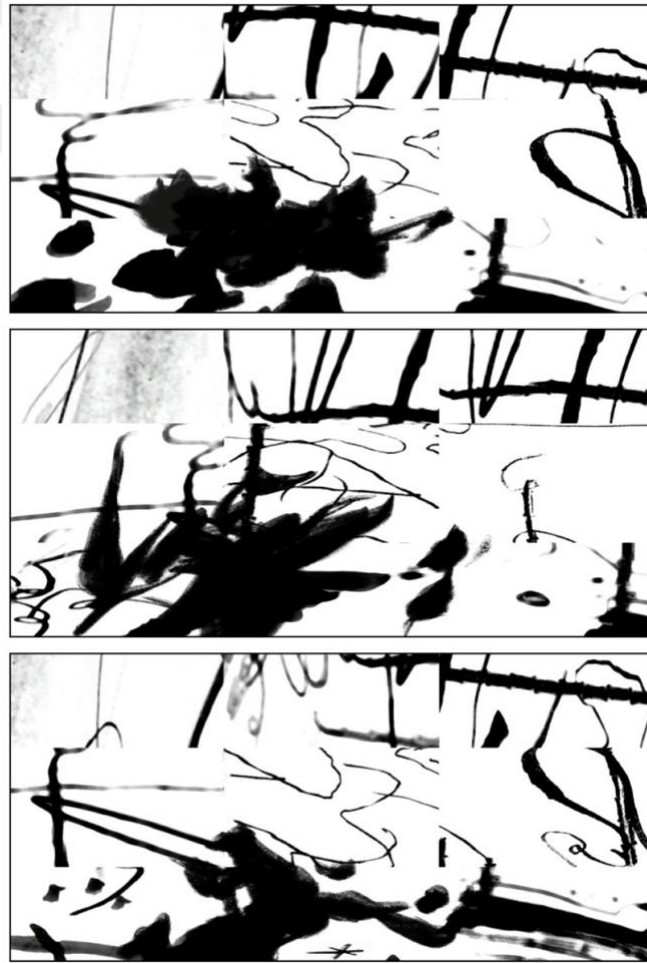


Figure 6. I See Myself (2024) Directed and produced by Şeyma Çelik. [Film stills].

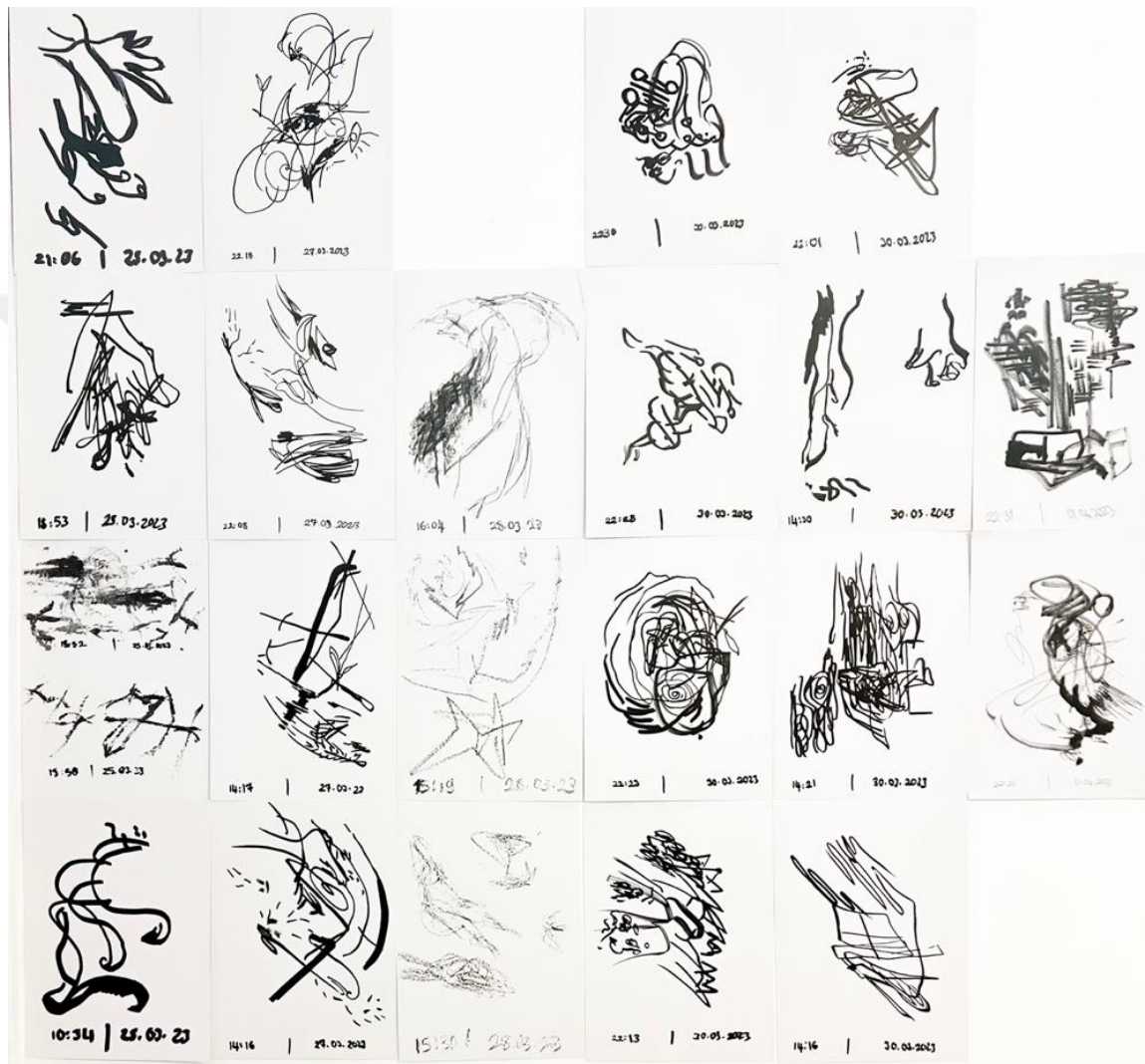


Figure 7. Static images produced by drawing with eyes closed in a ritualistic and regular fashion. Some of the images forming the artwork *I See Loved Ones* (2024).

There is judgment coming also from the viewer, trying to achieve a story out of the frames, but they do not have to have a linear narrative or realistic representational forms. The fear of judgment forces it on us that, as artists, our works must come together in a meaningful whole. But the static drawings hung up on the walls already form a meaningful whole. The video itself may appear redundant then, and it should not have to exist since the static images already fulfil their requirement of creating a narrative.

However, the video is still useful since it shows what not to do and how not to approach art, hence it being a meta work.

The single static drawings, partially shown in Figure 6, are intended to create a nonjudgmental environment. They do not have to look beautiful, nor do they have to tell an additional story other than the narrative that they show a healing journey, provided by arranging the scribbles in a linear timeline.



Figure 8. I See Myself (2024) Directed and produced by Şeyma Çelik. [Film still].

I also would like to make a short commentary on the material quality and technical details along with the colour choice of pure black instead of using the initial pink scribbles I have done. I initially used pink and described my intention with these words:

I see flecks of red, flesh of pink upon closing my eyes and those not so lulling, but more so luring hues grace my vision whilst I cannot really view anything but the dark. Closed eyes, yet light too ignites. And then I

peek through my fluttering eyelids and everything is ever more so vibrant, with flashing hues and textures reminiscent of the masters' artworks. This I could call the painterly peering phenomenon (Çelik, 2022).

An interaction of dark and light, black and flesh-pink, mimics my own visual experience when closing my eyes, a moment where I see flecks of red, flesh of pink, ultimately finding myself encircled by darkness. This 'painterly peering phenomenon', where bursts of colour appear within the darkness of the void and the blackness of a depressed mind, is correlated with how my mind, as the conductor, perceives hues of pink, yet my hand as the instrument, in a state of blind-contour creation, chooses black to showcase my dark, depressed thoughts along with the sense of blindness.

Therefore, I can comment on the art therapy process I have conducted in this thesis project as an interplay of perception, shown with flesh-pink and expression, shown with the ultimate decision to use solely black for the expression of depression. Instead of referring to what is perceived and seen in the act of closing the eyes, shown by the pink vision due to the reception of light when the eyes are closed, I instead choose to use black, as these scribbles of darkness better reflect a mental illness's expression.

Furthermore, black, as opposed to pink, is neutral and unfiltered, hence, it does not correspond to one side or another on a spectrum or mean anything other than a neutral attitude, freeing my art from judgment.

3.2: I See Myself

The video, as shown in the screenshot named Figure 7, portrays a few scenes with a gridded collage structure formed by dividing the screen into smaller sections. Such divisions are done to show the fragmentation of the self in Jungian psychoanalytic terminology. The projector serves as a way to exhibit the video and create a light source that shines upon the wall. The light from the projector signifies healing through art itself,

for it is bright yet cold and harsh, just like the therapy journey, which is not very pleasant. One may view how this audiovisual exhibition component is projected onto the wall and visualise it more clearly upon looking at Figure 8.



*Figure 9. The hall holding the exhibition *What I See When I Close My Eyes* that also showcases how the audiovisual component *I See Myself* (2024) is projected.*

In correlation with the ‘fragmentation of the self’ theory, Carl Jung defines ‘Shadow’ as one’s personality traits that the ‘ego’ denies as being part of the self, characteristics one would not wish to have (Jung, 1953). Shadows lead the self to a supposed necessity to change so that society can like them. Therefore, the self experiences a fragmentation that creates many versions of itself, each devoted to different segments and parts of the community that the person interacts with.

In this case, Shadow is represented by the people passing by and perhaps posing in front of the projector. This 'ego' that is not part of the self and the self's core values, would normally perhaps lead to some outside judgement due to the subject matter being dire and unpleasant for the spectators: A judgment that the values presented in the video as manifestations of mental health illnesses are simply corrupt and something to avoid. Therefore, it can be commented that the shadow formed by the judgment of outside sources, as well as the innermost problems of the self, leads to a fragmented identity, represented by the many divisions formed in the video.

Hence, the gridded visual in the video suggests a fragmented self that is constantly 'attacked' by judgment, which takes the role of the shadow cast by the spectators. If we think of it like an installation or an interactive exhibition, the components of the audiovisual experience are as listed: The light is the healing journey, and the audiovisual with the gridded structure is the fragmented self. Lastly, the cast shadows of people passing by are manifestations of Jungian Shadow that leads to this self-fragmentation, as there is a constant fear that shadow in the guise of people will potentially judge. These properties offer insight into the format, while the contents of the video include a mental health journey.

What is shown in the video, in this light, showcases mental illness manifesting as treatment-resistant depression. It acts as a motif that resists the light coming from the projector and rejects change. Hence, the repetition of motifs and even the scenes are present to showcase that there is some resistance against a healing attempt.

I also wish to comment on how I chose the sound effects for the audiovisual component of my thesis exhibition and the process of connecting them to psychoanalysis concepts: The video starts off with my interpretation of Jung's 'Persona' and the sounds used in the audiovisual component of my thesis project are stock sound files found in the library

of CapCut, a video editing app for iPhones. I edited and distorted several sound files such as making use of clapping sound effects for 'The Persona' section of the video, since the persona refers to masking in a society to better adapt, and it is a performative act. This concept was coined by Carl Jung to refer to the personality projected to other people without authenticity (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.). Therefore, I added the slightly distorted clapping sounds to indicate how performative human behaviour is. Many visuals, varying from the scribbles done with eyes closed and the black blobs that have been added later, are layered on top of one another and paired with the clapping. This is to show that masking, hence the persona archetype in society, is a chaotic, complex and multifaceted one.

As for the title 'Anima/Animus', because these two halves are opposites like the feminine and masculine and carry opposite properties of the psyche, they complete one another. That is why Anima/Animus, or 'syzygy' as their ultimate combination, is believed to refer to the 'true self'. In this light, I decided to insert my scribbles in their rawest form without extra black blob animations on top. This part of the video looks the simplest, and perhaps even basic visual composition-wise, but it is intentionally done to refer to this true self-concept. The sounds used for this section scratch the brain in a disturbing manner, to reflect inner conflict.

'The Shadow' is the next title that can be seen on the audiovisual, and since the shadow refers to the unknown side of the psyche, I opted to keep the screen blacked out without any traces of my scribbles done with my eyes closed. In this section, the darker side of the subconscious is represented by loud and chaotic sounds intertwined with one another. These sounds are indistinguishable despite them being actually the other sound files I used throughout the video, such as the Persona's clapping sound effects.

Lastly, ‘the Self’ appears as the ultimate title closing off the video. As the totality of the conscious and the unconscious (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.), the Self unifies both these aspects. I tried showing the unification through the black blobs I later digitally drew in, and my scribbles were done with my eyes closed. The sounds are calmer, almost quiet since the desired outcome and the highest version of the self are achieved. The difference between the persona and the self is also evident visually, and through the individuation of the Self by overcoming an inner conflict shown with the many complex layers, a calmer reality is reached. In this sense, a non-judgmental environment is obtained.

3.3: I See Loved Ones

Smaller paper pieces with drawings are arranged as a line that progresses in accordance with the dates written at the bottom of the drawings. I initially planned for it to progress in terms of changes in visual balance and composition instead of focusing on the dates. However, I later opted to change this approach to linearity since I thought it may have been difficult to arrange the drawings based on the progression of visual compositions. It would have depicted a therapy journey going from dark and heavy scribbles to lighter compositions on paper. I had wished to include a small warning label, saying, “You may think healing is solely going from black to white, but upon checking the dates beneath, you will realise that this linear ordering is done based on instincts and how we expect the compositions to change over time.”

This would, therefore, be not an accurate representation of healing but only a pretence and a facade to shield me, as the artist, from judgment. I thought the message could be strong that way by focusing on such pretence, and by portraying a perfectly ordered yet untrue narrative, the story being told would turn out to be a deceptive one. It would stress the fact that this is what society expects healing to look like, but the dates beneath

suggest another order. To convey a non-judgmental story that is free from the fear of bias, the ugly truth should have been revealed: The truth that mental health may not improve with time.

I had these aforementioned expectations of creating a narrative based on visual balance but upon realising it seems like an impossible task to order them that way, I decided to focus on a different narrative set with the dates. I thought it would still be an impactful way of showing progression despite losing some strong narrative elements. Instead of giving a sensational and harsh message that, despite looking like that, this compositional progress is not how a healing journey should look like, I chose a more direct approach to tell the story of a mentally ill artist's therapy journey.

These static images, now having different systematic arrangements and layouts than previously decided, are ordered according to their dates, as shown in Figure 9. Despite the change of plans between the intention and the actual outcome, keeping a narrative based on progress was still possible. As for their layout, this set of static images hung on the wall stresses that healing is not an entirely linear process and that there are high and low moments; hence, the zigzag organisation is present in certain placements.

3.4: I See A Paper Tapestry

The paper roll that people draw on mimics the other roll that displays my work, and both appear as unrolled rolls of paper, scrolls that tell the stories and destinies of people and their minds' content. The roll of paper with my own drawings having been put on the floor rather than being neatly stuck on the wall may signify the ugly truth and the messy, non-linear, occasionally relapsing process of healing despite the linearity of time, shown

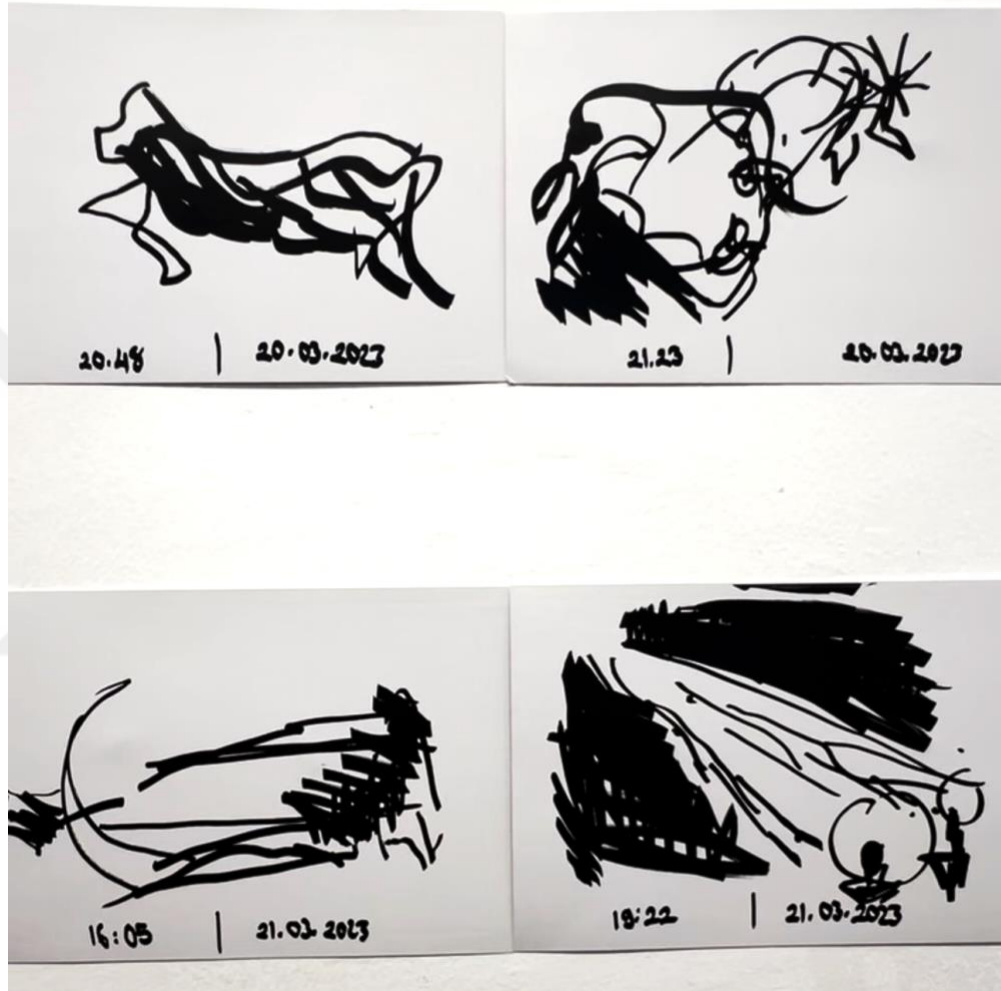


Figure 10. *I See Loved Ones* (2024) by Şeyma Çelik. [Fragments].

once again with the dates. This roll of paper tells a story that looks so crude and aesthetically displeasing and is thus worthy to be displayed only on the floor and to be beneath the spectators' feet. Healing from mental illnesses is not a beautiful process, and I wished to stress the rawness and ugliness by putting that paper roll onto the floor, almost as if it is something to be stepped on. The paper roll, hence, works as a carpet on the floor rather than a tapestry on the wall, unlike the other paper roll on which the spectator can draw.



Figure 11. I See A Paper Tapestry (2024) by Şeyma Çelik. [Scanned image of the paper roll on which the scribbles are drawn with graphite, charcoal and markers].

3.5: I See Your Worries

Upon entering the exhibition area, spectators are asked to draw their minds' content with closed eyes. This little experimentation and audience participation may suggest that the mind's content awaits to be set free without being overshadowed by judgment. This other paper roll can then depict a journey without a certain positive or negative interpretation outcome, free from judgment.

What can be certain is that no one can judge the scribbles since the audience at the end cannot figure out who drew what figure on the paper roll, nor are they able to distinguish the forms and thoughts the scribbles should represent. No one is allowed or able to tell if the scribbles are good or bad, either. Hence, the creation of a non-judgmental space allows a small therapy demo that is safe from the need for accuracy when it comes to drawings and what they represent, as shown in Figure 11 and the participants' scribbles done while keeping their eyes closed.

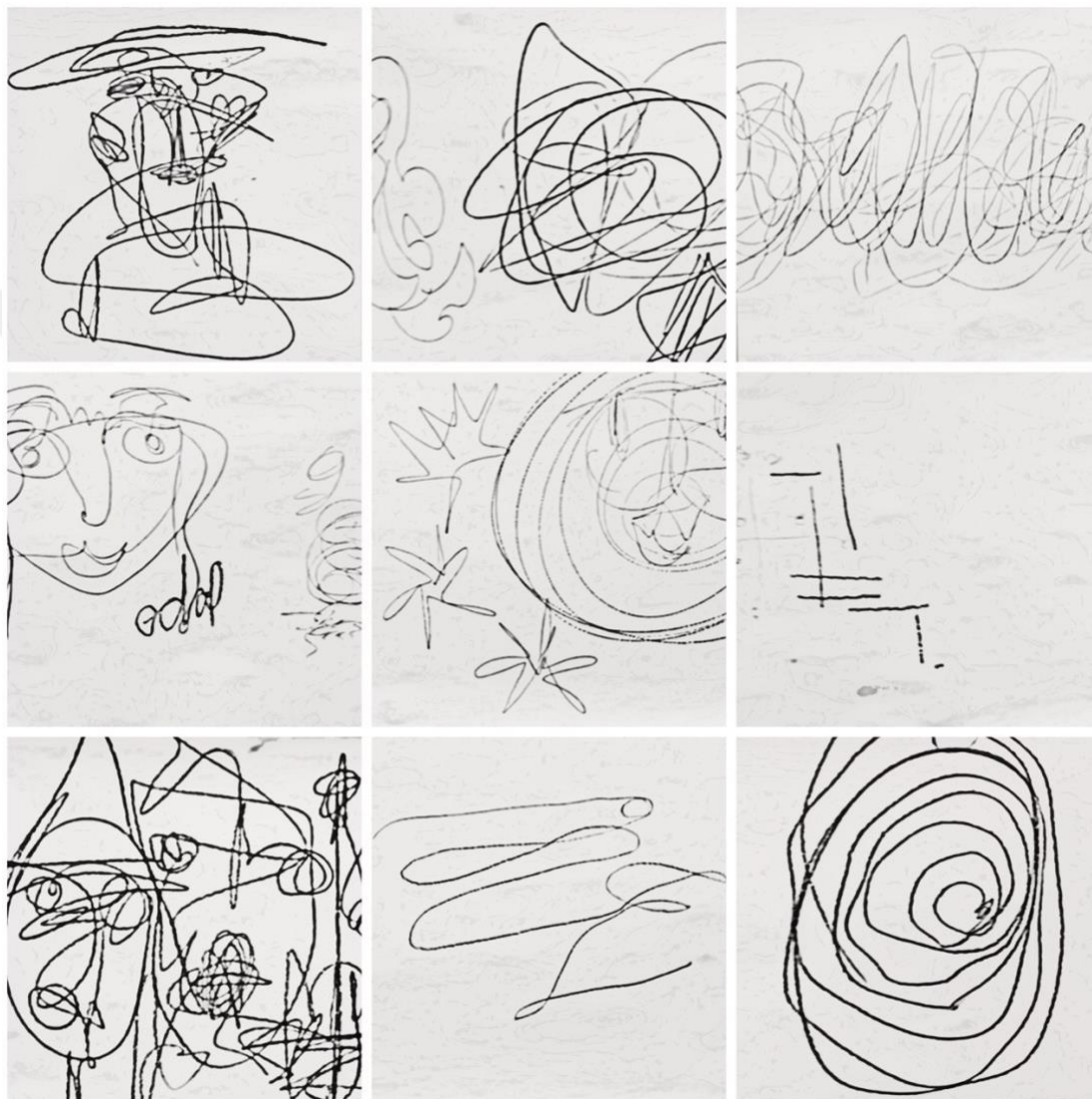


Figure 12. *I See Your Worries* (2024) by ‘You’ as the artist. [A collage of exhibition attendees’ scribbles done while keeping their eyes closed].

CHAPTER 4

POSSIBLE MEANINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF RECURRING MOTIFS

What seemed most interesting and fascinating to me while observing my scribbles was that there were motifs that would reoccur: Hands, stars, pillars and eyes. I first attempted interpreting what they may mean on my own, but as I have no degree in the field of Psychology myself, I also asked professionals working in the field who live across Türkiye.

My meaning-making attempts go as far as thinking that perhaps these motifs that repeat and reoccur at least a few times may mean that they are the challenges I had to face while creating artworks for *What I See When I Close My Eyes*. I thought these scribbles may have contained such oppositional elements and parts of Jungian Shadow that subconsciously resurfaced as I doodled.

After communicating and counselling with professionals in the field of psychoanalysis and art therapy, as well as referring to Deleuze and Guattarian theory, I have reached the solution that even though there may be a standardised set of solutions to certain problems, such as interpreting what a motif may mean in art therapy and psychoanalysis, it should not be forgotten that each and every one of these symbols may carry different meanings depending on the individual's life story and art therapy journey. As for the Deleuze and Guattarian commentary, I believe I should not look for collective unconscious-based interpretations but deterritorialise any fixed meanings. The representations are already valuable on their own, without signification or narratives

attached to them, as Rogers' person-centred approach suggests, stating that every individual, as well as the meaning they make out of their art, are cherished.

Deterritorialisation and a Rogerian approach to the self ensure that I avoid judging what the forms depicted in my art may mean, as such labelling may clash with my aim of approaching art sans judgment.

Regardless of my ultimate conclusion of leaning more toward Deleuze and Guattari's deterritorialisation, I would like to present what Jungian symbols may mean. For a more accurate interpretation, the individual contexts of the motifs in the therapy patient's life and how these symbols are expressed with other compositional elements should be taken into account while assessing (Dökmeci, personal communication, 2024).

4.1: Hands

Hands are motifs repeated in my iterations of releasing my mind's content onto paper, as seen in Figure 12. I assumed that hands may refer to the act of trying to have a grasp and being in control in moments of anxiety, as I am clinically diagnosed with three anxiety disorders: Obsessive-compulsive disorder, generalised anxiety disorder and social anxiety disorder. They may have a connection with an immense need to have control over every aspect and try to attain perfection. It is thus a battle of obsessive-compulsive disorder perfectionism and the freestyle scribbling that aims to create a non-judgmental environment.

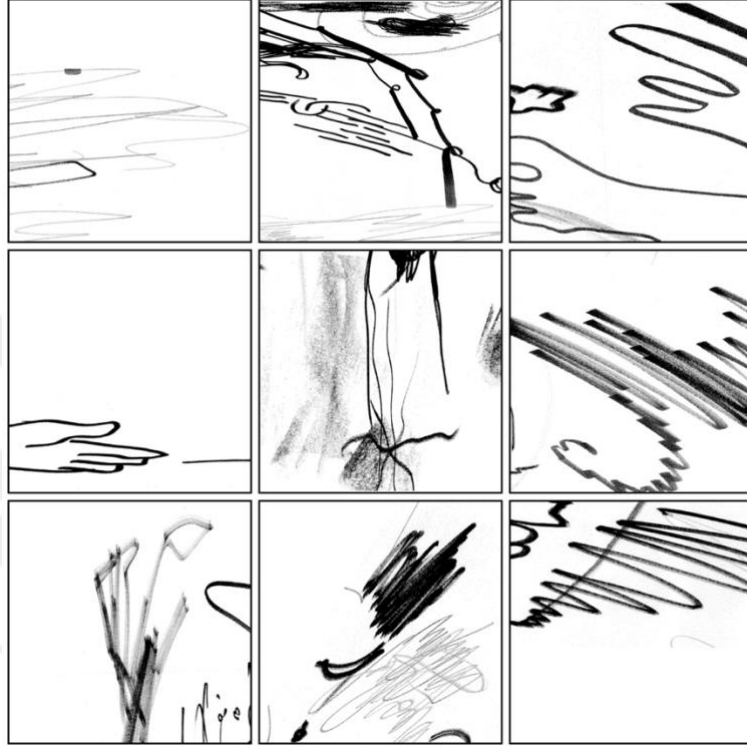


Figure 13. Hand motifs recurring in my scribbles done while keeping my eyes closed.

As opposed to how my meaning-attesting goes, professionals in the field have vastly different opinions: One interpretation is that the hand represents establishing connections with other people, according to the specialist psychological counsellor and guide Çağlar Sarıdede (2024). Actions such as holding hands, reaching out and asking for help, or touching someone may have implications for the relationship dynamics of the artist (Sarıdede, personal communication, 2024), in this case, me. As someone with only a few social contacts I can usually talk to, my obsession with healthily maintaining my connections may have resurfaced as hand figures in my scribbles.

According to Büşra Karabulut, another psychologist offering psychological counselling, the hand symbolises an individual's control or power over their own life (2024).

Determining how one uses their hands or what the hand holds can help the art therapist

understand what the patient wishes to gain dominance over and make meaning of the patient's, in this case, me as the artist and the patient, sense of purpose (Karabulut, personal communication, 2024). I myself, indeed, search for the meaning of my life and what my purpose may be in this vast universe.

According to Karabulut, hands refer to the theme of receiving or offering help and a drawing of a hand may express a person's need to receive support or their utmost desire to provide it to others (2024). Mayhap, the repetition of the hand motif is an indicator of me so often seeking help as a disabled individual with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and autism spectrum disorder. Hands can aid individuals in expressing themselves, exploring the depths of past experiences, be they joyful or traumatising, and envisioning future goals on both a tangible and abstract level. Additionally, the hand symbol is a powerful tool for understanding a person's relationship with their emotional and social world (Karabulut, personal communication, 2024). In this context, the milieu I, as the artist, occupy is a conflict zone most of the time due to my social difficulties as an autistic person with social anxiety disorder. Therefore, I strive to connect while constantly failing to reach others and attain their attention along with their admiration.

According to the psychiatrist Elif Begüm Cavak Dökmeci, who has a psych-art counselling centre in Eskişehir, the hand may signify communication and connection (2024). In the subconscious, it symbolises touch, bonding, and connection through interaction. The hand functions as a symbol of human relationships, embodying human connections in the shape of a motif recurring in the expression of the subconscious. In the field of artmaking and creativity, the hand may also represent the power to produce and the passion to keep creating (Dökmeci, personal communication, 2024). In this light, the hand as a repeating figure may be associated with expressing the subconscious creatively through the means of art therapy.

4.2: Columns

As far as my interpretation of columns and pillars go, they correspond to always having to remain resilient and strong and being grateful for the support I receive, as columns are often associated with support whether it is in the field of architecture or literature. For me, columns help me try not to feel or appear weak, especially in instances of me trying to evade sadness-based crisis moments like hysteric crying. If I am to attest a meaning to the column in terms of how it may be the resurfacing of Jungian shadow and as some obstacle I need to conceal or overcome, it may be a teaching that states that instead of always standing firm and tall, vulnerability too is essential in healthy self-reflection.

According to the professionals I have contacted, the column, as a recurring motif, can be described as a concept representing the building blocks of research, in this case, using art as an enquiry for conducting a study in the field of psychotherapy. The column may also imply the patient's inner strength, resilience, and core values. In this context, the column may express both the person's emotional and psychological stability, as well as be interpreted as the personal strengths of the patient in the art therapy process along with how what and who they view as their support providers in this therapy journey (Karabulut, personal communication, 2024). In the case of me as the artist and the patient, columns and pillars may refer to the people I love and cherish who make my life merrier and how much I rely on them to be present for me when I am struggling. Figure 13 lists some of the repetitions of the column motif across the scribbles I produced while keeping my eyes closed and trying to portray what I see when I close my eyes.

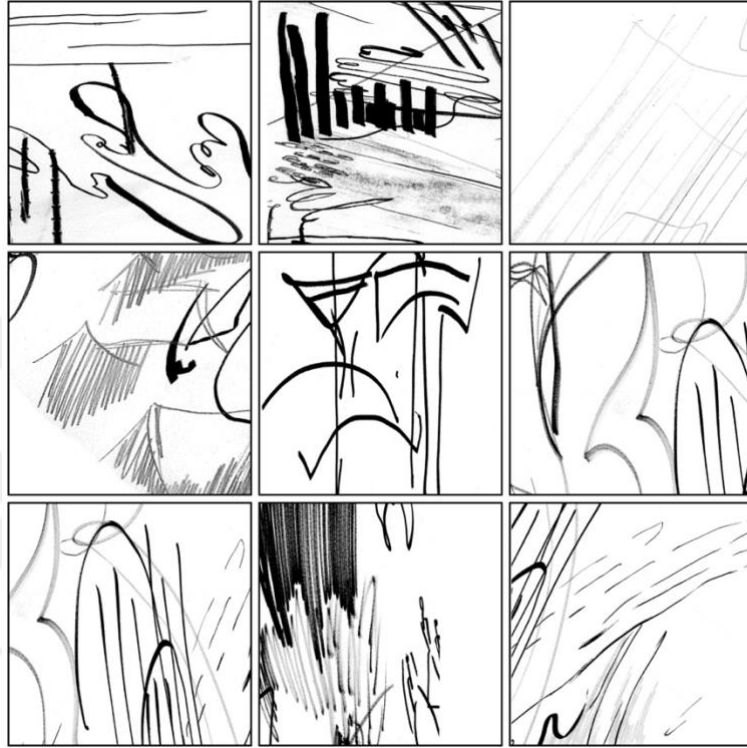


Figure 14. Column motifs recurring in my scribbles done while keeping my eyes closed.

As noted by Dökmeci, the column resurfacing from the unconscious as a repeating symbol may be connected to the concepts of support and strength through family, beliefs or core values (personal communication, 2024). Melek Saylan, a psychologist with expertise in family constellation therapy, which focuses on patterns and problems in a family setting, thinks that the column can symbolise authority and power (personal communication, 2024).

4.3: Eyes

Eyes for me, in terms of how I see them as the Shadow emerging to reveal difficulties I must overcome through scribbling them, making the worries resurface, may be connected to the fear of being judged. Due to obsessive-compulsive disorder, I constantly fear being surveilled in everything I do by higher powers or through mind

reading, even though they are not proven to be real. However, the paranoia, as well as a need to present myself perfectly, is ever so present. As the aim of this thesis project is to create a non-judgmental art environment, I may comment that this ever-present and watchful eye should be countered and weakened through my scribbles shown in Figure 14, in which my worries and difficulties resurface from the subconscious.

In the view of Karabulut, a professional, the eye may symbolise the desire to be seen and a need to see, as well as a yearning to know everything (personal communication, 2024). This hunger for knowledge and an immense sense of curiosity is indeed present in me. The eye can carry deep meanings about the person's awareness, perceptions and their emotional state (Karabulut, personal communication, 2024). The eye can be regarded as a powerful metaphor that allows the therapy patient to perceive the outside world and develop a sense of self. As far as art therapy goes, Karabulut states that using eye contact in sessions can help the patient discover their relationship with themselves and their environment (2024). In the case of my thesis project on how I administered a kind of therapeutic art approach into my life and how I introduced the idea of a non-judgmental space for art creation, eye contact was not available since I scribbled while keeping my eyes closed. However, I believe I still managed to strengthen my relationship with myself and got to know myself better through this thesis project, as well as finding peace via a non-judgmental art creation environment.

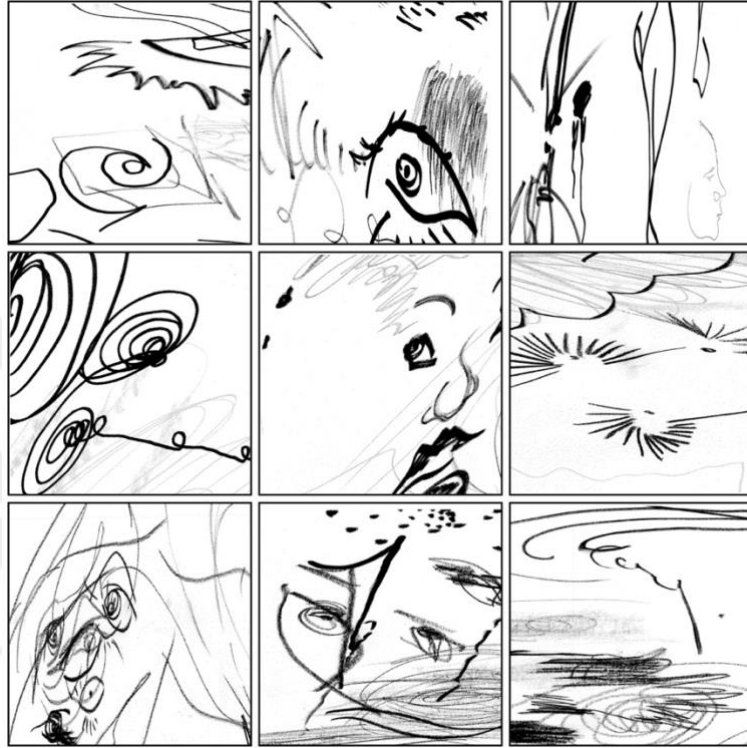


Figure 15. Eye motifs recurring in my scribbles done while keeping my eyes closed.

4.4: Stars

Stars as the last motif that I have observed to be repeating, as seen in Figure 15, in my own non-professional interpretation, may refer to a desire to shine and be an inspiration, as well as an aid for others. It may seem like a positive property, but it is not necessarily a good trait, since I, as the star, exhaust the self while trying to make others' days brighter.

In art therapy, the star symbol can carry powerful connotations such as hope, inspiration, direction, reaching personal goals, and chasing dreams (Karabulut, personal communication, 2024). The star is more or less a universal symbol representing humankind's pursuit of inner guide, light or the high ideals they wish to achieve. When

used in a therapeutic context, it can be seen as a valuable tool for the individual to make sense of their emotional, spiritual or psychological journey.

Just as the star refers to guidance and hope, this motif can subconsciously symbolise hope, guidance and attaining high goals, which can also indicate undiscovered potential and high ideals within the patient (Dökmeci, personal communication, 2024). Another professional view states that the star can signify a high origin and divine inspiration (Saylan, personal communication, 2024). I believe the star to indeed be very prevalent in my life in terms of me almost always having the ability to be inspired by what I see, hear and sense around. I also wish to be seen as a source of inspiration and hope despite my poor mental health, graced with depression and anxiety disorders.

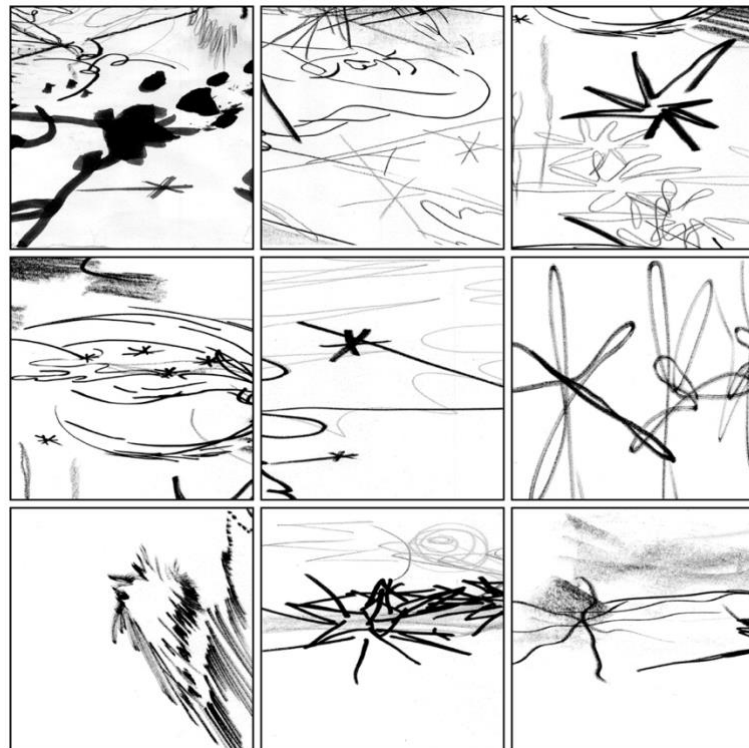


Figure 16. Star motifs recurring in my scribbles while keeping my eyes closed.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This thesis, as an exploration of a non-judgmental art environment that promotes emotional expression and facilitates healing, aims to contribute to the field of art therapy by advocating for an approach to art production as an auxiliary treatment for treatment-resistant depression and obsessive-compulsive disorder. I am happy to announce that this method of drawing with my eyes closed helped me to create abstract art forms I might not have otherwise produced, and most importantly, this methodology helped in combatting my inner perfectionism, mainly sourced by obsessive-compulsive disorder.

By taking art as an enquiry and part of my treatment, I focused on self-reflection through abstraction rather than attempting to draw perfect representations. With this approach, I strived to create a non-judgmental space for myself in which I, as a perfectionist suffering from obsessive-compulsive disorder, would not be able to make judgments on my art despite my tendencies to comment on the good and the bad parts.

This thesis is both an enquiry and an artwork on the idea of creating a non-judgmental space, which stresses that not everything can be perfect. The thesis is a work in progress, as I can constantly add to it in the future with further academic studies and artistic iterations. There is always room for improvement, resulting in an organic, non-perfect medium to work on. The thesis is, hence, the non-judgmental space required for me as an artist to thrive in: It is not perfect and does not strive to be perfect. I shall not judge its quality based on whether it is good or bad, and I am content that it communicates my message. By embracing imperfection and fluidity, this work, like art therapy, fosters an

ongoing process of healing and self-discovery. This thesis thus remains an evolving reflection of such philosophy. In this sense, it does not pursue a fixed conclusion but more so an open-ended invitation for further exploration, for myself and for others engaging with art as a means of self-expression and emotional liberation from judgment.



REFERENCES

- A. F. Thachil, R. Mohan and D. Bhugra. (2007). *The evidence base of complementary and alternative therapies in depression*. Journal of Affective Disorders 97(1) [23-35]
- Allen, P. B. (2013). *Art as enquiry: Towards a research method that holds soul truth*. In S. McNiff (Ed.), *Art as research: Opportunities and challenges* [13-20]. Chicago, IL: Intellect, The University of Chicago Press.
- American Art Therapy Association. (2017). Definition of art therapy. Retrieved from https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://www.arttherapy.org/upload/2017_DefinitionofProfession.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwi9p_Q7rCKAxXDXfEDHbbAPDEQFnoECBcQAQ&usg=AOvVaw0_qSTvJoNX-mZgi3W6QVHS
- Bloomgarden, J. (1997). [Review of the book *What Do You See? Phenomenology of Therapeutic Art Expression*, by M. G. Betensky]. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 24(1), 103-104. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0197-4556\(96\)00062-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0197-4556(96)00062-7)
- Bowman, Z. (2018). *Self-Portraits Drawn with Eyes Closed: A Response Art Series*. Spectrum: Concordia University Research Repository. <https://spectrum.library.concordia.ca/id/eprint/983706/>
- Çelik, Ş. (2022). *In situ: A case study of the artist 'elfwraith'* [Unpublished manuscript]. Department of Communication and Design, [İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University].
- Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1983). *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and schizophrenia* (R. Hurley, M. Seem, & H. R. Lane, Trans.). University of Minnesota Press. (Original work published 1972)
- Dökmeci, E. B. C. (2024). Discussion on the psychological symbolism of the hand in art therapy [Personal communication]. December, 2024.
- Encyclopaedia Britannica. (n.d.). Persona. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/science/persona-psychology>
- Encyclopaedia Britannica. (n.d.). Self. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/self>

- Foucault, M. (1983). Preface. In G. Deleuze & F. Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and schizophrenia* (R. Hurley, M. Seem, & H. R. Lane, Trans.) (pp. xxi–xxiv). University of Minnesota Press. (Original work published 1972)
- Hill, C. E., & Nakayama, E. Y. (2000). Client-centered therapy: Where has it been and where is it going? A comment on Hathaway (1948). *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 56(7), 861-875.
- Jung, C.G. (1953). *The archetypes and the Collective unconscious* (R.F.C. Hull, Trans.). Princeton University Press.
- Karabulut, B. (2024). Counselling session on art therapy and symbolism [Personal communication]. December, 2024.
- Lee, E., & Lee, K. (2015). *Proposal of Jackson Pollock's Art Therapy Recommendation System for Depression*. *International Journal of Software Engineering and its Applications*. <https://doi.org/10.14257/ijseia.2015.9.10.08>
- (Mcleod, S. (2023). *Carl Rogers' humanistic theory of personality*. Simply Psychology. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/carl-rogers.html>)
- Mota, P. (2021). Creativity and mental illness: Vincent van Gogh as the archetypal figure. *The Journal of Psychohistory*, 49(2), 1-30. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/353756766_Creativity_and_Mental_Illness_Vincent_van_Gogh_as_the_Archetypal_Figure
- Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. (n.d.). *Number 1, 1949*. <https://www.moca.org/collection/work/number-1>
- National Health Service. (2023). Symptoms - Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). NHS UK. <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/obsessive-compulsive-disorder-ocd/symptoms/>
- Pollock, J. (1998). *Introduction To Expert Systems*, (3 ed.), Addison Wesley, pp. 2.
- P. S. Ruby. (2008). *The Jung Page*. 29 Nov. 2003. November 23, http://www.cgjungpage.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=262&Itemid=40.

- Rogers, N. (2011). *The creative connection for groups: Person-centered expressive arts for healing and social change*. Palo Alto, CA: Science and Behavior Books
- Rogers, N., Tudor, K., Tudor, L. E., & Keemar, K. (2012). Person-centered expressive arts therapy: A theoretical encounter. *Person-Centered & Experiential Psychotherapies*, 11(1), 31–47. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14779757.2012.656407>
- Sarıdede, Ç. (2024). Discussion on the symbolism of the hand in art therapy [Personal communication]. December, 2024.
- Saylan, M. (2024). Counselling session on art therapy and symbolism [Personal communication]. December, 2024.
- Shiff, R. (2002). “With closed eyes”: De Kooning’s twist. *Master Drawings*, 40(1), [73-88] Retrieved from <http://0-www.jstor.org.mercury.concordia.ca/stable/1554555>
- Wood, M.J. Molassiotis, A. and Payne, S. (2011). *What research evidence is there for the use of art therapy in the management of symptoms in adults with cancer? A systematic review*. *Psycho-Oncology*, vol. 20, no. 2, Disorders 97(1) [135-145]
- Van Gogh Museum (n.d.). *Was Van Gogh poor?* Retrieved from <https://www.vangoghmuseum.nl/en/art-and-stories/vincent-van-gogh-faq/was-van-gogh-poor>
- Yao, L., & Kabir, R. (2023, February 9). Person-centered therapy (Rogerian therapy). In *StatPearls*. StatPearls Publishing. Available from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK589708/>