Her Beauty & Her Terror: Portrait of an Archetypal Land

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DECLARATION

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgement has been made.

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university.

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ABSTRACT

This studio research project is comprised of two complementary elements: a discursive exegesis and a production of artwork. Together they explore the idea that by applying Jung's method of 'active imagination', image-making operates as a practice for consciousness that reveals new insights into the nature of reality. The discussion is based on the theory that 'unconscious' images (appearing as dreams or in the imagination) not only have meaning but the potential to effect change on a deeply psychic level. The role of images in Western consciousness is also examined, specifically their potential to alter perception and thereby enrich humanity's relationship with the non-human world.

The visual or 'studio' research was carried out at a spectacular wild-site on the south coast of Western Australia known as The Gap. Inspired and informed by Jung's archetype theory, I set out to test the following contention: if the human psyche and landscape are arranged according to an imaginal (archetypal) matrix as Jung suggests, it should be possible to communicate with the 'spirits of place' through imaginative inquiry and the practice of making images. This core idea drives both the theoretical discourse and the visual research.

The underlying motivation for this project, and my practice in general, is to formulate a 'model for consciousness' in which both human and non-human existence can be reconciled. This is reflected in my interdisciplinary approach to research where I have drawn equivalences across several theoretical models: the 'Romantic sublime' in landscape painting, the Void of Eastern religion and Western philosophy, and Jung's imaginal realm of archetypal myth-motifs.
PROLOGUE

In 2003 a fifteen year old boy I did not know called Nathan drowned at Salmon Holes. I went there to surf on the day they were still searching for him. I spoke to his sister who was doing a survey of near-miss and actual drownings on the south coast. Two days earlier she had watched her brother slip into the sea, wave to acknowledge he was alright and calmly prepare to swim back to shore. He never got there alive.

I imagined what might have happened to him. I was inundated with mental images about drowning, sometimes poetic, always vividly compelling and often disturbing. Eight days after Nathan went missing his family found his body lodged under a reef. Months later I still could not reconcile myself with his death. I continued to dream about him - peacefully asleep and iridescent blue - tucked beneath the reef, in watery caves being resuscitated. I did some paintings and drawings with lots of blue in them.

I was already familiar with the 'drowning' motif - it surfaced in a dream when I was a small child and never left. An apocalyptic but distant dark red tidal wave advanced towards me as I froze in awe-struck wonder and fear. I always woke terrified and sweating before it engulfed me. As an adult it loomed closer until I was right inside a hovering cathedral of blue water where it threatened to hurl me to the deep. The image resurfaced with intensity after several open ocean voyages in the 1980s, one involving eighteen hours of sheer terror in the dark, three kilometres from a notorious stretch of coast on a lee shore in a force eleven storm.

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1 Nathan Drew Memorial Trust for Coastal Safety.
2 Salmon Holes is a small bay dwarfed by shelves of massive granite that slide into the sea only a few kilometres from the Gap. It is notorious because it is regularly mentioned in current affairs programs when fisher folk repeatedly ignore warnings and are swept into the sea. Nathan Drew was an experienced rock fisherman, took no risks and was in no obvious danger on that day.
3 The Dutch ship Zuytdorp perished on this stretch of coast. A lee shore is particularly dangerous if close to shore because the boat is pushed onto land by the wind. On the Beaufort Scale, Force 11 indicates wind speeds of 56-63 knots (103-117 k.p.h.),...Exceptionally high waves (small and medium size ships might be for a time lost from view behind waves); sea is completely covered with long white patches of
When the image returned again with urgency after Nathan drowned I decided to make peace with the ocean that had ended his short life and continued to dominate mine. I wanted to know why the drowning and tidal wave dreams persisted and what they signified. In the early stages of the research an acquaintance suicided at The Gap. Her death had a powerful impact on me because she was an artist. Not long after that another artist I knew suicided there, after which my focus turned more directly to the connections between art, death and the tragic sublime. I knew this was a traditional theme in Romantic poetry and painting. The phenomenon of 'drowning' did not appear to be specific to any particular culture so I assumed it was archetypal in human consciousness. Having read Jung's theories about the 'collective unconscious' and use of 'active imagination', I set out to test the relevance of this model for art practice. The following is a brief summary of the research I undertook and my findings.

Chapter one - 'A Practice for Consciousness' - introduces imaginal practice and explains my reasons for linking art practice to Jung's archetype theory. It provides an overview of the theoretical models that underpin the discussion and identifies the specific field of psychology in which the research has been framed. 'Landscape as God' explores the connection between the Romantic sublime in Australian landscape painting as an archetypal image in human consciousness and Jung's theory of archetypes.

'Imaginal Practice' includes sub-chapters 'Active Imagination', 'The Gap' and 'Welcome to the Edge'. Here I discuss the relationship between archetypal psychology's imaginal method, the Romantic imagination, the sublime in nature and the value of 'subjectivity' as a research methodology. 'Active Imagination' outlines imaginal psychology's rationale for engaging archetypal images through imagination, its application in art practice and its ability to access the sublime dimensions of consciousness. 'The Gap' invites the reader to the site at which the visual research (art-making) takes place. It

foam lying along the direction of wind; everywhere the edges are blown into froth; visibility affected'.
(Echelle Beaufort Scale)

4 See explanation of 'unconscious' in footnote p. 9
sets the 'physical' stage by linking art practice to a specific landscape. I also introduce the idea that one of the defining motifs of the Australian landscape is the Void and briefly compare Eastern, Western and Aboriginal perceptions of it. 'Welcome to the Edge' discusses the links between the sea as a symbol of the Void in Australian culture and the archetypal unconscious in Jungian theory.

From here I move on to the art theoretical 'Painting Against Death', specifically the tragic sublime in an Australian context by comparing the work of Australian artists Rick Amor and Lawrence Daws and their depiction of the Void as an awe-ful but sublime experience. I also suggest the Void's capacity to be simultaneously creative and destructive influences the ways in which it is imaged, particularly in relation to how Yves Klein and Mark Rothko experienced it as a 'transcendent possibility'. 'Into the Blue' is a personal account of my engagement with the Void through imaginal art practice in response to The Gap. 'The Imaginal Void' outlines two distinct models of the Void, its relationship to human consciousness and how these have influenced the ways in which artists have portrayed it.

Finally, in 'Living on the Edge of the Void', I evaluate imaginal (art) practice as a methodology and present my findings. I also share some of my insights into the relationship between the Void as a recurring motif in Australian culture and its archetypal role in the evolution of human consciousness as it continues to balance precariously between 'Her Beauty & Her Terror'.
A PRACTICE FOR CONSCIOUSNESS

There's a 'body' on the rocks
I don't know what it's doing there
It's not dead, but it's not alive either
So I guess I'll just paint it
It's all I know to do.

(Frantom, Journal entry, 2011)

Depth psychologist Dr. Stephen Diamond contends that making a distinction between subjective and objective realities is a 'false dichotomy' because, as Jung discovered, 'what we collectively agree to call consensual reality is no more important....than our subjective, inner reality'. (Diamond, 2010: n. p.) Maria-Pilar's suggests that

The real does not actually exist.....what is the truth for someone may not be true for another. What exists is the imaginary, a state of being which is imagined as real but which actually consists of images, fantasies and memories. (Maria-Pilar, 2012: 43)

As an artist concerned with the way human beings perceive things, I have learnt to appreciate there are as many unique views of reality as there are people. To make sense of how this complex assortment of individual perspectives functions collectively in the 'real' world I surmised two things: first, that my view of reality must be as valid as anyone else's; and secondly, there had to be some kind of matrix that prevented it all from completely falling apart - a set of 'givens' or 'constants' out of which the many differences arose. In addition I reasoned that if no single person had the definitive answer, then collectively we might - which also meant this metaphysical structure had to be flexible enough to cater for all conscious beings no matter how divergent their points of view. Carl Jung's theories offered such a framework.\(^5\)

\(^5\) Jung's archetype theory is based on his contention that there is a psychological field of archetypes that underpin the consciousness of humankind. He initially referred to it as the 'collective unconscious'. Jung originally chose the term 'unconscious' to suggest that it was located 'under' everyday awareness because it is 'of an a priori, general human character rather than merely the precipitate of personal repressed material'. (Whitmont, 1978: 41) The 'collective' unconscious differs from the 'personal' unconscious which carries the hidden, mostly unrecognised aspects of ego-personality. (The unconscious aspect of the individual psyche or 'personal unconscious' is not discussed here). The collective or objective unconscious on the other hand contains the archetypal images that make up human
Groups of individuals with shared experience can agree on a number of attributes that define an object, experience or phenomenon. Although superficial details vary, the underlying pattern or framework is recognisable - this is the basis of an archetype. Jung's biographer and pupil Aniela Jaffe, describes an archetype as a 'prime imprinter', an original or 'basic form' for later copies. In Jungian psychology archetypes are the 'unconscious quantities' that underpin the patterns of human life. They 'remain irrepresentable and hidden' and are only

indirectly discernible through the arrangements they produce in our consciousness: through the analogous motifs exhibited in psychic images and through typical motifs of action in the primal situations of life - birth, death, love, etc. (Jaffe, 1984: 15)⁶

Although they form the basis of images and ideas, representations of archetypes should not be confused with the archetype itself. (Jung, CW 8, 213) Yet even though they cannot be directly represented, archetypes become 'visible' when they are expressed as images; for this reason, and because the image is fundamental to both Jungian theory and visual art, I have brought them together in 'imaginal (art) practice'.

My basic premise is that when approached in a particular way, the image has the potential to become a 'practice for consciousness'. I developed this idea from Chris Allen's comment:

Consciousness appears first in practice, but without self-consciousness; theory tries to catch up, to impose its own interpretations and to simplify the ambiguities of practice....art is a form of practice....It articulates the consciousness of practice in concrete terms. (1997: 12)

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consciousness. Because Jung's choice of the term 'collective' generated some confusion by suggesting the unconscious was a shared realm, and the potential that it could be misinterpreted as a kind of 'mass psyche', he came to refer to it as the objective unconscious. (Whitmont, 1978: 42) His later use of the term 'objective psyche' replaces and enlarges the earlier concept of the collective unconscious'. (Whitmont, 1978: 41) Jung used 'objective psyche' or 'objective consciousness' to indicate 'spirit' whereas the 'personal psyche' equates to 'soul' ('psyche' in archetype theory retains its original meaning as 'soul' rather than 'mind' or 'intelect' which has different associations in other schools of psychology).⁶ 'In the course of time Jung broadened his concept of the archetype' to recognise it as the 'creative unconscious foundation of abstract ideas and scientific theories'. (Jaffe, 1984: 15)
Just as art practice can articulate the consciousness of practice, it has the potential to articulate consciousness itself. In addition, while the practise of making images articulates its expression, it is also a vehicle for its evolution. My research has been based on the idea that making images is both a way of being conscious and a way of exploring consciousness. Imaginal practice turns a consciousness of practice into a practice for consciousness based in the imaginal and facilitated through art-making.

Although this study had its genesis in an imaginary realm of dreams and inner visions, consciousness is both a physical and a psychological construct. Therefore I needed something external and material on which to project these images. I chose the wild coastal landscape of The Gap because it evoked similar emotions to the drowning and tidal wave images. I had been going there since I was a child - it epitomised all that was sublimely beautiful, awe-inspiring and terrifying about the sea. Projecting the internal visions and dreams onto this landscape I made art, with the material body and art materials. This primordial landscape grounded the abstract and numinous in a concrete setting in which I could explore the sublime in nature through art making. To consolidate what I had envisioned as imaginal (art) practice I set out to investigate the relationship between my dream images, Jung’s archetype theory, art-making and the tragic sublime in nature.

My approach to research has something in common with Jillian Hamilton’s 'connective' thesis model. I have endeavoured to link practice (in this case the Romantic sublime in visual art) to an ‘established field of research’ (Jung’s archetype theory) and weave them into a 'unified, coherent and flowing text'.

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7 In Edge of the Sacred, David Tacey applies Edinger’s (1984) definition: ‘the word consciousness actually means "knowing or seeing with an other" Edinger points out that the word science.....means simple knowing, or knowing without "withness". The point of consciousness is that it is “the experience of knowing together with an other"(1984: 36)’. (Tacey, 2009: 55)

8 In her paper "The Voices of the Exegesis" Hamilton outlines the connective model and explains its function: ‘Avoiding a fractured thesis, that simply conjoins two awkwardly juxtaposed or divergent parts, or abruptly shifts between expressive forms, requires the development of strategies that allow the author to reconcile differently situated perspectives and subject positions, and to transition effectively
woven these into a practice made up of two complementary components where the 'physical' work (art making) supports the meta-physical work (exploration of consciousness) in much the same way that rituals like meditation, chanting or body movement work in tandem with, but are not directly representative of, particular states of consciousness. Because I am committed to developing a holistic model for life, I have tried to present an integrated body of visual and written work - in essence a connective thesis.

To give voice to what Hamilton refers to as 'multi-perspectival subject positions' I have structured the exegesis in a particular way. As this is a creative enquiry and therefore assigns considerable value to the imagination in its various forms of expression, I have included written extracts from my personal journals where directly relevant to the discussion, but also to stimulate the reader's imagination at the beginning of some chapters. When visiting a site or when profound dreams or 'visions' appear I draw or record my impressions in text first. The journal entries are an integral part of my creative research methodology and provide insight into how imaginal (art) practice works, 'in practise'.

Where I have discussed the work of other artists I have included images in the main text when possible. Although I have referred to my own work they do not 'illustrate' the written content - they are intended to provide a visual experience and a sense of how art practice and theoretical discussion are linked. One of the aims of this study was to integrate theory and practice in a way that enhanced my relationship with the world. In the next section I explore the idea that because all manifestations of existence are sacred, landscape too has a 'consciousness' of its own.

between the intimate 'I' and 'my' (methodology, practice, reflection) and the objective 'it' (the field, the data). (Hamilton, 2011: n. p.)
Landscape as God

I love a sunburnt country, a land of sweeping plains,
Of rugged mountain ranges, of droughts and flooding rains,
I love her far horizons, I love her jewel sea,
Her beauty and her terror.....9

Dorothy Mackellar (1911)

Like knowledge consciousness grows in tiny increments and builds, layer upon layer. I used to dream that one day I would have an epiphany and instantly know everything there was to know about existence. In my hunger for knowledge I often fantasised about standing in a thunderstorm to entice the lightning to strike me 'sensible'. Instead there have been many less dramatic episodes which, though not delivering full 'enlightenment', have convinced me there is an all-pervasive, all-knowing realm of consciousness beyond the 'ordinary', or what I generally experience on a daily basis.

Reasoned intellectual insights sometimes occur when I am researching spiritual psychology and philosophy. More often than not these just confirm what I have already experienced or intuited, for example, a theorist articulates something I am familiar with but been unable to pin down. Original or 'primary knowledge' (Boyd, 2002: 50) - what I understand as a holistic body/mind epiphany - happens mostly when I am in nature, when sensation is heightened and I am suddenly aware of something non-ordinary, supra-ordinate and infinite.10 I feel exhilarated11, completely alive, as though I am 'nothing', yet at the same time 'everything'. I am the centre of the universe and have

9 Mackellar, D. 1911, My Country (Hoorn, 2007: 234)
10 According to Professor Anne Boyd, Dr David Tacey says that "The main language in Australia is earth language". Boyd adds: 'Earth language is a meta-language of the spirit which arises as right-brain activity based upon an intuitive connection with our natural environment, the language of place. Earth language has little to do with the left-brain language of human intellectual discourse. It is the territory of the sacred, long known to artists and deeply intuitive creative thinkers from all cultures through all time. It is the territory put off-limits by the European Enlightenment with its tendency to remove mystery from matter'. (Boyd, 2002: 50)
11 Peter Schjeldahl describes similar feelings in relation to 'beauty': 'In my experience, an onset of beauty combines extremes of stimulation and relaxation. My mind is hyperalert. My body is at ease....My mood soars. I have a conviction of goodness in all things. I feel that everything is going to be all right. Later I am pleasantly a little tired all over, as if after swimming. Mind and body become indivisible in beauty. Beauty teaches me that my brain is a physical organ and that ‘intelligence’ is not limited to thought, but entails feeling and sensation, the whole organism in concert'. (Schjeldahl, 1994: n. p.)
the ability to extend my awareness beyond its furthest reaches. Paradoxically, although this feeling is 'non-ordinary' it is also strangely familiar, there is a recognition that this is who I really am, that my true 'being' is actually 'open' and 'empty'. While something indescribable and wonderful is present, something else is missing - a veil, a fog, an illusion - I feel as though I see the world as it really is. Clarity and focus co-exist with a purposeful non-purposeness; there is absolutely nothing more to know, nor anything else to do.

Lecturer and Jungian analyst, Robert A. Johnson says glimpsing the 'true unity, beauty and meaning of life' has a powerful impact on the human psyche and that even though the 'intensity of revelation diminishes....the memory of these visionary experiences works on unconscious attitudes at a very deep level' bringing 'a sense of faith that wasn't there before'. (Johnson, 1986: 217, 216) Although these moments are too rare in my life, I feel it unwise and probably impossible to seek them deliberately because they occur naturally and 'unconsciously'. Even so, each small experience is filed away where it adds to a growing body of evidence to support the existence of a supra-ordinate being, or what many refer to as 'God'.

While all individuals have the capacity to experience sublime revelatory moments in nature it is possibly easier for those with a 'romantic disposition'. As Gregg points out, the Romantic artist in particular suffers a 'nostalgia for God', always on a mission to discover a 'Divine and a deeper meaning'. (Gregg, 2011: 8) As a consequence, the numinous in nature often finds its way into the Romantic sublime in landscape painting; a genre that continues to flourish in Australian art today. Gregg's question: 'Why Romanticism, why Australia, why now?', and his comment that 'our artists are retreating into their own psyches', suggest some avenues of enquiry. (Gregg, 2011: 3)

12 In this discussion psyche is the centre in human consciousness, that which knows its own existence.
13 Johnson cautions that these experiences should never be actively sought because doing so can lead to 'ego-aggrandizement' or 'occultism'. (Johnson, 1986: 217)
14 'The sublime, more than any other single element, unites the Romantics with the artists of today, but in Australia it has found a new and altogether more intriguing form.' (Gregg, 2011: 21)
'Why Romanticism' can be examined in a Jungian context: because it is part of the collective unconscious the sublime is natural and innate in human consciousness and we are just witnessing another cycle of an archetypal theme. The fact that many Romantic artists are unaware of its 'historical antecedents' supports that position because these influences operate at an unconscious level. (Gregg, 2011: 2) The reason behind 'why Australia' is more complex and one of the main topics in this discussion.

Early interest in the Romantic sublime in Australia is often attributed to the European psyche's 'antipodean' vision. According to Hoorn, Macquarie's reference to the sublime in his journal description of the Blue Mountains is 'notable':

This table land is extremely beautiful and has very fine picturesque and grand scenery....we halted for a little while to view this frightful, tremendous pass, as well as to feast our eyes with the grand and pleasing prospect of the fine low country below us.... (Hoorn, 2001: 36)

One hundred years later poet Dorothy Mackellar (1911) supports Macquarie's observation that the landscape is both pleasing and terrifying. The phrase 'her beauty and her terror' is an accurate and enduring summary of the paradoxical relationship many Australians have with their homeland. It is a sentiment still echoed by many, including contemporary poet Antigone Kefala:

You can feel it when you go out bush, these forces that unnerve you in certain landscapes. It is a very powerful landscape, a magnificent landscape, a country full of light and colour....a place full of terrible things....(Kefala, 2011: n. p.)

In a similar way, much of Lawrence Daws's artwork has been inspired by this resonant and clearly detectable discomforting presence or, in his words, 'certain unease about the landscape'. (Copeland, 2008: n. p.) Many non-indigenous artists are in awe of this numinous quality and its 'meaning beyond the physical', however Gregg (2011: 27)

15 References to the sublime qualities of the Australian landscape were recorded early on in its colonial history. Although pioneer artists like James Taylor paid their respects to the practice of empirical observation of rocks and vegetation, their main intention was to 'employ the conventions of the sublime to convey a sense of grandeur and to emphasise the power' of those natural forms. (Hoorn, 2007: 43) These artists were focused on capturing a quality in the physical landscape and conveying it through aesthetic activity.
notes that for millennia Aboriginal people had been using this as the basis for artistic expression as they gave form to the "'Dreamtime" - a vast and indefinable prehistory in which mythology of the land....was born'. The spiritual beliefs of Aboriginal people cannot be separated from their art practices because they are 'embedded in the land'.

Wandjuk Marika explains:

I am not painting just for my pleasure; there is the meaning, knowledge and power. This is the earthly painting for the creation and for the land story. The land is not empty, the land is full of knowledge, full of story, full of goodness, full of energy, full of power. Earth is our mother, the land is not empty. There is the story I am telling you – special, sacred, important. (Marshall, 2003: n. p.)

It is possible non-indigenous Australians have been unconsciously influenced by their approach, or by the spirits of the land itself. Based on his knowledge of both Jungian and literary theory, David Tacey suggests the earth 'makes its presence felt through various cultural disturbances and psychological complications'. (Tacey, 2009: 34) He cites the film *Picnic at Hanging Rock* as evidence of the 'grinding tension between the colonial overlay of society and the unconscious substratum of ancient and denied realities'. (Tacey, 2009: 34)

In time, the land has to be respected as having a life and will of its own....Gradually, a second or alien will begins to impress itself upon the society, and make its presence felt with peculiar and unerring force. (Tacey, 2009: 34)

It is my view that the 'denied' reality Tacey is referring to has links to a field of psychic energy Jung identified as the collective unconscious. A comparison of Aboriginal cosmology with this mythical realm of Jung's reveals some profound similarities: both are imaginal in that they are comprised of archetypal images, motifs and stories accessible to those who know where and how to look. There is also a correlation in the importance both place on the relationship between body and psyche because although the sublime is a transcendent reality, it is channelled through the body. Respecting this

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16 I understand Aboriginal people prefer the term 'Dreaming' to 'Dreamtime' because the Dreaming in traditional Aboriginal culture is still and always present - it cannot be confined to a particular 'time'. 'Aborigines see time as a circle rather than a line, in which the past exists with the present and future: everywhen (Stanner)'. (Marshall, 2003)
and maintaining a connection to the physical landscape is therefore critical - something I discovered myself and which I discuss in depth in 'Welcome to the Edge' (p. 57). When humans engage imaginarily with the spirits of place, landscape shows itself to be a supra-ordinate being; not only do we experience God in the landscape, we experience the landscape itself as God. Aniela Jaffe's comment supports this:

The postulate of a transcendent spiritual order has brought the physical sciences face to face with the religious factor. The same is true of the psychology of the unconscious: the manifestations of the transconscious psyche and of the archetypes....bring with them an aura of numinosity and are described as experiences of a religious nature. (Jaffe, 1983: 37)

Although the sublime is often associated with aesthetic beauty and light, I am far more interested in how it operates in both creative and destructive ways as an awe-ful and awe-inspiring presence in the Australian landscape. What intrigues me most is our attraction to it because I have observed that even when it is life-threatening, or perhaps precisely because it is, we are drawn towards it by an irrational impulse. This was noted by Edmund Burke:

When Newton first discovered the property of attraction, and settled its laws, he found it served very well to explain several of the most remarkable phenomena in nature; but yet....he could consider attraction but as an effect, whose cause at that time he did not attempt to trace....But when he afterwards began to account for it by a subtle elastic ether, [he]....seemed to have quitted his usual cautious manner of philosophising; since, perhaps, allowing all that has been advanced on this subject to be sufficiently proved, I think it leaves us with as many difficulties as it found us. That great chain of causes, which, linking one to another, even to the throne of God himself, can never be unravelled by any industry of ours. When we go but one step beyond the immediate sensible qualities of things, we go out of our depth. (Burke, 1757: Part IV, Section I)

Burke goes on to explain what he considers to be the mechanisms driving human responses to the awe-ful sublime in nature:

The passion caused by the great and sublime in nature, when those causes operate most powerfully, is astonishment: and astonishment is that state of the soul in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror. (Burke, 1757, Part II, Section I)
I have before observed that whatever is qualified to cause terror is a foundation capable of the sublime; to which I add, that not only these, but many things from which we cannot probably apprehend any danger, have a similar effect, because they operate in a similar manner. (Burke, 1757, Part IV, Section III)\(^{17}\)

Engaging with the tragic sublime in the landscape is a 'direct participation mystique in nature' that arises from a 'fundamental, even ontological, experience of the world as alive and in dread'. (Hillman, 1991: 98) When life is approached on an instinctual level, existence is alive with 'animism' - human beings find themselves in a divine 'living world' full of images of different gods inhabiting a vivid imaginal realm. (Hillman, 1991: 98) The fear associated with this type of event is a common 'first reaction to an encounter with an archetypal content, which....cannot be consciously accepted as a content of one's own psyche'. (Jaffe, 1984: 21) However, Hillman suggests there is a positive side because fear, dread and horror are the basis of a natural wisdom that asserts itself psychically in response to a depersonalised relationship with nature. When the existence of Pan is denied or repressed there is an irruption of panic and dread: panic flings open a door into this reality. (Hillman, 1991: 98)

I agree with Hillman that an experience of the tragic sublime is not entirely negative because the imaginal door it 'flings open' leads to some fundamental truths about the nature of reality.

Pan,\(^{18}\) or his cultural equivalent, is one of many archetypes that together form the psychic heritage of humankind. According to Jung these motifs are the 'dynamical organisers of images and ideas' and the 'patterning principle of matter and energy' in

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\(^{17}\) In "The World as Will & Idea" (1819) Arthur Schopenhauer gives a positive view of the awe-ful sublime, will, 'death' and their role in promoting a fuller appreciation of life similar to that of archetypal theorists. For earlier discussions on the sublime I refer the reader to essays by Longinus, "On the Sublime", (Greece 3rd century AD); Edmund Burke's "A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful" (1757/58) and Immanuel Kant's "Critique of Judgement" (1790).

\(^{18}\) The Greek god Pan is one of western culture’s most enduring and ubiquitous trickster figures. Half-man, half-goat, Pan dwells in forests and glades trying to seduce nymphs, despite his grotesque demeanor. Born in Arcadia, he has thus become an icon for those who lament the Fall into civilization'. (Pettman, 2002: 25)
the 'realm of physis'. (Card, 1998: n. p.) It was also Jung's contention that archetypes not only organise human personality but the material world and the 'numinous manifestations of the divine' as well. (Jung in Corbett, 1996: 15) Archetypal forms 'belong to all of time' (Jung, 1976: 498), in which case they must also belong to a 'no-time', or perhaps more accurately, an 'every-time'. In Australian Aboriginal culture the Dreaming or 'aljira means "dream" as well as "ghostland" and the "time" in which the ancestors lived and still live'. (Jung, 1976: 498) In an every-time, these archetypal dream images continue to provide a structural framework for the physical landscape and its unconscious Dreaming.

The uncanny and the 'sublime' in the Australian landscape is based on an aesthetic in traditional Western art that arises out of "a sort of natural impulse" to contemplate the astounding universe from our position of frail mortality'. (Levine, 1985: 12) Levine contends that

the sublime is not an ontology but a phenomenology, not a special essence of certain things but rather an experience of a particular kind, born out of the encounter between consciousness and the world. (Levine, 1985: 2)

Unconscious recognition of archetypal forms in the landscape makes the individual aware of the presence of the sublime - its deep rootedness in the psyche as an archetype of human consciousness also explains why it feels extraordinary yet also strangely familiar. Because the human psyche 'thinks' in images, archetypal motifs reflected in the Australian landscape regularly emerge from the unconscious to be transformed into myth, painting, poetry, song and dance.

Although their techniques are quite different, there is a disparate group of artists, including Lawrence Daws, who share a fascination for the sublime in the Australian landscape, particularly its dark face. Yet whilst it features predominantly as a real place in the artworks of Peter Booth, Rick Amor, Tim Storrier and Daws, landscape is equally an expression of their relationship with the numinous forces that shape it. Later in the discussion I will explore how these artists express a common universal theme by
tapping into the unconscious psyche and its archetypal motifs to express their personal anxieties about being human in a non-human world. As one of the archetypes of human consciousness, the qualitative state we know as 'the sublime' is projected onto 'other' external structures and phenomena. Conversely, in symbolic and abstract ways, images created in response to the sublime give this 'irrepresentable' quality a degree of visibility. The desire to engage with this presence in its negative form can prove fatal - I contend that an overwhelming attraction to the tragic sublime compels some individuals to choose locations like The Gap at which to end their lives. Although it is acknowledged 'the primordial psyche is capable of....eroding our humanity if we give into its seductive power and archaic attraction', it is less appreciated how closely aligned the human psyche is with specific sites that hold this level of psychic energy. (Tacey, 2009: 56)

I agree with Allen that the 'spatial experience of Australia, at its most hostile, alternates between claustrophobia and agoraphobia....' and, in the end, we are inevitably forced 'back on ourselves'. (Allen, 1997: 11) Although Individual response is subjective, ways of knowing based on material evidence and scientific reasoning alone are not sufficient. In the process of coming to terms with our place in the natural world the psyche's capacity to rationalise is only partially useful because no matter how much we know about the science of weather, we still struggle to understand why our home is flooded or burnt down. Asking 'why' rather than 'what or 'how' moves the psyche into spiritual territory. As Martin Leer notes:

The perceiving consciousness in Malouf always finds itself on the edge of an overpowering presence, often felt as an absence, which was there from the beginning, which the narrator or persona cannot conquer or subdue, but must come to terms with; and the only way seems to be through something resembling the via negativa of the mystics. (Leer, 1985: n. p.)

Such a position confirms that the sublime is a mystical and sacred phenomenon - subtle, qualitative, irrepresentable, numinous and abstract.
In the context of Jungian theory the sublime in nature is an expression of the *numen* or *numinosum* - a supra-ordinate entity, being or force commonly referred to as the Divine or Spirit.\(^{19}\) Jung originally borrowed the term *numen* from Rudolph Otto (1958) who defined it as an ‘essence of holiness, or religious experience….a specific quality which remains inexpressible and “eludes apprehension in terms of concepts”’. (Corbett, 1996: 11) In religious literature this supra-ordinate entity is known as 'spirit' because they are 'operationally synonymous’. (Corbett, 1996: 15) Because it too is archetypal in human consciousness, the *numen* elicits feelings of awe and reverence similar to those experienced in the presence of the sublime.

Numinous experience is synonymous with religious experience. Translated into psychological parlance, this means the relatively direct experience of those deep intrapsychic structures known as archetypes. (Corbett, 1996: 15)

Based on the fact that archetypes are apprehended as images in the psyche, Jung makes this observation:

> Perhaps the most important function psychic images perform is to aid the individual in transcending conscious knowledge. Psychic images provide a bridge to the sublime, pointing towards something unknown beyond subjectivity. (Jung in Young-Eisendrath, 2008: 89)

Although the archetype is an 'image in its own right', the relationship between it and spirit is 'a *dynamism* which makes itself felt in the *numinosity* and fascinating power of the archetypal image'.\(^{20}\) (Jung, CW 8, 1969: 211) Understanding the connection between the image-archetype and the collective unconscious requires clarification of the term ‘soul’ (psyche) and its relationship to spirit. 'Soul' is the *embodiment* of spirit (or *numen*), reflected in the consciousness of every individual. Jung referred to this image as 'God'. Basically, soul is the vehicle through which human beings receive spirit because 'their natures are the same....' (Corbett, 1996: 16) Even though humans

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\(^{19}\) In Jungian theory 'Spirit' is not God because God is an 'image' of the Divine or Spirit. Those unfamiliar with Jung’s theories may equate God with the omniscient divine Being referred to here as *numen*.

\(^{20}\) I construe the term "image" not in its usual meaning - i.e., as a pictorial form of imaginative presentation - but rather as the mode of presentation with which imagined content is given to the imaginer's consciousness. The image is not what is present to awareness - this is the content proper - but how this content is presented'. (Casey, 1991: 39)
identify with spirit through many different 'gods' according to their cultural background, the phenomenon of spirit itself is archetypal.

The *numen*\(^\text{21}\) makes its presence known in various ways, as 'a numinous dream, a waking vision, an experience in the body....in the wilderness, by aesthetic or creative means....' (Corbett, 1996: 15) It is recognised by its ‘affective intensity’ or what Jung also referred to as its ‘gripping emotionality’. (Corbett, 1996: 16) Corbett explains why:

The degree of affect indicates the degree of embodiment of the archetype, since affect is felt in the body. Unless embodiment occurs in this way, the experience usually has little meaning....the presence of intense affect always indicates the presence of the archetype. (Corbett, 1996: 16)

The emotional content of an archetype is always embedded in ‘a precisely qualified context, mood and scene’. (Hillman, 1991: 21) Acknowledging the affective content of an image is vital in imaginal (archetypal) practice because emotion is the 'chief source of consciousness. There is no change from darkness to light or inertia to movement without emotion'. (Jung, 1990: 96)

The *tremendum* form of the *numinosum* is ‘a kind of holy terror, awe or dread, commonly expressed as a paralysing fear of God’. (Corbett, 1996: 12) Because this also describes a confrontation with the tragic sublime, I have concluded there is a close relationship between the sublime and the *numen*. More precisely, the sublime is the affective content of an experience of the *numen*, in this case nature - a response to an essential energy that animates human existence and constantly brings it into being. As the archetypal creative principle therefore, the sublime is felt as something sacred. The *tremendum* is necessarily linked to the *mysterium* because fear and dread make the individual aware of the existence of a ‘“wholly other”’ - beyond the sphere of what is usual, intelligible and familiar - ‘filling the mind with blank wonder and astonishment’. (Otto in Corbett, 1996: 12) Otto's assertion that the “void” of the Buddhists and the

\(^{21}\) Corbett used the term ‘*numinosum*'.

“nothing” of the western mystic are ideograms of the “wholly other” supports the conclusions I have drawn from my encounter with it. (Corbett, 1996: 13)

I choose to use 'numen' rather than 'God' to identify the sacred quality of the sublime because it is not as common and less loaded with meaning. It is important to note too that in spiritual psychology numen is not God - it is related to it but it is not the same. More precisely, although the numen manifests as God, God does not represent the numen in its entirety. The term as I apply distinguishes the God as all-pervading omniscient irrepresentable 'being' from God as 'image' that appears in many different forms according to individual and cultural perceptions. In archetype theory God is a reflection of the Divine, not the Divine itself - Divinity itself has no image. Critically, in order to have a relationship with the numen, the psyche requires an 'image' or imago dei that reflects the essence of the holy and eternal aspect of itself in humankind.

The God-image is therefore central in archetype theory. Jung named it the 'self', defining it as the manifestation of a divine consciousness that incarnates in the psyche of each individual. Accordingly the self is a psychic phenomenon that must be made visible before it can be recognised and integrated into consciousness. When considered in relation to the Romantic sublime in art, the image (as the potential self) mediates between the psyche (individual consciousness) and the numen (objective or 'Divine' consciousness) during an encounter with nature. Sublime is a quality inherent in certain artworks that, in my view, are intuitively familiar and have universal appeal because they are archetypal in human consciousness. When individuals encounter the sublime, whether in the natural landscape or in a work of art, they are reminded that the material world is both an incarnation and a reflection of the Divine.

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22 Jung defined archetypes as the ‘most ancient and....universal “thought forms” of humanity’ (Jung, 1966: 66) then archetypes have no form of their own; an archetype is a ‘structure or “form” (not an image or “content”), distinct from and prior to experience, although dependent on experience for its expression as a particular “image”’. (Adams, 2004: 48) Archetypes make up the non-physical matrix upon which everything we know is laid; because they have no form of their own, they take the form of images.
Because the sublime has the potential to manifest in both nature and art, landscape painting is a common vehicle for its expression. (Rosenblum, 1961: 72) When filtered through the body's senses, as a dream or in a waking vision, the numinous is transformed into an aesthetic experience. In the Romantic sublime this aesthetic is often accessed during interactions with nature, 'commonly associated with the language of awe: brooding landscapes and sublime mountains, oceans and atmospheres'. (Gregg, 2011: 1) The sublime aesthetic is interpreted as such in a work of art regardless of when or how it was created because it contains archetypal content.

Neumann...establishes the eternal dimension in connection with art....(as) something that is beyond everything represented in a painting and the way in which it is represented. The eternal dimension becomes visible to us....as "the authentic reality,"....a description that not only reflects his conception of the archetypes as the primordial essence from which all life originates, but also hints at a sublime quality of the archetypal image. (Funch, 1999: 225)

Keith Patrick maintains that in Romantic painting the 'use of landscape, or figure in landscape' is 'the dominant image' and that this genre is 'invariably placed at the service of spiritual questioning.' (Patrick, 1988: 47) Images that encourage exploration of complex issues like 'being' and 'spirituality' offer a direct route from the individual psyche (that thinks in images) to the archetypal (imaginal) realm of existence, both of which, because they are fundamentally creative, also have links to the numen. 'Numinous experience is synonymous with religious experience' which, in spiritual psychology, is equivalent to a 'relatively direct experience of those deep intrapsychic structures known as archetypes'. (Corbett, 1996: 15) When the sublime is detected in either a work of art or in nature, the sensory body comes into contact with the spiritual.

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23 "...the sublime could be extended to art as well as to nature. One of its major expressions, in fact, was the painting of sublime landscapes'. (Rosenblum, 1961: 72)

24 Rosenblum observes a 'translation from the sacred to the secular' around 1760 and Romantic artists 'suddenly turned to specific sites in wild nature that seemed to elicit...divine revelation'. (Rosenblum, 1975: 17) The Romantic movement in painting at this time expressed the 'curious new Romantic amalgam of God and nature'. (Rosenblum, 1975: 19) Many artists chose to study the awe-ful in 'nature's terrifying grandeurs in situ....(they) tried to expand their pictorial imaginations and, like Ward with "Gordale Scar", even the actual dimensions of their canvases in order to encompass such sublimities'. (Rosenblum, 1975: 18)
Many of the first immigrant European artists were already part of a Romantic tradition when they arrived in Australia. Here I am referring to Romanticism as an aesthetic sensibility identifiable because of the presence of certain constants associated with the Romantic psychological disposition. John Griffiths lists these as:

- anti-conformism,
- preference for spontaneity,
- the sudden inspired impression,
- and vibrant, even violent colour rather than perfect finish and line.
- ...a passionate desire to exceed limits, a longing for liberty, an overreaching without anxious scrutiny of the bonds of love and passion. (Griffiths, 1988: 29)

In Australia today this aesthetic is still present and meaningful because it 'corresponds to something basic in our shared experience'. (Griffiths, 1988: 29) The privileging of emotion in Romantic art evidences a fundamental human desire to find meaning and engage with the numinous realms of existence - to experience non-ordinary consciousness. The drive to uncover the archetypal connections between human and non-human manifestations of reality continues to find expression through an imaginative engagement with the world in the form of visual art.

In the process of carrying out my studio research at The Gap I uncovered several parallel models. When I compared Jung's spiritual psychology (and its approach to consciousness) with the Romantic sublime in visual art, I realised the sublime and the numen, though not exactly the same, share common characteristics and play a significant role in the evolution of consciousness. As a result of these interlacing concerns, this research is grounded in the following considerations. I locate myself as a Western 'Romantic' visual artist whose study into the nature of consciousness revealed links between the numen and the sublime in nature. More specifically, and based on my observation that many people in Australia still experience nature as an 'agreeable kind of horror' (Morley, 2010), the sublime naturally manifests in its tragic form as the Void which has been, and continues to be, a dominant motif in the Australian psyche.

With their privileging of imagination and emotion, archetypal psychology and the Romantic sublime in art share a preference for exploring consciousness from a
subjective position. As a Romantic I too privilege the subjective psyche and have confidence in its ability to seek out the truth. I have therefore brought these two disciplines together in 'imaginial (art) practice' as a practice for consciousness.25

In the following section I provide a basic overview of Jungian theory and its derivative, Hillman's imaginal practice, because it is essential that the reader familiarise themselves with certain terms and concepts. I have tried to provide enough information to inform the discussion without altering the main focus of the research. Although this study is based in visual art rather than psychology, archetypal theorists have a deep respect for imagination, images and the 'Romantic' approach to the evolution of consciousness and this resonates with the creative psyche. Imaginal theory adds value to art practice because it offers a working methodology and a theoretical framework in which the development of the psyche can be tracked through images, which in essence, is the basis of imaginal (art) practice.

25 'Imaginal practice' is a term used by Jungian, archetypal and imaginal psychologists. However as far as I know I am using it in an original way by linking it to art as 'imaginial (art) practice'.
This is what I fear the most. I walk down to almost sea-level. It is big today. The rocks first. Very big these rocks. And then the sea. Rolling swells, like some lumbering leviathan, lifting, breathing, threatening to swallow the land - subsiding into aqua-white. Disappearing under the earth-shore. Small waves dancing on the serpent's back. My God. Crystal light shattering off the crests - all moving, all dancing. Shiny scales. A moving skin. What stops these two from colliding - the rock and the sea - into oblivion? The subtle balance of a wild dance - back and forth foaming - in and out of existence.

The calm pond dozing in the sunlight. And the serpent carving rainbows in a steel-grey sky.

(Frantom, Journal entry, 2009)

I have often been accused of having an overactive imagination. I concede my orientation to life in general is predominantly subjective, perhaps even overly emotional at times. I am quick to point out that emotionality is not unusual in the Romantic who traditionally approaches consciousness from this position. Romanticism in contemporary art practice continues to be motivated by a need to 'explore the mysteries of interiority, of moods....love....fear and angst....memories and dreams', in effect, to 'experience extreme and incommunicable states of consciousness....to bring the unconscious into consciousness' and 'to know the infinite'. (Tarnas, 200: 368)

Although there are real drawbacks to being emotional in a culture that favours logic, my Romantic temperament has turned out to be a valuable portal to non-ordinary states of consciousness.

If it is true that the sublime and the Romantic in art 'are not one and the same' as Gregg (2011: 22) suggests, then they are at least closely linked. The peculiar psychology of the Romantic contributes considerably towards their capacity to access the sublime, given that one of its main requirements is that we are overwhelmed by events 'that go beyond our ability to rationalise'. (Gregg, 2011: 22) In addition, if the indefinable and immeasurable sublime is beyond comprehension, as is commonly accepted, a predominantly rational mind is more likely to dismiss rapture as a useless aberration.
Conversely the Romantic's overactive imagination and emotional nature makes them more receptive to an experience that involves the sublime.

Sad 'imagination has been assigned a distinctly minor role in many psychological portrayals of mind' and 'fared little better in the hands of philosophers' (Casey, 1991: 31) Archetypal psychologists stand out as exceptions to this trend. Like the Romantic art movement, they value imagination and align themselves with 'the arts, culture, and the history of ideas, arising as they do from the imagination'. (Hillman, 2004: 13) Evolving from Jung's theory of archetypes, Hillman's 'imaginal psychology' is 'both a poetic basis of mind and a psychology that starts neither in the physiology of the brain, the structure of language, the organization of society, nor the analysis of behaviour, but in the process of imagination'. (Hillman, 1991: 22) Jung, Hillman and other archetypal theorists regard this 'utterly Western' view, based on the individual's right to develop a unique relationship with existence through direct personal gnosis, as fundamental to the evolution of consciousness. (Hillman, 2004: 44)

If, because of its tendency to privilege subjectivity, imaginal practice is criticised for being purely solipsistic, so Romanticism must also be judged. The Romantic sensibility is after all essentially based on what Michael Greenhalgh calls the 'untrammeled diversity of the individual human spirit rather than about the views of any particular group. Romanticism is inherently subjective'. (Greenhalgh, 1988: 23) The proponents of an imaginative approach to knowledge have conceded there are weaknesses in a

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26 Jung's theories about the evolution of human consciousness were based on his 'rediscovery' of a realm he named the 'collective unconscious'. (Jaffe, 1984: 14) Hillman developed his ideas about an 'imaginal realm' of consciousness from Jung's unconscious. The collective unconscious and Hillman's imaginal realm are the repository of archetypes common to human consciousness. Although he acknowledged its role in the evolution of human consciousness Jung was less focused on 'ego-consciousness' (individual psyche) than on the collective unconscious; he was more concerned with 'the psychological malaise of humanity and its underlying structures' than with the 'relatively limited sphere of the repressed and forgotten' aspects of the 'personal unconscious'. (Jaffe, 1984: 14)

27 Roberts Avens argues that 'archetypal psychology' is a 'parallel formulation of certain Eastern philosophies. Like them, it too dissolves ego, ontology, substantiality, literalisms of self and divisions between it and things.....into the psychic reality of imagination experienced in immediacy. The "emptying out" of Western positivism comparable to a Zen exercise or a way of Nirvana, is precisely what archetypal psychology has effectuated....' (Hillman, 2004: 44)
practice that is both self-generating and self-referential. Edward Casey notes that in the Romantic movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, 'imagination became a mesmeric term that meant so much in general....that it came to mean nothing in particular'. (Avens, 1980: 17) However, even though 'the scientific tradition rejected the Romantic belief in the creativeness of the Self as outright nonsense' the value of imagination was partially restored once it was realised that science's attempts to 'subject the whole of nature to man's(sic) technological control' was equally ridiculous. (Avens, 1980: 17)

Although undeniably subjective, the imaginal methodology I outline in this exegesis should not be considered purely solipsistic because its ultimate goal is to push the individual beyond the personal. I am motivated by a desire to explore consciousness in its broadest possible sense - I fully accept that 'my' self is not the only and final reality. Paradoxically, what knowledge I have of this objective reality has been gained by trusting and following my subjective impulses. Hillman's comment supports this:

Archetypal psychology maintains....that we can never be purely phenomenal or truly objective. One is never beyond the subjectivism given with the soul's native dominants of fantasy structure. (Hillman, 2004: 36)

Hillman makes his assertion based on Jung's theory that fantasy images are the 'primary data of the psyche' because the soul, is the

imaginative possibility in our natures, the experiencing through reflective speculation, dream, image, and fantasy - that mode which recognises all realities as primarily symbolic or metaphorical. (Hillman, 1991: 21)

Reality continues to be a subjective construct because most human beings do not stand outside of their own psyches to make judgements about it. Ever since the turn of the twentieth century Western society has lived with the assumption that reality is neither 'humanly ascertainable' nor 'ontologically absolute'. (Tarnas, 1996: 390)
Before I proceed it is vital I clarify the fundamental differences between the various schools of psychology for reasons that will become obvious. Hillman's identification with 'archetypal', and later 'imaginal', psychology is deliberate and intended to distance himself from 'analytical' psychology which he says 'attempts to solve psychological problems' with 'scientific models'.\(^{28}\) (Hillman, 2004: 13) Hillman has been quite scathing in his criticism of psychoanalytic theory.\(^{29}\) His ideas and methodologies are clearly located at the spiritual end of the psychology spectrum rather than the analytical and therapeutic. Jungian theory and its offshoots are concerned with the 'ontology of the soul'. (Hillman, 1999: 12) As part of that tradition Hillman's imaginal psychology is a "third generation" derivative of the Jungian school' whose mission has been to revision 'psychology', psychopathology, and psychotherapy in terms of the Western cultural imagination'.\(^{30}\) (Hillman, 2004: 13)

Another major difference between 'depth' (imaginal, archetypal) and 'analytical' psychologies (psychoanalysis, psychotherapy) is their attitude to psychic phenomena, in particular, 'fantasy'. Imaginal psychology rejects the notion that fantasy, neurosis and even psychosis have no value, arguing their role in the life of the individual is to offer a way through by working with the images that present themselves. I take my lead from archetypal psychologists who argue this is precisely the role of imagination

\(^{28}\) This discussion sometimes includes the work of 'psychoanalysts', however, their contributions should always be taken in light of this qualification. The demarcation I am making here is recognised in varying degrees by theorists in this field. However, it is a significant distinction in the context of this discussion.

\(^{29}\) 'While other nineteenth-century investigators were polluting the archaic, natural, and mythic in the outer world, psychology was doing much the same to the archaic, natural, and mythic within. Therapeutic depth psychology shares this blame, since it shares nineteenth-century attitudes. It gave names with a pathological bias to the animals of imagination'. (Hillman, 1991: 30)

\(^{30}\) Psychology refers to that 'which arose within the context of psychotherapy and has been called "depth psychology". Although it first appeared as an empirical field, it ultimately became, through Jung, an ontology of the soul based on archetypes. Because this psychology takes into account the depths of the soul at its most subjective, transcendent, and impersonal level and assumes that personal behaviour is derived from something beyond the personal, it attempts a true logos of the psyche'. (Hillman, 1999: 12)

\(^{31}\) 'The modern vision of ourselves and the world has stultified our imaginations. It has fixed our view of personality (psychology), of insanity (psychopathology), of matter and objects (science), of the cosmos (metaphysics), and of the nature of the divine (theology).....What is needed is a revisioning, a fundamental shift of perspective out of the soulless predicament we call modern consciousness'. (Hillman, 1992: 3)
and fantasy in human consciousness. In stark contrast, analytical psychology operates as a product of a 'rationalistically ordered civilisation' which views suffering in terms of 'sickness' rather than an avenue for 'soul-making'. (Hillman, 1999: 5) Hillman challenges mainstream analytical psychology's negative presumption of 'pathology' by saying,

suppose the fantasies, feelings, and behaviour arising from the imaginal part of ourselves are archetypal....and thus natural....Then what is there to analyse?....If there is one primary lesson we have learned in seventy years of analysis, it is that we discover a sense of soul in the sufferings of psychopathology. (Hillman, 1999: 4)

Under most forms of psycho-analysis the psyche is divided into 'normal' and 'peculiar', secular and spiritual. (Hillman, 1999: 4) In defence of the soul Hillman makes an impassioned plea to value these so-called peculiarities and let them 'into life', thus freeing the psyche from psychotherapy and the 'curse of the analytical mind'. (Hillman, 1999: 3) Archetypal and imaginal psychology's 'therapeutic aim' is 'neither social adaptation nor personalistic individualising' - instead they focus on restoring and developing a 'sense of soul by cultivating the imagination'. (Hillman, 2004: 15) In summary, the critical difference between Jungian and analytical or psychotherapeutic psychologies can be summed up in one word: intention. Therapy's aim is to improve the functionality of the individual in society whereas the process Jung defined as 'individuation' is about the evolution of consciousness. In a culture that defends the individual's right to 'self expression' it is hypocritical to expect the Western psyche to fit the prevailing cultural canon anyway. I agree with Hillman that psychological

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32 'To be individual means to be peculiar, to be peculiarly what one is, with one's own odd patterns of archetypal responses'. (Hillman, 1999: 5)

33 Jungian (archetypal) psychologists consider that individuation is an involuntary evolution of consciousness towards a holistic state of being. The full experience of 'being' human involves multiple ways of being and knowing - body, soul (psyche) and Spirit (numen). They contend that the process of individuation occurs naturally as a result of living one's life.

34 Jung qualifies this statement by saying: 'The difference between the "natural" individuation process, which runs its course unconsciously, and the one which is consciously realised, is tremendous. In the first case consciousness nowhere intervenes; the end remains as dark as the beginning. In the second case so much darkness comes to light that the personality is permeated with light, and consciousness necessarily gains in scope and insight'. (Jung, 1976: 647)

35 'The creative character of consciousness is a central feature of the cultural canon of the West'. (Neumann, 1971: xviii)
difficulties are an inevitable part of life and an avenue for discovery (or 'soul-making') rather than a problem to be fixed; they are central to the process of individuation itself.

The Romantic artist's tendency to transform disturbing and tragic emotional states into art might lead to the assumption that making art is a form of 'therapy'. Even if this were the case it does not devalue the practice. Every human life is regularly punctuated by fear, sorrow, anger, longing, tragedy and conflict. Romantic artists use these emotions as inspiration for their work and, in so doing, transform suffering into something meaningful. Ultimately it is about making meaning, converting the energy generated from so-called 'negative' experiences into something useful - which indicates functionality rather than pathology. Imaginal theory continues to support Jung's premise that 'spontaneous image productions, dreams, fantasies and artistic expressions [are] vitally indispensible sources of information and guidance supplied by the healthy - not the pathological - aspect of the psyche'. (Whitmont, 1978: 36) Jung maintained about a third of his cases were 'not suffering from any clinically definable neurosis, but from the senselessness and aimlessness of their lives'. (Jaffe, 1984: 12)

Subjectivity as the foundation of Romanticism has been the 'overriding impulse defining Western man(sic) since the Renaissance'. (Tarnas, 1996: 388) Yet although it promotes 'a particular self-consciousness',

the Romantic consciousness is ever in search of its totality: of that....empyrean realm in which its uniqueness will find completion. The Romantic urge is to connect or reconcile its special individuality through ideas, or literature, or art, with nature;....or with the totality of things....The Romantic ambition is to be complete, to repair the deficiencies of our present incomplete state.... (Griffiths, 1988: 31)

Embedded in the obsession for one's-self is its opposite because it is only through finding a deep connection to the whole that a sense of peace through unity is finally realised. Art historian Griselda Pollock, suggests the fantasy image in art practice has a similar potential to be universal.
The power of fantasy in art is not that the art work expresses the private and singular fantasies of its author. This would be boring to any one else. Rather, the art work achieves its general effect at the conjunction between general structures of psychic life and the contingent elements derived from particular individuals. "If fantasies were personal in this way, how can they work for a general public, for a mass audience?....fantasy scenarios involve original wishes which are universal". (Pollock, 1997: n. p.)

Because images are held in the collective unconsciousness of humanity they have the ability to speak for one and all - which is not only acknowledged by archetypal theorists but forms the core of their practice. An interdisciplinary study like mine brings different theoretical disciplines together and in this case, the centrality of the image in both archetypal psychology and visual art encouraged me to explore the relationship between them. Edward Casey's comment supports that decision.

Images provide the primary places in which imagination and remembering, archetypal psychology and phenomenological philosophy, and finally psychology and philosophy themselves, come together. (Casey, 1991: xx)

The term 'image' needs clarification because it can be interpreted in many ways. In archetypal psychology image is not simply a 'memory or after-image or a reflection of an object or a perception....[but] an irreducible and complete union of form and content....' (Avens, 1980: 35, 37) As an artist who works primarily with the visual and imagination though, I concede: 'Most acts of imagining occur as imaging....as the projection and contemplation of imagined objects or events....most frequently in visual terms'. (Casey, 1991: 36) This includes images that emerge during meditation.

Imaginal practice begins in the psyche of the individual as a dream, an envisioning, or an image that has found its way into consciousness as a result of an emotionally charged experience or event. As a research methodology it has more in common with gnostic spiritual practices than with traditional psychological methodologies. I agree with religious studies lecturer, Angela Voss who points out that:

true imagination [from im-ago, "I act from within"] whether one considers it from neoplatonic, Romantic or archetypal psychological perspectives, is the
mode in which the soul [psyche] reveals its nature through the language of symbol and metaphor. (Voss, 2009: 40)

Contemporary archetypal theorists continue to value the image's critical, mythical and symbolic place in human consciousness because it gives 'psychic value to the world'. (Hillman, 2004: 25) Unshackled from their association with pathology, the imagination and the fantasy-image are free to lead us back to our souls. (Hillman, 1991: 21) Having worked with dreams for decades I have experienced how psychic images speak to us in the 'archaic symbol-language of the objective psyche' and therefore agree that rather than being 'symptomatic', they are deeply 'symbolic'. (Whitmont, 1978: 37)

This is a practical point of difference between analytical and imaginal\textsuperscript{36} psychological methodologies. Analytical psychology assumes images (as symbols) have a "'real" or latent meaning'. (Avens, 1980: 36) Erich Neumann notes that the

'comparative' method of analytical psychology collates the symbolic and collective material (in this case images) found in individuals with the corresponding products from the history of religion, primitive psychology....and in this way arrives at an interpretation by establishing the 'context'. (Neumann, 1971: xvii)

This means that analytical psychologists evaluate images in relation to their time, immediate culture and social milieu, restricting them to a \textit{prescribed} 'meaning' that invariably leads to 'something else' - a 'something' predetermined by an established framework. On the other hand, although images also have 'meaning' in imaginal psychology, the difference lies in the way it is interpreted and where it derives from. Imaginal psychology encourages the individual to make their own meaning by not associating it with a particular symbol or confining it within a predetermined context. This approach to interpreting images and dreams allows the imagination to make its own connections, to tell its own story because meaning is specific, relative and unique. In addition, Jungian psychology assesses psychic images based on a person's stage of

\textsuperscript{36}Jungian, archetypal or depth psychologies.
psychological development (or individuation) and the ego's relationship to the unconscious. (Neumann, 1971: xviii)

Archetypal theorists\(^3\) set themselves apart from other psychologists because they consider humanity's ability to imagine gives it the means to explore the phenomenon of consciousness. Their focus therefore, is not matter, the brain, the mind, intellect or metaphysics but images reflected in the psyche.\(^4\) (Hillman, 1992: xvii) They value all images because as fundamental expressions of archetypes - Hillman (2004) says '....any image can be considered archetypal, not because it can necessarily be empirically understood or defined as such, but because of its inherent quality in being an image'. (Hillman, 2004: 25) He defines an archetypal image as one that is 'immediately valued as universal, trans-historical, basically profound, generative, highly intentional and necessary'. (Hillman, 2004: 25)

Imaginal practice values the fantasy-image as 'primary data' and, rather than dismissing it as 'just fantasy', embraces it as an essential tool for exploring consciousness. (Hillman, 1991: 21) This is because, as Adriana Berger notes, imagination is an ‘active and creative scene of encounters with other worlds through which understanding is achieved’, both a ‘means of knowledge and a modality of being’. (Berger, 1986: 142) Berger's comment reflects the views of Henri Corbin\(^5\) and Mircea Eliade whose phenomenological approaches to imagination have redefined it as a method that is

\(^3\) James Hillman, Michael Adams, Erich Neumann, Roberts Avens, Lionel Corbett, Angela Voss and Edward S. Casey among many others.

\(^4\) The term psyche encompasses the ‘totality of all psychic processes, conscious as well as unconscious’. It is used instead of 'mind' because 'mind' generally refers to those aspects of mental functioning that are conscious, excluding those that are unconscious. Jung says: 'In the East, mind is a cosmic factor, the very essence of existence.... (Jung, 1976: 485) He also says: 'It is safe to assume that what the East calls "mind" has more to do with our "unconscious" than with the mind as we understand it, which is more or less identical with consciousness'. (Jung, 1976: 491)

\(^5\) The French scholar, philosopher and mystic upon whom Hillman bestowed the title of 'father of archetypal psychology'. (2004: 15) Hillman initially borrowed the term 'imaginal' from Corbin's mundus imaginalis which I understand is equivalent, or at least very similar, to Jung's notion of a collective unconscious. (Hillman, 2004: 15) Imaginal is therefore used in this discussion in its original context because it identifies its links with archetype theory.
both an ‘artistic science and a scientific art’. (Berger, 1986: 143) Dismissing any image as unimportant also dismisses valuable data being supplied by the unconscious psyche.

Even though using imagination as a 'research tool' rejects predetermined analytical frameworks in favour of a creative methodology for working with all images, Berger would prefer imagination be separated from the Romantic to disassociate it from the taint of ‘mere fantasy’. (Berger, 1986: 143) However, it seems more productive to argue imagination's critical role in driving the psyche's evolution through the individuation process. Then it can take its rightful place at the creative core of human consciousness where it is an avenue for learning and a way to 'reach for truth'.

Imagination is critical to the individuation process because it allows the individual to meet the archetypes according to their own unique personality. In this context, images act as personal 'myths' that help make sense of the experiences encountered in life.

A myth is a large, controlling image that gives philosophical meaning to the facts of ordinary life....Without such images, experience is chaotic, fragmentary and merely phenomenal. It is the chaos of experience that creates them, and they are intended to rectify it. (Murdock, 1990: 143)

Mythologising events gives 'ego-consciousness' the chance to evolve 'by passing through a series of "eternal images" that reveal essential truths about existence.' (Neumann, 1971: xvi) Engaging imaginatively involves working with images that spontaneously make themselves known through various means, one of which is Jung's active imagination. In the following section I outline this practice as Jung defined it, as it has been developed since and how I apply it to art-making in imaginal (art) practice.

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41 'Myth usually takes the form of an unusually potent story or symbol that is repeated in the dreams of individuals...."Once a myth is in place it is nearly impossible to dislodge it by exclusively rational means. It must be replaced by another equally persuasive story or symbol". (Murdock, 1990: 144)
42 'The collective unconscious....appears to consist of mythological motifs or primordial images....In fact, the whole of mythology could be taken as a sort of projection of the collective unconscious....We can therefore study the collective unconscious in two ways, either in mythology or in the analysis of the individual'. (Jung in Hillman, 1972: 17, f.n.)
'Active Imagination'

I never leave without peering into the abyss,
the immense fissure in the granite.
And there I am - drowning.
I listen, I hear
Over and over, and in my own head:
'Imagine'

(Frantom, Journal entry, 2007)

According to Jung, images that present spontaneously as dreams, envisionings or by actively using the imagination are proof of the existence of a primordial realm of archetypes. (Jung, 1990: 49, 215) Those accessed during active imagining differ from dreams because they appear during waking consciousness, however both derive from the collective unconscious. (Jung, 1978, CW 8: 211) The methodology of both Jung's archetypal and Hillman’s imaginal psychologies use imagination as a conduit between conscious awareness and this realm of archetypal images.

Jung's 'active imagination' involves concentrated attention on some 'impressive but unintelligible dream-image, or on a spontaneous visual impression' and the observation of any changes that take place. (Jung, 1990: 190) It is both a visionary method of meditation that taps into 'spontaneous, visual images of fantasy' (Jung, 1990: 190) and 'a dialectical procedure....a dialogue between yourself and the unconscious figures'. (Jung in Adams, 2004: 16) Robert A. Johnson explains that it consists of conversing with images that rise up in one's imagination....the conscious ego-mind actually enters into the imagination and takes part in it. This often means a spoken conversation with the figures who present themselves, but it also involves entering into the action, the adventure or conflict that is spinning its story out in one's imagination. (Johnson, 1986: 24)

43 Imaginal and archetype theory are based on the idea that archetypes emerge from the collective unconscious and present to the psyche in the form of images. It was Jung who first identified the psyche's ability to reflect 'simple processes in the brain' as images. (CW VIII, 1978: 323)
Although Jung 'held dreams in high regard' he considered waking images that resulted from these dialogues were more effective because they involved the conscious mind as well.\(^44\) (Johnson, 1986: 139)

Not all dialogue or all images are 'verbal or spoken'. (Johnson, 1986: 138) In psychology and philosophy the 'image' does not not necessarily equate to 'visual'. Casey uses the term to indicate a 'mode of presentation with which imagined content is given to the imaginer's consciousness', that is, not just what is presented but how. (Casey, 1991: 39) The 'how' is concerned with affective content which is critical in determining what an image means personally. Events themselves, 'what happens', is less important than 'how we feel' about them - which is why emotion is so important in imaginal thinking and why these practices are naturally linked to Romanticism in visual art. Linking emotion with 'imaginal perception' engenders 'a kind of knowledge which arises from the confluence of inner recognition with “external” reality.' (Voss, 2009: 37) Based on Voss's description, actively imagining at a conscious level is a way of seeking knowledge through gnosis by providing direct access to intuitive wisdom.

Active imagination is more dynamic than everyday imagining because the individual consciously participates in the 'imaginal event'; an intentional act that 'transforms it from mere passive fantasy to Active Imagination.'\(^45\) (Johnson, 1986: 25) By actively imagining, rather than passively as in daydream and fantasy,\(^46\) the psyche's function in

\(^44\) During an early imaginal encounter Jung experienced a 'profound interaction between his conscious mind and the images that appeared to him from the unconscious'. (Johnson, 1986: 138) He describes being fully awake at his desk, thinking over his fears, when he suddenly felt himself drop into the 'dark depths'. He goes on to explain how he found himself at the entrance of a dark cave, encounters various entities and objects and finally witnesses a 'newborn sun, rising up out of the depths of the water'. (Johnson, 1986: 139) In dreams events occur in the unconscious, but in active imagination they take place in the imagination. (Johnson, 1986: 139)

\(^45\) 'By your active participation you convert what would have been an unconscious, passive fantasy into a highly conscious, powerful act of imagination'. (Johnson, 1986: 141)

\(^46\) 'Passive' imaginary states include hallucinations induced by drugs or certain mental illnesses. 'Such envisioning must not be confused with hallucinating, though certain hallucinatory states may prepare for or even induce imaginative visions.' In full-blown hallucination, a demonstrably false claim is made concerning what is perceived - say, that I am now seeing a certain quasi-perceptual object, a 'knife', when I am not in fact seeing any such object. In hallucinating, a would-be perception is substituted for an
bridging the divide between the material and non-material is realised. This occurs because the phenomenon of imagination is ‘...a sort of “subtle body” of psychoid nature’ that forms ‘an intermediary realm between mind and matter.....’ (Avens, 1980: 3) Johnson describes this imaginal realm as 'neither conscious nor unconscious but a....common ground' that 'gives rise to the transcendent function, the self....the synthesis of the two.' (Johnson, 1986: 139, 140) He suggests:

emptying the ego-mind and dialoguing with the unconscious contents that spontaneously appear; extending dreams by Active Imagination; dialoguing with dream figures in imagination; converting fantasy into imagination; personifying moods, feelings, and belief systems; and living through mythical journeys....

(Johnson, 1986: 203)

This entire process is a 'path toward wholeness' because it resolves the conflicts that exist between the ego and the unconscious psyche. (Johnson, 1986: 142) Johnson recommends we ask questions like: 'Where is the obsession? Who is obsessed? Where does this feeling come from....What is its image?' (Johnson, 1986: 143) He also advises that responses must be honest, 'direct, raw and unrefined' (Johnson, 1986: 142), that they be valued and taken seriously because he is '....convinced that it is nearly impossible to produce anything in the imagination that is not an authentic representation of something in the unconscious'. (Johnson, 1986: 150)

Jung recorded the images he encountered and the conversations he had with unconscious figures during his own imaginal journeys using this method in the recently published *Red Book*.47 In a series of lectures at the C.G. Jung Institute, the editor of the book Sonu Shamdasani, explained how Jung subjected himself to a 'process of self-

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47 When it was released in 2009 it was described as: 'The most influential unpublished work in the history of psychology....Carl Jung embarked on an extended self-exploration he called his “confrontation with the unconscious,”.... Here he developed his principle theories - of the archetypes, the collective unconscious, and the process of individuation - that transformed psychotherapy from a practice concerned with treatment of the sick into a means for higher development of the personality. It is an astonishing example of calligraphy and art on a par with The Book of Kells and the illuminated manuscripts of William Blake.' (Sheavly: 2013: n. p.)
experimentation' that provoked 'an extended series of waking fantasies'. (2009: n. p.) These encounters formed the basis of the practice of active imagination during Jung's lifetime. I contend that the dialogues and images recorded in text and as works of art published in Jung's Red Book posthumously are evidence of an imaginal (art) practice. Similarly, in the genre of the Romantic sublime, this method supports the exploration of both material (body) and non-material (psychic) ways of being human because it is 'a dialectical procedure, a dialogue between yourself and the unconscious figures' that shape the physical world. (Jung in Adams, 2004: 16)

Before I begin any imaginal engagement I allow the image to make its presence known to me spontaneously in a dream or meditation and then explore it further using art materials. I record and work with all types of images using Jung's method, starting with writing and drawing because of their expressive immediacy. However, the final image can be executed in anything from paint to pixels or a combination of several media. Throughout the process I take a passive approach and continue to give the image a lot of space. I allow it to roam freely in my mind and my imagination, though I pay close attention to what it is doing. Although my interaction with it is silent and visual it is still a dialogue of sorts because there is an 'exchange' of visual information and an evolving emotional response. I do not direct the action, I am an observer in this 'drama of the psyche', as though some other part of me is watching another part. (Casey, 1991: 5) The most accurate phrase I have found to describe the attitude I adopt comes from Coleridge: 'a "willing suspension of disbelief", that is, a bracketing of belief in the empirical reality of what is taking place....' (Casey, 1991: 5) I assume in this liminal space I am witnessing an exchange between the conscious and unconscious aspects of my psyche by making use of the imagination's ability to be 'neither conscious nor unconscious but a....common ground'. (Johnson, 1986: 139)48

48 Johnson says that: 'Most of the approaches to Active Imagination are keyed to coming to terms with the unconscious by bringing images up to the surface, reducing the negative effects of their autonomous power, making them conscious, and making peace with them'. (Johnson, 1986: 203)
Active imagination works because it positions the psyche between consciousness and the unconscious - these realms function quite differently and the psyche must find ways to balance the tension. (Jaffe, 1984: 77) As it tries to redress the imbalance it looks for creative solutions that require it to embrace possibility, allowing all images to enter consciousness including those beyond known frames of reference. Ehrenzweig explains that 'any creative search involves holding before the inner eye a multitude of possible choices that totally defeat conscious comprehension'. (Ehrenzweig, 1967: 35) This includes the conflicted, dark and disturbing images the conscious mind usually tries to reject, block or repress. These types of images are particularly dynamic because they push the conscious mind further into imaginal territory, placing it in a creatively precarious position where it loses its grip - something I have also encountered during art-making.49

Ehrenzweig notes that: 'Creative research proceeds in steps and stages; each of them represents an interim result that cannot yet be connected with the final solution'. (Ehrenzweig, 1967: 48) I have found this to be true. Imaginal thinking means accepting phenomena for which I have no known frame of reference because I am being guided by a vague numinous presence. To engage imaginally means entertaining not only the plausible and possible but the implausible and impossible no matter where it takes me - psychologically, morally, or spiritually. Making value judgements or restricting meaning to literal interpretations prevents the psyche from wandering freely and more deeply into imaginal territory and making full use of the unique relationship the individual has with the archetypal unconscious. The best way to safeguard against censorship is to let the image present itself first - unconscious images are not censored, which is why dreams are often bizarre and even embarrassing at times. I also take

49 When the imaginary speaks to us it creates pathways between outer and inner realities - when realized, an image ‘becomes a ‘psychopompous’, a guide with a soul having its own inherent limitation and necessity’. (Hillman, 1981: 56) Laszlo says that ‘when consciousness is in an altered state, the brain seems to function in a mode in which information that does not fit the commonsense conception of the world is not repressed.... ordinary waking consciousness is a strict censor’. (Laszlo, 2007: 99) When images circumvent the censor it is possible to explore realms of consciousness free of the limitations usually imposed by the physical body, consensual reality or established systems of knowledge.
Hillman's (1980) advice to 'stick to the image'.\textsuperscript{50} Allowing the conscious mind to 'let go' can be difficult - imagination naturally gravitates towards unfamiliar territory and this undermines conscious control.

One of the reasons for encouraging an exchange between conscious observer and the unconscious is that it 'gives rise to the transcendent function, the self....the synthesis of the two'. (Johnson, 1986: 140) The goal of this synthesis is not analysis or interpretation. Archetypal theorists are keen to stress that the imaginal is an experiential field - what is most important in archetypal practice is 'not whether the image is fanciful or truthful' but how we respond to it. (Hillman, 1991: 20) Michael V. Adams (2004) observes that working imaginally is about experience rather than interpretation because when something becomes an image, it is immediately 'animated, emotionalised, and placed in the realm of value'. (Hillman, 1983: 59)

As I indicated, experiencing involves emotion which is an essential part of imaginal practice - archetypes are ‘as much feelings as thoughts....’ (Jung, 1966: 66) Engaging imaginally therefore means paying close attention to affect because it is this that indicates the depth of engagement and drives the entire process. As Jung points out, 'it is not storms, not thunder and lightning, not rain and cloud that remain as images in the psyche, but the fantasies caused by the affects they arouse'. (Jung, CW 8, 154) Similarly, when the Romantic engages the sublime in nature, emotion inspires them to create images that express the incomprehensible. Emotion is a response to the mysterious unknown and the numinous manifestations of existence and this is why fantasy in both imaginal practice and Romantic art practice is essential. Emotion is also responsible for activating the imagination, particularly when it is in conflict with rational thinking.

\textsuperscript{50} Hillman in Avens, 1980: 47. I refer to this as ‘follow the image'.
Rational thought or analysis plays a part in imaginal practice and it should be evident from this discussion that I engage in it myself. However applying it sensitively means respecting the subjective and personal by not restricting meaning to established systems. Once I have worked creatively with an image I use an 'alternative' form of analysis. It is something I do at various times during the process but only after the original image has presented itself, and even then I am careful not to confine it within a pre-existing framework like classical mythology. I agree that the image ‘suffers from neglect if we ‘ground’ it 'outside itself’ and attach a meaning to it derived from ‘classic myth’ or ‘moral lesson’. (Hillman, 1981: 51) Although traditional terms of reference may turn out to be valid, it is important to explore individual relationships to these myths and symbols first because 'imaginal research does not seek to "reduce" symbolic experience to rational/scientific norms and terms, nor to "explain" it through an objectivist discourse which is alien to its own terms of reference'. (Voss, 2009: 45)

Protecting the integrity of the image gives it room to move and reveal what a superficial reading may not; I often find my interpretation is in direct opposition to the cultural canon and, in the process of unravelling the contradictions, I discover new layers of meaning.

Hillman suggests ways of working with images similar to those used by artists who are also motivated by an imperative to safeguard and preserve them. (Hillman, 1991: 16) However, he stresses that imaginal practice is not an 'artistic endeavour', nor is its intended outcome 'a creative production of paintings and poems'. (Hillman, 1991: 57) Although there may be, and often is, an aesthetic outcome, imaginal engagement is something to be undertaken ‘for the sake of the figures....not for the sake of art’. (Hillman, 1991: 57) Even though I am trained in my profession, my art practice is also in

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51 ‘Studio production as research is predicated on an alternative logic of practice often resulting in the generation of new ways of modelling meaning, knowledge and social relations....’ (Barrett, 2007: 4)

52 Because the value of this method derives from its subjective approach it is critical that each individual engage with the image personally. However, it is also true that regardless of how the image manifests for a particular individual, it still carries a reference to an archetype that can be located somewhere in the various mythological frameworks of human culture and classical mythology.
the service of psychic evolution. I value the image as a spiritual function of the psyche as well as an aesthetic object. This does not create any conflict for me as an art practitioner because, as I pointed out earlier, archetypal images have an aesthetic of their own based on certain givens or truths which, if respected, imbue the work with a certain numinosity.

During active imagining the psyche has access to a realm of archetypal images described as a 'margin', a 'field', a 'ground' or a 'state....an integral part of imaginative experience', placing it on the edge of an 'entirely empty abyss', while at the same time a 'sense of something, not of sheer nothing'.

(Casey, 1991: 39) I am familiar with this abyss and Casey's description of an image that becomes 'progressively less distinct in identifiable content'. (Casey, 1991: 39) The terms field and ground are fitting too in the sense that when I enter this state of consciousness, I am aware of a hovering groundlessness as my being opens out into an infinite space.

On some level this state of awareness can be compared to Stein's 'witness consciousness' which differs from the ordinary 'thinking mind' in both 'content' and 'activity'. (Stein, 2010: 70)

Active imagining is related to 'visionary experience....an eruption of what the mediaeval mystics called the unitive vision into one's consciousness', which suggests imaginal research is essentially a spiritual practice. (Johnson 1986: 216) Johnson describes the process:

An image or set of events seizes one through the imaginative faculty with such power that one really knows and experiences the unifying truth of the self. One

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53 'The marginal area remains projected in front of him or her, on the lateral edges of the plane of presentation. Thus the imaginal margin contributes to the irrevocably frontal, depthless character of the imaginative representation, which hovers before the imaginer at a certain indefinite and untrespassable remove'. (Casey, 1991: 39)

54 Tantric Buddhists and other Eastern philosophies have very detailed knowledge of the various levels or grounds of consciousness mentioned by Casey and others. They can be found in the Tibetan Book of Living and Dying (Rinpoche, 1994) written specifically for the Western psyche. It contains clear directions for recognising these states that may only be reached through certain practices. As I will explain in 'Into the Blue' I experienced one field of consciousness in particular I considered 'imaginal' because it bore similarities to the 'blue' ground of consciousness described in Tibetan philosophy.
sees, for a brief time, a glimpse of true unity, beauty, and meaning of life. (Johnson 1986: 216)

An imaginal (art) practice that uses imagination as a research 'tool' is visionary in both an artistic and a religious sense. When applied to the Romantic sublime in nature art-making provides a glimpse of what a unitive vision of existence might look like.

Because archetypes provide a matrix for both the physical landscape and the human psyche, 'through endeavouring to plumb the depths of a given experience, not only can we appreciate the experience more fully....we can also increase the possibility of encountering the universal lessons deep within all particulars’. (Voss, 2009: 44) Image-making and imagination are powerful activities in their own right but when undertaken in a natural open air cathedral they are even more so. The Gap was already resonant with its own archetypal forms. It played no small part in my psychic drama so before I continue I will acquaint the reader with this unique and dynamic landscape.

The Gap

I can feel my breath slowing to match the deep sine-waves of the rolling sea. Driving out to The Gap, BRINK - synchronistically scrawled on the back of my hand, on the steering wheel, to remind me about a community youth project. Earlier, chatting with a friend in cyberspace about her recent fall - and painting. Falling and painting, we decide, go together. Not today, not here - don't fall today.

(Frantom, Journal entry, 2009)

The Gap is located on the south coast of Western Australia, eighteen kilometres from Albany. It could be described as an awe-fully sublime landscape because it engenders an 'agreeable kind of horror'. (Addison in Morley, 2010: n. p.) Even the tourist signage recognises it as a symbolic threshold on the brink of the void, in this case the deep cold expanse of the Southern Ocean. Printed alongside dire warnings about the treachery of freak waves is the greeting: welcome to the edge....of Antarctica, adding that the rock on which you stand is one of the known limits of the southern world as most people
will ever see it. Beyond this edge humanity has minimal presence, little impact and even less control.

As you step onto the edge of this physical landscape you might also feel you are stepping onto a psychological edge. Even without the warnings or prior knowledge of events that have occurred there it takes little imagination to see it as a place of death. It is a dangerous if awe-inspiringly beautiful landscape associated with both foolish and courageous acts, one recorded on a plaque commemorates the rescue of Stephen Mathews on the night of March 14, 1978.\(^5\) As you advance along the western path the same plaque quotes James Barrie: 'All goes if courage goes'. The Gap has a formidable reputation - accidental drownings and suicides have been absorbed into local folklore and do not reach the tabloids. Discussion about suicides that have taken place there seems taboo, the only reason I know about several is because I am a 'local', having spent eight years as a child and twenty years as an adult on this coast. Word of mouth still operates in a community where until recently many people knew their neighbours.

\(^5\) 'On the night of March 14 1978 Stephen Mathews was saved from almost certain death in the waters off this spot. This plaque commemorates the outstanding courage of Paddy Hart, skipper; Keith Richardson, mate; and the crew of the whale-chaser Cheynes II and John Bell aircraft pilot in making the rescue'. (Government of Western Australia and Shire of Albany)
The art community is even smaller so when I heard about the death of Melusina, I spoke to a friend who, as a volunteer in the local rescue group, had been called out on that day. Another artist friend lived next door to a retired rescue worker who had been on the two-way radio - he agreed to talk to me off the record.

Romantic and somewhat anthropomorphic descriptions of the Devil’s Gap, as it was originally known, appeared in the tabloids as early as 1914:

The awesome Devil’s Gap, the dark frowning walls of which rise up in forbidding majesty to the height of 150 ft above water level, make an impressive scene....This is no place for the timid traveller for in its present unprotected state few will dare to risk looking over the brink of the chasm. The view can be taken in only by extending oneself flat upon the earth and drawing up cautiously to the edge. The ocean's swell dashing and swilling into the sides of the Gap, churning itself into fantastic tongues of water and sending clouds of vapour-like spray into the faces of those above, form a picture the fascination of which holds the lover of Nature for hours in silent admiration. Here Nature is seen in her sternest mood; bold massive piles of granite which have defied the seas for centuries are her materials, grand and impressive have been the manner of their employment....There is probably no more inspiring sea scenery i(n) any part of the world.57

Another more prosaic account was given in the local newspaper in 1935.

A great cleft in the cliffs fronting the Southern Ocean. The walls are sheer, almost as though deliberately plumbed, and are about one hundred feet in height. The entrance....is possibly thirty yards wide, but the cleft narrows considerably to its inner end, and forms a kind of blind funnel, into which great waves roll endlessly. The Gap is always floored with a smother of turbulent white water, churned to froth by the conflict between the forces of nature.58

Eighty years of violent natural weathering have probably had minimal impact on its geological structure but there have been some changes. One of the most obvious is the observation platform with metal railing securely bolted and cemented to the existing

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56 'Melusina' is a pseudonym for an artist I knew who 'apparently' suicided at The Gap. I have not sought permission to use her real name, preferring instead to protect her identity. In one version of a German myth Melusina is a creature, half fish and half human. http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/melusina.html
58 This description was originally published in the Albany Advertiser on November 11, 1935 but is referenced here from 'The Gap', Barbara Temperton's 'stories in verse' from Southern Edge.
granite on what has always been the best vantage point from which to peer into the yawning chasm. Confirming the comment made in the 1914 newspaper article about 'drawing up cautiously to the edge', my mother told me that once when she peered over the side she was buffeted by gusts of wind her friend had to grab hold of her to stop her over-balancing. When she took me there as a child in the 1960s there was still no protective barricade. Today the steel structure is a prominent though small interruption to the grandeur of the site. The tiny metal cage does not diminish awareness of the fragility of the human body as it hangs over this natural void. Neither does it not stop the suicides because it is only about two and a half metres in length and one and a half metres deep. Those wanting to jump choose one of many other convenient rock ledges. Although official reports indicate there have only been a few suicides, they loom large in local folklore and anecdotal evidence suggests there have been quite a few more.\(^59\)

During seven years of study, and previously, I have spent a lot of time at The Gap, worked in different parts of the landscape, explored and scrambled over rocks. I have always found it quite overwhelming - dense granite of sheer, impenetrable proportions and a powerfully dynamic, deep and turbulent ocean. If there is any sensory relief at all it is an uneasy calming of the violence when the wind and sea subside but there is never a complete absence of activity - the deep ocean suck and 'thwack' just dulls to a subsonic thud. I have been there on days when the hot granite dries hard salt wells in the baking sun; days also when the sea slams into the 'gap' making the rock shudder shiny with spray. The entire site is impressive but the chasm itself is the most memorable and awe-inspiring. Each time I go there I am drawn to this cauldron where rock and sea have been locked in battle for millennia.

\(^{59}\) I have been informed by someone who works at the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) that there have actually been very few suicides. However, anecdotal evidence suggests this figure has been downplayed. The DEC are currently (2013) conducting a risk assessment survey.
The Gap is a local curiosity, a natural shrine and a tourist drawcard. On clear days there is a steady flow of visitors, a quick stop on the way to lunch at Whaleworld. The majority do not stay for long, preferring to scramble over expansive rock faces, pose for photographs and leave. There is a quick exodus at dusk when the light begins to fade, an oppressive air descends and primal instincts encourage one to retreat to the reassurance of car lights and a warm engine. I have not been able to stay in this environment for any length of time during daylight hours but it was particularly difficult on one occasion at dusk when I stood alone behind the 'mouth' of the chasm to take photographs. Even though I was in no real physical danger, I had to speak severely and rationally to myself to find the courage to stay. As I stood on the ledge holding the camera carefully during a long exposure I felt very vulnerable but was able to capture

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60 Whaleworld is a popular tourist attraction built on the site of the old whaling station that used to operate in Albany.
the magical image I call Void (figure 3, p. 50) - the only alteration I made was to digitally change the exposure later.

During daylight hours sightseers are casual about the danger as they exuberantly scale granite formations and stare from flattened tops, over the sheer sides into the sea. They tend to sober up when they look into the chasm. Their verbal exchanges predominantly focus on one theme as they imaginally ‘project’ themselves into the chaos. Like them, my own reactions to the site have been based on abstract future concerns like - what ‘might’ happen ‘if’ - rather than on events that were happening in real time. My responses were personal and subjective yet it was uncanny how they were repeatedly echoed by others.61 Often I overheard comments like: 'Look how deep

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61 'All comprehension and all that is comprehended is in itself psychic....Nevertheless we have good reason to suppose that behind this veil there exists the uncomprehended absolute object which affects and influences us....The justification here is a psychodynamic one, of the sort usually termed subjective and regarded as a purely personal matter. But that is to commit the mistake of failing to distinguish whether the statement really proceeds only from an isolated subject....or whether it occurs generally and springs from a collectively present dynamic pattern. In that case it should not be classed as subjective, but as psychologically objective, since an indefinite number of individuals find themselves
the swine is. It wants to pull you in’, ‘I don’t think too many people come back out of the water here’\(^{62}\) and the most common response of all: ‘imagine….being in there’.

The tendency to project oneself into an event or situation, to imagine and visualise potential scenarios, seems to prevail in the face of overwhelming sensory stimulus and threat. The practice of ‘fantasising' is common in imaginal thinking too where ‘questioning loosens experience by asking how experience looks against a different background under an expanded horizon’. (Winquist, 1981: 32) Fantasy is an interface between the image as concept and as visual phenomenon - according to Winquist it has the potential to alter consciousness 'by generating contrasts between immediate experience and what could have been….the resultant non-temporal condensations are images that speak new meanings’. (Winquist, 1981: 32)

It does not require too much imagination to see the abyss at The Gap and the surrounding topography as a physical embodiment of the Void, so why do we project ourselves into such an alien environment? Casey's view is that 'The places of landscape - "placescapes" - provide a....setting, for archetypes as well as for structures of presentation'. (Casey, 1991: xx)

Place is paramount in human experience; it is the very basis of landscape taken in the generic sense of all that underlies geographic orientation and representation.... (Casey, 1991: 229)

In a primal place like the Gap thoughts turn to an omniscient and divine 'other'. When people speak into the abyss they might be talking to themselves, the souls of those who have disappeared into it, or maybe God. Because it presents a danger to both body and psyche it encourages a 'contemplative embrace of death' which, according to

\[^{62}\text{Journal entry, 19 November 2006.}\]
Schopenhauer, is the 'proper goal of life'. In *Seascapes of the Sublime: Vernet, Monet and the Oceanic Feeling*, Levine explains:

For Schopenhauer, art alone releases the spectator from the vicious circle of worldly desire, denial, and frustration that inevitably accompanies a life subservient to the workings of will. In opposition to Kant, the sublime is now purely defined as the response to phenomena that stand in a hostile relation to the human will to survive; gone are the metaphysics of human superiority to nature which Kant optimistically postulates as a reflection of the superiority of God. Aesthetic contemplation of the sublime may, for the brief instant of its enactment, elevate the individual above the trivial and tragic world of will into the disinterested and hence invulnerable realm of pure ideas; acceding to the sublime, however, constitutes a courageous rejection of the lurid blandishments of life. (Levine, 1985: 392)

Framed in this way the Romantic's 'negative' quest to experience the tragic sublime and confront death can be seen in a positive light. Schopenhauer suggests 'the seemingly paradoxical phenomenon of delight in the terrible....produces an ecstatic state' we understand as the sublime in nature. (Young, 2005: 116) This is because the antidote to the fear of death is to reach 'a point of view from which the extinction of the individual is a matter of complete triviality'. (Young, 2005: 170) In other words, contemplation of one's mortality becomes a platform from which the individual can see beyond themselves and appreciate that they are part of something immeasurably large and eternal - 'we feel ourselves pass away and vanish into nothing like drops in the ocean'. (Schopenhauer in Levine, 1985: 394) Standing on the viewing platform at The Gap this is not too difficult to imagine.

'At the sublime’s core are experiences of self-transcendence that take us away from the forms of understanding provided by a secular, scientific and rationalist world view'.

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63 Depth psychologist, Stanislav Grof has written extensively about the West's limited and generally fear-based attitude towards death based on its misunderstanding of it as a finite reality. 'In Western societies, the dominant paradigm presents a cosmology in which humans, as biological matter, live and die in a universe governed by the laws of physics. In this worldview, there is no room for the possibility of life after death, and different states of consciousness have significance only as pathological deviations from that worldview. In sharp contrast, the cosmologies of other cultures, ancient and contemporary pre-industrial, have taken for granted the existence of an afterlife. For them, dying is a meaningful part of life, and death is a journey for which the individual can and should prepare'. (Grof, S. 1994: n. p.)
Confrontation with the imaginal constructs of life and death in the symbolic Void lead to a deep appreciation of the body, mortality and life in general.

Experiences involving the collapse or the transcendence of personal boundaries are captured by the imagination as images of death. In these terms death and dying are metaphors through which is lived an awakening of symbolic life and a deepening of personal identity and of one's experience of the world. (Brooke, 2000: 137)

Grof cites the example of seventeenth century Augustinian monk Abraham a Sancta Clara who clearly understood the benefits for those prepared to face death in an experiential way: 'The man who dies before he dies does not die when he dies(sic).' (Grof, 1994: n. p.) This practice not only 'liberates the individual from the fear of death' by altering their perception but 'transforms the individual's way of being in the world'. (Grof, 1994: n. p.) As a 'transcendent reality', death is 'a metaphor for a pivotal shift in one's mode of experiencing things'. (Brooke, 2000: 131)

The desire to confront and find some kind of reconciliation with death through art is not uncommon in Romantic art. Referencing Monet's Belle Isle sojourn Levine explains:

Here we can begin to glimpse a metaphysical explanation for the self-destructive courting of peril that characterises the anecdotes about Vernet and Monet and the stormy sea. Whatever portion of their motivation might be attributed to the empirical pursuit of a natural effect, there is by Kant's account a determination much deeper, a drive that is anterior even to the claims of the life of the individual. This drive for the sublime finds its expression in the self-contemplative consciousness that alone in the universe can acknowledge the necessity and destiny of its own death, a cosmic death transformed by art into conscious spectacle. (Levine, 1985: 389)

The Gap presents the individual with the spectre of death because it is extremely difficult to occupy in both a physical and a psychological sense. Staring into the chasm and imagining 'what if' triggers a memory unconsciously known yet intuitively familiar to the human psyche - the Void. Those who recognise it as such on a visceral level are also grappling with an irrational desire to become one with it that opposes another
powerful instinct - for survival. If these conflicting desires are permitted to coexist without favouring one over the other, the resulting tension can force the psyche into unfamiliar territory and non-ordinary states of consciousness.

I discovered this during a drawing session at The Gap during which I forced myself to disobey an instinct to flee because I knew it was irrational. I experienced an unfounded but very real primal fear brought on by a 'vision' of the ocean rising up to engulf me. At the time I was sitting on a rock platform in an elevated position, at least thirty metres above the sea, so this was highly unlikely. When I controlled an instinct to run, the effort required to stand my ground changed my perception - my thinking became more 'distanced' and I had a profound insight. As I analysed the structural pattern and movement of the huge rolling swells through my drawing, I wrote this in my journal:

   We perceive a mountain like we see a wave....But the wave is fluid, a cone like the mountain except we see the mountain as solid - it's a time thing. Neither are really solid, but the mountain moves too slowly for us. If we had different vision we would see the mountain move....

   Time is the 4th dimension.

   (Frantom, Journal entry, 2009)

My understanding was more than just intellectual - it was experiential as well. My 'imagining' had caused a crisis of consciousness that highlighted the division between the physical and the metaphysical realms of being. Making an image of it brought resolution and real insight.

Edmund Burke noted that one of the main characteristics of the sublime was 'the heightened and perversely exalted feeling we often get from being threatened by something beyond our control or understanding'. (Morley, 2010: n. p.) The fact that the desire to enter this chaotic violence opposes the instinct for survival supports

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64 'Archetypal statements are based upon instinctive preconditions and have nothing to do with reason; they are neither rationally grounded nor can they be banished by rational arguments' (Jung, 1989: 353)
65 See Folder 4: 'Studio Research' CD ROM: JOURNAL 5, 2009, white pencil on black ink, 14.7 cm x 21.0 cm.
Schopenhauer's view that the sublime requires a 'division of the personality into two - a threatened self and an unthreatened one'. (Young, 2005: 131) It also highlights a fundamental yet paradoxical truth: wanting to enter this chaotic void indicates a primal need to be free of the physical, to transcend and enter another Void that is eternally still. Forgetting ourselves for an instant opens a space for the instinctual recognition that even though individual consciousness is small, it is held within a much larger one. That insight is a welcome respite from the relentless striving of and for material existence - the kind of rest we might experience in sleep, except in this case it happens while we are wide awake, completely conscious. The desire to enter the Void might explain why some people imagine 'being in there' as they look into the void-like chasm of The Gap. Its ability to evoke that response makes The Gap both awful and sublime.

During my research the contradictions between the material and non-material elements in the landscape shifted my consciousness from the physical to the metaphysical and from the concrete to the abstract. In a similar way, indigenous Australians know 'Uluru' as both a 'metaphysical presence....as well as a geological one'. (Cowan, 1992: 32) For the Pitjandjara people, who are its caretakers,

Rock is both an epic poem for all, a cautionary tale for some, a source of sacred law and ethics for others, and a repository of esoteric knowledge for those few who aspire to the title of mekigar (lit. 'man of magic') or tribal hierophant. (Cowan, 1992: 32)

It is conceivable the rock formations of The Gap have their own story of battle, death and resurrection; the geological descriptions on the tourist signage certainly imply this. The epic tales buried deeply in significant landscape features are an 'expression of various archetypal passions at a supra-mundane level'. (Cowan, 1992: 34) The drive to re-invent these mythical tales is instinctual and common in all cultures - a way to make sense of things that also pays homage to the creative forces that brought them into

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66 Uluru - also known as Ayer's Rock - is one of the largest rock features on the Australian continent. It is considered by some to be the 'geographical' centre of Australia. For Aboriginal people it is the spiritual centre and home of the Rainbow Serpent.
being. Geology symbolically mirrors the human psyche - changes in consciousness are represented 'as entering a cleft in the earth....The beginning of the spiritual journey is also frequently symbolised by a tunnel, funnel, whirlpool or gaping mouth of a gigantic monster'. (Grof, 1980: 70) The reference to being swallowed and absorbed into a larger entity is significant because it mirrors the experience drowning - of being overwhelmed by the sea and by the unconscious. Even though Grof cautions these images are representative and not to be taken literally, many cultures continue to associate human-like qualities with particular geographic locations. (Grof, 1980: 70)

In much the same way certain motifs and metaphors for human experience can be linked to the Gap because although it is undoubtedly a physically dangerous place, it is also a landscape that psychologically threatens. The Gap is a microcosm of 'death' - it challenges both body and psyche. However it is also a place where, sitting on the edge 'painting against death', I gained some profound insights into the nature of consciousness.

Welcome to the Edge

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.  

(Hebrews 10:31)

The coastal landscape of The Gap assaults the senses. It is physically threatening and visually overwhelming - emotionally thrilling and exhausting at the same time. During the research I painted my small ink studies under steel-grey skies, equally steely winds and in a blinding sun-shower of light - all to the relentless chorus of ocean crashing against impenetrable rock. As I dodged sea-spray I occasionally suffered vertiginous fantasies in which I plummeted off ledges into the sea. On one occasion an instinctual response to reach for some paint brushes bouncing innocently into the abyss was just as quickly withdrawn.
This landscape evoked emotions in me similar to the persistent drowning dreams - annihilation, suffocation, being overwhelmed, drawn down into the depths - the sensation of falling into a dark and infinite abyss. The prospect of overbalancing, either physically or psychologically, was not an option so I had to find a practical way to work on this 'edge'. I relied on two strategies: one involved staying connected to the body (as a way of grounding myself in a physical reality) and the other was to make sure I maintained a level of equilibrium between personal imagination (which is highly subjective) and an imaginal one (which is more objective). Although I took photographs I made small images from materials on-site both to ground me physically and to infuse the work with something tactile beyond the pictorial or informative. Making images in this environment gave me the opportunity to explore the dynamic relationship between creation and destruction which, as archetypal processes, are present in nature and an integral part of creative research.
Because The Gap is a physical manifestation of 'a' void it also symbolises 'the' primordial Void where 'every-thing' was created out of 'no-thing'. In such a dynamic crucible the tension between conflicting impulses stimulated an already overactive and fertile imagination. Although I completed the final works in the studio I continued to feed on these original emotions which, because they were a physical memory as well, helped maintain the link between body and psyche.

I have not always understood the importance of the material body. However, as a result of this study I am now convinced it is critical to not only preserve but continue to develop the connection between the physical and psychic bodies. I also appreciate why Jungian theorist Cedrus Monte made this comment in her paper Numen of the Flesh:

> the flesh, the materia of the body, contains its own capacity for generating the numen, and therefore the experience of healing. The numen arises out of the flesh as a direct result of the very nature of matter itself....there is no split between spirit and matter. (Monte, 2005: 1)

Given the 'negative, pathological effects generated by the relative split of body and mind', Monte feels it is 'imperative to offer skilful ways and means of affirming the irrevocable and harmonizing relationship between the instinctual, animal body and the archetypal, spiritual impulses of mind'. (Monte, 2005: 2)

Making images of a sublime landscape using an imaginal method is one way to harmonise the relationship between instinctual body and spirit (numen) because it involves both ways of being human. Monte's work is important because as she says, the body has been 'marginalised in psychoanalytic practice'. (Monte, 2005: n. p.)

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67 She aims to address the issue in her role as a Jungian analyst, integrating body-work and movement with a methodology based in imaginal psychology. Her underpinning premise is that: Imaginal thinking....encourages us to see the two worlds of spirit and matter, psyche and body, as one fabric, one realm inextricably interwoven with the other, as the Eastern spiritual traditions have been describing and teaching for centuries. (Monte, 2005: n. p.)
As I rendered the landscape, translating the felt experience of the sublime into art, I also began to see the relationship between its geological 'body' and the archetypes that made it so. In his paper *Rock Forms and Art*, Othmar Tobisch highlights the parallels between the 'earth' sciences and art:

> both artist and scientist are aware of similar forms, which in art are called "abstract" forms, and that perhaps their perception transmits a non-verbal kind of communication from the individual's unconscious to his(sic) conscious mind. Alternatively, the forms might be interpreted as symbols from the collective unconscious of the human psyche to the conscious mind of the viewer. (Tobish, 1971: 141)

If one accepts (tentatively) the reality of these complementary realms, then we can say the natural scientist investigates and represents (with symbols, etc.) the matter side of reality, while the contemporary artist investigates and expresses (with symbols) the psyche side of reality....The painter subconsciously discovers form in nature created directly through his(sic) imagination, which the scientist can discover in nature with instruments.... (Tobish, 1971: 143)

The equivalences that operate between models of reality across different fields of study further evidence the presence of an underpinning framework. Archetypes define
the molecular structures of landscape and become visible via artistic expression. When human beings acknowledge these archetypal patterns by continually recreating them in their cultural myths and art objects, they become more closely connected to the places in which they live. The following individual accounts confirm that these images are part of the collective psyche of humanity. The first is by Jung who recorded it in the 1960s. The second is taken from my own journal written decades later at The Gap with no knowledge of Jung’s at the time.

I once experienced a violent earthquake, and my first, immediate feeling was that I no longer stood on the solid and familiar earth, but on the skin of a gigantic animal that was heaving under my feet….It was this image that impressed itself on me, not the physical fact….man's(sic)....terror of the unchained elements - these effects anthropomorphise the passion of nature, and the purely physical element becomes an angry god.

(Jung, 1978, CW 8: 155)

The mass of rock beneath me moved. It swayed, I swayed. I was near the Natural Bridge and thought it might collapse, taking me down with it. I wanted to run, but my brushes and ink were strewn around me, I didn’t want to abandon them and that was enough to ground me. But that rocking sensation - it’s been there before, that feeling that I am riding on the back of a giant heaving serpent - a dragon. I stayed, against my instinct….but I still waited for the tidal wave. 68

(Frantom, Journal entry, 2009)

Further evidence that archetypal images are innate in human consciousness can be found in the cultural practices of the Eastern Australian Yaralde tribe. Adepts who underwent traditional initiation were required to confront terrible and 'prescribed' visions which included, among other catastrophic events, 'flood waters rising....and the earth rocking'. (Elkin, 1994: 60) Elkin observed how initiates involved in magical rituals deliberately slept in burial grounds or wild natural sites to evoke feelings of terror. It was thought that 'occult forces of conscious beings' inhabited the landscape, especially

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68 Jung says that in symbolic terms 'dragons make their lairs by watercourses, preferably near a....dangerous crossing....sea serpents live in the depth of the ocean' because 'the psychological conditions of the environment....leave similar mythical traces behind them'. (Jung, CW 8: 155) As a consequence these traces repeatedly activate the 'affect-laden fantasies' that manifest as particular 'archetypes' or 'myth-motifs' in the human psyche.

69 Lower Murray, Eastern Australia. (Elkin, 1994: 61)
those associated with terrible legends or where tragic events had occurred.\textsuperscript{70} (Elkin, 1994: 61)

The rationale for these practices is not vastly different to that of contemporary depth (archetypal) psychologists who consider that to become fully conscious the unconscious contents of the psyche must be integrated, which means facing the 'dark side'. Before certain knowledge is revealed it is necessary to confront psychic terror because although this darkness is a personal 'reality' it ultimately resolves at a point beyond the individual psyche. Resolution cannot be achieved however, until the person has undergone what is referred to in both mythology and psychology as the 'dark night of the soul' or 'descent to the underworld' - a psycho-mythical initiation found in many cultures in various forms. The intensity of this psychic journey varies and it can take the form of an encounter with the Void within which 'fear and ecstasy co-exist' - an idea 'similar to Martin Buber’s “divine Void,” where the spirit of the human being meets the spirit of the divine'. (Bento, 2012: n. p.)

The way the Void is interpreted is critically influenced by cultural background - in the West for example it is generally perceived as being negative because it is associated with death. However, in their exploration of death as an initiatory event, Stanislav and Christina Grof argue that although the contemplation of death is seen by Western scientists as a 'symptom of social pathology....deep confrontation with the most frightening and repulsive aspects of human existence can result in a spiritual opening....' (Grof, 1980: 20) An imaginal death prepares the individual for physical death by 'establishing a deep, almost cellular awareness that periods of destruction are those of transition rather than termination'. (Grof, 1980: 23) In this context negative states of mind and confrontations with darkness are creative initiatory processes rather than destructive episodes or evidence of mental illness.

\textsuperscript{70} The reference to 'tragic events' is relevant in light of the accidental deaths and suicides at The Gap.
Because of its design, the chasm at The Gap is both a physical and a symbolic Void and it was therefore a very effective imaginal portal through which I could enter the sea of the unconscious and confront death on a psychic level. Although this was an 'imagined' scenario it resonated through the emotional body as grief, sorrow and abandonment. I was fortunate to be able to channel these emotions through art-making - when faced with the creative yet equally destructive sublime in nature, the artist is forced to create nature ‘anew’, to balance these conflicting forces within the psyche. (Kris, 1971: 52) In so doing they are able to tap into the potential benefits of an experience that might otherwise be negative - in effect the artist is 'painting against death'.

In this chapter I introduced the idea that because the forms and forces in the landscape are archetypally determined they are unconsciously recognised and can therefore be translated into images by the psyche. I also highlighted the importance of psychic imbalance as a creative 'edge' in imaginal practice and its links to The Gap as a real-time symbolic equivalent. In the following chapter I discuss the work of artists Lawrence Daws and Rick Amor who respond to the uncanny and sublime in the Australian landscape by taking an imaginal journey into the unconscious through art making.
PAINTING AGAINST DEATH

The light is muted, not much tonal variation. It is stormy, brooding, sulky. Fierce heat then sharp sun, blinding glints of white shatter across the sultry purple blue. That intense aqua, the colour of hope that pulls you in, and the white foam - lazily slobbering up the sides....the sun has gone, it has cooled and the wind is stronger at my back. The mood is changing, darker - the fear that descends with twilight, when you know it's time to go.

( Frantom, Journal entry, 2008)

Both East and West recognise the Void as a significant and enduring image in human consciousness. Regardless of whether they are aware of it, human beings are drawn back to this image because it is an archetype of consciousness, evidenced by the fact that artists repeatedly return to this theme. Mark Levy points out that

The Void as a field with divine or spiritual associations is largely relegated to the Western mystics and to very select members of the avant-garde in Western art beginning with Romanticism in the early nineteenth-century..... (Levy, 2006: 2)

In order to 'know' the Void, intellectual understanding is not enough - real and direct knowledge through gnostic experience. As Townley notes, one of the Hermetic principles is that although 'Everything that exists is of a mental nature before it proceeds into physical form', ideas only come into being when we 'focus our attention on one specific image'. He suggests we follow image with action - a process he describes as "thought, word, and deed". (Townley, 1993: 4)

Although the Void tends to have a negative reputation in traditional Western culture, this is only one of its manifestations. As I indicated in my discussion on Schopenhauer and Levine, I am more interested in how it has been interpreted positively as a transcendent phenomenon rather than one predominantly associated with physical death and nihilism. Levy traces the first recorded positive view of the void to Plotinus [201-270 C.E.]. (Levy, 2006: 66) Plotinus's position is anomalous because Western attitudes have been determined by the dominant spiritual traditions of the time - both Judaism and Christianity have imaged the divine as a 'single transcendent God the Father' and 'creative principle' rather than God as 'Void', which they understand as being nihilistic. (Levy, 2006: 67) For them the Void was in opposition to God and they
could not see how it might instead represent it. (Levy, 2006: 65) The tendency to associate the Void and death with the nihilism is justified on both a conscious and an unconscious level. This is a only one dimensional view however and it continues to dominate Western perceptions.

The perception that the Void contains 'no-thing' has greatly influenced the ways in which non-indigenous Australians relate to their homeland, particularly in the early part of our colonial history. Yet in just five words of her poem 'My Country' Mackellar (1911) accurately points to a Void-God in the Australian landscape as something more than just empty space. The phrase 'her beauty and her terror' clearly identifies the ways in which many non-indigenous Australians, including its artists, respond to the landscape. As a country of extremes its inhabitants are regularly faced with the challenge of self-preservation and the reality of their own mortality. Though less poetic, Mackellar could just as easily have chosen the words 'life' and 'death' instead of 'beauty' and 'terror'.

Australian artist, Rick Amor said: ‘....the greatest art is about death...Death’s the ultimate fact we work backwards from and....painting should have that awareness in it of the passing of time....and then we disappear....art is the consolation for that’. (Copeland, 13 April 2008: n. p.) His comment struck a resonant chord because at the time I was making art\(^{71}\) about death in a place of death. During one of my drawing sessions at the Gap it occurred to me that I was engaged in the futile pursuit of trying to paint the Void - symbolically painting against death. I was reminded of the crumpled animal corpse I had seen there previously, suspended on a precipitous ledge in the chasm directly opposite the viewing platform. I wrote:

[There is] the carcass of some once furry animal on the ledge opposite the lookout. My heart drops like a stone into the chasm as I imagine the poor stranded beast, shivering between the sheer impossibility of granite above and the long fall into the abysmal sea.  

(Frantom, Journal entry, 2009)

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\(^{71}\) I am not suggesting my art is 'great'.

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This scenario was highly improbable in real terms and later an obvious explanation came to light. At the time though, I was overwhelmed by the incongruency of the image: the creature's soft fur and fragile warm skin against the cold hard granite, exposed to the more than usually extreme elements. In my imagination it was an ineffectual offering to the sea-gods. As I empathically projected myself onto the ledge I saw myself suspended over that chaotic void - between creation and destruction - impotently painting against death.

Death is possibly the most tragic theme known so Amor's comments not only confirm his place in the 'Romantic tradition of painting' but with the tragically sublime. (Lindsay, 2005: 5) Linking creativity to death as he does invokes a particular kind of terror that Simon Morley (2010: n. p.) says:

first came into vogue as a way of discussing new kinds of experiences sought by Romantic artists....generated by evocations of extreme aspects of nature - mountains, oceans, deserts - which produced emotions....of a decidedly irrational and excessive kind, emotions seemingly aimed at evicting the human mind from its secure residence inside the House of Reason and throwing it into a boundless situation that was often frightening.

Simon Gregg identifies two traditional categories of the sublime as polar opposites: the 'catastrophic and the terrible', and the 'quiet and transcendent'. (Gregg, 2011: 22) The most obvious category for this discussion is the former, however they should not be considered in isolation because in imaginal theory, one invokes the other. Greg further divides these categories into eight qualities: the 'grotesque', the 'glacial', the 'domestic', the pastoral', the 'void', 'light', 'disquiet and darkness' and 'decline'. (Gregg, 2011: 3) Although it is convenient to isolate them for discussion, several of Gregg's categories overlap. Even though I agree the Void is 'materiality....consumed by vacuousness....an engagement with the infinite' my experience of it is that it is a paradoxical space. (Gregg, 2011: 3) My view of the Void aligns with Eastern philosophy that defines it as both 'empty' and 'full' - although it is often described as being 'empty', the Void is not a 'state of mere nothingness'. (Capra, 1975: n. p.) On the contrary, it is
actually 'the essence of all forms and the source of all life'. (Capra, 1975: n. p.) Frifjof Capra explains that because the Void is a reality that underpins 'all phenomena' it 'defies all description and specification' and is therefore often viewed as being 'formless, empty or void'. (Capra, 1975: n. p.) An interpretation of the Void as both empty and full makes sense of Mackellar's paradoxical description.

It is not just the land in Australia that is void-like, in its infiniteness, fullness and emptiness the ocean too evokes feelings of the sublime. In his recent book, Simon Gregg (2011: 161) focuses on the space above the sea as a source of contemplation for the sublime, however Jungian theorists are adamant that descending into the dark depths is a similarly powerful and necessary transcendent stage in the evolution of consciousness, or what they call 'individuation'. Archetypal psychologists contend that transcendence is not even possible until we confront the hidden recesses of the psyche and its contents. Descending into the depths is a symbolic 'drowning' in the Void of the sea (or its equivalent) - a plunge into the unconscious undertaken by the ego-self as a psychological 'death'. As we have seen, the value of facing one's own death is recognised in both Eastern and Western cultures and, as the example of the Yaralde people showed, carried out in different ways during shamanic rituals all over the world. Many contemporary depth (archetypal) psychologists like Stanton Marlan, James Hillman and Stanislav Grof uphold that tradition.

72 In her paper, "Suffer a Sea-Change: Turner, Painting, Drowning", Sarah Monks says that "sublime" (etymologically perhaps sub limen, up to a high threshold) always carries with it – even if only as trace memory – that over which it climbs or floats: "the gloomy deep". ‘By engaging with the implications of ‘beneath’, of the sub in the sublime’ Monks ‘sets out to challenge any sense of the sublime as necessarily already ascendant, as always and easily cut free from its murky remnant.’ In particular she focuses on ‘the ways in which J.M.W. Turner set about suggesting, to an extent which is unprecedented in the visual representation of water, what it might be to be beneath – beneath the horizon, beneath the water and beneath paint’. (Monks, 2010: n. p.)

73 Archetypal psychologists like Jung, Hillman and Avens recognise the profound similarities between Eastern and Western spiritual systems. However they caution that although ‘the unconscious is identical with the imaginal ground from which all purely spiritual doctrines and disciplines’ derive from, in order to be relevant to the West, ‘Eastern values must be discovered from within’, which means dealing with the unconscious. (Avens, 1980: 5)

74 The different stages of ‘transcending’ or dying are well documented by Tibetan Buddhists who have studied these images in detail in the context of their own culture. They fully acknowledge that Westerners will see different images particular to their cultural heritage but that these nevertheless
The sea occupies a significant place in the Australian cultural imagination as a symbol for death. As Kathryn Burns notes, the sea is 'a traditional symbol of change and the passing of time, and, through its sheer enormity and power, also carries the very real danger of death'. (Burns, 2007: 25) The Australian habit of perching on the edge of the continent 'between two states: land and sea' has a 'powerful and symbolic impact for coming-of-age narratives', on a national scale. (Burns, 2007: 25) The proliferation of images of 'islands, thresholds and frontiers....in Western Australian writing' suggests there is a strong imaginal relationship between the sea and death. (Burns, 2007: 17) The ocean evokes real terror and it is this particular form of the Void, with its links to death and the unconscious, through which many Australian artists continue to engage the tragic sublime in nature.

Whether on land or in the sea, the motif of the Void in the Australian landscape confronts its inhabitants with their mortality. One of the most effective ways to meet that death is through symbol and metaphor - in the form of art, dance, writing and painting - giving visible expression to the archetypal psyche of the landscape and its figures. Painting against death is an attempt to paint this Void, or paint about it. Confrontations with the powerful and numinous forces in nature are a reminder of all that is temporary and permanent, creative and destructive at the same time. Extremes of terror and awe challenge the individual to transcend the everyday. Whether these dualities are reconciled through expressive painting techniques, abstraction or symbolism, artists continue to paint and write against the death the Void implies. As a microcosm of that Void, The Gap is an ideal place to explore the relationship between the sea, the Romantic sublime, death and transcendence.

equate symbolically with the different stages of consciousness experienced during the process of dying. (See Sogyal Rinpoche's, "The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying", 1994, U.S.A.: Harper Collins.) Spiritual psychologists like Jung and those who followed are convinced this process can be studied during life by seeking out and working with images that arise from the unconscious and present to the conscious mind. This is what motivates their imaginal engagement with the unconscious. The practice of seeking out of death in life is also common in many indigenous cultures during initiatory and shamanic rituals.
In Australia, the relationship between the Void and the landscape has been explored repeatedly since European occupation. (Gregg, 2011: 161) Yet while the desert is recognised as a symbol for the Void, it is less appreciated that it is also powerfully represented by the sea. In imaginal psychology an encounter with the Void is often experienced as a 'descent to the underworld' or a 'night sea journey'. Certain paintings by Rick Amor and Lawrence Daws suggest they have taken such a journey, at least in part. It is evident from his comments that Daws understands the significance of this undertaking. He is familiar with Jung’s theories and shares his view that suffering is not an entirely negative experience because it furthers the evolution of consciousness. Daws understands it is 'necessary to live through anxious and dangerous situations to arrive at a state of peace' and ultimately forge a 'whole personality'. (Bruce, 2000: 83)

There are two bodies of Daws's work that convey two different experiences of the Void: one that views it from a personal perspective and another that is more abstract and archetypal - the latter categorises my experience of it. The first series produced in
the 1990s is entitled *Night Sea Journey*. Daws’s encounter with the unconscious takes place on board a ship in the middle of a black ocean.

![Image](image.jpg)

**Fig 7. Lawrence Daws, *The Dark Sea*, 1993, oil on canvas, 61.0 cm x 76.0 cm**

In *Night Sea Journey 1* (1993) (figure 6, p. 68) a woman, naked or dressed in translucent sleepwear, sits, stands or sleepwalks on deck. The sea in this case is framed by the clean mechanical lines of the ship’s architecture which means the threat of direct confrontation is mediated. There is an element of self protection in these works. The ship’s architecture holds the figure safely within its defined geometric structures so that the viewer, and Daws himself, are prevented from falling into the (unconscious) sea. This image reminds me of the safety barrier-cage at The Gap where, standing inside it, organic body-shapes are in strong contrast to the metal railings. Based on esoteric philosophy’s idea that the image of the cube symbolically fixes the eternal aspect of the self in the presence of an overwhelming archetypal force. The psychological function and esoteric symbolism of the cube is discussed further in the 'The Imaginal Void' (p. 100)

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75 I contend that Daws’s painting of the cube-like cage of cabin walls provides physical and psychic stability. I base this on esoteric philosophy’s idea that the image of the cube symbolically fixes the eternal aspect of the self in the presence of an overwhelming archetypal force. The psychological function and esoteric symbolism of the cube is discussed further in the 'The Imaginal Void' (p. 100)
aspect of the self in the presence of an overwhelming archetypal force, I contend Daws's painting of the cube-like structures provides physical and psychic stability.\textsuperscript{76}

It is informative to compare the impact of the \textit{Night Sea Journey} paintings with one entitled \textit{The Dark Sea} (1993) (figure 7, p. 69) completed in the same year which does not include a direct reference to the human figure. In the first, the figure is placed between the viewer and the abyss. As psyche she stands between the image and viewer to mediate the powerful forces of the unconscious because the figure and the 'safety rail' protect them from the full impact of the night sea. In \textit{The Dark Sea} we are at greater risk of falling into the darkness yet prevented once again by the ship's railings. On both occasions Daws has positioned himself and viewer behind a barrier, a psychological device that protects the ego-self from a full confrontation with the Void.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{Andrew Mc Ilroy, \textit{From the Pier}, 2009, oil on linen, 153.0 cm x 146.0 cm}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{76} The psychological function and esoteric symbolism of the cube is discussed further in the 'The Imaginal Void' (p. 100)
Many of Andrew Mc Ilroy’s 'partly autobiographical' paintings have been 'inspired by Tim Winton’s book *Breath*’ in which Winton writes about surfing on the south coast of Western Australia and the issue of 'drowning'. (Johnston, T., 2010: n. p.) Mc Ilroy acknowledges that although his works are 'representations of actual places', they are more about recollections of experiences - like not being able to reach the surface before he ran out of breath:  

'I mostly remember beautiful stillness, the darkness, the muffled sounds from above. I try to paint the movement, the tumult and the desperation I felt in reaching for the surface'. (Mc Ilroy in Johnston, T., 2010: n. p.)

On a deeper level that parallels Winton’s symbolism, Mc Ilroy’s paintings also convey a sense of unease, with fear invoked by deep waters and the feeling of sinking into the abyss, a metaphor for anxieties which gripped the artist's own childhood. (Johnston, T., 2010: n. p.)

Other visual artists engage with this particular symbol of the Void directly and through the work of writers. It has been a dominant theme in Australian literature as the 'remarkable array of late twentieth and early twentieth-first century Australian novelists' and authors who have 'presented images of West Australian beaches and coastlines' attests.⁷⁷ (Bennett in Cranston, 2007: 31) Australians continue to have a love/fear relationship with the sea. Through her character Esther in *The Toucher* Dorothy Hewett 'reflects on the capacity of the ocean to both create and destroy':

> There was something elemental about it - the black salt-streaked granite, the foaming sea....something brutal and absolute, like death or murder....The force of the wind could tear you over the edge.....She dissolved into it: sea, rocks and sky; the dark curve of a land splashed with light; a giddy sense of clinging to the edge of things. (Cranston, 2007: 37)

Bruce Bennett observes how novelist Robert Drewe has captured the 'simultaneous lure and threat of oceans and beaches for many Australians'. (Ed. Cranston, Zeller: 2007) Bennett notes that for Drewe,

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⁷⁷ Among them are: 'Robert Drewe, Jack Davis, Randolph Stowe, Peter Cowan, Dorothy Hewett, and Tim Winton'. (Bennett in Cranston, 2007: 31)
threat and danger in the sea to which he is drawn by fascination and need....is principally represented in the image of sharks which grew in the young man's imagination. (Bennett in Cranston, 2007: 32)

![Image](image_url)

**Fig 9. Rick Amor, The Visitor, 1999, oil on linen, 130.0 cm x 162.0 cm**

Although it is a place of foreboding being confronted with this oceanic Void is also an opportunity to transcend the everyday. Tim Winton acknowledges that immersion in the sea can be redemptive, he writes about a 'sense of at-oneness' and recognises its 'numinous possibilities'. (Bennett in Cranston, 2007: 39)

Rock and ocean carry Rick Amor's projected personal anxieties - his painting *The Visitor* (1999) (figure 9, p. 72) revisits a traditional theme in Romantic art. A lone figure stands small against the titanic enigmatic 'figure' of rock as a 'reminder of the vastness of creation and our relative insignificance within it.' (Bond, 2000: 40) Tony Bond suggests the role of the vertical figure is to act as 'a lightning conductor connecting the material and immaterial.' (Bond, 2000: 40) I interpret this as a confrontation between individual consciousness and the unconscious because it also anchors the psyche, just as Daws female figure did in his *Night Sea Journey* series. In *The Visitor*, the figure is not
required to convey scale because even without it, the 'figure' of the rock still dominates - it confronts because it takes centre stage and extends beyond the frame. This convinces me further that the human figure is not purely a compositional device.

Amor alludes to the disembodied shadows of De Chirico's paintings that influenced him at a young age. (Fry, 2008: 30) Like these shadows the figure of the rock acts as a 'witness-judge' to remind us of the 'need for humility in the face of power or nature, or by extension, God'. (Lindsay, 2005: 5) By making us aware of this threat, Amor successfully captures the 'Romantic terror of our times'. (Lindsay, 2005: 5) As humanity faces existential annihilation and the inevitability of rising sea levels, he is not alone. Collectively we have entered into a new but very old relationship with the sea on both a physical and a symbolic level. Amor still dreams about the sea78 and these images are part of his 'psychic life'. (Copeland, 2008: n. p.) He says he is unsure if the images feed the dreams or the dreams feed the paintings but concludes it probably works both ways. (Copeland, 2008: n. p.)

Fig 10. Rick Amor, The Runner, 1998, oil on canvas, 76.0 cm x 110.3 cm

78 'Rick Amor dreams of the sea.....He has a(n) intense relationship with it....It deeply informs his art. It inspires him. It attracts and repulses him equally. And it seeps into his sleep. "I dream about the sea all the time..."' (Johnston, C. 2002: n. p.)
In *The Runner* (figure 10, p. 73), as in many of his early sea paintings, Amor's figure 
flees some unseen terror. In a moving field of paint it struggles to hold its ground. Amor 
shares what prompted him to paint an earlier work called *Nightmare* (figure 11, p. 74):

I had a dream that I was on the Frankston Pier, it’s night-time, the sea is dark 
and crashing and the pier’s breaking up. I’m on the bit of the pier that’s out the 
end, it’s sort of isolated out in the water, at the mercy of the elements. That 
figure on the pier came out of my head immediately. I was painting a picture, it 
was very quickly painted and it just appeared like that…. (Copeland, 2008: n. p.)

Amor acknowledges his sea-scapes have their genesis in a psychic realm that 
repeatedly throws up the anxieties of his childhood. Although based on an actual pier 
*Nightmare* is more of a psychological self-portrait than a representation of a real place, 
conveying a time of personal crisis when distressing memories had resurfaced. 
(Copeland, 2008: n. p.) He also accepts his fears are not unique because they belong to 
a collective ‘age of anxiety’ that pervades the contemporary psyche. (Copeland, 2008: 
n. p.) For more than three decades Amor has painted the sea 'as a metaphor for man's
(sic) insignificance in the face of nature'. (Nicholls, 2012: n. p.)

However, he is also painting against the death of his ego-self in the face of the imaginal Void. Amor's relationship with the sea is similar to my own because these 'portentous dreams of the sea....won't go away. "It's an anxiety," he says. "There is a perceived threat. The sea has always frightened me. And I love that aspect of it."' (Johnston, 2002: n. p.) Hillman identifies the underlying source of these fears:

> The image-soul's delight is the ego-soul's dread. In dreams, it fears drowning in torrents, whirlpools, tidal waves which....translate to mean the dreamer is in danger of being overwhelmed by the unconscious....., flooded with fantasies - no ground, no standpoint. Heraclitus, however, like alchemical psychology, sees death in water as the way of dissolving one kind of earth while another comes into being. (Hillman, 1979: 153)

Amor explores his relationship with the sea through the materiality of paint. He engages with the material to convey something 'immaterial' and numinous, tragic and sublime in the landscapes he physically occupies and dreams about.

Motivated by a similar imperative, Lawrence Daws draws less on paint quality and more on symbols. His engagement with the 'numinous in art' and the tragic sublime has been enriched by his study of 'Jung, Kant, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and Hermann Hesse....sacred geometry....Piero della Francesca, paleogeography and geological formations....mandalas, alchemy....the Bible.....' (Macaulay, 2010: 11) He has intimate knowledge of the dark underworld of the psyche. (Macaulay, 2010: 12) By 'giving equal space to sky and ground' in *The Cage II* (1971) (figure 12, p. 76) he expresses the psychological tension between 'dream, nightmare' and the world of everyday consciousness. (Macaulay, 2010: 13) In *The Labyrinth*, (figure 13, p. 77) a painting from

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79 'My whole childhood was spent in the sea....I dream about this natal littoral constantly and regard my artistic breakthrough in the eighties as having been inspired by the memories and fear of the sea....I dream about my childhood in the dark tonality of my painting. The sky is always lowering into the sea, the beach is deserted and something awful has happened or is about to happen.' (Nicholls, 2012: 130)

80 'Due to unconscious interpretive conventions, it was asserted, the viewer considers works of art to be brimming with expression if they appear rough and visibly "laboured" - any visible traces of the hand are treated as seismograph data taken unfiltered from the creative psyche. Viewers respond to marks in paintings as signs for the artists feelings, as 'expressing', which is why a long smudged stroke will be called "moody", while a cluster of short rapid dashes are said to be "agitated"....' (Smith, 2001: 579)
the *Mining Disaster* series, Daws uses symbols to 'explore conscious and unconscious states, rational response, fear and the panic of miners trapped underground.' (Macaulay, 2010: 14) The allusion to being overwhelmed in both of these paintings reminds me of my drowning dreams where I am held 'under' something. The common psychological theme being acted out is a confrontation with the unconscious. In each case it represents an encounter with the Void that is projected imaginally onto some aspect of the landscape and made into a piece of visual art.

![Image](image.png)

**Fig 12.** Lawrence Daws, *The Cage II*, 1971, oil on hardboard, 91.0 cm x 106.7 cm

Daws chooses different aspects of the landscape to reflect his encounters with the Void. As we saw in the more personal *Night Sea Journey* series, he positions himself close to the sea. However, to paint the non-anthropomorphic existential Void he takes a remote view above a waste-land horizon. In both the *Night Sea Journey* and *The Cage* (figure 14, p. 77) series he juxtaposes organic and geometric forms. These reappear over several decades - initially in the 1970s and as late as 2005.
Fig 13. Lawrence Daws, *The Labyrinth*, 1969-70, oil on linen, 122.0 cm x 122.0 cm

Fig 14. Lawrence Daws, *The Cage*, 2005, 11/40, digital mixed media print, 102.0 cm x 136.0 cm
At different times in their artistic careers, both Daws and Amor have used the figure as a motif to illustrate the unequal the relationship between the sublime forces in nature and the ordinary human being. However, Lindsay notes that in works like *The Visitor*, although Amor's use of the figure is ‘...powerfully perspectival’ it creates a dilemma for the viewer: ‘a visual fragment, an image or a person which resonates with meaning....’, pulling the eye up short ‘on its journey to the vanishing point'. (Lindsay 2005: 6) Daws uses the figure more effectively - the mass of tiny figures in his apocalyptic painting *The Cage* (2005) speak to me directly because their anonymity conveys the ultimate insignificance of human existence. Using both scale and viewpoint Daws hints at an 'other' omnipresent consciousness that eclipses the individual psyche.

Daws's transition from the representational figure in *Night Sea Journey* series to a symbolic representation in his later work parallels a shift in consciousness from the transient to the eternal self in the symbol of the cube. Archetypal determinants like this imbue both his and J.M.W. Turner's later works with a certain numinosity. Paradoxically perhaps, by moving into abstraction and symbolism they engage the viewer more directly. Before he too dispensed with the figure, Turner included it in works like *The Passage of Mount Saint Gothard* (1804) (figure 15, p. 79) presumably to indicate scale which, as in Amor's work, limits interpretation. The paintings of Turner, Amor and Daws I find most powerful are those that do not reference the figure directly. This seems to contradict Amor's observation that: ‘the figure will always have an emotional content to it, there’s always an association with a figure....’ (Copeland, 2008: n. p.) However, it does appear that by denying the viewer something recognisably 'human' to identify with, there is a more direct exposure to the archetypes that underpin these primordial landscapes.

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81 See explanation 'The Imaginal Void', p. 100.
82 'The first major English landscape painter to omit the figures was Turner, clearly because his subject is so often the interplay or conflict of natural forces - wind and water...' (Seddon, 1987: n. p.)
Daws weaves symbols and paint into a 'web with which he spins' the archetypal image-myths of the human condition - "suffering, redemption....freedom". (Crumlin, n.d.: 128) Amor manipulates paint to exorcise his personal anxieties and, in so doing, engages the viewer emotionally. Both artists use the motifs of sea, sky and 'desert' to represent the Void and paint against an existential death. Turner seems to have had a slightly different relationship with this archetype than either of them which could be attributed to the time in which he painted. Daws and Amor place the figure ‘in’ the landscape to protect their psyches from its potentially destructive impact, whereas Turner's perspective is infused with an eighteenth century Romantic vision of the *numen* as it manifests in nature. The former are influenced by a twentieth century ego-centric anxiety where God is either absent or ready to annihilate the unsuspecting individual at any moment. Turner's paintings deliver a powerful experience because he invites the viewer to step into a transcendent field of ethereal painted glazes in which scale and
form are impossible to determine. Yet although each renders it quite differently, all of these artists indicate they have experienced nature as a detached and disinterested entity on some level. Their God is not the redemptive *imago dei* reflected in the loving face of a Jesus Christ or serene Buddha, but an ancient and pure form of the *numen* that pre-exists all images - the primordial Void itself. Regardless of whether it is possible to achieve or not, Daws, Amor and Turner have sought to bridge the divide between ‘us’ and the ‘other’ in the landscape and reconcile themselves with it through their art practices.

Another way to reconcile with the landscape is to give it a human form and characteristics, which is what traditional Romantic painters did when they began to respond more imaginatively to it in the 19th century. (Rosenblum, 1975: 36) Amor says of his own relationship with landscape: ‘....I use buildings and landscape and the environment as a poetic metaphor for the human content’. (Copeland, 2008: n. p.) In some of Lawrence Daws's paintings like *Big Terrace*, (1986) (figure 17, p. 81) rocks morph into bodies, transforming landscape features into anthropomorphised figures.
This move away from the literal figure in the ground of the painting is also a psychological one - anthropomorphication evidences a desire to merge psyche and body-consciousness with the landscape and find a point of reconciliation with it.

Fig 17. Lawrence Daws, *Big Terrace*, 1986, acrylic & oil crayon on paper, 152.0 cm x 122.0 cm

Throughout his career Lawrence Daws has repeatedly tapped into an imaginal field of 'archetypal dreams and fantasies' to re-present the symbols and motifs of human cultural expression. (Bruce, 2000: 2) Even though he paints real landscapes it is evident that 'no matter where he locates the physical geography of his art....the inner landscape of the unconscious mind....(is) always present'. (Bruce, 2000: 84) Daws himself admits his 'pictures have always been a psychic enquiry' and that landscape for him is 'just a way of unloading a whole lot of private imagery'. (Bruce, 2000: 84) The 'fact that so many of us respond so strongly to Daws's work suggests that he taps into profound archetypal images that resonate within each of us on a deeply personal level'. (Grishin, 2010/2011: 48) Daws uses archetypal motifs with different types of symbolism - abstract geometry in the mandalas of the 1960s to 1970s, symbolic landscapes,
representational figurative works and geometric symbolism in The Cage series in the 2000s. When an abstract non-anthropomorphic version of the Void reappears in 2005 in The Cage series, signalling a deeper descent into the unconscious. Based on my own experience, these encounters resurface at different times and levels of intensity during one's lifetime.

Forays into the unconscious can be dangerous to the psyche's equilibrium and the experience cannot be fully expressed or conveyed to others in the final images. I can only speculate how Daws encountered the Void but it is my view the physical act of painting helped him reconcile with it on some level. What seems evident in the various depictions of the Void is the need to protect the psyche, whether through symbols (Daws), the religious act of painting (Turner), or the facture of the paint itself (Amor). Imaginal experience has a physical component. Conversely ritualistic acts like making images engage the body - real painting has an impact on the psyche. This reflexive process offers one way to integrate the disturbing and numinous manifestations of existence and is one of the positive outcomes of imaginal (art) practice.

As well as the examples provided in the work of Daws and Amor, I found several written accounts to indicate my experience of the night sea journey was not isolated. It is acknowledged and recorded in cultural myths as well as in spiritual psychology - Jung himself undertook the journey. He also related an image given to him by one of his clients - a theologian who dreams he is standing on the shore of a dark lake in a deep valley:

As he approached the shore, everything grew dark and uncanny, and a gust of wind suddenly rushed over the face of the water. He was seized by a panic fear, and awoke. (Jung, 1969: 17)

Jung suggests the theologian's descent into the valley of water was symbolic of a descent 'into his own depths'. This accords with a similar dream of my own.³³

³³ According to Hillman 'the underworld differentiates at least five rivers: the frigid Styx; the burning
I am standing on a wild black cold ocean under an inky black sky, in a palpable leaden darkness, buffeted by a screaming primeval wind - the kind that hails from an existential void. I am calling for someone and someone is calling out for me but the wind is obscuring our voices. I wake in mortal dread.

(Frantom, Journal entry, 2011)

Although they are disturbing, dreams like this have a positive function - Hillman explains that when working imaginally the ‘most distressing images' are the ‘best for they....restore a figure to its pristine power as a numinous person at work in the soul'. (Hillman, 1992: 25) As well as providing entry to this imaginal territory, my recurring drowning dream operated on another level - the idea-image of drowning corresponds to a psychological state in which the individual psyche is overwhelmed by the collective unconscious. This image is part of humanity's mythic imagination and expressed in different cultures where it takes on the narrative of a descent into an 'underworld'. On a symbolic level 'drowning in the unconscious' is an encounter with the void.

Some archetypal images make no reference to being in human form, they are abstract and resist direct analysis and expression. They have a powerful effect on the psyche because they loosen the grip of the censoring, controlling intellect and self serving demands of the ego-self, which is why the descent is also known as the ‘transcendent function'. (Jung in Rossi, 2002: 134) Deconstruction of the ego on some level is an

Pyriphlegethon; the mournful, wailing Cocytus; the depressive, black Acheron; and Lethe....' He also says that 'we must pay attention to the kind of water in a dream....' (Hillman, 1979: 152) From his description I identified the water in my dream as the Cocytus or 'river of wailing' which Stanton Marlan (2005) describes as 'the frozen lake of Dante's ninth circle'. It was also reassuring to find the blog of Ron Dowd (2010), a contemporary Sydney-based psychotherapist who references the work of James Hillman. '....at a deeper level I experienced icy chill, an existential heart, a cold stranger that seemed completely unconcerned for my sleep and for my well-being in general. I learned something of this stranger: as James Hillman says, sickness can be a vital way for the soul to learn'.

84 Jung says that because consciousness 'appears to be essentially an affair of the cerebrum', the mind therefore sees the unconscious as separate from itself, which causes it to experience this descent as terrifying and alien encounter characterised by a 'suffocating atmosphere of egocentric subjectivity'. (Jung, 1990: 20) 'This confrontation is the first test of courage on the inner way, a test sufficient to frighten off most people', often resolved by avoidance in the form of projection of this negativity onto others and the external environment. (Jung, 1990: 20) If the individual proceeds though, they face 'unprecedented uncertainty, with apparently no inside and no outside, no above and no below, no here and no there'. (Jung, 1990: 21) In the turbulent chaos that follows we collapse, we 'sink into a final depth...a kind of “voluntary death”. (Jung, 1990: 32) This 'symbolic process is an experience (in images and of images)' and may be 'compressed into a single dream....or extend over months and years'. (Jung,
essential part of the individuation process\(^{85}\) (Jung in Bruce, 2000: 76) as the psyche moves towards integration with what Stein refers to as a 'super-consciousness'.\(^{86}\) (Stein, 2010: 70) Stanislav Grof observes that 'along with our experiences of extraordinary perception there often comes a deep metaphysical fear....rooted in the fact that such experiences challenge and undermine fundamental beliefs about the nature of reality'. (Grof, 1994: 135) He goes on to say that more often than not when we are given the choice between a new way of seeing and returning safely to something we are familiar with, we choose fear because it is easier. (Grof, 1994: 135) It takes courage to step away from a reality we are comfortable with into a 'death' where we face the ultimate unknown.

Artists have traditionally used landscape painting to enter the sub-liminal space between their personal psyches and this numinous realm of the unknown. Some, like Daws, have done so through the image of the night sea journey. This form of encounter with the unconscious is well known to Jungian theorists. It is a critical stage of 'individuation' - a ‘natural process’ made up of ‘a series of fantasy-occurrences which appear spontaneously in dreams and visions....’ (Jung in Rossi, 2002: 134) Jung described individuation as ‘dramatic’ (Jung, 2005: 4) and a ‘true labour’, even if it is 'ultimately a worthy pursuit'. (Jung in Rossi, 2002: 134) Although the 'perilous journey into the unconscious' in some form is vital, Jung advised against it because 'until we are

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85 The process of becoming an 'individuated' human being cannot be fully accomplished without first integrating both aspects of the unconscious psyche: the personal and the collective. (Jung, 1990: 276) The ego-personality paradoxically seeks individuation however this is problematic because, although it is the primary vehicle for individuation, the subjective ego-self ultimately loses it-self when it reaches its goal in the objective Self (or God-image). As the psyche becomes more aware it also becomes more cognisant that it is only a small part, not the whole, of consciousness. As Jung notes '...the experience of the self (Self) is always a defeat for the ego.' (Jung, 1963 CW 14, 778)

86 The process of individuation is based on a fundamental paradox. On one hand it requires that we respect and encourage the drive to develop our individuality, on the other it requires the ability to leave that behind. I understand this phenomenon as the development of a 'dual-awareness', the ability to balance seemingly conflicting agendas; a both/and approach to knowledge rather than a singular either/or. The ability to handle paradox is a critical part of the evolution of consciousness.
driven to it out of necessity', it is 'neither useful or necessary'. (Jung in Breaux 1989: xi) Inevitably, at some stage though, each person will encounter it. One of the positive outcomes of such a journey though, is a degree of reconciliation of the 'yawning gulf between conscious and unconscious'. (Jung in Rossi, 2002: 134) Whenever an individual undertakes the night sea journey it signifies the development of an ego towards independence and the ability to use 'free will'. (Neumann, 1955: 203)

The night sea journey is a confrontation with the unconscious and can be extremely challenging. I can confirm that 'when the ego....takes the vanishing personally, it makes depression....’ (Hillman, 1972: 285) However, Hillman also counsels that any 'lacuna (of emptiness) is not to be overcome, fulfilled or completed’, the ‘emptiness is the completion’. (Hillman, 1972: 283) This is because it eventually leads the individual to realise the one true reality - the ground of being in Taoist philosophy, the primordial Void of the West or Divine consciousness in Hinduism. As a first step in the evolution of consciousness the reward for undergoing annihilation is the opportunity to gain some
valuable and critical insights into what it means to be human. Instinctively I knew I should follow the image all the way down, take the journey to its end, before I would be able to swim to the surface, which is eventually what happened. On a very deep level the experience has irrevocably changed me.

In the next section, 'Into the Blue', I show how imaginal practice works as a 'practice' for consciousness and how it unfolds in the context of visual research over a period of time. I describe a series of 'events' in the order they happened as I moved out of the dark, into the blue and towards the light. These events enabled me to reconcile the displaced contents of my own psyche with an external environment and gave me insight into the Void and its role in human consciousness. The following is a 'map' that tracks my movement through a particular imaginal landscape in response to a physical one. It is a discrete episode in a complex ongoing narrative and should be read as a 'dialogue' between the real and the imagined, between myself and the numinous figures that inhabit an archetypal land. The discussion moves into The Gap as 'studio' where I carried out the practical research and, as I painted against death, set out to refine imaginal practice as a working methodology.

### Into the Blue

I dreamed some people were trying to revive a drowned boy in an underwater cave....he was an opaque ultramarine blue colour, like Krishna. Maybe it was Nathan Drew. His eyes fluttered and I realised he had been alive all along. The last few nights I dreamed I am surfing, being held underwater and surrendering to drown in chaotic seas.

(Frantom, Journal entry, 2008)

Psychologist Peter Butcher identifies one of the triggers for the psychological night sea journey. A client of his related an experience in which

The ordinary world....was suddenly transformed: he became aware of a radiating, complex pattern in existence, in which he and all else played an integral part....he particularly recalls walking across a field, becoming aware that the plants around him appeared quite changed and that they had a vibrant livingness which seemed to expand beyond their form. (Butcher, 1983: 222)
I recall being aware of what Butcher describes as an 'expanded' state of consciousness like this at various times in nature, but there is one in particular that occurred in the early phase of my research at The Gap. I tried to paint it (figure 19, p. 87), the image does not do justice to the actual experience but making it was an essential part of the process. I also wrote in my journal:

the rain is driving almost horizontally - the wind has swung to the south and it is bitterly cold.....The rain eases, the sun comes out and I come out from behind the rock to an epiphany of golden light, blinding yellow white dancing on the sea and a glow behind the headland. It is sublime, overwhelms my senses and I scramble for my journal, white pen, no....gouache, black pen....I sit on the wet rock, awkward with my little book on my lap, grateful that the page is already primed in aqua ink. The headland has disappeared in a suffusion of gold....I cannot drink it all in. If I open my eyes too wide the whole scene will pour into me. (Frantom, Journal entry, 2009)
Butcher goes on to say that after this type of episode individuals 'often encounter a period of inner chaos or disorientation' similar to 'a Death, the Dark Night, a Fall into Formlessness, Being Swallowed by a Monster, Entering Hell or the Void....' (Butcher, 1983: 222) He suggests it is caused by an 'inward disorientation' that makes the person 'question some well-entrenched self-perceptions'. (Butcher, 1983: 222) As a consequence, the usual frame of reference is brought into doubt which, in the case of his client, resulted in

an encounter with a dark 'Void' or a 'Fall into Formlessness', a world where there were no distinctions, no means of orientation, where all opposites, even good and evil, were not opposites at all but were part of one and the same thing. (Butcher, 1983: 222)

Butcher's comments were a revelation because they gave me insight into the possible reason for my own descent.

The disorientating nature of the night sea journey requires the psyche to anchor itself. This can be done through the work of art and transforms a 'negative' experience into a positive one. As Spezzano observes:

The task of elaborating religious experience seems simple: what began as a loss of self and a subsequent submersion into unity is reversed and leads back to reality when the individual begins to express what she(sic) experienced. (Spezzano, 2003: 32)

Elaborating my own experience I made images to try and express the emotion and chaos I felt at The Gap. I am sure the physical act of making art grounded me. Initially my response to the powerful numinosity of the landscape were recorded in text and as small black and white studies (see examples in 'Folder 3: Folio Images', CD ROM, Studies 4-8 and Studies 36-40). As the 'night sea' phase of the journey progressed, dread transformed into a milder anxiety - my perception altered and the artwork changed along with it. The black became translucent and suffused into a particular aqua colour. Light symbolically and actually penetrated the dense water as it opened out into the sky. This movement was paralleled in the chromatic progression from black
to blue and white (see figure 20, p. 89; figure 21, p. 99 & Studies 20-22, 'Folder 3: Folio Images', CD ROM). I channelled this transition through the physical body and the act of painting with art materials - rough, thick, luminous blacks and opaque whites (see Drowning, 'Folder 2: Work Exhibited', CD ROM), scale and texture (Chasm, 'Folder 2: 'Work Exhibited', CD ROM). The large 2400 millimetre square paintings attempt to convey how overwhelming this landscape was - painting them was a very physical act.

![Image](https://example.com/image.jpg)

**Fig 20. Michelle Frantom, Study 15, 2009, mixed media on paper, 20.4 cm x 14.2 cm**

As I continued to mirror-trace the movement of 'water' in its fluid media equivalents of ink and gouache on my small journal pages I began to focus more specifically on the aqua blue. The more time I spent at The Gap the more I became obsessed with it. At the same time I noticed I was projecting myself imaginatively into the physical drama at the base of the vertical rock face, in effect imagining 'being in there'. I wanted to be immersed and absorbed into this precious jewel-like substance. I followed the affect
and, just as Johnson advises, I asked questions: Why was I so obsessed? What was the attraction. What did this blue represent or symbolise?

Fig 21. Michelle Frantom, Study 17, 2009, mixed media on paper, 20.4 cm x 14.2 cm

The obsession with the water at the base of the cliffs partly arose because I 'recognised' it - this was the blue I had seen in a recurring dream of many years in which benign yet imageless entities from 'somewhere' in the sky encouraged me to drink a blue sickly sweet effervescent liquid. Although it made me want to vomit I was compelled to drink it. The response to that dream and the blue water at The Gap was similar - a compulsion to 'drink it in', be 'immersed' in it - 'drinking in' also describes the way in which we engage visually with something that is pleasing to the eye. My sensory memory of the dream was so strong that, as I created my small studies, I became aware of a seductive quality common to both the dream and the blue water. I was attracted and repulsed at the same time. The form of the two images - the dream of drinking the blue liquid and the waking image of being in the blue sea - was different.
However the content, affect and irreconcilable psychic conflict was similar - this schism was both emotionally and logically disturbing.

Fig 22. Michelle Frantom, Study 28, 2007, gouache on paper, 16.7 cm x 18.0 cm

The degree of internal conflict I felt indicated the presence of the archetype and shows how imaginal practice operates as a conduit between the imagination and material reality. I felt compelled to engage but was unable to do so without taking some 'risk', albeit a psychological one. I resolved the issue by leaping metaphorically and visually into the new blue chasm that presented itself, which meant following the image without knowing or trying to discover its meaning. This is a critical dynamic in imaginal practice. Not being able to reason, effectively intellectualise or match the image with pre-existent symbolisms it remains 'open', maximising its potential to take the individual beyond the immediate experience. As it tries to maintain order, the conscious mind censor things for which it has no frame of reference. Working imaginally means allowing both of these disparate voices to be heard, straddling the
divide between conscious control and unconscious chaos. There is always a risk the purpose or intent of the image will never be revealed, however it is precisely this willingness to surrender control of the outcome that allows meaning to unfold more deeply and on several levels.

Later, applying theory retrospectively as imaginal practice dictates, I discovered 'blue' has a specific archetypal significance. In his essay *Alchemical Blue and the 'Unio Mentalis'* (2010), James Hillman correlates the symbolic values of several colours with stages of psychological evolution. He equates the chromatic movement, from black to blue and then to white, with a specific phase in the development of consciousness - from introspection through the faculty of thought and imagination to an imaginal realm. In archetypal philosophy this is known as the *unio mentalis*, which is 'the interpenetration of thought and image, of perceived world and imaginal world, a state of mind no longer concerned with distinctions between things and thought, appearance and reality....' (Hillman, 1981: 8) Hillman (2006) also explains that the *unio mentalis* is the 'confluence of understanding and imagination', a state of consciousness where thought integrates with imagination. In an imaginal sense, the addition of air, or imaginative thought, to matter activates both a physical and a psychic process that facilitates entry to a numinous realm - blue leads us into an experience of the spiritual. (Jung, CW 8, 1978: 211 f.n.) Hillman's and Jung's comments suggest reasons for my move from black to blue inks as I made perceptual and metaphysical shifts from the element of water to air.

Hillman claims the archetypal realm of images is coloured blue and that this ‘blue foundation is the imaginal ground which allows the eye to see imaginatively....' (Hillman, 1981: 8) He even contends that the psyche itself is based in the 'blue firmament', that it is a 'mythical place' that supports 'metaphysical thinking....the presentation of metaphysics in image form'. (Hillman, 1991: 34) In traditional Buddhism

87 Similar to the way I forced myself to stay seated on the rock at The Gap and chose not to follow an instinctual urge to flee.
the 'blue light' symbolises certain realms of consciousness, one of which human beings may be reborn into.\textsuperscript{88} I suggest this field of images or psychic projections shares similarities with Hillman's imaginal \textit{unio mentalis} where thought and imagination come together. When framing a model of consciousness in art practice a conversation based around colour is useful - if consciousness operates on a continuum from 'darkness' to 'en-lightenment', then its evolution can be matched symbolically to the range of visible colours in the spectrum from black to white during the process of making art. (Hillman, 2010: n. p.) Matching transitions in consciousness with the symbolic values of colour resolved one of my research objectives because it was one way in which imaginal psychology could be combined with art-making to provide a 'practice for consciousness'.

As I followed the affective content of the image, in this case my emotional response to a particular chromatic variation of blue, I was able to note the symbolic value, the feeling, the idea of blue and my evolving relationship with it. Making observations in a detached way without trying to solve the puzzle, allowing imaginal dialogues to play out without judging them brings Coleridge's 'willing suspension of disbelief' into focus. Feeling and playing with images is not the same as analysing and intellectualising them. The latter is a function of the conscious mind that attempts to establish and maintain boundaries because, in the extreme, not doing so leads to 'madness'.\textsuperscript{89}

In addition to the tension that already existed between the controlling aspect of my psyche and its imaginative function there was another split - between psyche and body. Although I was powerfully and irrationally drawn to the beautiful blue water I

\textsuperscript{88} '...a dull blue light representing the human realm will come toward you.... Do not delight in the dim blue light of the human realm. This is the seductive path of habitual tendencies....This (dull blue light) is an obstacle blocking the path to liberation...' (Rinpoche, 1994: 287) In addition \textit{The Bardo of Thodral or Tibetan Book of the Dead} makes a distinction between a 'dull' and a 'clear' blue, about which it says represents 'limitless wisdom....skanda or aggregate of consciousness'. (Bakula, 2013: n. p.)

\textsuperscript{89} The blurring of boundaries between creativity, altered states of consciousness, spirituality and what society often perceives to be 'madness' have long been recognised. This lack of clarity means artists often find themselves on the metaphorical and metaphysical 'edge'.

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was also holding a sensory ‘body-memory’ of its treachery. From my surfing experience I knew that being immersed in this colour in the ocean, in that place to which I was drawn and imagined myself to be, was also the place I would most probably drown. I was caught between emotion and reason: the desire in wanting to drown (merge, become one with, 'die') and survive (remain separate, 'live'). My thoughts continued to unfold in the following imaginary scenario and show how this creative imbalance led to some quite illogical but valuable insights.

If I jumped into the blue it was unlikely I would survive the fall and the swell breaking hard against the rock face. Even if I did, the sea at the base of the cliffs is aerated by constant agitation. From watching waves break on beaches, reef, diving, sailing and surfing I knew this agitation makes the colour of the sea lighter, giving it the beautiful aqua tinge I was so entranced with. However, the addition of air to water also renders it less capable of physically supporting a human body. I have experienced this when trying to claw my way to the surface after falling off a ‘green’ wave. Even when the maelstrom of white has subsided, the pretty blue-green does not support my weight. It is only after the air has been released and the bubbles dissolve that the water reclaims its cohesive density and offer enough resistance for a human body to push against. This prior knowledge might have contributed to my 'physical' bodily fear.

The numinosity of the blue water was intensified because of the irreconcilable conflict between an instinctive (body) memory and a projected (psychic) imaginary reality. The emotional depth of my response and ensuing internal dialogue had probably already altered my perception of the actual colour of the sea. When I tried to capture the feeling in my visual diary, and later in the studio at home, I was completely seduced by the aqua ink and rich translucent phthalocyanine blue oil paint in my kit - it was rich enough to 'eat'. This mesmeric attraction prompted me to over-use it obsessively at first, probably to the detriment of the work. It was as though I could not get enough

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90 Surfers look for 'green waves' because they are unbroken. They support and propel the board forward through the water.
blue or one that was sufficiently vibrant and translucent. In the latter stages of research I came across Hillman's warning of the inherent risks in literalising the image, or 'as the alchemists say, "Beware of the physical in the material". Physical, of course, means also metaphysical.....Any blue that becomes pure blue is not true blue'. (Hillman, 2010: 108) Hillman maintains this is what happened to Yves Klein who was so obsessed with a particular type of blue he not only created it, but patented it.

Hillman continues to explain that, 'The blue transition is delicate; things can go wrong....When the element of air and the far imagination of blue conjoin, an archetypal possession can ensue'. (Hillman, 2010: 107) This occurs because of the 'exasperating complexity of blue' that 'often forces on its devotees a monochromatic reduction that idealises one specific component, most famously, the Blue Revolution of Yves Klein'. (Hillman, 2010: 123 f.n.) He concludes that:

Unless the mind can dissolve the literal into fantasy it can become possessed by a single feature of archetypal blue's imagination i.e. Yves Klein's manifesto and demonstrative acts......Blue literalisations must be dissolved lest the archetypal power coagulate into a monocular metaphysical vision. (Hillman, 2010: 123)

It is possible that individuals become obsessed with this colour because it promises insight and revelation, which Hillman's comment supports:

Blue is preparatory to and incorporated in the white, indicating that the white becomes earth, that is, fixed and real, when the eye becomes blue, that is, able to see through thoughts as imaginative forms and images as the ground of reality. (Hillman, 1981: 8)

Because of its close links to imaginal consciousness, blue is particularly relevant for a methodology based within art practice. It became evident that the blues of my own landscape palette had introduced me to a realm that had seduced others before, the fascination it has held for several Western artists is well documented. Some have studied its metaphysical properties and its role in the evolution of the psyche in depth - their research, as well as my own, uncovered links to Western alchemical systems in which the symbolic value of blue is examined. A few artists have had intimate and
lengthy relationships with it and produced a body of blue work - probably the best known is Picasso for his ‘blue period’. Cezanne too went deeply into blue, transcending its usual referential associations to align it with a 'deeper level of existence'. (Hillman 1981: 8) Klein's relationship with blue seems to have been somewhat literal, which may have been a result of an unrealistic quest for immateriality through the material that obscured an alternate reading of its value as a symbol. In contrast, Cezanne was able to maintain the 'complexity' of the colour blue by constantly engaging with its chromatic variations, thus ensuring it did not 'fixate into a singleness of mind or mood'. (Hillman, 2010: 123) However, it is also possible Cezanne did not venture quite as deeply into the blue of the imaginal realm as Klein did.

Finding myself in my own 'blue period' I took the risk, indulged the obsession and 'painted it out'; blue remained dominant in my paintings, right up until the latter stages of my studio research. Unaware of Hillman's warning at the time I pressed on, invoking the recurring dream in which the saccharine sweetness of the blue liquid made me nauseous. I noted the synchronism between my dream, the blue, my insatiability for it and what was happening with the paint in the studio. There was something ‘unpalatable’, I could not 'swallow', yet I was compelled to drink it, use it, eat it - to satisfy a hunger that had a destructive element embedded in it. I had incorrectly assumed my response to blue was not significant in itself because it was simply representative of the water. However, I also realised on some level that the psychological states Hillman spoke of were familiar, confirming what I had already observed: that when air penetrated the black water there was a parallel shift from the density of the material body through the emotional psyche towards a numinous reality.

There is another quality of blue that confirms its critical role in the evolution of consciousness. Hillman says the imaginal field represented by blue allows us to see 'the event as image creating at the same time a remoteness from real things'. (Hillman, 1981) Remoteness enables the viewer to be less emotional and move to a place of
intellectual distance that encourages contemplation. Here is psyche as *logos*\(^{91}\) (as distinct from *eros*), a psychological state that seemed to have something in common with the phenomenon of aesthetic distance and the way in which the creative process itself provides a level of remoteness from what may otherwise be an overwhelming experience. Given my need to return regularly to the site, the process of looking as well as working with art materials, facilitated an aesthetic and a more detached relationship with the subject. As Hillman says:

> When imaginal engagement occurs, images facilitate the expression of thought - imagination thus enables movement toward a wider horizon of mind. (Hillman, 2010: 110)

Imaginal practice gave me a deeper understanding of the landscape, a way to play creatively with the images and the emotional distance to reflect on them without becoming completely seduced by the blue or drowned in the black ocean of the unconscious. I am convinced that both object and image grounded me enough to negotiate the Void safely. Imaginal practice continues to be my safety barrier - a metal cage perched on the edge of the chasm - securely bolted to the dense granite of matter.

There are similarities between my encounter with blue and Yves Klein's obsession with it based on its links to the imaginal. Inspired by the philosophies of Rosicrucianism where "empty" space was spirit, a living dematerialised substance', Klein set out to represent the 'subtle energies of the Void by means of the most immaterial vehicle possible'. (Levy, 2006: 123) He chose blue because it 'symbolised pure spirit manifest in an indefinable, boundless space'. (Levy, 2006: 124) Levy notes that Klein's blue 'did not have the melancholy associations of the Symbolist poets and painters'. (Levy, 2006: 91 Logos as the so-called 'higher' function of mind is identified with *spirit*, *Logos* equates to the theological 'Spirit'. In one aspect *logos* is an intellectual function of the 'material' cognitive brain whereas on another level it represents a more holistic 'knowledge' or 'truth'. It is tempting to think of the former as a process *towards* something and the latter as an 'absolute', which is its intended 'goal'. From this I have assumed that the journey of consciousness begins with the mind's basic capacity for conscious awareness, then in the ability to take in, process and interpret information. Eventually *logos* moves towards a realm of consciousness where paradoxically 'thought' is no longer present or required. Here it could then be defined as *Logos*, *Spirit* or *numen*.\(^{92}\)
Instead he preferred to evoke an 'ecstatic experience' in the viewer through a 'sense of infinite expansion'. (Levy, 2006: 126)

Fig 23. Michelle Frantom, Water (Study 1), 2011, oil and material on board, print 20.0 cm x 20.0 cm

On some level, I too have explored blue as an infinite expansion of ecstatic experience and its links to the Void so I appreciate why Klein (1959) would say: 'I want to go beyond art, beyond sensibility, beyond life, I want to go into the void'. (Levy, 2006: 130)

In 1960 he claimed he was in a 'spiritual state' that grew daily and which he was focused on keeping 'pure and authentic', untainted by the 'psychological domain'. (Levy, 2006: 124) Although he had previously represented the Void as a blue square or rectangle, he eventually traded colour and the materiality of paint for an empty white gallery infused with his essence. (Levy, 2006: 127) Given his awareness of the dangers in opening himself to the 'immeasurable energy of the Void' perhaps his sudden death from heart failure 3 years later was not unexpected. (Levy, 2006: 131)
The perceptual shifts I experienced in response to the aqua sea at The Gap opened a window into the blue of imaginal consciousness, a non-ordinary reality where the boundaries between consciousness and the unconscious are blurred. In blue, as in water, I move without gravity - strange thoughts and images float unhindered to the surface. What was happening in the physical landscape, in the sea, between sea and stone, was mirrored in abstract and symbolic ways in my psyche and my artwork. The inter-play between the emotional values of colour, and real observation with fantasy, changed my view and my understanding of The Gap and the Australian landscape in general. In the process I discovered for myself that the imaginal realm was coloured blue. In addition blue turned out to be the interface between black and white, between un-knowing and knowing where I could begin to see the connections between things.

In the final stages of my research I had an extraordinarily numinous dream, confirming that not only had my imaginal perception changed colour from black to blue, it had also moved into white. I wrote in my journal:

I was out on a vast body of water on a surfboard that was capable of neutral buoyancy. Someone else was there, on a slower board. I went underwater, maybe 30 or 40 feet deep and suspended myself above an empty white shallow recessed 'shrine'. I could not quite see inside but was sure it was empty. I knew this structure was creating the waves on which 'we' would be surfing. We could barely see the land but felt in no danger because the sea was completely transparent, clear and full of radiant crystal light. 'We' decided to head further in and catch some waves.

(Frantom, Journal entry, 2012)

The dark oceanic unconscious had finally mirrored its opposite in a sea of brilliant crystal white light in which I was no longer alone or fearful. In that brief moment I understood that both darkness and light are illusory manifestations of the same phenomenon of consciousness.\(^{92}\) The impact of this image on my psyche was immense.

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\(^{92}\) Support for this view can be found in the tale of Markendaya: 'The secret of Maya is the identity of opposites. Maya is simultaneous and successive manifestation of energies that are at variance with each other, processes contradicting and annihilating each other: creation and destruction, evolution and dissolution, the dream-idyll of the inward vision of the god and the desolate nought, the terror of the void, the dreadful infinite. This “and,” uniting incompatibles, expresses the fundamental character of the Highest Being . . . Opposites are fundamentally of the one essence, two aspects of the one Vishnu.' (Stein, 2010: 67)
It supported what Western spiritual psychologists and mystics, and Eastern traditions like Buddhism maintain - that binaries are just two aspects of the same reality - the imaginal Void. Even though I am unable to re-enter this state at will, a memory of the crystal light periodically enters my waking life and I am reminded of the numinous dimensions of existence as they manifest in that form. Paradoxically, this image also enabled me to reconcile with the dark underworld of the unconscious. Having changed my perception of reality in a very profound way, this knowledge persists and is now the lens through which I occasionally see the world.

The Imaginal Void

'Australia is a mere outline with darkness at its centre: a void'.

(Leer, 1985: n. p.)

Although confrontation with the unconscious should not be underestimated it is a valuable opportunity for growth. In esoteric philosophy the ability to embrace paradox is critical because in a unified field of consciousness one polarity always carries its opposite - extreme darkness therefore leads to the light. The Void is a multi-dimensional phenomena that is not just empty or nihilistic - an and/both rather than either/or scenario which is clearly articulated in Eastern philosophy.

The Void I know is full and empty at the same time. For traditional Western philosophy and theology however, the Void is just empty. If the Void is the ultimate image of a supra-ordinate reality as I am suggesting, then it presents a problem for those who only see God in human form because an absence of that form implies God is not there. (Levy, 2006: 1). On the other hand if God is a ‘formless field that permeates everything, the Void is full and has presence’. (Levy, 2006: 1) Even in Western culture,

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93 'The idea of the Void or God as a formless field that at once is the source of all creation and is inextricably linked to all forms of creation is hard for most Westerners and even many Easterners to grasp'. (Levy, 2006: 1)
in Genesis, the world was created from the Void. Buddhist philosophy is founded on this paradox - as the essence of reality and the source of all life, although the Void is ‘....formless, empty, or void’, it is an emptiness ‘not to be taken for mere nothingness’.

(Chandogya Upanishad, 2006: n. p.)

Arnolds Grava explains:

The confusion arises between Nothing and Emptiness. They are not the same thing. When philosophers like Lao Tzu speak of 'primordial Emptiness' they are talking about the void as a state of ultimate potential, the 'Great Void' of the Tao. (Grava, 1963: 238)

The Tao as a ‘creative void' also bears a significant resemblance to ‘field’ theories in modern physics. (Grava, 1963: 235) The Void of Eastern mysticism, like the physical vacuum in field theory, is not a state of mere nothingness which even science now concedes. (Monte, 1997: n. p.) Rather, it is a vital part of reality because it is

the absolutely necessary interval between the poles....the ‘in-between’ that is essential for the ‘wholeness of the atom, the togetherness of the structural-functional units in their reciprocal, mutual relationship'. (Grava, 1963: 244)

If the 'Void or God' is a ‘formless field’ and ‘the source of all creation’ (Levy, 2006: 1), then the Divine must be present in both 'torrential cataracts and vertiginous abysses, but also by the opposite extreme of an uncommon stillness and silence'. (Rosenblum, 1975: 20)

The Gap is a real-time representation of the Void - full and empty in equal measure, invoking both presence (stimulation) and absence (for life) on a massive scale. It is full because watery abyss and stone structures together form a living psychic cauldron. It is empty not because it is void of life, but because it is void to human existence - both a

94 In the interpretation of Tao there has often been an inclination to associate ‘non-presence or ‘not-yet-being’ with ‘absolute non-being’ and to confuse ‘potentiality of a “field” with empty space or absolute void, or....nothingness’ (Grava, 238: n. p.)
95 ‘...the metaphysical concept of Tao in its essence corresponds to the scientific concept of a tensional field’ (Grava, 240: n. p.) This is based on the principle of ‘inward polarity’ – and characterises every field of tension – nuclear, protons and neutrons, extra- nuclear, nucleus and atoms and so on. This is where we get into Whitehead’s “realm of eternal objects” both before their ingression (state of potentiality) and after....(state of actuality)’ (Grava, 240: n. p.)
96 The Void is also known as a ‘field of clear or luminous light, or a state of utter stillness, or even just a symbol or mental concept’. (Levy, 2006: 2)
psychological and a physical symbol of death. As a coastal landscape The Gap is also a recreation of Genesis where rock (earth) and water (sea) come together violently to create the world. For the physical body and the mind it is a paradoxical space that, on a collective psychological level, is the place to which we will return if we cannot maintain order and control: 'that state of barbaric vagueness and disorder out of which civilisation has emerged and into which, unless saved by efforts of gods or men(sic), it is always liable to relapse'. (Sweeney, 1960: 376) Yet between the polarities of creation and destruction the imagination thrives and transcendence is always a possibility. The Gap is a microcosm, a relatively small void within a larger one - the transcendent Void of existential annihilation in the West and the eternal Divine immanence of the East.97

Individual experience of the Void varies, for some it is 'active energy' that 'cannot be apprehended through the normal senses or by mechanical extensions of these senses'. (Levy, 2006: 1) In this it resembles the sublime in nature. One of the most successful painters of this type of Void was J.M.W. Turner.98 With his extraordinary ability to convey both chaos and emptiness many of Turner's paintings powerfully express the dual nature of the Void. Rather than interpreting nature as a 'benevolent force that soothes the psyche' he presented it as an 'active entity....overwhelming and awesome'. (Levy, 2006: 95) Turner's Void was inspired by Milton's chaotic and turbulent realm of 'warring elements that exist in an intermediary zone between hell and the created world' - between life and death. (Levy, 2006: 98)

Where Caspar David Friedrich painted the 'empty' Void as vast, silent and still, Turner gave us the 'full' void of Creation - it was 'said of Turner that he delighted in going "back to the first chaos of the world....All is without form and void"'. (Rees, 1982: 264) Perhaps this was because he was more intent on discovering a 'fundamental order of

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97 Buddhist literature on the Void is vast and specific, especially in regard to the different levels of consciousness encountered in religious practice. I consider there are links between these models. I direct the interested reader to an E-library publication by Taylor & Francis, The Buddhist Unconscious (2004) by W. S. Waldron.

98 Despite the fact that his interest in painting the Void raised the ire of his critics. (Levy, 2006: 94)
reality’ than just experimenting with new ways of representing it.99 (Rees, 1982: 264)

Turner’s Snowstorm (figure 24, p. 103) conveys the Void less by depicting ‘elemental forms....than the processes of painting and thought: this work seems to depict its own creation’. (Monks, 2010: n. p.) The fact that Turner captured the 'chaotic miasma' or 'the khora....this primordial state of suspended possibilities....prior to knowledge, words and meaning' supports his claim that it was inspired by 'first-hand experience'. (Monks, 2010: n. p.)

![Fig 24. J.M.W. Turner, Snow Storm - Steam-Boat off a Harbour's Mouth, exhibited 1842, oil on canvas, 91.4 cm x 121.9 cm](image)

According to Monks (2010), Turner makes more than one reference to the experience of drowning - this is evident in the practical execution of Snowstorm where the boat's mast has been almost obliterated by layers of paint. In his choice of the sea as subject, its symbolic relationship to the unconscious and the way in which he renders it, Turner

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99 ‘...the picture....performs the moment before knowledge, when vision, thought and bodily experience are effectively equivalent and have yet to tip over into the re-cognition that will define them as distinct, and differently valued, types of 'knowledge'. A chaotic miasma from which form only hesitantly and incompletely emerges, Turner’s painting approximates the blank space – the khora, prior to knowledge, words and meaning – into which origins are born in philosophical thought. Significantly, this primordial state of suspended possibilities is no longer implied by the horizon but rather constitutes the entirety of the scene before us’. (Monks, 2010: n. p.)
exhibits at least an intuitive knowledge of the Void and its dual nature. Turner is just one of a disparate group of artists linked by their capacity to tap into the images of the collective unconscious, regardless of whether they had partial, full or no knowledge of its existence. As well as Lawrence Daws and Rick Amor this group includes Caspar David Friedrich, Mark Rothko, Yves Klein, James Turrell and Anish Kapoor. The work of these artists has a sublime quality because they re-present the symbols and motifs of human cultural expression, the reappearance of which across two centuries not only connects modern Romantics with the Northern Romantic painters of the nineteenth century, but with artists from every era. (Rosenblum, 1975: 12)

Mark Levy agrees with historian Robert Rosenblum that 'Rothko's paintings are successors to Friedrich's landscapes and seascapes', which in turn are some of the earliest attempts to express God as a sublime presence in the landscape. (Levy, 2006: 136) In his study into the Void in art, Levy notes that although he was 'first attracted to artists who used empty space' he 'soon realised that empty space is not always employed as a vehicle to present the Void'. (Levy, 2006: 3) Some artists make images about the Void while others have tried to make images of it. I suggest Rothko and Klein literally fell into the second category because in trying to 'recreate' it they un-created themselves. While there is no irrefutable evidence that Klein's engagement with the Void led to a heart attack at 34, or that by entering the abstract Void Rothko fell into depression and suicide, I am not the first to point out the links between their art practises and their eventual undoing as the following discussion shows.

Martin (2010) suggests that for Rothko, the emptiness of abstraction offered a way to paint an underlying categorical level of what he called "the Spirit of Myth"....that required no objects in a narrative, no story in the sense of a symbolic with its historical reservoir of mythological beings and laws'. Rothko's move towards the abstract was an 'attempt to avoid the personal, subjective and pathological. But this shift from the hypothetical to the categorical ultimately stages Rothko’s encounter with a psychotic
bitter end'.

(Martin, 2010: n. p.) His abstract and symbolic Void focused primarily on a Dionysian expression of ecstasy where the artist 'becomes one with primordial nature, "the phenomenon without a body", the Void' rather than on an Apollonian 'creation of form'.

(Levy, 2006: 134) Given Rothko's claim that he was 'interested only in expressing the basic human emotions, tragedy, ecstasy, doom', and that painting allowed him to share a religious experience with the viewer, I do not completely agree. (Levy, 2006: 135) Instead I consider Rothko's 'mistake' was in his reasoning:

If surrealism gained access to the domain of the Jungian archetypes, abstraction gained entry to the Who or the Thing that guarantees this domain of metaphors, the ‘Spirit of Myth’ itself. (Levy, 2006: 135)

In his impatience and faith in his ability to gain direct access to the archetypal 'I' and the sublime, Rothko did not progress naturally through the 'human' process of subjective identification with the physical and emotional dimensions of being. It was a case of too much too soon and, just as with Klein, the ego got ahead of itself in its paradoxical desire for individuation and engineered its own destruction prematurely.

The 'empty' form of the Void as a space both of them were trying to convey has no image - this is psychologically dangerous to the ego and perhaps even the physical self.

Whether abstract, expressionist, symbolic or representational, artists who paint the Void as a sublime phenomenon are concerned with the numinous and transcendent dimensions of existence. Levy suggests Rothko was able to evoke the 'loss of self' also experienced in meditation - 'feelings of lightness and release bordering on ecstasy' as well as 'profound fear and sadness'. (Levy, 2006: 135) However, pushing the visible

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100 The modernist pursuit of pure abstract form was envisioned as a pursuit that was compelled by the principle of painting (its internal categorical imperative of flatness and depth) and this imperative was meant to cleanse the pursuit of painting of any personal or pathological elements. In America there was a general turn away from surrealist practices over the course of the 1940s because of their dependence on personal unconscious content'. (Martin, 2010: n. p.)

101 To support my earlier comment about his relationship with the Void and early death; form relates to the body and anchors the psyche within it. A psyche that has been separated from its body must move into a different reality.

102 I am not making this judgement unthinkingly, it has been based on my own direct experience.
beyond its limits will eventually land us right in the Void where the body and ordinary consciousness cannot prevail. We need different eyes and different ways of being to survive it. Moving beyond the image into the Void proper is a Herculean task requiring sustained effort and training; it is probably out of reach for most of us. However, standing on its edge looking in delivers some very powerful insights. Surviving at least some of that journey and coming back to tell the tale as Rothko and Klein did is no guarantee of longevity but it might still have delivered the experiential knowledge they were seeking.103

The one quality of consciousness that links the sublime, art-making and the Void is transcendence. Artists who make images about or of it share a fundamental need to explore being as an immaterial possibility. Forays into the Void have been taken by contemporary artists Reinhardt, John Cage, Agnes Martin, James Turrell and Anish Kapoor,104 to name a few. The latter two have been strongly influenced by Eastern ideas about the Void. (Levy, 2006: 135) Anish Kapoor's representations of the sublime are grounded in the physical, that is, he does not attempt to image 'nothing' as Rothko and Klein were trying to do. Instead he seeks to convey 'a potential space, not a non-space', to equate an experience of the sublime with 'emotional transcendence' and 'a powerful sense of exaltation and release rather than fear...... ideas [that] are closely allied to those of east Asian thought as it has come down to us through Taoism and Buddhism'. (Morley, 2012: n. p.)

103 To integrate the image of the Void on a conscious level requires not only courage but some form of 'training' or strategy. Klein was highly trained in martial arts. However it is acknowledged that when trying to 'recreate' the void as an art installation he exposed himself to its destructive potential: ‘while he was shaping the Void....he was also opening himself to the immeasurable energy of the Void, and this was not to be taken lightly’. (Levy, 2006: 129)

104 Simon Morley (2012) says that: '....Anish Kapoor’s monumental Marsyas, made of stretched PVC, managed to convey a more affirmative experience of the sublime – a kind of post-religious state of emotional transcendence in which, exactly because of the lack of ordered structures or codes, we feel a powerful sense of exaltation and release rather than fear. His work also serves to link discussions of the sublime to non-Western concepts. In an interview given several years ago, he declared that through the experience of void that is central to his art he sought to convey “a potential space, not a non-space”. Such ideas are closely allied to those of east Asian thought as it has come down to us through Taoism and Buddhism'.
Rothko's 'bitter end' and Klein's early death may have had a positive outcome because the main function of art is to

set in motion the archetypal reality of the transpersonal within the individual and on the highest level of artistic experience to bring the individual himself (sic) to transcendence - that is, to raise him (sic) above time and epoch....to lead him (sic) to the timeless radiant dynamic that is at the heart of the world. (Funch, 1999: 183)

Neumann maintains that archetypes are 'intrinsically formless structures which become visible in art' (Neumann, 1959: 82) This is because:

The creative impulse springs from the collective; like every instinct it serves the will of the species and not the individual. Thus the creative man (sic) is an instrument of the transpersonal, but as an individual he (sic) comes into conflict with the numinosum that takes hold of him (sic). (Neumann, 1959: 98)

When Turner imaged the Void as a potential space rather than a non-space as he did for most of his career, he demonstrated that he was far more interested in the 'universals of nature' than 'the particulars'. (Rees, 1982: 263) Rosenblum suggests it was these 'archetypal forms' that made his work so powerful. (Rosenblum, 1975: 12) These motifs can be detected in the work of many other artists working in very different ways:

Rothko (a static expanse of dematerialized, luminous colour),.....Pollock (a dynamic whirlpool of equally bodiless energy)....Still (a slow but relentless surface growth of incommensurable shapes....). (Rosenblum, 1975: 12)

The terms 'sublime', 'numinous' and 'void' have all been used in association with artists who paint archetypal themes. These qualities are drawn from the same imaginal source. The presence of root metaphors in some artworks makes them compelling because they speak in a universal language. Images referred to as sublime have epic and timeless themes - their purpose is to share a fundamental given that is unconsciously recognisable to others. When an image is archetypal it expresses an essential quality, through exquisite beauty, ethereal light, materiality, perfect or abstract form. It hints at a truth that reaches back into the primordial fabric of
humanity's mythic imagination. These motifs persist independently of time and cultural context because they are archetypal in human consciousness, they remain true regardless of whether the artist is even aware of their presence - something 'else' has taken hold of the materials and, just as the spiritual is conveyed through the human body, a divine truth is carried by the body of the artwork.

There are many examples where the void is a central theme in Australian landscape painting and I have listed only a few here: Lawrence Daws's *The Cage* (2005), (see figure 14 p. 77) is a non-anthropomorphic void of post-apocalyptic flatlands. The Void is also evident in Amor's expressive writhing oceans in its 'full' chaotic guise in *Nightmare* (1982), (see figure 11, p. 74) and in the desolate non-anthropomorphic voids of silent empty cityscapes like *Seawall* (1996). It appears in John Olsen’s 'void series' - landscape as void in *Lake Eyre* (1975), (see figure 25, p. 110) and *Life Drawn Towards the Void* (1975), Robert Juniper's, *The River Dies in January* (1977), sun-bleached and sprinkled with scraggy vegetation. Peter Booth's chaotic anthropomorphic void convey his personal existential catastrophes. (*Painting 1977*) Tim Storrier and Andrew Mc Ilroy recognise the symbolic relationship between the void, the unconscious, drowning and the sea to produce works like *Pacific Drift - The Gesture*, (1997), (see figure 27, p. 113) and *From the Pier* (2009), (see figure 8, p. 70). Whether minimally rendered or packed with visual information, all of these works image a potential space - a qualitative state of being, always on the brink of becoming and not-becoming, that shapes the psyches of those who are living on the edge of the Void.

Australia's archetypal links with the primeval past play a central role - the idea that land, sea and sky are imbued with 'spirit' emerged from a primordial sensibility that did not divide 'the holy from the unholy, the divine from the human'. (Neumann, 1971: 282) For Aboriginal people the land of Australia was, and continues to be, sacred because the *kurunba*¹⁰⁵ or *numen* is embodied in all things manifest'. (Cowan, 1992: 3)

¹⁰⁵ 'Life-essence'. (Cowan, 1992: 26)
Rather than seeing an empty land as early Europeans did they inhabited a place of worship 'reminiscent of an open-air cathedral'. (Cowan, 1992: 25) *Kurunba* is not an animistic spirit that breathes in the same way that 'organic nature' does, but a presence that underpins the metaphysical as well as the physical structures of the land. (Cowan, 1992: 26) Aboriginal people recognise landscape features as iconic representations of the Primordial Event\(^{106}\) and therefore manifestations of the *numen* (*kurunba*), leading to the perception that tribal lands are 'symbolic' landscapes.\(^ {107}\) (Cowan, 1992: 28) The similarity between the ever-present *kurunba* and the *numen* of spiritual psychology convince me there is a strong correlation between the Dreaming of Aboriginal culture\(^ {108}\) and the collective archetypal unconscious that Jung identified.

Imaginal practice is a valid a way for non-Aboriginal people to develop a deeper relationship with their homeland. Although I initially felt quite alienated from what was a very hostile environment, drawing and painting gave me a different view which may relate to Cowan's comment that the task of unravelling 'the web of significance surrounding....events pertaining to a given landscape requires....us to think in images'. (Cowan, 1992: 31) Aboriginal people traditionally engage spirit through 'ritual enactment and imaginal perception' by entering the primordial unconscious of the Dreaming with its store of archetypal images. (Cowan, 1992: 31) Although they have evolved in a different landscape, the ancestral/genetic memories of non-indigenous peoples similarly allows them to connect with the soul of the land via their own mythical traditions, even if they have moved to another place. Imaginal traditions established in European cultures millennia ago can be reactivated anywhere and at any

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\(^{106}\) When the *numen* bearing 'Sky Heroes' created the world, they left behind 'their personalised "signatures" in the guise of topographic landmarks, contour variations, trees, animals....all manifestations of life on earth'.\(^ {106}\) (Cowan, 1992: 27, 25)

\(^{107}\) For an oral culture in which 'imagistic' points of reference were vital, the land was a mnemonic device enabling its people to recall the Dreaming. (Cowan, 1992: 29) Cowan says that 'at this point landscape became an important co-respondent in the dialogue between man and earth'. The land contributed to this dialogue with 'signs created out of rocks, contours, flora, fauna....', enabling its human inhabitants to 'converse with the Sky Heroes of the numinous Dreaming'. (Cowan, 1992: 29) It is not too difficult to see these as the archetypes embedded in the landscape.

\(^{108}\) 'The Aboriginal belief is that before the Dreaming....that is, before the Primordial Event had occurred - this pristine landscape....conformed to the idea of "chaos" (lit. formless void).' (Cowan, 1992: 25)
time if those deep connections to landscape can be realised and a 'methodology' applied to put that instinctive knowledge into practise.¹⁰⁹ I consider this is what happened during my imaginal engagement with the Void at The Gap.

Other artists appear to have had similar insights and made significant connections with the landscape through art practice. John Olsen explored the idea and the physical reality of the Void as simultaneously 'full' and 'empty' in his 'void series' of paintings about Lake Eyre in the 1970s (figure 25, p. 110). His appreciation of the natural cycle of life and death with its inherent paradoxes enabled him to see it in a positive light more closely aligned with Eastern religion than Western philosophy.

Olsen's notion of the void did not imply a negative response....but related instead to the paradoxical nature of the full and empty lake, the "ocean" and the desert which, in turn, found a correspondence with Oriental philosophy. (Hart, 1991: 135)

¹⁰⁹ Many are still practised - for several years I was a member of O.B.O.D., a British Druid order that operates in many countries. Their rituals and practices include active imagining during which initiates are encouraged to speak with various 'spirit figures' in the landscape.
Olsen described his experience at Lake Eyre in Central Australia as a 'first awakening to the mysterious power of the landscape'. (Fitzgibbons, 1995) In 1975 he wrote:

What is commonly known as the "dead heart" became instantaneously the living heart....The lake is paradoxical, conceptual, for it is impossible to view it without thinking of the empty lake, ....it's superabundance now and it's future emptiness. (Fitzgibbons, 1995: n. p.)

Much can be learned from observing the experiences of artists like Olsen and Daws because it is clear that although the spiritual adept goes in search of the light, it is the journey into the darkness that paradoxically leads them to it. As Levy points out:

Spiritual growth entails an encounter with the Great Void and lesser voids, it is not all sweetness and light as the new agers would like us to believe. (Levy, 2006: 5)

Recalling Jung’s comment that the night sea journey is perilous, and in view of my own experience, it would be irresponsible not to caution anyone considering engaging in any type of practice aimed at exploring the unconscious. Even on an imaginal level it poses a significant threat to the ego. Not everyone will encounter the Void as I did, but there are real psychological dangers from becoming entangled with it in whatever form it takes. Because it there is nothing recognisably human for the ego to attach itself to, the Void is a particularly dangerous archetype. When it is full with chaotic sound and movement it engages the ego but still has the potential to frighten it to death. An empty Void starves it - either way the ego faces deconstruction. As it fights for its existence it loses its grip on what it thinks reality is, which opens the psyche to other possibilities, one of which is the 'self' - but the other is crippling fear and depression. Being in either a challenging physical or psychological situation pushes the ego to its limits. Engaging a landscape like The Gap on more than just a superficial level is a confrontation with an imaginal death that can send the psyche plummeting to the underworld. However, imaginal practice works because the numinous dimensions of

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110 Levy cites these as the 'boredom, vertigo, depression, melancholy, and fear' found in the 'works and lives' of the artists he discusses. (Levy, 2006: 5)
111 Here 'ego' indicates an aspect of consciousness that knows that it exists as a conscious entity but remains primarily linked to the personal aspect of the psyche. The inference is that ego is only partially or not at all aware of a consciousness beyond 'it'-self.
consciousness are non-ordinary, illogical and contradictory - what appears on the surface to be a negative experience is also a positive transcendent opportunity if the individual can stick to the image as the following example illustrates.

In the latter stages of my studio research, and just as Amor's 'running man' (Copeland, 2008: n. p.) appeared out of nowhere in his Nightmare painting, I spontaneously 'saw' a stone cube suspended in the chasm\textsuperscript{112} at The Gap. I felt compelled to add one to an early version of Chasm. At the time I did not understand why - it was a revelation to discover later that the cube harnesses the power of an 'impersonal' symbol to 'concretise the "eternal" aspect of the self....in the imagery of the unconscious'. (Jaffe, 1984: 84) The cube symbolises the self, or the psychic image of God and is a 'limiting' agent that defines and fixes the formless void into a contained space, offering 'fixation and limits for divine expression.' (Leviton, 2004) As a 'subtle container of the higher

\textsuperscript{112} The chasm I refer to is the main attraction at The Gap. See earlier reference in 'The Gap'.

Fig 26. Michelle Frantom, The Philosopher's Stone, 2007, digital collage, print 40.0 cm x 40.0 cm
cosmic worlds', the cube 'defines both the process of divine emanation and of spiritual return.'\(^{113}\) (Leviton, 2004: n. p.) Edinger observes that:

Quaternity, mandala images emerge in times of psychic turmoil and convey a sense of stability and rest. The image of the fourfold nature of the psyche provides stabilizing orientation. It gives one a glimpse of static eternity. (Edinger, 1992: 182)\(^{114}\)

![Fig 27. Tim Storrier, *Pacific Drift - The Gesture*, 1997, synthetic paint on paper, 103.0 cm x 152.0 cm](image)

A variety of quaternity or 'four-fold' images appear in different cultural traditions as squares and rectangles, or forms that relate to the number four like the cube which is made up of four-sided squares with eight points. (Clogston, 2007: n. p.) Alison Deadman says that in esoteric philosophy the cube is 'the symbol for the soul':

The Cube of Space, like the better-known Qabalistic diagram, the Tree of Life, can be interpreted as a map of the soul’s journey toward unity with the Divine. (Deadman, 2006: 10)

This motif can be seen in the work of several Australian landscape painters. In Tim Storrier's *Pacific Drift (The Gesture)* (1997) (figure 27, p. 113) a cube in the form of a

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\(^{113}\) Leviton quotes Kevin Townley and Leonora Leet.

\(^{114}\) ‘The mandalas of Tibetan Buddhism are used for this purpose. They are instruments of meditation which convey to consciousness a sense of peace and calm as though one were safely grounded in the eternal structural substance and protected from the disrupting dangers of change'. (Edinger, 1992: 182)
submerged television is suspended symbolically in the sea of the unconscious. Of course it is possible I had seen Storrier's painting and been influenced by it. However I have seen hundreds of paintings and could have chosen any number of motifs. I consider I chose this particular motif because the image of the cube is a natural psychological response when faced with a particular kind of alienation found in the void-like spaces of the Australian continent.

![Image]

Fig 28. Michael Maier, Emblem 36, in 'Atalanta Fugiens - Emblemata Nova', 1618 (engraving, no details)

Even though I discovered the cube motif quite independently, this synchronicity is supported by 400 year old esoteric literature. There is a reference to the floating cube in Western alchemy: Michael Maier's *Atalanta Fugiens - Emblemata Nova* published in 1618. Maier's *36th Emblem* (figure 28, p. 114) is accompanied by the quotation: 'The Stone that is Mercury, is cast upon the Earth, exalted on Mountains, resides in the Air, and is nourished in the Waters'.\(^{115}\) The cube in my work is uncannily similar to Maier's image, the motif of a cube floating on air is unusual and uncommon.

\(^{115}\) John Eberly, *Atalanta Fugiens (Emblem #21)*, 2000. A book entitled 'Michael Maier's Atalanta Fugiens: Sources of an Alchemical Book of Emblems' was also published in 2002. In it H. M. E. de Jong shows how Maier 'borrowed mottos from old alchemical sources' that 'have a number of meanings and express ideas from alchemy, medicine, and the Rosicrucian system'.
In *Burning Train & Flesh Cube* (figure 29, p. 115), Lawrence Daws responds to a perceived threat in the landscape by invoking the cube. This work shows how Daws was able to reconcile the unconscious with consciousness, by clothing the symbol of 'spirit' with the image of 'flesh'. Later, in his painting *The Cage* (2005) (figure 14, p. 77), the cube that dominates this dark elemental flatland has reverted to its abstract symbolic form. The juxtaposition of human and non-human elements re-affirms the position of the psyche in its critical mediatory role during an encounter with the Void - suspended between consciousness and the unconscious. While it references the Australian landscape, Daws's painting has universal relevance because the cube is a symbol for the eternal aspect of the self. Its repeated appearance in his work and that of other artists in response to landscape, as well as its links to established systems like alchemy and esoteric philosophy, suggest imaginal practice has the ability to reconnect some individuals with these archetypes. A critical function of images in imaginal practice is that they act as a psychological 'safe-guard' to protect the psyche from complete annihilation.
Although it is vital for the ego\textsuperscript{116} to hold itself against the destructive forces of the Void and stand its ground, the way in which that happens must be authentic and evolve naturally without interference from the conscious psyche. In his retelling of the story of the fifteenth century Saint Nicholas of Flüe, Jung cautions against what he perceives as inauthentic engagement. When Nicholas sees an 'overwhelmingly terrifying face he involuntarily interprets it as God', and then spends a lifetime trying to adjust the image until it becomes the Trinity so he can convert this awe-ful \textit{imago dei} into something his traumatised psyche can absorb.\textsuperscript{117} (Jung, 1990: 12). Jung contends the Trinity image has 'nothing to do with the original experience' and that instead, Brother Nicholas twisted it to represent Divine Love because it fitted the Christian canon in which he was operating at the time. He could not deal with the reality of seeing the 'terrible face of God' - Jung concludes Nicholas's 'involuntary' response was a 'phenomenon of belief' and not true knowledge. (Jung, 1990: 12) I agree that imaginal practice only works if the image arises naturally and is constantly protected from conscious interpretation. On the other hand, when confronted with the awe-ful and terrible sublime, visualising a symbol like the cube and carrying it through the artwork can psychologically fix one's presence and reconcile the individual with the imaginal Void on some level.

\textsuperscript{116} Hillman says that 'Modernism is caught up in the reductionist notion that the psychological is coextensive with the personal, that the psyche is all ego. A more subtle modernistic formulation....is that Jung's idea of \textit{the self} embraces both ego and the unconscious, or that there is an axis between them, and the point of psychological work is to firm up that axis'. (Hillman, 1991: 9)

\textsuperscript{117} Nicholas of Flüe spent a lifetime converting an awe-ful \textit{imago dei} into something his traumatised psyche could absorb. However, Jung cautions against what he perceives as inauthentic engagement - when Nicholas sees an 'overwhelmingly terrifying face he involuntarily interprets it as God' and then adjusts the image until it becomes the Trinity, which has 'nothing to do with the original experience'. Brother Nicholas twisted it to represent Divine Love because he could not deal with the reality of seeing the 'terrible face of God'. Jung considers this a 'phenomenon of belief' and not true knowledge. (Jung, 1990: 12) He also discusses the revelations of Jakob Bohme, a mystic of the early Christian church.
LIVING ON THE EDGE OF THE VOID

It indeed appear’d to Reason,
as if Desire was cast out,
but the Devil’s account is,
that the Messiah fell,
& formed a heaven
Of what he stole from the Abyss.

(William Blake, 1757)

One of the objectives of this study was to make meaning of a set of recurring images that consistently made their way into my consciousness in the form of dreams. Combining Jung’s method of active imagination with visual art practice, I set out to find symbolic equivalents of those dream images in a sublime landscape. An account of that research and my findings are now held in a collection of artworks and a written exegesis where they will add to an existing body of knowledge about the tragic sublime in the Australian landscape. Driving that personal objective however, was a desire to learn more about the role of images in Western consciousness in general, and particularly their ability to mediate between the ordinary and sacred dimensions of the psyche. It was always my intention to develop a working methodology that could be shared with others - in the process I have learnt a few key things about consciousness.

My study into imaginal (art) practice has shown that it not only has the potential to deepen the connection between people and place, but between the individual psyche and a collective consciousness as well.

In 'Welcome to the Edge' I argued that the imaginal relationship between the natural landscape and the human psyche is underpinned by a shared archetypal matrix. I also discussed psychic imbalance as a creative and vital component of imaginal practice, particularly in respect of my studio research at The Gap. As a result of that research during an extended intimate relationship with The Gap, I have come to the conclusion that the void is not only a recurring motif in the Australian landscape, but a significant archetype in human consciousness. Although it is important to Australians, it resonates in the consciousness of humanity, as David Malouf’s comment suggests:
The claustrophobic room and the infinite void are extremes of Malouf’s vision....it is tempting to see them as somehow reflecting the extremes of Australia: the inland desert and the sea....against which the continent is outlined....the basic features of the map have almost universal validity for Malouf. It is his map of the condition humaine. (Leer, 1985: 4)

The map Malouf refers to cannot be negotiated by privileging either the psychological or the physical because, as I expressed in 'The Imaginal Void', the physical void has links to another more complex metaphysical Void where emptiness is not mere nothingness. Ideas about the physical void in the landscape and its relationship to the metaphysical Void in human consciousness were explored in the context of the Romantic sublime in 'Painting Against Death'. Here I examined how Australian artists respond imaginally to the Australian landscape through art materials to create both 'full' and 'empty' representations of the void. The personal 'case study' in 'Into the Blue' supported that discussion by showing how a 'negative' encounter with the imaginal Void in the landscape altered my view of reality in a positive way.

I continue to support the comments I made in 'Painting Against Death' that artists' attempts to make reality visible through paint reveals a fundamental need to filter an experience of the world through the senses, reconcile inner and outer realities and remove the barriers that prevent us from achieving a unified relationship existence. I can also confirm from personal experience that although it is the ego that drives that quest for wholeness, it is the ego that is symbolically 'sacrificed' as the psyche undertakes the night sea journey. Embracing the paradox and living with the contradictions eventually leads to the realisation that individual consciousness operates within a collective one.

It is through my conatus that I mirror, and am mirrored in, the wider systems of Nature. It is through my conatus that I, and other selves, achieve oneness with the ecocosm. Recognition of the fact that my conatus unites me with the ecocosm, which is seen as my greater Self, in itself expands the scope of my conatus: my will-to-exist now encompasses the wider systems of Nature. (Freya Mathew in Mc Donald, 1995: 61)
In 'Painting Against Death' I broadened the theoretical framework for Romantic sublime painting in Australia by suggesting the themes of ‘Romantic terror’ and ‘existential anxiety’ repeatedly rise up from the unconscious because they are an archetypal necessity for an evolving consciousness. I put forward some reasons for that fear and shared my insights into the role the idea-image of death plays in the process of individuation. As a result of that discussion I now conclude that fear is not entirely negative, in fact, when used in a conscious way, it is transformed into a valid way of knowing. Hillman's comments support this:

The biblical statement that fear is the beginning of wisdom is a significant psychological statement. Fear is not merely something wrong, to be overcome with courage, or at best, an instinctual protective device, but is rather something right, a form of wise counsel. (Hillman, 1999: 81)

Although the drowning dreams that initiated this project were frightening and I wanted to banish them from my consciousness, I now see them in a totally different light. As I discovered through my studio research and argued in 'The Gap' and 'Welcome to the Edge', the positive outcomes of the 'practice of dying' are not only well known, but an integral part of many traditional cultures, including that of Australian Aboriginals. The ‘problem’ death presents to the psyche is not meant to be resolved. Enriched by techniques like active imagination the creative imbalance that arises out of a confrontation with one's mortality opens the psyche to an imaginal ground in which shifts of consciousness are possible.

From my personal account in 'Into the Blue', it should be evident that an imaginal practice involving image-making, writing and research has the potential to transform the fear and negative emotions associated with death. Although Jung's studies provided the theoretical backdrop, the combination of 'doing' with 'knowing' that forms the basis of imaginal (art) practice finally brought about that transformation because as Jaffe explains,

an experience of meaning comes....only from a deepening of external reality through recognition of its numinous background.....By becoming conscious of its
transpersonal connections and images, and experiencing their numinosity, we get an inkling of powers which operate autonomously behind our being and doing, creating an order in our lives.... (Jaffe, 1984: 80)

My personal insights and the images that reflect my interaction with The Gap may inspire others to seek meaning by taking some kind of imaginal journey. The paintings and drawings that stand alongside the theoretical discussion are not intended to be images of the Void. In 'The Imaginal Void' I compared the ways in which Rothko and Klein imaged the Void, to convey what I see as an inherent danger in being too literal and explain why I used certain motifs. I had no intention of trying to recreate the Void - nor do I imagine I could. Instead my artworks were intended as an invitation for others to look into an imaginal space which, in the final analysis, is a ground of being impossible to image because it is an immanent and imminent manifestation of existence. Although this ground extends beyond the parameters of visual art practice, they share similar qualities in that both function as threshold states of consciousness between the material and the immaterial.

Knowing that images are, in a sense, 'meaninglessness' has implications for my visual art practice in future. Although I will continue to engage with them I now consider they are not an end in themselves but point to something else. This finding is supported by my studio research and study of archetype theory. It has also highlighted some ideological differences between Jung and Hillman. Comparing Jung’s view of the function of the imaginal in human consciousness with Hillman’s I agree that:

Hillman does not seem to have made a heuristic advance, especially since an emphasis on the imaginal tends to sequester affect as a primary aspect of the soul's experience. The idea of the 'imaginal' replaces only a small part of what is contained within the idea of the unconscious. Both mean realms of the psyche beyond the sphere of the known. But the imaginal and the unconscious cannot be simply equated. (Corbett, 1996: 98)

Jung and Hillman have divergent philosophical approaches to the imaginal based on their understanding of the Void. This difference is significant because their perspectives
present two fundamentally distinct theories about the role of images in consciousness. Adams suggests they diverge because, by adhering to archetypes like the 'great mother', 'hero' and 'trickster', Jungian psychology remains a structural theory and is therefore not a 'true psychology of the imagination'. (Adams, 2004: 56) Instead he advocates a post-structuralist 'revolution' that privileges imaginal psychology (as being 'superior to that of a conceptual psychology'). I disagree, because I see Hillman's engagement with the imaginal as being more intellectual and superficial than Jung's. To my knowledge Hillman makes no reference to a realm beyond images and does not support the existence of a reality it is not possible to imagine. On the other hand, and although Jung's imaginal encounters were important enough for him to painstakingly record his dreams and visions in the Red Book, he eventually acknowledges they are a means rather than an end in the evolution of consciousness. This is confirmed in sermon one of Septum Sermones ad Mortuos ("Seven Sermons to the Dead").:

Harken: I begin with nothingness. Nothingness is the same as fullness. In infinity full is no better than empty. Nothingness is both empty and full. As well ye might say anything else of nothingness, as for instance, white is it, or black, or again, it is not, or it is. A thing that is infinite and eternal hath no qualities, since it hath all qualities. (Jung, 1989: 379)

The introduction to Septum Sermones ad Mortuos reveals that Jung was influenced by his study into both Eastern and Western philosophy.118 His ability to trace the common threads that link Eastern and Western philosophy both convinces me of the authenticity of his insights and supports my experience of the Void. It also shows how, by image-making when combined with scholarly enquiry as Jung did in the Red Book, can uncover certain truths.

I continue to respect Hillman's study into the imaginal realm as a psychic reality. I have experienced this realm, it is blue and full of images and, based on Hillman's comments quoted in 'Into the Blue', and my enquiry into the work of Yves Klein in 'The Imaginal

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118 ‘The Seven Sermons to the Dead written by Basilides in Alexandria, the City where the East toucheth the West’. (Jung, 1989: 378) Jung was drawn to the Gnostics because of their ‘thinking in paradoxes' and therefore identified himself with the Gnostic writer Basilides. (Jung, 1989: 378)
'Void', I am only one of many who have seen it. I have learnt to appreciate that even though it will be transcended at some stage, it should be taken absolutely seriously. I can appreciate the veracity of my claim to real and direct knowledge could be seen as fanciful, except that even in subjective methodologies there are checks and balances. As the account of my experience at The Gap demonstrated in 'Into the Blue', when the psyche engages in imaginal (art) practice, new insights emerge in unique, spontaneous and synchronistic ways through direct engagement with the landscape and art-making. In my case if, they had not, I might have dismissed them as the result of an unconscious subsuming of someone else's experience or ideology. In the spirit of gnosis true knowledge arrives unbidden, irrationally and unexpectedly, and is only confirmed by a retrospective application of theory - just as the cube appeared spontaneously in my imagination before it was applied to my artwork. The process of seeking knowledge through the imaginal requires a commitment to integrity - the mantra for imaginal practice is: image (emotion) before theory (intellect). Many artists demonstrate a similar privileging of practice before theory.

Given my experience, and based on my research into the work of both Jung and Cedrus Monte, I now realise the importance of maintaining a close relationship with the material body, even more so when undertaking psychological work. As Monte says: 'The body wants the experience of the numen because the numen is the very thing that is the centre and core of its existence'. (Monte, 2005: n. p.) The physical is important because when the psyche is challenged in a confrontation with the unconscious it must preserve itself. The body assists in carrying out that function. In a study primarily focused on the transcendent possibilities of consciousness I admit this finding was unexpected. However Jung suggests it is not unusual:

The more insistent the spiritual quality of the self becomes, the more our consciousness is expanded through the integration of psychic contents, the deeper we must strike our roots in reality, in our own earth, the body.... (Jung in Jaffe, 1984: 83)
The difficulties endured as body and spirit move towards reconciliation are not only necessary but should be welcomed: when confronted with the raw power of nature, like the awe-ful sublime or *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* at The Gap, the numinous manifests in the body as a very real and tangible fear. In 'Welcome to the Edge', I explained how on more than one occasion I felt a high level of irrational anxiety when I was actually in no real danger. I now conclude that physical fear has a psychological component intended to jolt consciousness out of the everyday, free it from the controlling rational mind and embrace new possibilities.

One of the major challenges I faced as a cross-disciplinary researcher was in trying to present a single coherent idea while juggling some diverse and disparate models for consciousness. Several have been drawn into the discussion - the Romantic sublime in visual art 'Landscape as God', Jungian theory in 'Active Imagination', contemporary esoteric (spiritual) psychology in 'The Gap' and not least of all art practice itself in 'Into the Blue' and 'The Imaginal Void'. Reconciling these was not as difficult as it might seem because they are correlatives - different ways of looking at the same thing. In the context of this study the Void is the common symbol for an aesthetic ideology, a particular psychological state, a quality of the Australian landscape and a model for consciousness in esoteric philosophy. In the final analysis it is the psyche's ability to think in images that brings them all together.

Based on their qualitative similarities and how they are imaged in the psyche the sublime, the Divine and the *numen* are ultimately an expression of one phenomena in human consciousness - the true nature of being, or what Buddhists call the 'primordial ground of our absolute nature'; what we in the West might call the 'existential' Void. (Rinpoche, 1994: 263). Although it has been presented from different perspectives, all of the work has been driven by a need to discover and image that Void. In light of my findings, that is an oxymoronic statement because the Void is an image with no-image, or at least one it is not possible to convey by the usual methods. When fully integrated
into consciousness it is this knowledge that answers the question: what is the true nature of reality?

At the extreme, the individual consciousness seems to encompass the totality of existence and identify with the Universal Mind. The ultimate experience appears to be that of the mysterious primordial emptiness and nothingness that contains all of existence in a germinal form, the Void. (Grof, 1980: 31)

In the archetypal Void, image and theory lose their ground to make way for pure experience in an 'all encompassing space of truth'. (Rinpoche, 1994: 263) One of the 'light-bulb' moments of this project was the realisation that images are signposts on the way to that space of truth. Images are not the definitive answer, but they can show the way to it.

Further reading suggests the Void I encountered is only one stage in the realisation of an overarching unified superconsciousness. The idea that images are finally transcended has been acknowledged by many philosophers including Jung (1989) in *Septum Sermones ad Mortuos*, Mark Levy (2006) in *Void/In Art*, Richard Stein (2010) and William S. Waldron (2004) as well as artists like Yves Klein and Anish Kapoor. My comments about the psychic function of images in 'Landscape as God' indicate this knowledge is not new. What might be original in my study however, is the way that knowledge was discovered through a subjective and Romantic methodology in response to the landscape - which was one of the objectives of my research. When conducted in a particular way, imaginal (art) practice not only articulates consciousness by providing a means for its expression, but facilitates its evolution by offering a practical method of knowing through the creative psyche and its capacity to think in images.

Even though it now seems Jung's imaginal collective realm of unconscious archetypes is only one aspect of Divine consciousness it continues to play a central role in the evolution of the human psyche. It maintains equilibrium by making individuals aware that ultimate reality is a co-existence of opposites, a succession of manifestations of
energies 'at variance with each other....creation and destruction....the dream-idyll of the inward vision of the god and the desolate nought, the terror of the void, the dreadful infinite'. (Zimmer in Stein, 2010: 67) Engaging in imaginal practice, seeking out the sublime in nature and taking journeys into the unconscious, offers a glimpse, in varying degrees, of that reality. For the Romantic in search of dialogues with the numen or spirits of place, Cowan's advice rings true: to live in the Australian landscape authentically we must encounter the 'Primordial Event as if it were eternally re-occurring', just as its indigenous inhabitants did and still do. (Cowan, 1992: 41) The event Cowan refers to is the archetypal core of human existence - an ever-present paradox of creation and destruction. The challenge for humanity is to embrace both, the tragic as enthusiastically as the paradisical. It is not possible to fully know one without knowing the other - just as it is not possible to be human without valuing the material landscapes we occupy and the immaterial archetypes that constantly renew them. To engage wholeheartedly in life we need to embrace death - to know existence in its entirety we must look into both the loving and the terrifying face of God. When Australian artists paint their imaginal portraits of an archetypal land they see both faces - the awe-ful and the sublime.

In Australia we live on the land and near the sea, between Her Beauty and Her Terror, precariously balanced on the edge of the Void. Despite the difficulties in reconciling with its contradictory personality it alone offers redemption:

For Beauty's nothing but beginning of Terror we're still just able to bear....why we adore it so is because it serenely disdains to destroy us. (Rilke, 1912: n. p.)

This is the Beauty of Terror.
Appendix 1: 'Exegesis Images' - CD ROM Folder 1

This is a list of images that appear in the exegesis. Individual JPEG files can be viewed in 'Folder 1' of the CD ROM accompanying the exegesis. Dimensions are H x W. No dimensions are given for jpeg images in digital format. Sizes of prints provided.

Fig. 1. Mike Lyons, Gap Panorama #1 (photo of cage from Eastern side), circa 2009, film scanned to digital file. Collection of the artist................................................................. Page 46

Fig 2. Michelle Frantom, Study 40, 2009, mixed media on paper, 20.7 cm x 14.3 cm. Collection of the artist................................................................. Page 49

Fig 3. Michelle Frantom, Void, 2010, digital photograph, print 40.0 cm x 40.0 cm. Collection of the artist................................................................. Page 50

Fig 4. Michelle Frantom, Study 48, 2012, digital collage of mixed media drawings. Collection of the artist................................................................. Page 57

Fig 5. Michelle Frantom, Study 43, 2011, mixed media on paper, 14.2 cm x 20.5 cm. Collection of the artist................................................................. Page 59

Fig 6. Lawrence Daws, Night Sea Journey 1, 1993, oil on canvas, 158.0 cm x 137.0 cm. Private Collection. In Bruce, C. 2000 Lawrence Daws: Asylum in Eden, Thirty Years in Queensland, Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, p. 120.................................................. Page 68

Fig 7. Lawrence Daws, The Dark Sea, 1993, oil on canvas, 61.0 cm x 76.0 cm. Private collection. In Bruce, C. 2000 Lawrence Daws: Asylum in Eden, Thirty Years in Queensland, Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, p. 122.................................................. Page 69

Fig 8. Andrew Mc Ilroy, From the Pier, 2009, oil on linen, 153.0 cm x 146.0 cm. No details of current location. Andrew Mc Ilroy website: http://www.andrewmcilroy.com/recent_paintings.php (accessed 17/9/2013)... Page 70
Fig 9. Rick Amor, *The Visitor*, 1999, oil on linen, 130.0 cm x 162.0 cm. No details of current location. In Fry, G., 2008 *Rick Amor*, Sydney: The Beagle Press, p. 107... Page 72

Fig 10. Rick Amor, *The Runner*, 1998, oil on canvas, 76.0 cm x 110.3 cm. No details of current location. In Fry, G., 2008 *Rick Amor*, Sydney: The Beagle Press, p. 22..... Page 73

Fig 11. Rick Amor, *Nightmare*, 1982, oil on canvas, 33.0 cm x 40.0 cm. No details of current location. In Fry, G., 2008 *Rick Amor*, Sydney: The Beagle Press, p. 20..... Page 74


Fig. 17. Lawrence Daws, *Big Terrace*, 1986, acrylic & oil crayon on paper, 152.0 cm x 122.0 cm. Collection of the artist. In Bruce, C. 2000 *Lawrence Daws: Asylum in Eden*, Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, p. 105................................................. Page 81

Fig 18. Michelle Frantom, *Study 42*, 2010, pencil on paper, 18.0 cm x 17.0 cm. Collection of the artist................................................................. Page 85

Fig 19. Michelle Frantom, *Study 21*, 2009, mixed media on paper, 20.12 cm x 14.2 cm. Collection of the artist................................................................. Page 87

Fig 20. Michelle Frantom, *Study 15*, 2009, mixed media on paper, 20.4 cm x 14.2 cm. Collection of the artist................................................................. Page 89

Fig 21. Michelle Frantom, *Study 17*, 2009, mixed media on paper, 20.4 cm x 14.2 cm. Collection of the artist................................................................. Page 90

Fig 22. Michelle Frantom, *Study 28*, 2007, gouache on paper, 16.7 cm x 18.0 cm. Collection of the artist................................................................. Page 91

Fig 23. Michelle Frantom, *Water (Study 1)*, 2011, oil and shroud material on board, print 20.0 cm x 20.0 cm. Collection of the artist................................................................. Page 98

Fig 24. J.M.W. Turner, *Snow Storm - Steam-Boat off a Harbour's Mouth*, exhibited 1842, oil on canvas, 91.4 cm x 121.9 cm. Accepted by the nation of Great Britain as part of the Turner Bequest, 1856. Tate gallery website:


Fig 26. Michelle Frantom, The Philosopher's Stone, 2007, digital collage on painting, 91.5 cm x 91.0 cm (print 40.0 cm x 40.0 cm). Collection of the artist................. Page 112

http://menziesart.sitesuite.cn/cgi/dmcat.cgi?rm=display_lot&item_id=7736 (accessed 17/9/2013)................................................................................................................................. Page 113


Fig 29. Lawrence Daws, Burning Train & Flesh Cube, 1973, oil on canvas, 2 x 122.0 cm x 122.0 cm (122.0 cm x 244.0 cm) Collection of Broken Hill City Art Gallery. In Bruce, C. 2000 Lawrence Daws: Asylum in Eden, Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, p. 40........................................................................................................................................ Page 115
Appendix 2: 'Work Exhibited' - CD ROM Folder 2

This is a list of original work exhibited by Michelle Frantom at John Curtin Gallery, Curtin University, Bentley, 15 November to 8 December, 2013.

Unless otherwise indicated all work, including collages, is original. Individual JPEG files can be viewed in 'Folder 2' of the CD ROM accompanying this exegesis. Dimensions are H x W. No dimensions are given for jpeg images in digital format. Sizes of prints are provided where relevant.

1. The Cube of Space, 2013, digital animation over photograph.avi or mpeg (animation Kingsley Taylor, original soundtrack Robin Thomson, technical consultant Paul Kelly)
2. Drowning, 2013, oil and mixed media on panel, 2.4 metres x 2.4 metres
3. Chasm, 2013, oil and mixed media on panel, 2.4 metres x 2.4 metres

PRINT 1, Study 1-1, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 2, Study 1-2, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 3, Study 1-3, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 4, Study 1-4, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 5, Study 1-5, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 6, Study 2-1, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 7, Study 2-2, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 8, Study 2-3, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 9, Study 2-4, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 10, Study 2-5, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 11, Study 2-6, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 12, Study 2-7, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 13, Study 2-8, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 14, Study 2-9, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 15, Study 3-1, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 16, Study 3-2, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 17, Study 3-3, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 18, *Study 3-4*, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 19, *Study 3-5*, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 20, *Study 3-6*, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 21, *Study 4-1*, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 22, *Study 4-2*, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 23, *Study 5-1*, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 24, *Study 5-2*, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 25, *Study 5-3*, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 26, *Study 5-4*, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 27, *Water (Study 1)*, 2011, digital print of mixed media painting, 22.0 cm x 21.29 cm
PRINT 28, *The White Stone 2*, 2012, digital collage of drawings, print 40.0 cm x 27.0 cm
PRINT 29, *The White Stone 3*, 2013, digital collage of drawings, print 40.0 cm x 27.0 cm
PRINT 30, *Study 27*, 2010, acrylic on board, 12.41 cm x 22.87 cm
PRINT 31, *Study 3*, digital print of mixed media work, 40.0 cm x 41.3 cm
PRINT 32, *Welcome to the Edge*, 2012, digital collage, print 40.0 cm x 38.65 cm
PRINT 33, *Chasm 3*, 2013, digital drawing with traditional painting, print 40.0 cm x 40.34 cm
PRINT 34, *The Philosopher’s Stone*, 2011, digital collage, print 40 cm x 40 cm
PRINT 35, *Void 1*, 2012, digital photograph, print 40.0 cm x 40.0 cm
PRINT 36, *Void 2*, 2012, digital collage, print 40.0 cm x 40.0 cm
Appendix 3: 'Folio Images' - CD ROM Folder 3

This is a list of prints exhibited by Michelle Frantom in 2 folios at John Curtin Gallery, Curtin University, Bentley, 15 November to 8 December, 2013. Unless otherwise indicated all work is original.

Individual JPEG files of these images can be viewed in 'Folder 3' of the CD ROM accompanying the exegesis. Dimensions are H x W. No dimensions are given for jpeg images in digital format. Sizes of prints are provided where relevant.

FOLIO 1, Study 1, 2007, digital collage of scanned objects with photographs
FOLIO 2, Study 2, 2007, mixed media on board, 45.5 cm x 45.0 cm
FOLIO 3, Study 3, 2007, gouache & pencil on paper, 42.0 cm x 29.5 cm
FOLIO 4, Study 4, 2007, digital collage of mixed media drawings
FOLIO 5, Study 5, 2007, digital collage of mixed media paintings
FOLIO 6, Study 6, 2007, digital collage of mixed media paintings
FOLIO 7, Study 7, 2007, digital collage of mixed media paintings
FOLIO 8, Study 8, 2007, white pencil on black paper, 15.25 cm x 16.0 cm
FOLIO 9, Study 9, 2007, mixed media on paper, 12.9 cm x 9.7 cm
FOLIO 10, Study 10, 2013, digital collage of drawings
FOLIO 11, Study 11, 2011, acrylic on canvas, cropped to 27.0 cm x 27.0 cm
FOLIO 12, Study 12, 2008, mixed media on paper, 14.35 cm x 20.58 cm
FOLIO 13, Study 13, 2008, mixed media on paper, 20.58 cm x 14.46 cm
FOLIO 14, Study 14, 2008, mixed media on paper, 14.28 cm x 20.55 cm
FOLIO 15, Study 15, 2009, mixed media on paper, 20.4 cm x 14.2 cm
FOLIO 16, Study 16, 2009, mixed media on paper, 20.4 cm x 14.2 cm
FOLIO 17, Study 17, 2009, mixed media on paper, 20.4 cm x 14.2 cm
FOLIO 18, Study 18, 2008, mixed media on paper, 14.36 cm x 20.76 cm
FOLIO 19, Study 19, 2008, mixed media on paper, 14.05 cm x 20.85 cm
FOLIO 20, Study 20, 2009, mixed media on paper, 14.4 cm x 9.9 cm
FOLIO 21, Study 21, 2009, mixed media on paper, 20.12 cm x 14.2 cm
FOLIO 22, Study 22, 2009, mixed media on paper, 14.16 cm x 20.79 cm
FOLIO 23, Study 23, 2009, mixed media on paper, 16.5 cm x 19.6 cm
FOLIO 24, Study 24, 2009, digital collage of mixed media work
FOLIO 25, Study 25, 2009, oil pastel on photo of painting, 15.3 cm x 11.3 cm
FOLIO 26, Study 26, 2006, digitally enhanced original photograph
FOLIO 27, Study 27, 2006, oil on board, size unknown (painting sold)
FOLIO 28, Study 28, 2007, gouache on paper, 16.7 cm x 18.0 cm
FOLIO 29, Study 29, 2008, digital p.d.f. (originally 'Illustrator' CS 5 file)
FOLIO 30, Study 30, 2011, digital file
FOLIO 31, Study 31, 2011, digital collage of mixed media drawing
FOLIO 32, Study 32, 2011, mixed media on paper, 13.6 cm x 18.7 cm
FOLIO 33, Study 33, 2011, mixed media on paper, 9.7 cm x 9.0 cm
FOLIO 34, Study 34, 2012, digital collage of mixed media work
FOLIO 35, Study 35, 2013, digital drawing (print 22.0 cm x 22.0 cm)
FOLIO 36, Study 36, 2009, mixed media on paper, 20.81 cm x 14.33 cm
FOLIO 37, Study 37, 2009, mixed media on paper, 20.75 cm x 14.22 cm
FOLIO 38, Study 38, 2009, mixed media on paper, 13.2 cm x 13.8 cm
FOLIO 39, Study 39, 2009, mixed media on paper, 14.4 cm x 14.6 cm
FOLIO 40, Study 40, 2009, mixed media on paper, 20.7 cm x 14.3 cm
FOLIO 41, Study 41, 2012, pencil on paper, 18.45 cm x 18.55 cm
FOLIO 42, Study 42, 2010, pencil on paper, 18.0 cm x 17.0 cm
FOLIO 43, Study 43, 2011, mixed media on paper, 14.2 cm x 20.5 cm
FOLIO 44, Study 44, 2011, mixed media on paper, 20.25 cm x 14.1 cm
FOLIO 45, Study 45, 2011, pencil on paper, 12.7 cm x 14.6 cm
FOLIO 46, Study 46, 2012, pencil on paper, 29.5 cm x 19.0 cm
FOLIO 47, Study 47, 2012, digital collage of original drawings
Appendix 4: 'Studio Research' - CD ROM Folder 4

This is a list of images that form the remainder of the 'studio' or visual research undertaken by Michelle Frantom. These resolved and unresolved works were not included in either the exegesis, exhibition or the folio.

Unless otherwise indicated all work is original and journal drawings are mixed media, pencil, ink and gouache. Dimensions are H x W. No dimensions are given for jpeg images in digital format.

JOURNAL 1, 2008, 20.5 cm x 29.0 cm
JOURNAL 2, 2008, 28.7 cm x 17.0 cm
JOURNAL 3, 2009, 20.5 cm x 29.0 cm
JOURNAL 4, 2009, ink, 14.5 cm x 21.0 cm
JOURNAL 5, 2009, white pencil on black ink, 14.5 cm x 21.0 cm
JOURNAL 6, 2010, 20.5 cm x 29.0 cm
JOURNAL 7, 2010, 20.5 cm x 29.0 cm
JOURNAL 8, 2011, oil pastel on photograph, 7.8 cm x 11.0 cm
JOURNAL 9, 2011, 20.5 cm x 29.0 cm
JOURNAL 10, 2011, 20.5 cm x 29.0 cm

STUDIO RESEARCH 1, 2010, digital photographic collage
STUDIO RESEARCH 2, 2010, oil on board, 49.0 cm x 49.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 3, 2010, digital collage of paintings and imported image
STUDIO RESEARCH 4, 2006, oil on canvas, 100.0 cm x 100.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 5, 2007, oil on canvas, 100.5 cm x 100.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 6, 2008, mixed media on board, 49.5 cm x 49.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 7, 2007, mixed media on board, 40.0 cm x 46.5 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 8, 2007, mixed media on board, 45.5 cm x 45.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 9, 2007, digital collage of painting & photo
STUDIO RESEARCH 10, 2007, oil on canvas, 60.0 cm x 61.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 11, 2008, oil on canvas, diptych, 30.5 cm x 60.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 12, 2008, oil on canvas, 30.0 cm x 30.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 13, 2008, oil on canvas, 30.0 cm x 30.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 14, 2008, oil on board (detail)
STUDIO RESEARCH 15, 2009, oil on board, 12.5 cm x 23.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 16, 2006, oil on canvas, 20.3 cm x 16.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 17, 2007, oil on canvas, 70.0 cm x 50.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 18, Study 9, 2007, mixed media on paper, 9.7 cm x 12.9 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 19, 2007, mixed media on paper, 17.6 cm x 11.6 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 20, 2012, digital collage, drawing & photo of sculpture
STUDIO RESEARCH 21, 2010, digital collage of mixed media work
STUDIO RESEARCH 22, 2010, digital collage of mixed media work
STUDIO RESEARCH 23, 2010, digital collage of mixed media work
STUDIO RESEARCH 24, 2007, digital collage of mixed media work
STUDIO RESEARCH 25, 2006, oil on board, 120.0 cm x 58.5 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 26, 2007, oil on board, 120.0 cm x 184.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 27, 2006, mixed media on board, 22.0 cm x 22.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 28, 2009, digital collage of drawing & painting
STUDIO RESEARCH 29, 2009, oil on board, 22.0 cm x 22.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 30, 2009, oil on board, 22.0 cm x 22.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 31, 2009, oil on board, 22.0 cm x 22.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 32, 2009, oil on board, 22.0 cm x 22.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 33, 2009, oil on board, 22.0 cm x 22.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 34, 2012, digital collage of drawings
STUDIO RESEARCH 35, 2012, digital collage of drawings
STUDIO RESEARCH 36, 2012, digital collage of drawings
STUDIO RESEARCH 37, 2012, digital collage of drawings
STUDIO RESEARCH 38, 2012, digital collage of drawings
STUDIO RESEARCH 39, 2012, digital collage of drawings
STUDIO RESEARCH 40, 2012, digital collage of drawings
STUDIO RESEARCH 41, 2012, digital collage of drawings
STUDIO RESEARCH 42, 2012, mixed media on board, 120.5 cm x 90.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 43, 2009, mixed media on paper, 22.0 cm x 14.5 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 44, 2009, oil on board, 122.5 cm x 72.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 45, 2013, oil & mixed media on board, 164.0 cm x 122.0 cm
STUDIO RESEARCH 46, 2013, digital collage & drawing on painting
STUDIO RESEARCH 47, 2013, digital drawing on digitalised painting
STUDIO RESEARCH 48, 2013, digital drawing on digitalised painting
STUDIO RESEARCH 49, 2012, time lapse drawing.mov
STUDIO RESEARCH 50, 2013.mov
STUDIO RESEARCH 51, 2013.mov
STUDIO RESEARCH 52, 2012, Series 1, digital file
STUDIO RESEARCH 53, 2012, Series 2, digital file
STUDIO RESEARCH 54, 2012, Series 3, digital file
STUDIO RESEARCH 55, 2012, Series 4, digital file
STUDIO RESEARCH 56, 2012, Series 5, digital file
STUDIO RESEARCH 57, 2013, digital scan
STUDIO RESEARCH 58, 2013, digital scan with digital drawing
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