

# BPSI BULLETIN

Fall • Winter  
2016-2017



## Rooms with a View

As this issue of the Bulletin goes to press, we are processing an election cycle, unprecedented in tone, in which separate realities, voices, and affects were deep and division was stark. Versions of truth were debated and dismissed. Hate and fear continue to dominate. How are we to make meaning of this result? I wonder where we go from here, and how we can express our passion and commitment: how we can work as a community, and in the intimacy of our consulting rooms, to press for change, for dialogue, for open minds.

Immersed as we are in the verbal, we analysts sometimes favor words over the communications that are reflected in images, gestures, and light. Perhaps more comfortable in the world of shade and color, and with the physicality that is required to apply paint to canvas, artists reveal themselves differently. The visual artist approaches the work of creation in layers of meaning: brushstrokes, chisel or lens, wet and dry, abstraction and reality. Imagination drives the expression of personal representation onto a blank space. The mixture of internal and external perspectives is a two-way mirror, a special kind of window. Privileged to view the creation, we might think about what it means to look at art.

In some ways, it is a familiar space for analysts. A painting, drawing, photograph, or sculpture positions us within the artist, seeing through his or her eyes, looking outward. Simultaneously, we see in—a penetration of the artist's mind. It is bidirectional, in and out of the creative body; a moment in time, layered by personal meaning, orientation, and focus. This is what we know in the analytic world, where deep empathy flourishes - within a frame. The experience is immediate—evocative, personal, dynamic. Located before a piece, the viewer will gaze, stare, wait for reactions, for affect, for resonance, and for stimulation. The visual image captures us; we make meaning of it and ask: What does the artist want us to know? Our perceptions organize self-referentially, and though we may find clues in biographies or titles of works, there can be no certainty. Though we may interpret, we are given no denials, agreements, or answers. The art is the silent partner—there is no signal for truth or accuracy. The artist has expressed the gift of the intimate interior—we are free to receive the offer. To each of us who wishes to engage, the experience is different.

The environment that we create has impact, and so we now look to the artists who have found their voices — to inspire us, to help us rise up to the challenges and shoulder the burdens of dread, despair, and ugliness, whatever form they take and whatever frame may bind us. American artists have always been free to express defiance, conflict, despair, consolation, and comfort within the frame. Beauty and pain are unrestricted in the free space of creativity. But even so, it takes courage to risk exposure and dismissal. The art that is now on view in our building, the discussion of art in our community, the thoughtful inclusion of diverse representations of internal and external, is also part of BPSI's expansion. This is art that can ignite our work and life, and reveal many possibilities for reflection, difference, and connection. We reach into the visual, toward the expression that goes beyond words. We must guard against censorship of beauty, of protest, of integrity. So raise your voice, make contact, and seek the free space of expression. Someone said, no one can clip the wings of a bird while it is airborne.

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Front cover painting: *Psyche Opening the Golden Box* by John William Waterhouse (1903)

Photography credit (pages 26-27): images from *The Persistence of Memory: Photographs from a Geniza* by Vivien Goldman

Art credit (page 10): *Dark Sky, Dark Water* by Jennifer Ellwood (2012)

### Calling All Writers:

*The BPSI Bulletin is seeking members who have attended interesting talks, panels, or plenaries at local professional meetings, or at national and international conferences who would report on the event for the next issue. Or, if you would like to contribute a book review, please let us hear from you.*

*The Bulletin is published two times a year, and your contributions will provide opportunities for writing, and will enrich the community with your unique voice.*

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## *Letter from the President*

As President, I have the honor and sad responsibility of informing members when a death occurs in our community. This year we have lost several beloved members: Max Day, Sandra Holbrook, William Ackerly, Rae Silberger, Phillip Isenberg, Leon Shapiro, and Terry Maltzberger. At the time of a death, it is a privilege for me to communicate with colleagues, friends, and family so that I can write a notice to our membership. I have also attended several meaningful memorial services for our members. These memorials offer an opportunity to share grief and celebrate the person's life, and I have found that they can also be a time to reflect on our own lives. We hear about the lives of these analysts and psychotherapists—their stories and what they cared about—and in turn we can consider what we value and how we want to live.

Let me say a few words about what these seven members valued. Acknowledging the importance of his mentor, Elvin Semrad, Max's great interests lay in therapy, teaching, and his family. Sandra drew her inspiration from industrious Vermont women, her mother and grandmother, and valued her connection to the ATP and BPSI, attending meetings until shortly before her death. Bill was full of energy and joy and was nurturing to friends, colleagues, students, and patients, while also being incredibly generous to BPSI. Rae volunteered in our psychotherapy program and helped create a named scholar program. With his infectious enthusiasm and generosity, Phillip mentored many young psychiatrists and became their role model. Leon valued education, teaching, and humor, and he was inspiring in his commitment to addressing the social problems of our times. Terry was a loving, thoughtful, and generous mentor and scholar who wanted to be known as someone who loved to learn and loved to teach. As we think about these personal values of learning, teaching, mentoring, love, industry, devotion, and generosity, we can consider which of these is important to us as individuals. In a similar way, I also believe it is essential that we consider what values are important to us as an organization. I want us to continue to talk about what kind of culture we want at BPSI.

Fourteen months ago, over 150 BPSI members met in small groups in members' homes to consider a number of questions. What should our priorities be at BPSI and in the greater community? What will nurture and sustain our engagement at BPSI? We were asking what values we want to foster as an organization. And when we were confronted with questions of conflicting values, we began to consider how we can address the dilemmas. In those groups, members spoke about the importance of feeling connected and having a community and professional home at BPSI, and many felt that the small groups were a model for the kinds of conversations and meetings they wanted. I want to invite all our members to again participate in small groups in members' homes early in 2017 to continue our conversations about BPSI's priorities and future. We will discuss challenging questions about BPSI's future and also begin a process of reviewing our Strategic Plan. Please join us and participate in these important groups!

Our new initiative, the Campaign for Psychoanalysis, is underway! Since last winter, campaign Chair Jan Seriff; honorary Chair Tony Kris; our leadership team of Catherine Kimble, Carole Nathan, Joe Schwartz, Stephen Sternbach, Julie Watts, and myself; Larry St. Clair; the members of the Campaign Committee; our consultant, Diane Remin, and of course, our administrative staff, have worked hard to create a case statement that is focused on gifts toward projects that will "Engage the Next Generation" and "Expand Our Reach." This year we have all been shaken by the erosion of the values of trust, respect, truth, and decency in our national politics. Writing in the New York Times, David Brooks identified what he sees as a central challenge of our era, our social isolation, and made the point that small community organizations can make a difference. At this crucial time in our field, we have the opportunity at BPSI to act together



# *BPSI Works: Dreams and Objectives*

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and bring about change. We can build greater awareness, among healthcare professionals and the public, of the value of analysis and intensive therapy as effective and meaningful treatments. As we continue to build bridges to the community and deepen our public involvement, we can also encourage conversations about difficult social issues involving, among other things, race, gender, violence, and class, and share the ways in which psychoanalytic thinking and expertise inform these concerns. Campaign for Psychoanalysis committee members have begun visiting BPSI members to elicit feedback about the initiative and the case statement and to give them the opportunity to contribute financially to the campaign. As members hear about the campaign and receive information about it, I hope we can all act together to make it a success.

Perhaps you know the old folktale about “stone soup”. Some soldiers or travelers come to a village hungry and tired, seeking something to eat. The villagers are frightened and, having little enough for themselves, say they have no food to give. What follows is the charming story of how the travelers enlist the villagers in making stone soup, starting with a large pot, water, fire, and three stones. The travelers tell the villagers that “stones like these generally make good soup. But oh, if there were carrots, it would be much better.” One villager thinks she has a carrot or two and ends up adding an apron full of carrots to the pot. On it goes in much the same way with cabbage, a bit of beef, a few potatoes, barley, and a cup of milk. Soon the soup, which is “truly fit for a king,” is joyfully shared by all at a banquet.

In much the same way, all of us at BPSI have something to share. I am continually struck by the remarkable personal and professional gifts of our members. We each contribute something to our community—as teachers, students, writers, clinicians, visual artists, musicians, mentors, committee members and leaders—and all of our gifts contribute to the vibrancy and life of our organization. However, in the past, we have not had a tradition, as a group, of contributing money to BPSI. We all weigh our values when we consider investing our money. Depending on our age and personal circumstances, we think of providing for the future of our children, our families, or ourselves (my wife tells me she doesn’t want to live on cat food), and there are certainly times when we are freer or less free to make significant gifts to the organizations we value. Nevertheless, I urge you to consider what you value about BPSI and to donate to this campaign so that we can engage the next generation and expand our reach. It makes such a difference if we all contribute. Please consider with me what analysis, psychotherapy, and BPSI have meant to you, and join me in giving generously at this important time.

— James D. Walton



## Members Council

Julie Watts, *Chair*

As we embark on this new academic year, we are pleased to once again offer a menu of rich programming through our Program Committee, Members Seminar and “Explorations in Mind” courses. Several of last year’s initiatives have been launched. We now have recycling! Our ridesharing program is in operation, and we are optimistic that Drew Brydon, our website, database and roster administrator, will be doing the beta testing for the BPSI listserv in early winter, with a launch to follow in 2017.

This fall, the Committee on the Aging Analyst convened under the leadership of Malkah Notman and Jonathan Palmer. It is meeting this year as a study group to decide its direction. In addition, we are fortunate to be able to host two Ethics Education Committee discussions at our Members Council meetings, as we did last year.

At our Members Council meetings this fall, our conversations included concerns about the lack of attention to diversity in our membership and in our training, discussion about the potential impact of the American Psychoanalytic Association’s restructuring, and brainstorming about how BPSI can do better in outreach to and inclusion of our elder and retired members.



## Academic Affiliation and Research

Dan Mollod, *Co-Chair*

The Programs in Psychodynamics (PiP), which BPSI supports with travel grants to the American Psychoanalytic Association’s National Meeting as well as organizational assistance, helps keep trainees interested in psychoanalytic ideas and knowledgeable about training opportunities and programs that BPSI has to offer. The PiP is currently quite active and well established at three sites: the MGH/McLean psychiatry residency, the Harvard Longwood psychiatry residency, and a combined child psychiatry program, which draws fellows from the three major Boston child psychiatry fellowship programs. BPSI also offers four travel grants for social workers, and an Academic Affiliation & Research Division subcommittee is convening to distribute those awards for the 2017 meetings. We are pleased to have so many of the current PiP residents and PiP alumni active in the BPSI Fellowship as well as the ATP and analytic training. The division continues to discuss how to reach out in a similar “grassroots” way to trainees in other fields.

# *BPSI Works: Dreams and Objectives*

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## *From the Chair*

Joseph M. Schwartz

By the time you read this article, we will be well into the 2016–17 academic year. Training and membership programs are in full swing, our summer vacations a distant glimmer in our rearview mirror. But thinking back on this past summer, I was struck as never before by the fact that—although things may appear quieter at BPSI when classes are not in session and no members’ programs are scheduled—in truth, keeping BPSI running smoothly is a year-round project. I want to note, especially, the amazing work that Carole Nathan continued to do over the summer in collaboration with Drew Brydon, Karen Smolens, Lauren Lukason, Pharrel Wener, and Olga Umansky, and to express my appreciation for the many hours they dedicate to BPSI that extend far beyond the standard working week. A special thank-you is in order to Jonathan Palmer, whose beautiful paintings graced the walls of our home for the better part of the last year, and to the newly formed Board of Trustees Art Committee, which curated and coordinated the installation of our BPSI Family and Friends Art Exhibit which you now see displayed throughout the building.

It is an honor and a pleasure, as Chair of the Board of Trustees, to welcome two new Community Trustees, Susan Silbey and Harry Spence. Among other academic appointments, Susan Silbey is a professor of behavioral and policy sciences at the Sloan School of Management at MIT. Her faculty web page states that she “is interested in the governance, regulatory and audit processes in complex organizations. Her current research focuses on the creation of management systems for containing risks, including ethical lapses, as well as environment, health and safety hazards,” thus making her an ideal addition to our board. Harry Spence, a lawyer by training, has been engaged for many years in public service work that spans the fields of housing, education, and social services. Most recently he served on the faculties of both the Harvard Kennedy School and the Harvard Graduate School of Education. We are very fortunate to have two such eminent Community Trustees join the board. Both of them have already begun to bring their energy and wisdom to the work of the board. It is one of the goals of the board to expand the number of Community Trustees in the coming year.

As I am sure you are aware, it is one of the central responsibilities of the Board of Trustees to manage BPSI’s finances. This responsibility has three main components. First, the board must oversee the Annual Operating Budget to assure that it is balanced (no constitutional amendment required) and that all authorized expenditures are aligned with BPSI’s mission. Our Executive Director, Catherine Kimble, ably oversees this process, which takes many hours over many months. Assisted by our dedicated office staff, Catherine seeks input from the leadership group, the Coordinating Committee, and our division Chairs to create and refine the budget. Her capacity to be at once encouraging, generous, and disciplined can’t be overvalued. I am happy to report that a balanced Operating Budget was presented to and accepted by the board in our October meeting. The Annual Appeal, which you have recently received in the mail, is essential to closing the shortfall in the Operating Budget not covered by dues, tuition, and our yearly draw on our endowment—and is thus crucial to maintaining the rich array of educational and membership programs we have all come to count on.



Second, the board must carefully monitor the performance of our endowment, which is essential to guaranteeing BPSI's long-term financial stability. Our Treasurer, James Nemetz, is in regular contact with our investment advisers and maintains a collaborative relationship with them, thereby keeping the board fully apprised of the performance of our endowment and any recommended changes in investment strategy.

Third, it is our responsibility to raise funds not available to us in our very tightly constructed Annual Operating Budget for initiatives that support our role as a preeminent institution that trains psychoanalysts and psychoanalytic psychotherapists and furthers the development of psychoanalytic ideas and treatment. For this third purpose, the board has undertaken the Campaign for Psychoanalysis, which will fund a number of very exciting initiatives, including an effort to substantially expand the scholarship support available to our trainees. I am deeply grateful to Jan Seriff, who has stepped up to chair the Campaign for Psychoanalysis. And I am gratified that the members of the Board of Trustees and others in leadership positions at BPSI fully support both the Annual Appeal and the Campaign for Psychoanalysis. Look forward within the next few months to receiving in the mail a detailed description of the campaign's initiatives. I encourage each of you to give as generously as possible to both fundraising efforts, in order to support BPSI's present and guarantee our future vitality and the vitality of the field of psychoanalysis.



B P S I

boston psychoanalytic society & institute

## Campaign for Psychoanalysis

EXPANDING THE PRESENT. SECURING THE FUTURE.

To make a special campaign gift, contact:

**Carole Nathan**

**617-266-0953, x101 or [cnathan@bpsi.org](mailto:cnathan@bpsi.org)**

## *Education Division Update*

Stephen Kerzner, *Co-Chair*

BPSI is admired nationally as a leader in psychoanalytic education. Our outreach initiatives and the programs of our Education Division promote psychoanalytic ideas as well as the value of psychodynamic and psychoanalytic training to the mental health community. These programs depend on the generous volunteer efforts of our Candidates and Faculty. The energy, enthusiasm, and commitment of our community is palpable. Prospective applicants sense it. Our programs have inspired renewed interest in psychodynamic and psychoanalytic treatment in Boston and beyond. A growing number of talented clinicians have chosen our Institute for psychoanalytic training, and our Candidates are progressing. In June, we celebrated the graduations of seven Candidates from our Psychoanalytic Training Program, including four clinical graduates and three academic graduates. This fall, we welcomed a dynamic and diverse first-year class of seven Candidates and one Affiliate Scholar. They are off to a great start.

We have a creative, dedicated, and dynamic faculty that embraces complexity and integrates multiple perspectives in our seminars and clinical training. Our classroom teachers, supervisors, advisers, tutors, and mentors all engage with our Candidates to support and encourage them as they acquire the skills and knowledge they need to launch their psychoanalytic careers. Many of our Candidates are developing analytic cases early in their training. This enriches their training experience and facilitates progression toward graduation.

The members of the many subcommittees of our Education Policies Committee (EPC) work hard to ensure that our programs not only maintain BPSI's standards of excellence but also evolve to accommodate new ideas, initiate new programs, and adapt to changing external circumstances. I will describe some of these changes and initiatives below, but first I wish to acknowledge the enormous contributions of Alisa Levine, Chair of the Admissions Committee; Steven Cooper, Chair of the Supervising and Training Analysis Committee; and Alex Harrison, Chair, and Ellen Golding, Vice-Chair, of the Students Committee, who completed their terms in June. I also wish to welcome our new EPC subcommittee Chairs: Susan Austrian (Adult) and Kim Boyd (Child), Co-Chairs of the Admissions Committee; Bernard Edelstein and Cary Friedman, Chair and Vice-Chair of the Students Committee; and Jim Dalsimer, Chair of the Supervising and Training Analysis Committee.

Over the summer, several Faculty and Candidates contributed to a major revision of the Candidates Manual to improve clarity, reduce redundancy, and reflect current policies and procedures. In particular, Bernard Edelstein and Cary Friedman oversaw a total rewrite of three chapters—"Working with a Supervisor" (Chapter 4), "Psychoanalytic Cases" (Chapter 5), and "Educational Progression" (Chapter 6)—to reflect changes in the structure and function of the Students Committee and in the processes of the Progression and Graduation Review. Among the notable changes, time requirements for analytic control cases have been eliminated. Case approval for progression and graduation will be based on evidence of analytic process as defined in the Candidates Manual. Post-seminar Candidates who have done clinical analytic work but whose cases did not count because they did not meet the requirement for number of months in analysis will be encouraged to reapply for progression when they are contacted by a Students Committee member.



The EPC has launched two new initiatives over the summer and fall. The first is the Task Force on Integration of Child and Adult Psychoanalytic Curricula, co-chaired by Sarah Birss and Jan Seriff. This group is exploring ways to integrate adult and child analytic curricula that might work for BPSI. The second initiative “Writing Through the Curriculum” aims to expand and integrate writing into the training process and course work.

In response to the sunsetting of the Board on Professional Standards (BOPS) of the American Psychoanalytic Association (APsaA) this coming June, BOPS leaders have formed two organizations to externalize the functions of BOPS. The first organization is the American Board of Psychoanalysis (ABP), which provides certification exams in adult and child analysis. Certification is currently a requirement at BPSI for appointment as a Supervising and Training Analyst. The Supervising and Training Analysis Committee appointed a task force to evaluate the ABP and recommended that we accept certification by the ABP. The EPC subsequently voted to approve the acceptance of certification by the ABP. However, it was recommended that we monitor the experience of our graduates who apply for certification through the ABP. Jim Walton, Julie Watts, and I organized a task force, chaired by Rita Teusch, that has begun to do voluntary, confidential interviews with all BPSI members who go through ABP certification, to determine how it is working.

The second externalizing organization is the American Association of Psychoanalytic Education (AAPE), which will be responsible for establishing educational standards—along the lines of those APsaA has historically maintained for member institutes—for participating psychoanalytic institutes. APsaA standards include curricular and supervisory requirements, certification, the training analyst system, and a minimum required frequency of analytic sessions. The AAPE will work in coordination with the Accreditation Council for Psychoanalytic Education Inc. (ACPE) to provide site visits and certification of institutes. AAPE-accredited institutes will be eligible for simultaneous national accreditation by the ACPE. Following discussions within the SA/TA Committee and the EPC, the members of the EPC voted last spring to join the AAPE. The AAPE has asked that a representative from BPSI join its board, which will have representation from participating institutes, professional organizations, and members of the public. Further information about the AAPE will be shared as details become available.

I could not chair the Institute’s Education Division without the contributions of the hardworking chairs and members of the subcommittees of the Education Policies Committee. We are a productive and collaborative team. Further, the steady support and guidance of Catherine Kimble, BPSI’s Executive Director, has been invaluable. Her leadership is an inspiration to all of us. Finally, we are very fortunate to have a dedicated administrative staff that deserves our deep gratitude and support.





# *BPSI Works: Dreams and Objectives*

## **BPSI Family and Friends**

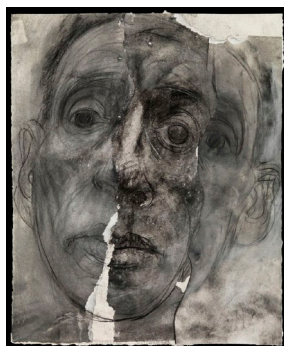
The Fall 2016 Art Exhibit



*Lisa Brody*



*Diane Fader*



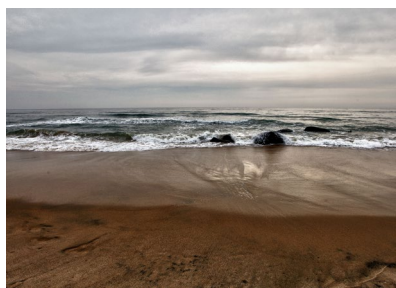
*Anthony Fisher*



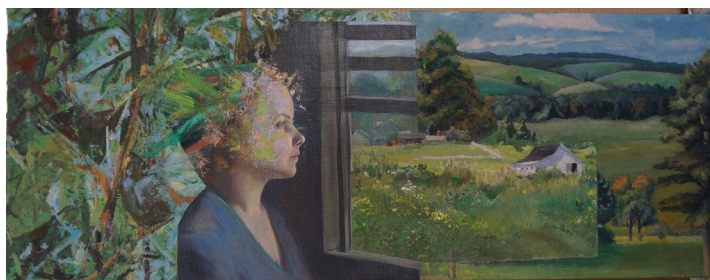
*Deborah Shilkoff*



*Sasha Wright*



*Christopher Bullock*



*John Baker*



*Judy Tsafirir*



*Jennifer Ellwood*



*Jane Hanenberg*

## Community and Public Programs

Laura Crain, *Chair*

BPSI's fall educational programs reflect the spirit, thinking and activities of the Social Awareness and Gender and Sexuality Committee, encouraging our members to think more deeply about relevant social issues. New students were privileged to start the year with the fall academic lecture given by Paul Lynch, which was a sophisticated overview of the topic of sexuality in contemporary psychoanalysis. Robbie Apfel, Bennett Simon and Michael Grodin are teaching an "Explorations in Mind" course entitled "The Evaluation and Care of Refugees and Survivors of Human Rights Violations". This course provides training to prepare participants to do clinical work in order to assist refugees and survivors of human rights violations. BPSI will host a training outreach program on Forgiveness and Reconciliation in November.

The upcoming Annual Child Care Conference, chaired by Judy Yanof, will mark its 25th year. This extremely popular conference has been fully subscribed for several years running and provides a wonderful opportunity for child care professionals to incorporate psychoanalytic thinking into their work with children and families. Ann Epstein has joined Judy as new co-chair for the conference this year. "Off the Couch" chaired by Ben Herbstman continues to offer a psychoanalytic lens to interpret contemporary issues portrayed in film.

BPSI's new Referral service, chaired by Laura Crain, now functions under the guidance of both the Community and Public Programs and Education Divisions of BPSI. Since BPSI has a much larger community presence due to recent years of public outreach and our rich and informative website, the process of handling referral inquiries needed to be modified to serve the needs of a growing number of people reaching out to BPSI to be referred for analytically informed treatment.

The new referral process has been developed using the foundation of many years of wonderful work by BPSI's Consultation Service Committee, with much help from past chair Stevie Smith and a task force including Catherine Kimble, Laura Crain, José Saporta and Karen Schiff.

The public can now learn about what BPSI clinicians have to offer under the "Find a therapist or analyst" button on the BPSI home page. The public can request a referral by completing a simple confidential form that is used by members of the referral committee to make contact by phone and suggest appropriate referrals from our new referral directory. The referral committee is very alert to discerning which persons seeking a referral would be a successful fit for psychoanalytic control cases, ATP student intensive psychotherapy cases; to that end, the committee has liaisons within BPSI for specific guidance on making referrals for child and adolescents, for mental health clinicians seeking a training analysis cases, and identifying candidates and ATP students seeking cases to fulfill training requirements. Soon, BPSI will be piloting a partnership with Vanguard/Atruis Health to refer patients seeking long term psychotherapy to BPSI members.

BPSI members are encouraged to check out the new referral function in the members' section of the website and (for those who have not already done so) to add their practice information to the referral directory so that patients can be referred to them by the Referral Committee. BPSI members can also access the complete referral list through the members section of the website and use the information for their own professional referral needs.



## Library News

Dan Jacobs, *Chair* and Olga Umansky, *Librarian*

### Library Membership Update

The Library Committee welcomes its newest member, David Kamen, who is currently a BPSI psychotherapy Fellow. David is a clinical child psychologist licensed in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. He holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Brandeis University and a master of science and a PhD from the doctoral program in clinical psychology at Auburn University. In addition to a private practice in New Hampshire that includes both children and adults, David serves the state's family court system and is a member of the New Hampshire Association for Justice. His publications have appeared in *New Hampshire Child Bar News* and the *International Journal of Behavioral Consultation and Therapy*. It's a long trip from New Hampshire to BPSI for monthly hour-long Library Committee meetings, but David's devotion to reading and research makes it worth his while. He will be playing an important part in building our library for the future.

### Graduation Requirements from a Pioneer of British Psychoanalysis

Ellen Pinsky alerted us to Ella Freeman Sharpe's list of required reading for graduation, from "The Technique of Psycho-Analysis," in the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* (1930, volume 11, p. 256):

In any reading for analytical qualification I would make compulsory the following books:

Nursery Rhymes, the Alice books, Hunting of the Snark, Grimm, Andersen, the Brer Rabbit books, Water Babies, Struwwelpeter, Undine, Rumpelstilzkin, Peter Ibbetson, Greek Myths and Tragedies, Shakespeare's Plays.

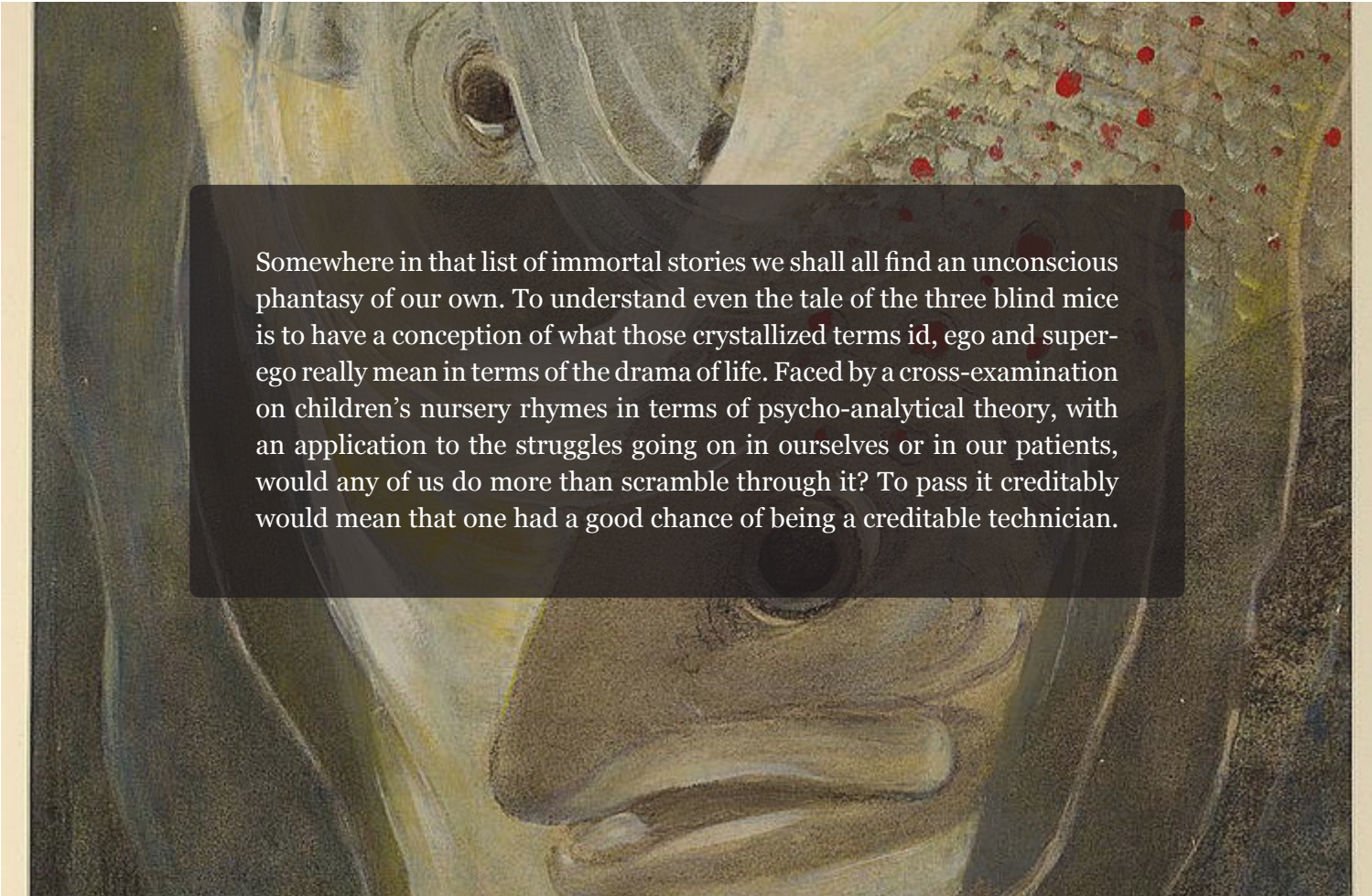
Were I an arbiter of training, I should set an examination on those books as a final test by which the would-be analyst should stand or fall. My final examination for qualification would run on these lines:

1. Quote in full a verse in which "London Bridge is falling down" occurs.
2. Give briefly the story of three blind mice.
3. If the mice were blind, how came they to run after the farmer's wife so purposely? Account for the cutting off of their tails.

Illustrate what unconscious drama is being staged when a patient thinks of himself as one of the blind mice.

What inference concerning the health of the ego do you draw from the fact that the tails were cut off instead of the mice being killed?





Somewhere in that list of immortal stories we shall all find an unconscious phantasy of our own. To understand even the tale of the three blind mice is to have a conception of what those crystallized terms id, ego and super-ego really mean in terms of the drama of life. Faced by a cross-examination on children's nursery rhymes in terms of psycho-analytical theory, with an application to the struggles going on in ourselves or in our patients, would any of us do more than scramble through it? To pass it creditably would mean that one had a good chance of being a creditable technician.

*Ella Freeman Sharpe (1875–1947), considered one of the pioneers of British psychoanalysis, was a prolific writer about dreams and metaphor in psychoanalysis. Feel free to add to Ella's list. We are always interested in what our members are reading and their recommendations. You are more than welcome to share your thoughts about books in our Library Newsletter section What Are We Reading?*





## *Self Disclosures and Unknown Passions*

### **Hello Dalí: Notes On The Intersection Of Art And Psychoanalysis**

Stephen B. Bernstein



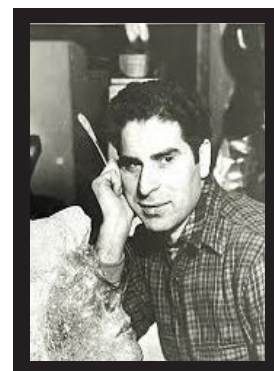
Dalí

I had always experienced my interest in psychoanalysis, my life's work, and my interest in art history, my avocation, as existing in parallel. I became aware of the intersection between the two when I was asked to comment on an art exhibition during a symposium of scholars who studied the connection between literature and visual art, word and image. What could I say to them about words and images? I realized that just as some artists are taken up with the expression of their visions or fantasies on the canvas, so am I taken up with the expression of fantasy, both the patient's and mine, on the canvas of the analytic hour.

When I look at a painting or other work of art, I usually don't wonder about the artist's motivation for creating the work. The content or context will often tell me enough. An oil painting of a New York City breadline dated 1935 will tell me something about the artist's feelings about difficult times during the Great Depression. A work by a previously representational painter who had begun to paint abstractly may tell me that he or she had seen the work of Jackson Pollock or Willem de Kooning in 1949 and had been gripped by the new abstract expressionist movement. Sometimes merely reading the label on the wall next to a picture in a museum is enough. However, in the case of three prints I encountered in different places over the past few years, my experience was quite different. Each has stayed in my memory, and each makes reference to psychoanalysis. I have wondered why the artists dealt with the subject, and why they used a particular style. I have rarely seen serious works by recognized artists that deal with Freud or analysis. More often one sees *New Yorker*-style cartoons or humorous trinkets that caricature Freud or analysis, perhaps in an attempt to diminish an ineluctable fear of the unconscious.

#### **Salvador Dalí – Surrealism, Automatism and Free Association**

The first of these prints—each of which is signed in pencil by the artist and published in a limited edition—is an untitled etching by possibly the most talented (at least in his early work) of the surrealists, Salvador Dalí (France/Spain, 1904–1989). It shows an image of Freud's head with a winged nude woman emerging from a crevice on his forehead (fig. 1). The second print is a surrealist image, a lithograph by the New York and Provincetown, Massachusetts, artist Chaim Gross (New York/Austria/Poland, 1904–1991), of a swirling cluster of birds surrounding several somewhat hidden images of Freud, together with a couple in an embrace and a child unlocking a heart-shaped lock (fig. 2). The title *Homage to Dr. Sigmund Freud* appears in pencil in the artist's hand. Gross was an avowed modernist and non-surrealist sculptor and painter who created lyrical images of mothers and children, circus acrobats, Jewish religious figures, and Provincetown fishermen. The third print is a lithograph



Gross





Soyer

by the representational artist Isaac Soyer (New York/Russia, 1902–1981) titled *On the Couch* (fig. 3), a rather straightforward image of an analytic session, with a male analyst seated behind a female patient. Soyer was the younger brother of the well-known representational painters (and twin brothers) Raphael and Moses Soyer. I am left with these questions: Why Freud and why surrealism for Dalí and Gross? Why an analytic session for Soyer? I note that the birth and death dates for the three artists were quite close, perhaps indicating that their formative years coincided with the time of greatest impact for Freud's new ideas.

Surrealism was an outgrowth of the Dada anti-art movement, which began in Europe and North America in 1916. Dada attributed the chaos and destruction of World War I to nationalist, bourgeois, and colonialist social and political forces that many of its artists felt contributed to all wars. The Dadaists saw themselves as rejecting those values and embracing an art based on idiosyncratic chaos and irrationality. It was epitomized by Marcel Duchamp's "readymades," store-bought implements (for example, a urinal that Duchamp titled *Fountain* and signed "R. Mutt") that he exhibited as works of art. After the war and as peace returned, many of the Dadaist artists, influenced by Freud's writings, began to look inward toward the potential effects of the unconscious on their artistic creativity, and thus began surrealism, the major art movement between the wars.

In order to understand Dalí's embrace of surrealism, as well as Gross's temporary use of it, we have to understand something about one of surrealism's founders, the French poet and critic André Breton, who would be called the pope of surrealism. Breton saw Sigmund Freud as the prophet of surrealism (Shattuck in Nadeau, 1987), as a result of having read Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* and *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life and Its Relation to the Unconscious* when he worked as a psychiatric aide under the tutelage of a psychiatrist in a military hospital during World War I (Esman, 2011). According to Breton, who published *The Surrealist Manifesto* in 1924, the aim of surrealism was to forge a unity of the conscious and the unconscious so that dreams and fantasy would bring about a rational world, "an absolute reality, a surreality." Breton eventually, and with much trepidation, had what both felt was a disappointing meeting with Freud in 1924. During the meeting and over several years of unsatisfactory correspondence, it became evident that Breton understood little about analysis and that Freud could not fully comprehend surrealism. Breton both idealized Freud and was ambivalent about him, but when Freud and his family were threatened in 1938, and after Anna Freud was questioned by the gestapo (Young-Bruehl, 1988), Breton was active in efforts to rescue Freud from the Nazis and get him and his family to England (Esman, 2011).

The untitled Dalí etching depicting the head of Freud with a nude woman emerging from his forehead was a result of Dalí's infatuation with and extreme appreciation for Freud, and of a meeting he'd had with Freud in 1938, arranged by the writer Stefan Zweig. For Freud it was an interesting meeting, but for Dalí it was the "culmination of years of planning and dreaming" (Romm and Slap, 1983, p. 338). Dalí felt that Freud had deeply affected his emotional life and work, and he drew four portraits of Freud in order to memorialize what we can see as his "intense feelings and over-invested fantasies" (*Ibid.*, p. 338). Dalí's idealization of Freud, and his desire to use his own unconscious imagery throughout his work, may be related to the death

# BPSI Reveals: Reception and Response

of Dalí's seven-year-old brother from meningitis three years before Dalí was born. Salvador ("the savior") was named for the dead brother, and he was seen by the family as a replacement, almost a reincarnation. The childhood loss, the family's expectations, his desire to separate from this image, and yet his need to fulfill his brother's legacy may have combined to stir yearnings for an ideal and reparative relationship (Secrest, 1986). Perhaps his fantasies of Freud eased the unconscious burden of a not fully mourned relationship with his dead brother. Martha Wolfenstein (1973) has described the child's difficulty mourning before the passage through adolescence. As a result of this limitation, there may be an ongoing unconscious tie to the image of the lost person rather than a more fully mourned loss and consequent internalization of the lost object. Wolfenstein describes this in the creations of certain artists, including the surrealist painter René Magritte. His mother's body was found when he was 13 years old, after she had committed suicide by jumping from a bridge. Some of Magritte's paintings show a strand of white material coming forward toward the viewer from the picture plane, or covering a woman's face, a remnant of the white nightgown in which his mother was dressed and that was covering her face when she was found.



Figure 1  
*Untitled*, Salvador Dalí

Dalí's etching of Freud was done in 1968, 30 years after their meeting, when he was occupied with fulfilling many requests for prints, and when he was more concerned with commercial enterprise than during the period of his more consequential, earlier work. I believe that the image of Freud in the print shows the continuing idealization of Freud as a living replacement for Dalí's lost brother. The etching alludes to Freud's skull being partially open and accessible to Dalí. And while sexuality is symbolized by the nude woman, I think the open crevice in Freud's skull is related to an event that happened as Dalí was on his way to his meeting with Freud. Believing that nothing happens by chance or accident, Dalí was entranced by the sight of a snail on a bicycle outside Freud's house. He envisioned Freud's head as a snail, and that the snail's or skull's contents could be scooped out and ingested. This would be Dalí's way of concretely taking Freud in, as a substitute for the incompletely mourned loss of his older brother. This idea is given some credence by a 1974 etching titled *Freud with a Snail's Head*. In that etching Freud's head is almost hidden in the lines and curves of the snail's shell, or perhaps the snail and the skull are one.

Dalí employed a method of surrealist automatism to loosen conscious control of his inhibitions in the service of the creative process. This method was devised by the surrealist painter André Masson and was an application to painting of the concept of automatic writing adopted and developed by Breton. Dalí used a version of automatism in an attempt to achieve what we would call a free associative state. "Sitting in the warm sun after a full lunch and feeling somewhat somnolent, Dalí would place a metal mixing bowl in his lap and hold a large spoon loosely in his hands which he folded over his chest. As he fell asleep and relaxed, the spoon would fall from his grasp into the bowl and wake him up. He would reset the arrangement continuously and thus float along—not quite asleep and not quite awake—while his imagination would churn out the images that we find so fascinating, evocative, and inexplicable when they appear in his work" (Ewell, 2003).

Such automaticity, which could be seen as an attempt at free association, was an integral part of surrealism. It was later adopted by the first generation of abstract expressionists. These artists (such as Pollock, de Kooning, Arshile Gorky, and Franz Kline) were referred to as “action painters,” because their use of bodily movement to overcome the mind’s restraints was seen by some to be an essential part of the creative process. The painting was no longer about the portrayal of objects; it was about the process of touching deep emotions in the viewer. One of the greatest of the abstract expressionists, Pollock was influenced by the automaticity of surrealism and also by entering psychoanalysis with a Jungian analyst in 1939 in an effort to deal with his alcoholism. The analyst encouraged him to make drawings that might increase the free outpouring of his mind. This greater freedom would lead over the next 10 years to his mature style of spontaneous, poured and dripped paintings.

### Chaim Gross – Fantasy Drawing as Therapy

Chaim Gross was one of the finest American modernist sculptors of the 20th century. The youngest of 10 children, he was born into a poor Hasidic family in the Carpathian Mountains of Austrian Galicia. When World War I broke out in 1914, his family was caught between the Austrian army, the Russian army, and the czar’s Cossacks.

His parents were almost beaten to death by the Cossacks, his brothers and sisters were separated from the family, and at age 10, Gross, by then alone and homeless, was seized by the Austrian army for two years of enforced labor. After periods of incarcerations and escapes, he found his way to Budapest, where he began to sketch and eventually to attend art classes. He was able to immigrate to New York City with a brother in 1921, but never again saw the rest of his family, many of whom were exterminated by the Nazis. In 1949, during a trip to Israel, he felt that a joyous connection to his Hasidic roots had been revived. Also revived were his memories of early trauma and his feelings about the enormity of the destruction of European Jewry, including his own family members. Thus emerged the bifurcated themes of his sculptures, watercolors, drawings, and prints—strong, modernist sculptural figuration alternating with lyrical images of a mother and child, rabbis and their students, religious ceremonies, and Provincetown scenes, such as his sculpture *The Tourists*, which stands in front of the Provincetown Public Library.



Figure 2  
*Homage to Dr. Sigmund Freud*, Chaim Gross



# BPSI Reveals: Reception and Response

Gross created the print *Homage to Dr. Sigmund Freud* in 1976 to raise funds for the Hebrew University in Israel. In its use of surrealism, it is different in style from his later, more mature work and recalls his early drawings collected in the book *Fantasy Drawings*, published in 1956. It is interesting that, in contrast to the book's surrealist content, Gross often drew and signed on the front page of copies of it an original drawing using his later, non-surrealist style. While Gross denied being a surrealist, the book of fantasy drawings shows waking and nightmare fantasies revealing access to material that may be an expression of significant early trauma, in an artist who was able to sublimate these experiences in his later life and artistic style. Introductory essays in Gross's book by a literary critic and by a psychoanalyst discuss both the surrealist style and the traumatic underpinnings of the drawings, which I feel are present in the more recent Freud print. Much later, Gross told the art historian Roberta Tarbell that the drawings were a kind of therapy he used to obliterate the images of loss and the horror from the war. His method seems similar to the surrealist automatism of Dalí. "To create these drawings Gross sat completely relaxed in an armchair in his own living room and listened to classical music; images from his subconscious mind were released and flowed onto the paper" (Tarbell, 1977).

*Homage to Dr. Sigmund Freud* was created more than 20 years after the fantasy drawings, when Gross had generally given up the surrealist style, although he continued to use the surrealist "automatic drawings" as therapy and occasionally exhibited these (Baker, 2016). It would appear that a subsequent trip to Israel, together with an appointment to the Collections and Acquisitions Committee of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, again revived Gross's earlier trauma and early object loss. I am not aware of other images of Freud in Gross's oeuvre, and thus I wonder whether this image reveals a search for relief in the figure of Freud. In the print, we see the artist's conception of the Jewish Freud who mined the unconscious, where the artist's hidden pain and incompletely mourned loss lay. The image contains at least three hidden iterations of Freud as well as the symbols of a key that can unlock the past, a primal scene of lust, and birds in the forest of a lost Eden, perhaps the Carpathian forest of Gross's childhood before World War I tore everything apart. The hidden images of Freud that the viewer must search for remind me of how Al Hirschfeld, in his *New York Times* illustrations of Broadway shows many years ago, hid the name of his young daughter, Nina, in multiple places for her and the aware viewer to find. The theme of hiding and finding (of loss and reunion) again arises when one knows that Gross at times had a way of signing his name in a complex manner such that the signature revealed, upon examination, a self-portrait of the artist.

## Isaac Soyer – Social Commentary

Isaac Soyer was a social realist painter whose work often portrayed the working-class people of New York City. He was born into a scholarly family, the fourth of six children. The family emigrated from Russia to New York City in 1912. Isaac's older twin brothers, Moses and Raphael, gained more acclaim in the field of representational painting, although Isaac's work is part of the collection of many important museums, including the Whitney, which owns his painting *Employment Agency*. There is little biographical material available about Isaac, and



Figure 3  
*On the Couch*, Isaac Soyer

most comes indirectly from material about Moses and Raphael. What we do know is that Isaac was affected by Raphael's near death from illness when both were quite young, and that he also felt the impact of the immigrant experience on the family. The motivation for Soyer's lithograph *On the Couch* would remain a mystery were it not for the mention, in other family members' biographies and obituaries, that his younger sister Fannie went to college and became a psychoanalyst. We can conjecture that Soyer's lithograph has something to do with his sister's experience, either as a patient or as an analyst. The composition is otherwise straightforward, but we can note the intense involvement of the analysand and the thoughtful expression of the analyst. The title itself, which is handwritten on the print, seems almost like a caption and makes me wonder if the print might have been a gift from Soyer to his sister. Perhaps the work was a tribute, or a commentary on his sister's success. We have no evidence that Soyer—or Dalí or Gross, for that matter—had ever been in analysis, although a friend of the Soyers', the noted social realist painter Reginald Marsh, had been in analytic treatment, as had others in their artistic circle.

Finally, I am reminded of a film about the figurative expressionist painter Robert Beauchamp. We watch him painting a picture from its beginning to its end. First the artist puts the large canvas on the floor and spreads the paint on it widely, vigorously, even violently. Over time, as he works on it again and again, we begin to see an image take shape, a forest and some birds. Eventually Beauchamp picks up the canvas, hangs it on the wall, and continues working on it. Finally, he sees what he wants and stops. He says, "It's done. I am finished. I am through with it." He turns his back and walks away with a sense of finality. What was this? My feeling is that the composition existed as a tension or aesthetic conflict or fantasy in him, and that he externalized it, projected it, expelled it onto the canvas, and thus received some relief that we might call the resolution of a conflict through a compromise formation, at least until more tension or conflict arose, and had to be dealt with again, by painting another picture. Perhaps we are all painting our lives.

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# *BPSI Reveals: Reception and Response*

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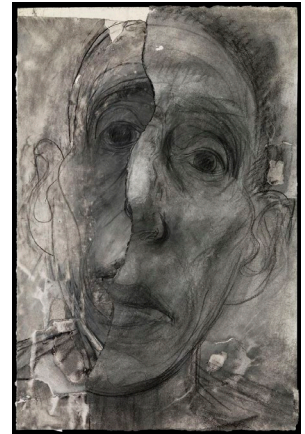
## **Notes on Curating: Reflections on the Practices of Art and Psychoanalysis**

Mary Anderson, *Curator*

In early September, I had the privilege of curating BPSI's first *Family and Friends Art Exhibit* – the timely response of a newly emergent Art Committee in the wake of Jonathan Palmer's inaugural show. The invitation to curate the exhibit offered me the opportunity to speak my first language and professional practice—visual art—on an architectural scale, within the psychoanalytic community that welcomed me three years ago as an Affiliate Scholar. Asked to contribute a piece to the BPSI Bulletin, I offer here a few thoughts on the practices of art and curation, each a symbolic parallel for the generative and therapeutic intentions of psychoanalysis.

It seems apt, even auspicious in this psychoanalytic context, to recognize the confluence of meanings—archaic, aesthetic, humane—in the English infinitive “to curate.” The verb, which in contemporary idiom refers to the selecting, organizing, and arranging of an archive or exhibition, derives from the Latin and Middle French *curatus* (pp. of *curare*, or “to take care of”): “one responsible for the care of souls.” Indicating, in its noun form, a priest and invoking, in its etymology, the practice of curing and healing souls, “curate” is imbued with an ethics of care. It still carries, in my mind and practice, this resonant promise of empathic, aesthetic, and ethical intention.

Curating is a dynamic process of seeing relationally and differentially across multiple surfaces within a spatial environment. It is to attend and discern sensibilities in the works of art, the architecture, and the spaces emerging between them, actively engaging possibility and play, the yet-to-be known or narrated or seen. Curating this particular group exhibition, with works by 10 artists of radically discrete sensibilities—John Baker, Lisa Brody, Christopher Bullock, Jennifer Ellwood, Diane Fader, Anthony Fisher, Jane Hanenberg, Deborah Shilkoff, Judy Tsafir, and Sasha Wright<sup>1</sup>—was a process of listening to these spaces between works, sensing in their gaps and distances potential links of relation, in contiguity, adjacency, or appeal. A curator discovers and makes visible these actual, perceptual, and unexpected relationships within and between works of art, seeing into, across, and through their differences in form, color, palette, size, medium, intention, and presence. In the appearance of difference, relation resides.



*Figure 1*  
*Study of Ira IV*  
Anthony Fisher

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<sup>1</sup> Ten artists submitted works to the Art Committee and all, with the exception of two large pieces, were installed in the exhibition. After curating and hanging the exhibit, one empty wall remained outside the offices. I offered, to Carole and the staff, to look through my work at my studio in Maine, in case something might fit. I framed *Isthmus*, a recent photographic print, and installed it shortly after the exhibition opened.



One example of this paradox is the dialectical pairing of Anthony Fisher's conté and charcoal drawings *Study of Ira I–IV* (fig. 1, *Study of Ira IV*) with Diane Fader's buoyant red, orange, and blue *Abstract #2* (fig. 2) in room 303. Each artist's work conveys a sense of intensity and interiority, yet when set in direct relation, the one becomes a counterpoint for the other, exposing the fine, ambivalent line—perceptual, psychological, metaphorical—between color and value, integrity and dissolution, fracture and facture. In these images we experience the monumentality of the intimate, the affective power in 10 by 10 inches of color, and the fluent resiliency of an artist's eye and hand and heart bearing witness, repeatedly, to the faces of our human condition.

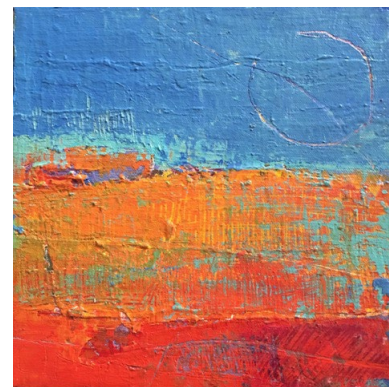


Figure 2  
*Abstract #2*  
Dinae Fader

As a synaesthetic practice, curating coalesces seeing and listening to sound the depths within and among the artworks, the architectural spaces that hold them, and their ever-changing choreographies of light and time. Working with the expanse and nuance of 141 Herrick Road was a joy. Each level and turn meant my listening to the lively interplay of space, light, edge, and function that shapes the way we inhabit, think, learn, and work within its walls. Before receiving the works of art, I walked through the spaces of the exhibition, noting the size and feel and orientation of each room and its view, where light enters and falls at intervals throughout the day. Using thumbnail images and actual measurements, I created a collage of each room, cultivating a maquette of visual affinities and differences at play between the artworks and the architectural site. This process changed my relationship to the space, the works of art, the building, and the community. I sought to encourage such change in others by installing the art in the path of encounter, compelling viewers to see and experience the familiar anew.

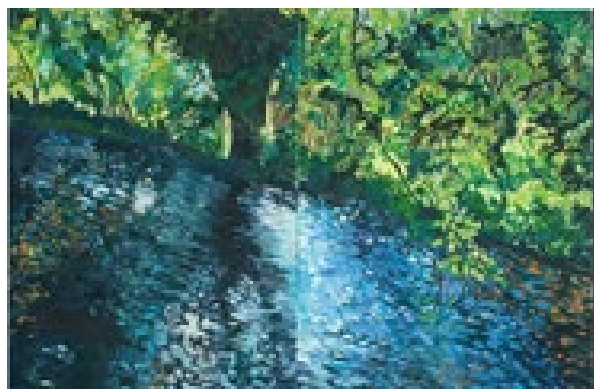


Figure 3  
*Irish Reflection*  
Lisa Brody

Several examples of this aesthetic possibility come to mind, each holding psychoanalytic resonance. Set in dialogue with each other and the exterior landscape, Lisa Brody's paintings *Irish Reflection* (fig. 3) and *Forsythia on Ore Hill* draw our awareness to the building as a threshold between outside and in. Creating an *inter-view*—both an interface and an interstice—between the real and the represented, their placement brings actual trees on the hill, framed by the window, into perceptual proximity with images of nature interpreted by the painter's hand. This asymmetrical relation in difference becomes a symbol of our psychical and ontological experience.

# BPSI Reveals: Reception and Response

In contrast, John Baker's *Man of the World* (fig. 4) and *By the Sea* boldly engage this dialectic of the real and the represented within the painting's pictorial plane. Using collage as a double-edged medium of dis/orientation, Baker builds into each painting an oneiric sensibility, poignantly playing with the fissures and figurability of human perception, memory, and experience. Intensifying this view of Baker's work is Deborah Shilkoff's kaleidoscopic *Ratatouille* (fig. 5), installed at the entrance of room 304 in which Baker's paintings hang. "Hand quilted 'in the ditch,' " *Ratatouille*'s structure and surface collaborate in and amplify this dynamic interplay of fragmentation and alignment.<sup>2</sup> Adjacent to Baker's work yet holding its own singular locale, Shilkoff's quilt-painting becomes a metaphoric prism for seeing, in aesthetic displacement, the interstitial patterns and



Figure 5  
*Ratatouille*  
Deborah Shilkoff

overlaps of narrative in our lives, our repeated attempts to construct and represent experience – as Shilkoff writes of her artist's process – "along the seam lines."

One final example of art in the path of encounter lies in Christopher Bullock's photographs, *Vineyard Beach I–V* (fig. 6, *Vineyard Beach III*), which share a palette and room with Brody's *Grey day view from window*. With a clarity of the real in the represented, these photographs subtly heighten one's sensibility of the inter, speaking a language of present, recognitive, and



Figure 4  
*Man of the World*  
John Baker

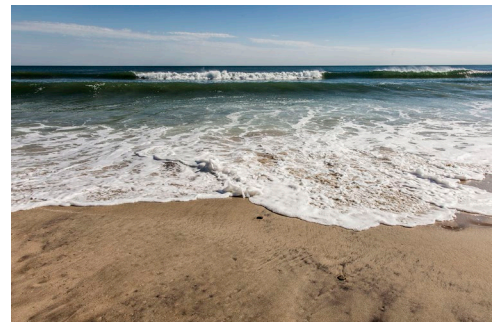


Figure 6  
*Vineyard Beach III*  
Christopher Bullock

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<sup>2</sup> The artist, Deborah Shilkoff, writes of *Ratatouille*: "An adaptation of a quilt by Ruth McDowell, based on a traditional 'Corn and Beans' pattern of overlapping squares and triangles. Machine pieces, hand quilted 'in the ditch,' that is, along the seam lines."



In closing, I would like to express my gratitude to all of the artists who, on very short notice, offered their vibrant work for this exhibition; without their interest, participation and care, there would have been no exhibit or opportunity to write this short, incomplete reflection on it. A particular note of gratitude also to Catherine Kimble, Carole Nathan, Karen Smolens, Lauren Lukason, Drew Bryson, Olga Umansky, Chris Valle, and the members of the Art Committee, for their efforts, trust, goodwill, and care in making this first *BPSI Family and Friends* exhibition possible.

Fig. 1: Anthony Fisher, *Study of Ira IV* conté and charcoal on paper, 26 x 23 in., 2014.

Fig. 2: Diane Fader, *Abstract #2*, acrylic paint, 10 x 10 in., 2016.

Fig. 3: Lisa Brody, *Irish Reflection*, oil on canvas (diptych), 48 x 72 in., 2010.

Fig. 4: John Baker, *Man of the World*, acrylic and collage on canvas, 27.5 x 21.25 in., 2013.

Fig. 5: Deborah Shilkoff, *Ratatouille*, fabric and wood, 22.5 x 22.25 in., no date listed.

Fig. 6: Christopher Bullock, *Vineyard Beach III*, color photograph, 21 x 25 in., 2014.





# *BPSI Explores: Dialogue and Discovery*

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## **COMPASS**

### ***The Center for Mutidisciplinary Psychoanalytic Studies***

**Murray Schwartz, Chair**

In accordance with our charge to further the mutual interests of BPSI and academic institutions in the Boston area, the Center for Multi-disciplinary Psychoanalytic Studies (COMPASS) has been active on several fronts.

#### **Emerson College— Creating a Psychoanalytic Studies Minor**

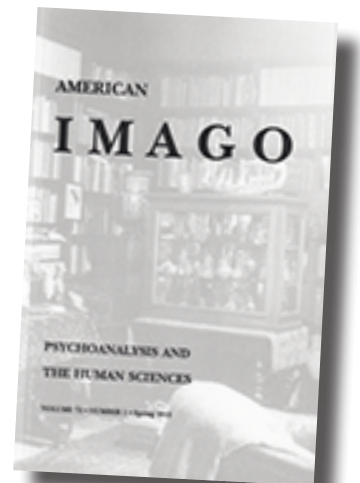
The curriculum of undergraduate courses taught by BPSI members at Emerson College has steadily grown to four courses. This fall, Howard Katz is teaching “Dreaming: The Play of Imagination” for the second time; Mary Anderson taught “The Visibility of Desire: Art, Psychoanalysis, and Culture” last spring; Murray Schwartz is currently teaching “The Holocaust: History, Testimony, and Trauma”; and in the spring of 2017, Richard Gomberg will offer “Freud: Exploring the Mind, Building Theory, and Understanding Society”. In addition, Frances Lang is developing a course titled “Perspectives on Humor” as part of Emerson’s interdisciplinary offerings in conjunction with a new major in comedy.

These courses will enable us to bring forward the proposal for a minor in psychoanalytic studies at Emerson for formal approval next September. Emerson students will enroll in four courses over two years to complete the academic minor criteria. Student responses to the courses offered so far have been very positive, and interinstitutional cooperation is proceeding smoothly. Special thanks to Howard Katz, Cathy Mitkus, and Amy Ansell, the Dean of Emerson’s Institute for Liberal Arts and Interdisciplinary Studies, for their steady support.

#### **Cooperation with American Imago**

Last spring, at the suggestion of Tony Kris, Murray Schwartz became Associate Editor of *American Imago*. Working with the editor, Louis Rose, he will solicit and contribute to review essays on a range of books that address relations between psychoanalysis, history, and culture. These essays will make up a major part or the entirety of forthcoming issues of the journal.

*American Imago* was founded by Freud and Hans Sachs in Boston almost sixty years ago, and Professor Rose has proposed that the journal be associated with BPSI and edited by a BPSI member in a few years. The possibility of this transition



is already under discussion, and BPSI members will meet with Professor Rose in January at the American Psychoanalytic Association's National Meeting in New York to make further plans.

In another welcome development, *American Imago* has agreed to advertise the Silberger Prize and to publish the winning paper. This year's winner, Solange Leibovici's exploration of Philip Roth's literary personae, will be the first of these publications.

### **Five College Psychoanalytic Studies**

Christine Maksimowicz, last year's Silberger winner and this year's winner of the CORST essay prize in Psychoanalysis and Culture, and Murray Schwartz have teamed up to spearhead the development of a Five College Program in Psychoanalytic Studies, building on the existing program at Hampshire College. Drawing on the extensive faculty interest in contemporary psychoanalysis within the Five College Consortium (Amherst College, Smith College, Mount Holyoke College, Hampshire College, and the University of Massachusetts Amherst), a plan is under discussion to offer a Certificate in Psychoanalysis and to initiate regular discussions of work by local and invited faculty. The planning group has secured a \$10,000 grant for an initial speaker program.





## *Deathbed Wisdom: Conversation and Collaboration*

Holly Friedman Housman

“Deathbed Wisdom: Hasidic and Psychoanalytic Insights on End of Life Conversations” was the first joint program presented by Hebrew College and BPSI, on September 21, 2016. The program began with Daniel Jacobs, introducing the exhibit *The Persistence of Memory*, photographs by Vivien Goldman of “age-old graceful Hebrew scripts found on the fraying edges and bindings of sacred books.” This was followed by a panel discussion on the wisdom revealed in the end-of-life conversations between the Breslov Hasidic rabbis, their disciples, and the lessons those conversations hold for us today.

The interdisciplinary panel included two rabbis, Sara Paasche-Orlow and Joel Baron, the editors and translators of *Deathbed Wisdom of the Hasidic Masters: The Book of Departure and Caring for People at the End of Life*, and BPSI members Bennett Simon and myself, a liaison to Hebrew College. The story the panelists commented upon was of the death of Rabbi Nachman of Breslov (1772–1810).

Who was Rabbi Nachman of Breslov? Rabbi Nachman was the founder of the Breslov Hasidic movement. He inspired his followers by combining the esoteric secrets of Judaism (the Kabbalah) with in-depth Torah scholarship. He taught that his followers should spend an hour alone each day, talking aloud to God, as if “talking to a good friend”—perhaps a precursor to Freud and psychoanalysis? The following is a brief summary of the comments made by the panelists regarding specific sections of Rabbi Nachman’s story.

Rabbi Paasche-Orlow spoke of “Oliver Sacks, a rebbe of our time.” Of his imminent death he wrote, “And now, weak, short of breath, my once-firm muscles melted away by cancer, I find my thoughts, increasingly, not on the supernatural or spiritual, but on what is meant by living a good and worthwhile life—achieving a sense of peace within oneself. I find my thoughts drifting to the Sabbath, the day of rest, the seventh day of the week, and perhaps the seventh day of one’s life as well, when one can feel that one’s work is done, and one may, in good conscience, rest.” Paasche-Orlow offered that the image of the Sabbath can help people begin to think about death more intimately: “perhaps the way Nachman did—and certainly how Oliver Sacks did, with the huge and powerful message of a well-deserved time of rest and peace, after great accomplishment.”

Rabbi Baron, aware that Rabbi Nachman picked Breslov as his burial place, asked these questions: “What does it mean to plan your own funeral? To actively prepare for one’s death by not only buying burial plots [and] editing your will [but also considering and planning] your own end-of-life rituals as opposed to having others do it? [What is] the value of ritual in life, what is the significance of place, and what does it



mean to me?” Baron also talked about training for his work specializing in end-of-life issues: One assignment was to write his own obituary and to lie on the floor and meditate on his own death. He encouraged the audience to contemplate these issues with intention.

As he lay dying, Rabbi Nachman tried to console his disciples by saying to them, “I am not leaving you.” In response to this quote, Dr. Simon discussed the theme “Presence and Absence—the Presence of the Absent”: “The work of the analyst involves dealing with the interplay between presence and absence, the presence of those absent and, sometimes, the absence of those present, because they are so absorbed in those absent. At any given moment in a psychoanalytic session, the room is peopled, as it were. ‘Ghosts in the room’ cannot do justice to the intensity of the presence and salience of crucial figures in the life of the patient.”

Rabbi Nachman, a “savior of souls[,] travels from Breslov to Uman and asks why is everybody here; don’t you know I am a man who knows nothing special? Now I am just a simple ordinary man.” I responded to this section of the text: “As therapists we try to facilitate people making emotional and behavioral shifts in their life from one affective state of being to another. Metaphorically, Rabbi Nachman was between Breslov and Uman, between life and death. As therapists we are always between Breslov and Uman. In the interpersonal context, we hold the tension with our patients when it is too painful for them to cope with their feelings alone. We help them regulate and contain their overwhelming feelings as Rabbi Nachman is trying to do with his disciples’ worries, so they can mourn him and go on.”

#### References

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Images by Vivien Goldman



## *Election Aftermath—November 19, 2016*

Jim Walton, *President*

One year ago, our Members Meeting was held the day after the horrific attacks in Paris; this year, we met 10 days after our national election. After palpable anxiety preceding Election Day, we know the results. While not a terrorist attack like Paris or 9/11, the election left many of our patients and many of us with a deep sense of anxiety, of disbelief and even terror; there is a great uncertainty about what is next. We have heard words that fueled the passionate anger of so many over financial inequality, yet also stoked racist and sexist attitudes, and now we wonder if our republic might be in danger—our freedoms, our respect for our institutions, our values, the rule of law, and our respect for one another. We are concerned about the future in our country.

What are our questions? Surely one is, “What happened?” And then, “What can we do—as individuals, in groups, as an organization?” BPSI is not a political organization. However, I do think the political process that just occurred raises significant questions about how we choose our elected leaders. In what kind of democratic process are we participating if words have no meaning and there is little respectful discourse—if it is all performance, with the end of getting elected justifying any means? As individuals, as a profession, and as an organization, we have values that are essential to our sense of ourselves. At BPSI we want to encourage conversation about values and about difficult social issues, while exploring the ways in which psychoanalytic thinking and expertise inform these concerns.

During our Members Meeting, participants in several breakout groups wanted to speak about our national election—its effect on us, our patients, and vulnerable groups in our greater community. In considering how we might respond as an organization, we will hold meetings open to the entire BPSI community to discuss ideas and identify priorities, and we will also involve our Social Awareness and Gender and Sexuality Committees in discussions in conjunction with the Coordinating Committee, which oversees our organizational priorities.