What Does a Mythopoetic Inquiry Look Like?
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A mythopoetic inquiry is the bringing of one's story out of the isolation of one's private thoughts and sense of irrelevance (feeling cut-off or dis-membered), to finally let the inner narrative re-join its sisters and brothers[1] in the collective shaping of experience.

A mythopoetic inquiry includes an investigation of the relationship between a state of mourning or loss and *amor fati*—love of one's fate. This investigation requires seeing symbolically. This symbolic perspective allows the reader to see both the original story as it has been manifest, and the now animated narrative being actively re-engaged. This process of moving from the myth (the past, or original story) to the mythopoetic (present, re-embodied, living act of poesis) could invite the possibility of both mourning the dream—the mourning of what has been lost or never even achieved—and loving one's fate: a sacred way of seeing; illuminating this perspective as a path of 'letting go' and 'seizing hold' of life towards one's fate; and falling in love with this continuous revelation of the mysteries of Self.

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[1] One's story or myth is born out of the folds of the family myth; the societal myth; the cultural myth; and the zeitgeist one lives in.

Mysteries of the Self

The first story, the one told by the narrative self, the story we privately tell about ourselves to ourselves, is actually a cultural text. As cultural text, or myth, this story is embedded with archetypal motifs expressed largely unconsciously. Tracking the movements of this original story, one might come to see the myth as it presents itself within the container of a mythopoetic inquiry. In this alchemical vessel of the body of the inquiry itself, there is movement from the mythic to the mythopoetic: from mourning the dream to amor fati. In this shift lies the challenge to lay bare the underpinnings of the structure and content of the self-story and how it is

part of the interweaving of all myth. "When any one person recovers [her] his voice many people begin to speak through that story" (Frank, 1995, p. xiiii).

As a container a mythopoetic inquiry creates the appropriate temenos[2] for the unveiling of the 'truth'[3] that lives within the myth; the rolling narrative that runs like an underground river creating a directional pull that moves life forward from behind, or beneath—in the subjective: our "imaginative, invisible gaze, in the direct sense of what is beneath our feet, our 'sub-jectivity' (from 'to throw under')" (Angelo, 2005, p. 25): *One is thrown under and into the river to meet the archetypal image beneath the narrative: Death.* Through the disclosure of dark secrets that have shaped one's story and one's body, lies a part of a larger truth, a legitimacy, which holds a potency beyond one's present capacity to embody the narrative without this kind of inquiry, this mythopoeia. The kind of story we tell about our life can make a big difference to how we experience this life. An individual's myth is the story which may unconsciously govern the individual's life course. Jung (1969) proposed personal myths to be archetypal patterns found in mythology and fairy tales, and that the mythology or fairy tales found within archetypes could influence the life course of individuals, in most cases unconsciously: the intention then, is to bring these unconscious myths to consciousness.

Embarking upon this multifaceted inquiry places one within an historical and mythological context in which the personal and collective Psyche can show her deeper intent beyond the empirical through creative processes: art making (such as examples offered in this paper); movement; poetry; story telling; teaching; writing. Situated primarily in the discourse of Depth Psychology, this description of a mythopoetic process also draws on

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[2]   "the psychological container shaped […] by mutual respect for unconscious processes […] and a commitment to symbolic enactment […] the hermetically sealed vessel […] an alchemical term for the closed container within which opposites transform" (Samuels, 1986, p. 149).

[3]   Truth in this context is Psyche's intent that lies deep beneath one's conscious ego-oriented understanding, in the realm of the archetypes. This deeper intent is revealed unconsciously through image and embodiment which can then be contemplated consciously.

references to art education, art therapy, philosophy (Merleau-Ponty) and mythology, The terrain of the gathering of evidence of living moments on paper surfaces as the journey of discovery and dissolution of selves, is the process of a mythopoetic endeavour; a re-shaping of the past through a re-assemblage of the images the inquirer is simultaneously holding and being held (back) by: A re-creation myth that is both apocalyptic, in its original meaning of a "revelation of secrets" of what lies behind the veil of the story already told.
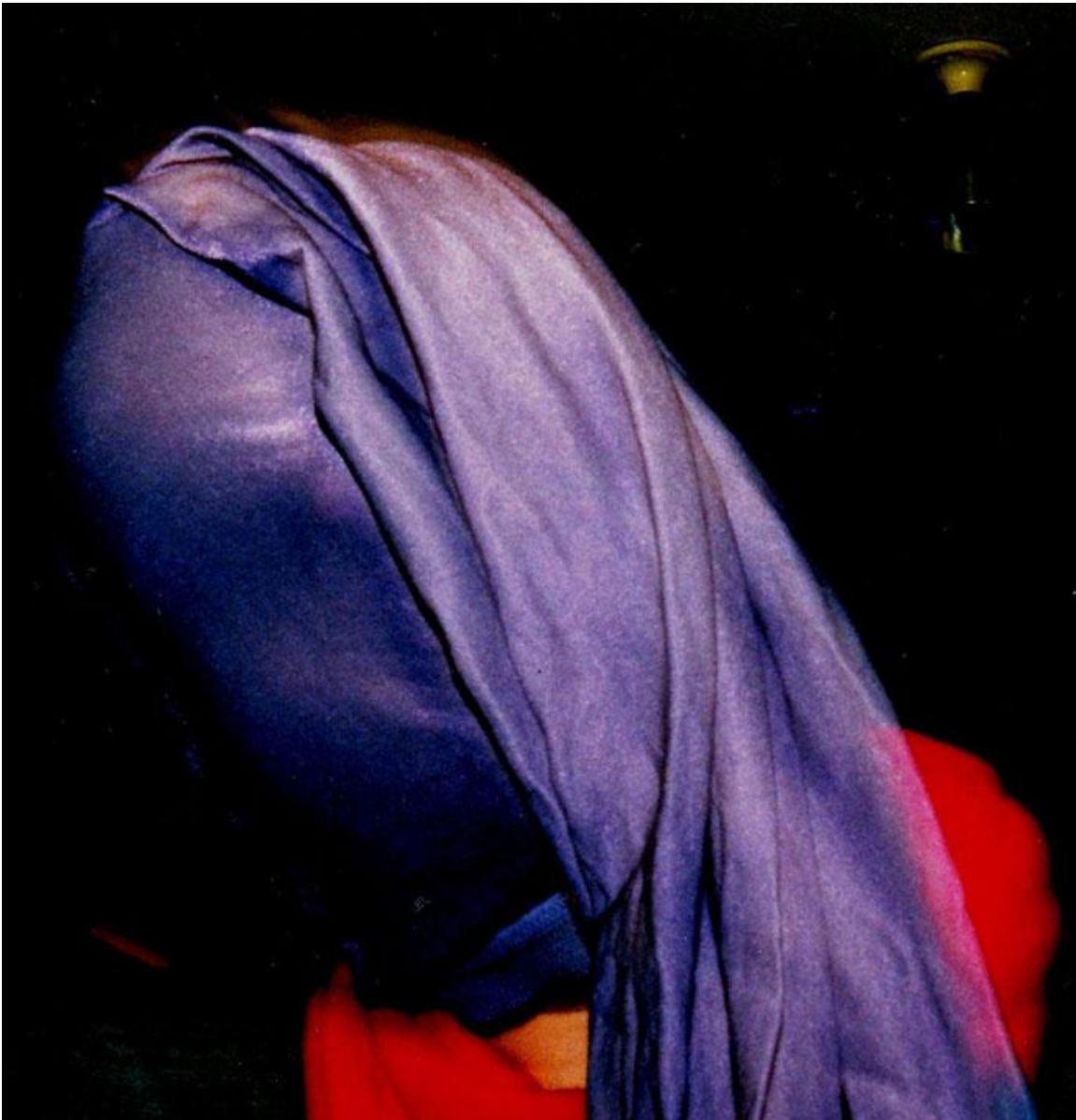
Veil

Aspects of a mythopoetic inquiry require deep, complex, dialectic, receptive action: action that affirms polarity and brings polarities into relationship, metaphoric action (action whose genesis is based in metaphoric understanding and whose activity reveals the metaphoric nature of life). Archetypal action[4] that would speak the unspeakable and mourn openly (McNamara, 2010).

In a mythopoetic inquiry one might encounter this mourning openly through journeying into folds of grief, labyrinths of loss where one might be forever left wandering, sad, bitter and angry. The necessity of walking this potentially dangerous path however, is one of the steps the inquirer takes as an archetypal activist who can consciously hold the tension of opposites that inevitably arise in the mythopoetic journey. This form of activism then potentiates a process whereby deep insight has immediate consequences—living in deep time[5]. In this deep time exists another track, an alternative mythic or symbolic process the conscious mind can activate and interiorize through the mythopoetic endeavour that has the capacity to hold a parallel meaning to the experience of descent. In this manner, the conscious mind takes its appropriate role in the ongoing dialectic of conscious and unconscious by catching glimpses of this other track as it flickers in the body and in dreams, and shines forth through art, dance, theatre, music, storytelling and poetry.

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[4]   As archetypal activists we are called to be synthetic (i.e. dialectical) in order to facilitate bringing together the fragmented polarities of the culture in such a way that the existential tension of opposites is maintained while the opposites interact mutually, engaging without definitive dominance. In this way, polarities may reflectively energize and activate each other, reflecting through distinction (McNamara, 2010).

[5]   In 'deep time' everything is for itself. There is no outside reason or reasoning. Everything in deep time is for me. In deep time "The 'I' is the location of a stream of possibilities" (Grumet, 1988, p. 66).
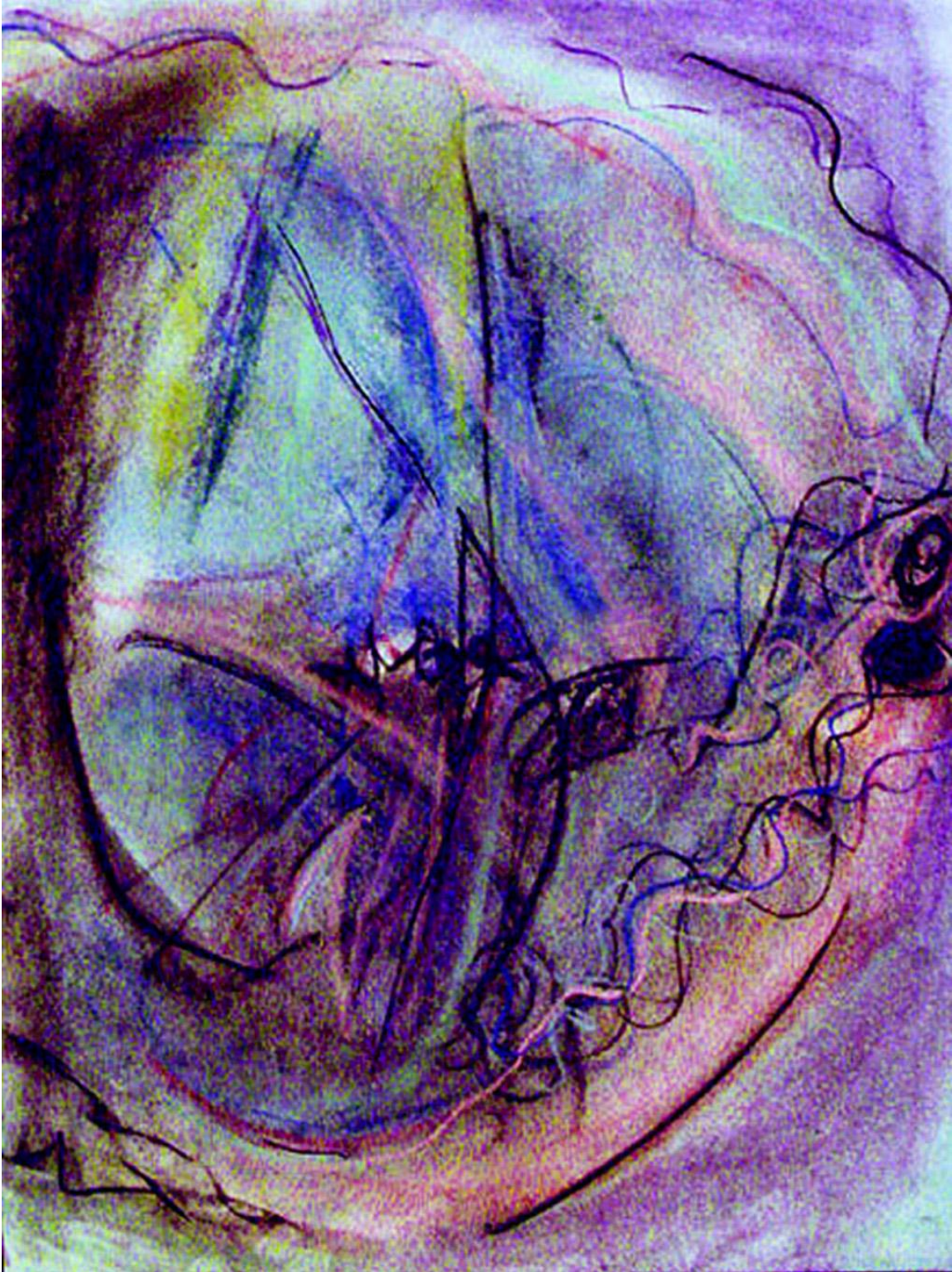
Deep Time

Dropping into deep time, into an embodied moment provides the quality of energy that fertilizes the process of mythopoesis, which actively

takes up these flickers, often revealed, unfolded and made explicit through the creative arts. Living in any given moment, living in 'deep time', when the body/image (art) itself is the speech, has consequences reaching far beyond imagination! *I am in the midst of an arrangement of images that has a force that ironically, lies beyond the present image that is having me.* But if I awaken my awareness to the pattern and its diaphoric[6] impact—creating presence through the emergence from the original metaphor—I will feel that presence of the possibilities that actually lie within this moment.

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[6] "The take-it-or leave-it attitude that is implicit in all good metaphor is in itself so far as it goes, diaphoric; the sense of an invisible finger ambiguously pointing is epiphoric. The role of epiphor is to hint significance, the role of diaphor is to create presence. Serous metaphor demands both [...] diaphor emerges from the metaphor" (Wheelwright, 1962, p. 192).

Unfoldment

David Bohm (1989), contributor to theoretical physics, philosophy of mind and neuropsychology, described this generative capacity as "active

meaning": "meaning" becoming activated within a particular kind of energy which then synthesizes into meaning-making. My understanding of Bohm's "active meaning" suggests that this meaning lies within the energy present in the implicate order—a deeper enfolded order[7]. As a mythopoetic inquiry of underpinnings of the structure and content of one's myth, one's story is an unfolding of meaning-making; an explication of a more inconspicuous form of meaning that is called into consciousness through its relationship to the implicate order; an order which lies beyond space and time, according to Bohm[8]; in deep time. A mythopoetic inquiry's is highly sub-jective, its content often including suffering, loss and consequent sadness, bitterness and anger. This suffering however, within the context of a mythopoetic inquiry may actually be hints calling one to an awareness of a larger context: a larger narrative that embraces a certain significance that mourning openly can create a portal to. This "active meaning" Bohm (1989) speaks of, can re-gain this significance that encompasses a sense of purpose, intention and value. This meaning comes from the implicate order that can be made explicit in the creative act which is the stirrings of this deep tacit awareness of the implicate order itself where, the history of one's unconscious lives.

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[7]   The Implicate Order lies beyond the categories of space and time (Peat,1995).
[8]   Instead of talking about object we deal in process, we enquire as to how a particular explicate (individual mind/body) unfolds out of the Implicate. Minds become both truly collective and personal by virtue of the continuous process of unfoldment and enfoldment whereby they are united within the Implicate and individuated within the Explicate. Mind and matter are connected because of their essential identity within the Implicate Order (Peat,1995).

Primordial Walk

The unconscious, in its often overwhelming pull towards the
Underworld[9], has one lose touch with this more subtle sense of purpose and
intention. What is needed is the capacity for both immersion *and* reflection;
a looking back and forward simultaneously in that space of 'deep time'
where the self and the process of selfing are united within the Implicate, and
individuated[10] within the Explicate. *Embodiment.* This individuating
involves actively engaging the archetype at hand, which in many cases is

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[9]   "I am a frequent traveler and have visited many countries. However, of all the
trips I've taken in my life, the one that was the most fascinating was my descent to the
dark recesses of my psyche, that place where we reside as if in a nightmare, a place that
the ancient Greeks called the Underworld and that we call the unconscious […] The
necessity of a descent into the Underworld is a core idea of depth psychology" (Paris,
2009, p. xii).

[10]   "Individuation is " a person's becoming [her]himself, whole, indivisible […]This
the key concept in Jung's contribution to the theories of personality development. As
such, it is inextricably interwoven with others, particularly SELF, EGO and ARCHETPE,
as well as with the synthesis of conscious and unconscious elements" (Samuels, 1986, p.
76).

various aspects of the Death archetype from which the dynamic purpose, the "active meaning" that is encoded in every individual comes to life.

Immersion and Reflection

Here the old dichotomy that splits action and reflection, living and dying, is dialectically surpassed. The track of suffering, surrendering, letting

go—mourning—is paralleled by a sense of significance, purpose, intention and value that true, authentic mourning has to offer. Through the practice of archetypal activism comes the possibility of letting go (archetypal), and seizing hold (activism), just as the in-breath and out-breath form one complete cycle. *Life and death as one complete cycle: deep time.* The act of entering deep time—an act of archetypal activism—is the beginning of a mythopoetic engagement that can be considered an emergence of a quality or resonance that inspires both reflection and action. It is an endeavour to get at the root of the matter.

> The light of the moon is the light of the true sun.
> The moonlight being on the moon is what is called the "root of heaven".
> Otherwise it would be enough just to say "heaven".
> <div align="right">(Anonymous, 1991, p. 48)</div>

Reflection is the true seeing; the root of seeing through, when one can apprehend the archetypal being revealed in an event or story. One can then hear the archetypal image voicing beneath the myth as it sings and flickers through for one to engage actively.

The Moon Is Reflecting upon Herself in the Animal Body

David L. Miller's (2000), Watson-Ledden Professor of Religion, Emeritus at Syracuse University, teaching and writing are in the areas of Religion and Myth, Depth Psychology and Literary Theory. Miller associates activism with one-sidedness and archetypalism with many-sidedness, an oxymoron by definition (p.175). Could such opposites be held together in one piece of work? (Do opposites stem from the same root?). Or would this paradox be too daunting? Coming into relationship with deep paradoxes in one's life can be a form of archetypal activism in itself—the one-sidedness of activism and the many-sidedness of archetypalism—and asks one to engage one's interiority and environment in a manner perhaps never quite imagined before. *Digging in the earth for the root of heaven. Dying to each moment, so to live in the next. One breath. All stories share the same breath.*

Psyche's Breath

Sometimes these paradoxes are experienced viscerally, feeling the tension of the one-sidedness and many sidedness of archetypal activism: an experience of living and dying as one short breath. This can manifest as an intense energy held in from the inside as if from an outside force pressing in. A force field; a field of information; subject and object, active and receptive at the same time constantly reminding of something just dying to happen. There is a deep grieving process present that allows for the initiation of some form of movement; some kind of momentum to be ignited; something as simple as rolling over in bed. Or putting pastel to paper and letting the subtle waves of in-breath/out-breath create the mark on the blank white surface. White sheets to roll over in as if in sleep; gestures of the unconscious; shades of the Underworld. If one can turn to these shades and gestures inherent in the creative arts—where transformative embodiment generates its own activism even while the thinking mind sleeps—a kind of dreaming into its tacit *significance, purpose, intention and value* takes place, secretly

creating an aesthetic that has the capacity to touch the imaginal, and into the active and present process of mythopoesis: deep time, the moment the mythic realm of being is becoming.

In 'fleshing out' the shadow[11] and bringing fresh blood into those pale places, there is a healing and re-membering: bringing limbs of the liminal[12] that had been cut off, back to the Self (archetypal Self)[13]; Those lost pieces that yearn for the Self like a child reaching for her mother. Through the engagement of creative modalities, unconscious myths can embody into consciousness. The body listens to the wisdom the mind is too busy to hear. It dances, paints, sings out from the depths, the shadows, and creates something from the imaginal of which the mind may not be aware. Then this dance, this painting, this performance, this song can, in turn infuse the whole being and bring to life unborn awareness: awaken a life unlived.

[11] "Everyone carries a shadow and the less it is embodied in the individual's conscious life, the blacker and denser it is. If an inferiority is conscious, one always has a chance to correct it […] if it is repressed and isolated from consciousness, it never gets corrected, and is able to burst forward suddenly in a moment of unawareness." (Samuels, 1986, p. 138).

[12] In order to learn, according to David Appelbaum, what has previously been, needs to be stopped. "The Stop", as he calls it, is indispensable to bringing something new into being, but is precisely what is most often dis-membered, cut off, or dismissed as irrelevant. Appelbaum explains, "The momentum of habit and preconception makes observation difficult […] [the stop] breaks an onrushing momentum and opens experience to another point of view" (1995, pp. ix).

[13] "An archetypal image of [hu]man's fullest potential and the unity of the personality as a whole. The self as a unifying principle within the human psyche occupies the central position of authority in relation to psychological life, and therefore the destiny of the individual" (Samuels, p. 135)

Something from the Imaginal

In this kind of reflexive engagement there is no need for an antidote to the myth presently being acted out unconsciously. No 'cure' for one's life: Nothing to fix. Rather, it is an act, an archetypal act of moving into essence and taking up the mythopoetic endeavour to see through one's myth and deepen experience. In her research Dr. Celeste Snowber (2011)[14] speaks/dances "body seen as text; moving to becoming listening; stretching to become research". Snowber (2011) asks: "What happens when we listen to all of who we are, integrating grief as a place of research—grief is in the body who is interested in what is absent, touching the behaviours of the body; inappropriate behaviour that might tell an embarrassing tale; reveal a wrath of grief that cannot be contained". *Grief is a doing, an act of engagement with what cannot be contained. It asks that a temenos be built for it.*

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[14]   Dancer, writer, educator, and an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University.

Temenos

"Stories are told not just about the body, but through it. They are autobiographical acts echoing the embodied self" (Frank, 1995).

In this sense, mythopoeticizing, practicing archetypal activism, is a meaning-making *(soul-making)* process of transformation: trans-forming in the arts; moving from the mythic to the mythopoetic. Art/research as imaginal container. Carl Leggo (2012)[15]describes this as "language designed to enrich our comprehension of our inner lives, a language that helps us to see beyond the literal, beyond the world revealed to us through other disciplines like science and mathematics, history and geography. In this it shares an epistemology with the other creative arts […] Our mythopoetic discourse helps us see the world more fully". For me this translates into the mythopoetic discourse taking us into deep time when the embodied self lives; "when we listen to all of who we are, integrating grief as a place of research" (Snowber, 2011).

Deep Listening

Taking one's story on a mythopoetic voyage helps one see and experience deep time more directly through speaking the language of body, story, poetry and image; swimming with the current of the imaginal.

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[15]   Poet and professor in the Department of Language and Literacy Education at the University of British Columbia,

Mythopoetizing has one drop down and ask what the story/message in the embodied image/gesture is, that sits at the bottom of deep time. What important message or question is this deep time at the bottom of the image holding, just waiting to get past the analysis, past even the emotions that are the call to pay attention; to listen? Listen deeply in the body, story, poem, song, performance of the archetypal speaking/embodying through these modalities. Snowber (2011) explores and teaches ways of writing from the body and its connection to teacher education, arts education, ecological education and holistic education, inquiring into the relationship between the inner landscapes of the heart and the outer landscapes of creation.

Travelling to the Underwater Cave Paintings

Many arts-based researchers and scholars are investigating what Maxine Greene (1978) draws from Alfred Schutz's (1967) notion of "Wide-awakeness" as being in the world, and so brings our attention to when the 'why' of life. Greene points scholars and researchers towards Camus' (1955)

words: "and everything begins in that weariness tinged with amazement" (p.13). Greene (1978) believes that Camus had "wide-awakeness" in mind because the weariness of which he spoke comes "at the *end* of the acts of a mechanical life, but at the same time it inaugurates the impulse of consciousness" (Camus, 1955, p. 13), Many arts-based inquiries are largely concerned in creating a practice that marks the end of the mechanical life Camus describes. These living inquiries—that can become ongoing practices—act both as entry points as well as containers for "wide-awakeness", what I would refer to as a symbolic or mythopoetic sensibility. *Living in deep time.* These practices, as Lynn Fels (2012)[16], so aptly describes them, are "cross-disciplinary explorations through drama/theatre, visual arts, dance, writing, and/or music in which researcher and participants engage in artistic practices and creative activities in order to investigate a research question or inquiry" (p. 2). At the core of these inquiries for some researchers and scholars lies the question "why".

   Greene (1978) explains: "The 'why' may take the form of anxiety, the strange and wordless anxiety that occurs when individuals feel they are not acting on their freedom, not realizing possibility, not elevating their lives. Or the 'why' may accompany a sudden perception of the insufficiencies in ordinary life, or inequities and injustices in the world, of oppression and brutality and control. It may accompany, indeed it may be necessary, for an individual's moral life" (Greene, 1978). My sense, my intuition, my gut agrees with Greene's explanation in part. I see the anxiety Greene writes of as also possibly being the restless stirrings of inner figures or hidden presences who are trying to come into consciousness, asking to be embodied but generally remain in the form of undifferentiated anxiety. *The uneasy rustlings of the ancient ones held in the present—through the body—without living there.* To me, the question "why" itself is mostly impossible to answer. And if it is answered, I propose that whatever is arrived at is simply another beginning. A beginning of a deeper inquiry where "Why" is just a stepping stone to questions that can be animated and offer important raw material/data for the researcher. Asking "why" is much like asking "Who am I?' again simply a point of departure. Each step taken towards individual

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[16] Assistant professor in Arts Education at Simon Fraser University.

awareness arouses anxiety. *Bodying-forth creates friction by the very movement forward: Move into the question with the body instead of trying to answer it. Let your hands move freely on the paper while you keep your eyes shut. The hands will know what to do.* "What is important is not a philosophy of life but to observe what is actually taking place in our daily life, inwardly and outwardly" (Krishnamurti, 1969, p.16).

Sometimes a Gesture is a Sign. Sometimes It's Unconscious

The 'what', 'where', 'when' and 'how' are more revealing questions which lend themselves to an open-ended inquiry that engages the movements of one's every day lived-in, embodied life. These questions also offer the raw material which the unconscious can shape and move in a manner that intuitively makes sense; makes meaning through the body/heart/gut that can then speak, sing, dance, paint an essence (an archetypal pattern) into presence that releases the notion of "why" altogether. "Consciousness is perception" (Merleau-Ponty, 1948). *Perception is consciousness. Not through five senses, but one sensing; the holistic way we consume space and reality.* From this perspective there is no "why". "Why" does not live in deep time. It is not embodied so there is no occasion for it. Asking why only leads me to more thoughts. Why should I believe my own

thoughts will help me? Conscious intentions are different than the deeper intent of Psyche. It is in the depths of Psyche that we find embodiment which will be actualized more potently in image than in conceptualizing alone.

A mythopoetic inquiry holds the intent to unveil and bring the depths into view, asking questions with no answers—finding meaning by sacrificing the attempt to find it—is both an archetypal action that creates a container and opening to an evolvement of one's present way of seeing. This new way of inquiring/seeing reaches beyond what the present myth or story proclaims, re-searching, re-imaging, re-activating a journey in which life is imaging the inquirer in each moment as the researcher images it, in deep time. It does not require a "why" as the "why" is embedded in the journey itself—Psyche's deeper intent. "This is correct seeing; whatever is contrary to this is false seeing. Once you reach this ungraspability, then as before you continuously practice stopping and continue it by seeing, practice seeing and continue it by stopping[17]. This is twin cultivation of stopping and seeing. "This is turning the light around" (Cleary, 1991, p. 21). *I see flickers, catch glimpses, and reflections in the mirror of my experience.*

"Turning the light around is the turning on of the light of the mind itself emblematic of the basic awakening of the real self and its hidden potential" (Cleary, 1991, p. 1). Turning the light around, awakening to the archetypal Self that sees the Implicate Order is a mythopoetic move; mythiopoesis: "situations where meanings of mythical accounts had been re-visioned, the original literal tellings of *myths* and stories transformed into symbolically new versions" (Doty, 2000, p. 20). *The story re-flected in a silver strand of hair. Flickers in the body.* Shedding light on the mind, becoming conscious of consciousness itself is a "stop": "a moment of opportunity when one is momentarily paused in action that calls attention to what is hidden; a vulner-ability. "Between closing and beginning lives a gap, a caesura, a discontinuity. The betweenness is a hinge that belongs to neither one nor the other" (Appelbaum, 1995, p. 15). A stop invites a questioning of longings as well as habits of practice and to engage anew. A stop is an invitation to understand things, events, experiences and/or

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[17]   The Secret of the Golden Flower, the Classic Chinese Book of Life, 1991, p 48.

relationships from a new perspective18" (Fels, 2009). *I stopped combing for a moment, and noticed for the first time the silver threads glistening through the darkness of my hair. Time.* This stop, a moment of risk, drops one's ordinary way of being and into an intimacy that releases into the many-sides one's story, one's myth is both telling and withholding from the inquirer; the shadowy places between one's differing conceptions of self.

Something has gone terribly missing. Where might the researcher look for this something, or even know what it is?: In the interstices "space-moments of possibility mark presence within an uncharted galaxy of interstanding, here now in this moment and something happens" (Fels, 2002, p. 47). *One of the guests of the unconscious has tapped my shoulder asking me to dance. Is it the archetype of the elder.* "Stalking a dramatic moment requires the patience of a fly-fisher, the willingness of a coyote, the breath of a winged angel" (Fels, 2002, p. 47). This is a moment outside the habitual chattering narrative the mind so often indulges in. This dramatic moment, if one "practices seeing and continues it by stopping" (Cleary, 1991), is an archetypal action that enables the researcher to continue on this mythopoetic journey, this shifting from the literal to the symbolic. In the archetypal dimension the researcher is a many-sided being: she is all ages. Psyche knows the moment of her birth and her death.

This notion of the mythopoetic as encompassing the one-sidedness of activism, with the many-sidedness of the archetypal, moves beyond the perspective of the mythic. It is also in strong contrast to today's society's view of myth as a kind of a fable or false story. "In native traditions, what are called myths, are better described as stories. Many are called guiding stories [guiding images] that were actually created to teach about something that was important to the people, such as how to survive […] The metaphor comes into place in the stories to teach about something else and the

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18   "Philosopher David Appellbaum (1995) speaks of what he calls a "stop," a moment of risk, a moment of opportunity. A stop, he tells us, occurs when a traveler encounters an obstacle, and is momentarily paused in action. A stop is a moment of hesitation, a moment that calls our attention to what is hidden—a vulnerability, an intimacy, a longing. A stop invites us to question our habits of practice and to engage anew. A stop is an invitation to understand things, events, experiences and/or relationships from a new perspective" (Fels, 2009).

something else is really the core teaching of the story itself' (*Racette,p. 7, 2009)*. The mythopoesis.

Ways of Knowing

Metaphors have been used in a variety of different ways in story forms to convey information and knowledge over generations. Story telling essentially is the first foundation of teaching anything. Human beings are story makers and story tellers: image bearers reaching into deep time and making visible the archetypal encoded in every gesture of being human: telling/writing our lives.

Vicki Kelly (2010)[19], describes her own process: "It is through life writing that I began to understand the value of 'looking from the mountain' In writing I was engaged in an act of stopping and attending to the lived landscapes of my life from a distance in time and space […] I was following my own act of navigating through life. I was witnessing my wayfinding by tracking my lived experience" (p. 84). *Tracking the movements of my original story, I come to feel the invisible momentum of my myth as it presents itself to me within the container of a mythopoetic inquiry.* Developing a mythopoetic sensibility by mapping out the unfolding of experience of that aesthetic that is one's being, allows for a particular positioning of this being in the invisible. *My body needs no instruction. My body is the place of a fold by which the sensible reveals itself: my "body's non-coincidence with itself; the invisible* of *the visible"* (Merleau-Ponty, 1959, p. 149). From this fold that is one's aesthetic that is intertwined with the world; sensations; gestures; images and words *unfold* in a way that may shed light, bring to consciousness the deeper intent of Psyche. One must be "wide-awake", as Maxine Greene (1978) suggests, if one is to meaningfully engage in the world's renewal (Fels, 2009).

This mapping includes the tracking, like a hunter of the imaginal, to find entry points to the liminal, sacrificing one's usual positional way of being in the world and in oneself. *Stopping*; taking the risk of being in the invisible trusting that the body will find its way. *My mother used to say to me when I was confused "your body will be somewhere".* "Turning the light around": Learning how to listen to one's 'call', feel into the Implicate Order, one can only hear if one "stops" and goes into the silence of non-being, the bardo, the 'place-in-between' where the noise of neuroses ceases to drown out a deep voice that one must hear.

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[19] Indigenous scholar and Associate Professor in Education at Simon Fraser University.

By setting out on a mythopoetic journey through the deepest of discussions with oneself, the individual will need to choose to travel in the dark for a period of time—go into the timelessness of myth—mythic rhythm: the imaginal, slip into deep time where any notion of oneself is a redundancy, a "false seeing" (Cleary, 1991, p. 21): a neurosis structuring itself out of the narcissistic wound. If one is narcissistically wounded one must learn to attend to the feelings, instead of denying them or striving to *do something* about them, and thus remaining cut off from them, dis-membering them and their important messages. *The original story—the myth I have been telling myself even while having begun this mythopoetic inquiry—is the wound in its intimacy with soul. It needs my conscious engagement and attending now to trans-form.* The myth *is* the wound: the very passage of soul-making towards self-actualization and wholeness[20] which, includes the wound. Here is the 'myth' in both senses of the word: a false story, the source of suffering and 'wounding'; *and* a guiding narrative that is part of a greater weave of sentient beings. This myth miraculously *is* the route to, (and root of) "active meaning", the portal to the now activated mythopoeia. Through this re-activating of this journey of inquiry, the wound is tended to; *held like a baby in my arms*. However, it is vital that one re-members that there will need to be a "stop" now and again, to know that to understand the mystery demystifies it; remembering that no amount of answers can exhaust the questions.

      This kind of inquiry is better approached in terms of open-endedness rather than attempting any potential solvability. Holding the intention to develop one's capacity for open-endedness—this many-sidedness that includes the one-sidedness of a conviction to immerse oneself in the liminality the container this inquiry is—is an important first step. If one "stops" and sees and follows one's images as guides that come as visitors, teachers, even disturbers as they nudge us out of our comfort zone, images that Psyche is, one can receive clues to the mystery that act as stepping stones or light posts helping the inquirer each step of the way. At the same time these images Psyche has sent as guides, looking back, become footsteps

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[20]   "it is possible to see how often life's experience has that end as its secret goal […] a completeness rather than perfection" (Samuels, 1986, p. 160).

for others to track into realms unfamiliar—others also implying 'others' within oneself: the lost or abandoned child; or the hero that is convinced of its 'right path', and all the other liminal subjects that will have their particular version of the story. This notion of liminal subject here may be a leap from the more familiar notion of liminal as a space. Liminal figures are symbolic psychological possibilities that roam the unconscious landscape, or dreaming reality and have immense impact on experience. If we pay close attention we might catch a glimpse of one of these possibilities wanting to take shape in the posture we are holding, or a subtle gesture we make in a moment of unawareness. *I see flickers, catch glimpses, and reflections in the mirror of my experience.*

Another important step towards developing a mythopoetic sensibility is the practice of deep democracy[21] which lays the ground from which archetypal activism can emerge. "Deep democracy is both a philosophy and method. The philosophy recognizes that every group [individual psyche] has a consensual [ego-oriented] reality as well as another dreaming reality. This dreaming dimension includes all of the deep feelings and dreams hidden within our communication" (Deep Democracy Institute, 2009). Deep Democracy includes everything in the field; all the images each participant is living whether they are aware of them or not; whether they are consciously or unconsciously expressed. All the 'guests' are participants of what is going on so that a collective dream is taking place that embodies the group's or individual's myth. The work of deep democracy is "to give a place at the table" for all these images and allow them to have voice; to welcome them into consciousness. The voice of images is given through the art. This is how deep democracy both draws on the deeper, broader pool of resources of the collective unconscious, otherwise perhaps left untapped. As well, deep democracy brings power and attention to archetypal presences that exist parallel to conscious, consensus reality: those "flickers". Through

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[21]   "Unlike 'classical' democracy, which focuses on majority rule, Deep Democracy suggests that all voices, states of awareness, and frameworks of reality are important. Deep Democracy also suggests that all the information carried within these voices, levels of awareness, and frameworks is needed to understand the complete process of a system. Deep Democracy is an attitude that focuses on the awareness of voices that are both central and marginal [...]This type of awareness can be focused on groups, organizations, one's own inner experiences" (Deep Democracy Institute, 2009).

tracking those "flickers" from the unconscious—subtle shifts in consciousness, body gestures and symptoms and dreams, as well as what arises in an aesthetic experience and creative processes— different guests are brought into awareness, even if just for a moment. As images to engage and work/play with through the practice of deep democracy, the researcher is also able to practice archetypal activism and dialectically bring together fragmented polarities[22] one experiences on so many levels of ones being.

Choking Bud

Within the practice of deep democracy lies a vast field of possibilities for attending to the images, the "flickers", as well as seeing symptoms and conflicts of the tension of opposites in an entirely different manner:

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[22]   Synthetic "(i.e. dialectical) in order to facilitate bringing together the fragmented polarities of the culture in such a way that the existential tension of opposites is maintained while the opposites interact mutually, engaging without definitive dominance. In this way polarities may reflectively energize and activate each other, reflecting through distinction" (McNamara, 2010).

symbolically, mythopoetically. This way of seeing brings the archetypal processes that are forces shaping one's myth into awareness through their images and affect. Becoming open to these archetypal forces through their images, and how they influence experience, is the journey itself. Understanding this unconscious shaping of one's experience and living it fully, is the purpose of embarking on the long, perhaps dangerous voyage of a mythopoetic inquiry: unpacking the myth one is living without killing it by analysis alone. Now the individual can consciously participate at a deeper level by including their understanding of the mythopoetic endeavour: moving from the story already told by the repetitive patterning of previous experience, to "seeing correctly": Turning the light around; awakening to the archetypal Self that sees the Implicate Order.

A mythopoetic inquiry can often follow the traces of dark scripts for their disguised transformative messages. This might include re-living failures, suffer symptoms and experience tragedy as these are the stuff' one's myth is made of. "Our attention to what is working within us opens us up to the paradox that beauty, growth, and wonder are inextricably connected to living from and through the depths. This too is the lived curriculum" (Snowber, 2009). This voyaging of the living moment and its "twin"—the imaginal version of the myth through the action of being symbolized in the very moment it becomes a story—is the best chance one has of being "wide awake".

From the perspective of Depth Psychology, a mythopoetic inquiry could be considered a process of exposing the dialectical nature of self-actualization, what Jung (1983) referred to as individuation. Included is the examination of what role 'image' plays in the relationship between perception and consciousness: what action or momentum this relationship generates that is embodied in image. The notion of 'image' is used in a broad sense of its definition to include not only the visual image, but also that which is experienced as sound, smell, touch; or as idea, notion or even impulse: the invisibles. "The image [...] is a radiant node or cluster; it is what I can, and must perforce, call a vortex, from which, and through which, and into which, ideas are constantly rushing (Witemeyer, 1969, p. 37). The word image is suggested as the process of imaging itself being the nature of how we experience. The most direct experience there is as Psyche

is image which is always imaging. If, according to Archetypal Psychology, every psychic process is an image and an imagining — a part of one's unfolding myth—one needs to ask what the image is seeking, what the image within one's longing is and what buried significance it might hold; and "What is its intent?" as it is reflexively both reaching out and reaching into, at the same time. What is proposed is that image is a gestalt or organizing mechanism that creates meaning in one's experience. Image as embodiment of unconscious experience: Psyche's deeper intent.

Embodying

A mythopoetic inquiry might weave modalities such as art making, poetry, autobiographical inquiry, all being methods of what Jung (1961) termed "Active Imagination"[23] and Bosnak (2007), Dutch Jungian

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[23]   "a process of dreaming with open eyes […] the images have a life of their own and develop according to their own logic. Conscious doubt must be overcome and allowance made for whatever falls into consciousness as a consequence: (Samuels, 1986, p. 9).

psychoanalyst referred to as "embodied Imagination". This method is a meditative technique wherein one opens to the contents and processes of one's unconscious which are translated into imaging: visual images, narrative, dreams, symptoms, complexes which are imaginally embodied as if an inner figure or 'other', personified as separate entities or sub-personalities that can become activated in life's daily encounters. 'Active imagination' can serve as a bridge between the conscious 'ego' and the unconscious through working with dreams and the creative self via imagination. Underlying the modalities and theories from the various discourses, primarily Depth Psychology, is the fundamental structure of the ongoing dialogue between the conscious and unconscious, the imaging that can lead to integration, synthesis and in some traditions, wholeness, or alternatively, emptiness. "Indigenous epistemologies acknowledge the individual journey of life long learning, learning as a pathway, a sacred way toward completeness or fully becoming one's potential" (Kelly, 2010, p. 83).

A mythopoetic inquiry is a kind of 'soul tracking' by way of the footprints of the emerging autonomous images from the unconscious that present themselves symbolically suggesting that developing the ability to see symbolically and that this way of seeing could allow the possibility of loving one's fate: a sacred way of seeing. As Nietzsche wrote in Ecce Homo, **"**My formula for greatness in a human being is amor fati [love of fate] that one wants nothing to be different, not forward, not backward, not in all eternity. Not merely bear what is necessary, still less conceal it—all idealism is mendaciousness in the face of what is necessary—but love it" (Nietzsche, n.d., para. 16).

In a mythopoetic inquiry one is the witness and participant of the ongoing dialogue of the conscious and unconscious. This process reveals itself through the various modalities mentioned that can serve as bridges between the conscious 'ego' and the unconscious. As one engages in the modalities of creativity—active imagination—one's intent is to set the inner life into motion. This is particularly important where "the inner life is frightened, wedged, or cornered" (Estee, 1992, p.52). To Amor Fati.
In deciding to begin a mythopoetic journey, one might begin by asking, or rather requesting that one develop a mythopoetic attitude towards deep learning of the mysteries of being. This could include asking oneself who

they are willing to be in the art and the imaginal—to fully engage the continuous imaging of life: To be open to the possibilities presented by the image and the process of imaging and where the images/imaging in turn will take them. This suggests taking a risk of engaging in a discussion about the importance of a willingness—consent of the ego—to surrender in part to what happens when one enters the imaginal (world of images, mundus imaginalis) through mythopoetic/symbolic seeing and sensing; hopefully a risk with the reward of moving into and then from, a more fluid peripheral way of perceiving that develops a new more expanded consciousness: Seeing from inside the image/story rather than at it: imaging rather than imitating one's own reality. Following closely the subtle movements of this practice and its forgetting—develops a mythopoetic sensibility that will be a way of gaining entrance to the imaginal realm. *Home.*

Into the Imaginal

The container of depth and insight that is the mythopoetic is built to withstand and welcome the animation of archetypal processes and figures. Creating such a container of depth and insight is what such an inquiry is

intended to be. By opening and entering this temenos one enhances and accelerates a kind of learning that enriches and deepens experience beyond that of the presently identified 'self'.

A mythopoetic inquiry also explores the phenomenology of perception through an investigation of 'image': image as primal process and experience of perception. With the assumption that images emerge spontaneously and autonomously from the unconscious, such an investigation reveals the 'subjectivity' that "[…] intentionally reconstructs things within an ever-present world frame, through use of its pre-conscious, pre-predicative understanding of the world's make-up": Merleau-Ponty's (1945) concept of the "body-subject" (1945). Integrating this "body-subject" approach assumes an eco-phenomenological stance ('deep democracy'); each image, or inner figure, having equal weight. Psyche both creates, and is, image: Subject and object simultaneously, suggesting that image is a way of seeing—"seeing through"[24] (Hillman, 1976) phenomena ontologically and teleologically. A de-literalizing process that sets free the creative imaging force of being.

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[24]   "The soul learns by searching for itself in whatever ideas come to it; it gains ideas by, subjectivizing all questions, including the 'How?' to give any direct answer to 'How' betrays the activity of soul-making which proceeds by psychologizing through all literal answers […] the soul loses ideas by putting them into practice in answer to 'How?'" (Hillman, 1976, p. 122)
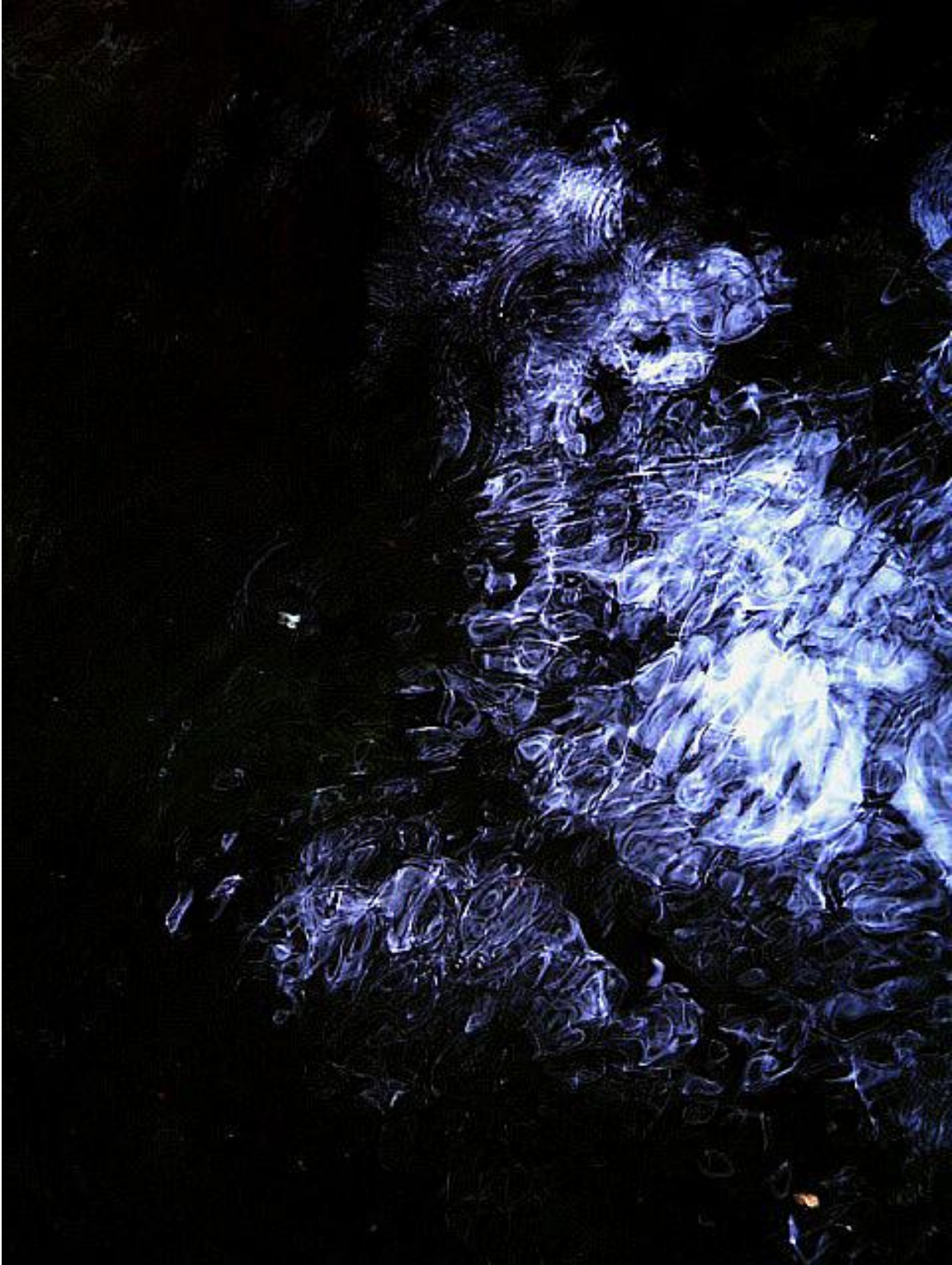
Creative Imaging Force

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