

# Irrational Re-Interpretation through Series of Emotional Portraiture Inspired by Works of Christina Otero and Clara Lieu

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## ABSTRACT

Workplaces or studio constitute the important sites where individuals can construct and negotiate their own social identities. Firstly, this paper can illustrate how I construct the identities by using emotion in ways to exploit that specific discursive norm that characterize the identity. Emotion also comprises a valuable component of the linguistic. As the beginning process of making artwork is the process of critical thinking that I apply the concept of mix and match by using Adobe Photoshop. Several images that I pick from Google I use it as my main idea to develop. Furthermore, the idea behind the process of mine involves the sense of self-discovery, curiosity, and emotion that I have along the way and applying these feelings, thoughts into my series of drawing. Ripple human face that I use closely related with my daily life, image that I draw is image that I try to describe my feeling, what I feel, what I go through during my life journey, during the process of making artwork, as honest as I felt that my drawing describe what I go through, how I try to overcome emotion that well off inside myself all this while.

**Keywords:** Portrait, Emotion, Humor, Teasing, Identity, Expression.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

“Emotions” were traditionally conceptualized as a spontaneously arising subjective states associated with a variety of thoughts, behavior, and bodily responses. The word “emotion” is taken from the Latin word *exmovere* meaning “to move,” “to stir,” “to act in motion” which was referred to as mental movement or agitation.

Thus, emotion and expression is a cluster of values that including teasing, irritated, mocking, social toleration, life satisfaction, public expression and as aspiration of liberty. According to Ronald Inglehart, University of Michigan who develop the theory of post-materialism, has worked extensively with the concept.

As consider research in expression psychology has examined the expression have the interaction of the personality that associated with an individual’s expression influences attitudes. Besides, the current research is trying to focuses on the how irritated can influence of the malleable expression of consumer attitudes in a drawing.

Hence, these effects have been tested in a set of theory-based interactions that rely on the self-monitoring individually. Furthermore, these research shed light on the emotion of expression and the role or how irritated can influencing individual attitude.

Expression is the heart and soul of all forms of drawing, I try to combine my inner thoughts and feelings with what I perceive in the outer world and put it into words. Sometimes, expression and emotion comes across as little more than navel gazing, narcissism, or sarcastic.

If we're drawing strictly for personal reasons, it doesn't matter whether we draw clearly or in a way that interest other people, but if we want to draw professionally, to connect with audience, our personal expressions must be clear and they must go beyond ourselves, they must resonate with viewers.

Apparently the best drawing is full of truth, I've come across some of drawer who insist on the sheer pleasure or therapeutic value of expression through process of drawing. To me, there's nothing wrong with that. In fact, it's healthy to give yourself a personal drawing space that isn't influence by the thought if someone else. It's also good drawing practice because there's freedom in drawing without inhibition. According to Melissa Donovan, "I've heard this said of all art forms: art takes two people, the artist and the person experiencing the art". Besides that, as I know personally does not develop in a vacuum, but through the movement, feeling, and thinking of a specific body.

Hence, the main point why I'm choosing emotion expression of teasing to relate with drawing is because I'm trying to examining my life based on my personal experience surrounding me. By using drawing as my strength and personal experience as my point it is a expression that I'm trying to show when people are making fun of me. I'm trying to show that people see I'm laughing but it doesn't show actually what does I feel. Given drawing as a medium for me to express that it is a some part of my journey that I try to irritate or provoke with persistent petty distractions when people are making fun of me, make jokes, mocking me.

In the drawing, I'm trying to putting all my feeling which I'm distract, offend, sadden, anger, irritate, annoy into the drawing which people can see that what I have been drawing is actually a reflection of myself.

Furthermore, drawing has always been a part of my life. I've noticed as I get older it transforms into a different kind. I didn't planning to jump into drawing course because when I've started over people that are closest to me are doubtful that I can do it. The fact that my drawing is taking so long gives me inspired that it'll stick with people. I have more practice and can depict the good stuff from the crap more easily. Drawing isn't about what the audience won't like. It's about what they connect with that makes it more than worth while.

## **2. BACKGROUND OF STUDY**

What does art therapy do? It was involved in my creative process in expressing one's self behavior that involved my feeling, reduce stress and awareness. Why should something beautiful as moonlight turn a human into beast? A bizarre and gruesome images hunted my feeling and the wellness of mind. Thus it's also improve my physical, mental and emotional well being. Art therapy comes in many way which is music and dance therapy. But how does the art therapy helps me towards portraying narrative in my drawing? narrative has an aspect of artifice where the construction from previous narrative ruins. I try to use the drawing as hints of an untold story of my traumatic experience. At times there a something intentionally unclear inside my drawing which there have a sense of mystery.

As for me, I started making my artwork through own experience in life who facing up the psycho person in everyday life. This happened during my major class while having a discussion with the lecturer in charge which is Associate Professor Jalaini Abu Hassan and Associate Professor Prof Ramlan Abdullah. Most of the drawings showed them the scary images such as angry expressions, sadness, bizarre and depressions. Thus, actually the idea is about self-expression toward what is happening surrounding me as a psychopathic victim. Thus in releasing the unconscious by means of spontaneous in art making or also in art expression it has its roots in the transference relation between artist and therapist and on the encouragement of free association. It is actually closely allied to

psychoanalytic theory. The treatment depends on the development of the transference relation and on the continuous effort to obtain the artist or patient's own interpretation of his or her own symbolism or images. The images produced are a form of the main communication for artist to let their audience notice the meaning of their artwork.

Frida Kahlo's work was inspired me more into expression and how to paint own experience into art piece. Frida Kahlo's work was influenced by her traumatic physical and psychological events from her childhood and early adulthood, including a crippling accident and the infidelity of her husband. In addition to personal issues, Kahlo's often brooding and introspective subject matter also deals with questions of national identity. Frida Kahlo's using her personal tragedies or both physical and psychological combined with a realistic painting style, Kahlo's produced images that were emotionally raw and visually disturbing. Her artistic output was dominated by self-portraits that often show the artist suffering.

### **3. ART AS A FORM OF COMMUNICATION**

As human has its own form in the community and since our words tend to be dominate, art is the best way to communicate with the others especially on therapeutics condition. This is also the way to communicate with the others world by expressing and communicating the experiences. To find the right words," expressing" play the important role to convey or to portray the traumatic and they suffer from depression. Sometimes our experiences and traumatic are beyond s the words.

In the context of making art, there are several supportive and relationship of making an images. One of the example was through imagination or by the person emotional growth. In the search of the inspiration, the patient has to randomly making the art by sharing their thought and feeling and creativity had become restricted by own style of the images of experience of making. The aim of the art therapy is a inevitably according to the need of the patient and the artist and encouraging personal autonomy and self-motivation to relate with the materials and the unconscious mind.

### **4. EXPRESSIONISME**

Hence the big influence in this art making was from "Expressionist" era. The style plays the important role to rebuild the brush stroke, shape, color and texture. The intentions are for the language which is in art therapy term is a "Visual Language" through emotional states. The narrative is one of the way to portray the traumatic and its bring the faithful representation of internal reality. Expressionism comes from variety sources so called "Primitive" art forms of the European Middle Ages, folk art or non- European cultures.

#### **4.1 Aim**

The aim of this research is to interpret personal experience into visual expression using collage and drawing method. In order to achieve this, I have to line out three research question and three research objectives to facilitate the main aims of this study.

#### **4.2 Research Questions**

1. What are the criteria in emotional portrait that instigate the representation of retaliation in my series of drawing?
2. In what way does the retaliation emotion being contributed in my attempt to create new meaning in my art making?
3. To what extent does the selected portrait symbolism play their interpretative role in narrating retaliation stories?

### 4.3 Research Objectives

1. To produce series of portrait inspired by artists Christina Otero and Clara Lieu as means of re- interpreting my personal distressing experience as a new body of work.
2. To use the element of drawings such as tonal quality of light and dark as the main medium in manifesting the meaning or irrational portraiture.
3. To use exaggeration on the facial expressions of portraitures as symbolic elements representing the dark, irrational and emotional narrative in my story telling.

### 4.4 Significance of Study

The significant of this report is to help conveying my art making in studio process to question to give a massage, to healing and to create the personal symbol and images from traumatic experience. To conveying the message and humorous approach, I prefer using drawing as my main method to represent the dark, gruesome narrative in my story telling. I couldn't imagine on how studio process could be part of the healing process and it's involved me into positive vibes.

## 5. REFERENCE ARTISTS

There a few artists that attempted in interpreting the life experience into visual narrative. By doing so they also adopted by the different approaches while connecting to the meaning and the value of the artwork. Here are some of the artists who communicate the experience of the traumatic in life into piece of artworks:

- A) Frida Kahlo
- B) Vincent Van Gogh
- C) Edvard Munch
- D) Pablo Picasso
- E) Francis Bacon
- F) Chuck Close

Art has been Frida's hobby throughout her childhood.

She began to explore and interpreted the idea of becoming an artist during her long recovery. Actually its the way for her to release all of the depression inside her life. Her 1st attempted in politics in 1927 and joined the Mexican Communist Party. So, Frida's through the party that she joined, she meet muralist named Diego Rivera. After the met up, Frida's decided to married with Diego Rivera's in 1928 and they remind as a married couple until Frida's death. During 1920s Frida's traveling to Mexico and United States with Rivera's and from that she try to developed her own skills as an artist itself and draws her own inspiration from Mexican Folk Culture. All of her artworks are mostly on self-portraits.

Meanwhile for, Edward Munch's was inspired by the human activity and surrounding such as chronic illness, sexual liberation and religious aspiration. He expresses these obsession through works of intense color, semi abstraction and Edward's also plays with mysterious subject matter.

Edward Munch grew up in a household periodically by life threatening illness and the premature death of his mother and sister, all of which was explained by Munch's father a Christian fundamentalism as acts of device punishment. Frankly, Edward Munch's artworks more to the anxiety, emotional suffering and human vulnerability in his own life. All of the events are more to the tragic situation and their fatalistic interpretation left a life long impression on his own life experience.

Furthermore, Van Gogh said the looking at the stars always makes me dream. Through the reading, Van Gogh's wrote about his experience and to his brother Theo's. Most of the images is rooted in imagination and memory. Van Gogh's made his work more to touchstone just like Expressionist painting. The painting leaves behind the impressionist style of truth to the nature in a favor of restless feeling and intense color.

Thus, The Weeping Women by Pablo Picasso series was regarded as a thematic continuation of the tragedy that depicted in Picasso's epic painting Guernica. As we focusing on the image of the woman crying, Pablo Picasso was no longer paint about Spanish Civil War directly but he rather paint and referring to a singular universal images of suffering about the war during that era. There a several series that Pablo's prints and draw was in protest emotion. We can see on how Pablo's play with the emotion and the composite images to create another image that successfully telling us that the girl was under despair and related to the emotion.

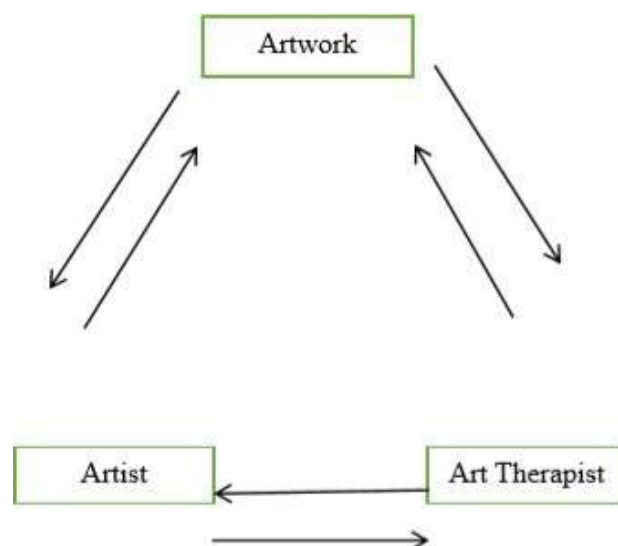
Francis Bacon is one of the famous artists in art era. But his subjects were always portrayed as violently distorted, presented not as sociable and charismatic types but as isolated souls imprisoned and tormented by existential dilemmas. One of the most successful British painters of the twentieth century, Bacon's reputation was elevated further during the widespread return to painting in the 1980s, and after his death he was viewed by some as one of the world's most important painters.

Crucifixion is the work that first launched by Bacon into the public eye, long before the much greater successes of the post-war years. The painting may have been inspired by Rembrandt's Slaughtered Ox (c.1638), but also by Picasso's Surrealist style (perhaps sensing this latter connection, Herbert Read, in his book Art Now, illustrated Crucifixion adjacent to a Picasso Bather). The translucent whiteness painted over the bodily frame in Crucifixion adds a ghostly touch to an already unsettling composition, introducing Bacon's obsession with pain and fear. Exhibited at a time when the horrors of the First World War were still remembered, Crucifixion spoke of how brutality had changed the world forever. At the time of writing the picture is owned by Damien He is an artist who has acknowledged a large debt to Bacon.

Lastly, Charles Thomas Close was born at home to Leslie and Mildred Close, a couple with a leaning toward artistic pursuits. Leslie Close was a jack-of-all-trades with a flair for craftsmanship; he built Charles his first easel. His mother was a trained pianist but unable to pursue a musical career due to financial restraints. Determined to provide her son with opportunities she herself never enjoyed, Mildred pushed Charles to take up a myriad of extracurricular activities during his school years and hired a local tutor to give him private art lessons.

Charles had a difficult time with academics due to dyslexia, although teachers were often impressed with his creative approach to projects. He was also diagnosed at a young age with facial blindness and a neuro muscular condition that prevented him from engaging in athletics, making the social aspects of school life difficult. Once in college, and upon deciding to make a career in art, he excelled.

The tentative air of experimentation that might be said to characterize Big Nude is nowhere apparent in Big Self-Portrait, a watershed painting that virtually showcases Close's unique method. Abandoning the full-body view, Close turned to one of the oldest traditions anywhere in art history, the self-portrait. Close had partially set out to refute the critic Clement Greenberg's claim that it was impossible for an "advanced" artist to work in portraiture. Closes untraditional approach involved conceiving of and creating a unique kind of "mug shot," a black-and white idiom that exacerbated the subject's blemishes and the original photographic distortion caused by the camera. The devotion to the idea of an unsparring, head-on view led him to refuse all commissions, as Close used only his own "mug" and that of close friends for his subjects.



**Figure 1:** The method to interpret the art therapy

Within this triangular relationship greater or lesser emphasis may be placed on each between the artist and the therapist. For example the artist and their artwork or between the artist and the therapist. There are a few artists that attempted to interpret their life experience into visual narrative. By doing so they also adopted different approaches while connecting to the meaning and the value of the artwork. Here are some of the artists who communicate the experience of the traumatic in life into art pieces.

While according to Freud, the artist is also able to make art through form. There is some aesthetic value on the artwork. While Jung said that the therapy must be based on imaginative activity to understand the nature and the function of the symbol. Freud also mentions that the symbol is part of the art and it is a desire that needs to be contributed to the art therapy and it is all found in dreams or art. All of the expressions created and begin. All ideas must come from the unconscious mind and desires in a disguised form. "Work of art is the better way" to express the traumatic event. The structure of the human mind also brings and plays a significant role in this therapy.

Mandala art is one of the therapy forms to reduce stress. Thus mandala art also plays with the variety of forms, but the basic mandala comes from geometric figures. The symbol and the meaning are a remaining perpetual challenge to the thought and feelings. Plus, Carl Jung also mentions that drawing as a symbolic of wholeness and the expression of self-trauma. It was constructed by the human mind too. Some of the symbolism also brings the meaning to the artwork.



**Figure 2:** Mandala Triangular Art

In this figure 1.1 the mandala represents the Goddess of Shri Yantra. Its repeated lines and the symbolism to the goddess. It is also related to desire, anger, envy, delusion, greed, jealousy, virtue, and vice.

If look at the circle, it's was represent on the "Fulfilter of Desire". Then it was related to the taste, growth, memory, revivification and all the physical body. Mandala is a desires and the healing process of the traumatic including the drawing. Mandala describing the beauty of the art itself and reflection of the creator. Thus mandala art is the right therapy and the healing point and also can be great point and source of represent on one soul. Apart form that mandala can be seen around us. They are larger than life. They also represent in our larger system in our life or universe.

The color that created with the mandala and the shape really reflect the inner self at the time of creation. The instinct and feeling are also inspired and guide us through the process of creation. Ultimately, creating the self-portrait as creating the mandala. When the emotion come through it will be our art therapy. Most of the therapy was not the final product but its come along with the journey. If we look back at our own life story, we will represent something special about our on personal life.

The example of mandala can be found on the Jung Book ( Jung,2009). The important of the image and the imagination in psychological healing already influence the development of art scene especially in art therapy (Maclagan, 2001).

## **6. CONCLUSION**

Art and the inner world are connected to each other. Either by human being or the nature both are related to between human and the nature itself. We are depending on relationship to survive and develop. The desires, the fears, losses are also bring the significant to lives. The mechanisms are also involved in life processes. These experiences are either bad or good they incorporated to the inner world itself. And the most extreme, some of the people are confined their own inner world. In practise as a artist in art scene, therapy in making art was concerned with gaining the access and making sense of the unknown influence our relationship to external world. Thing happen when we start making the object or images, the unconscious feeling may find the "expression". Through all this, the artists become more possible to stand apart from and think or change it. The particular important was from the Freud onwards about the dreams and imagination making more senses in reproducing the art.

According to the McNeilly,(1984) said that the therapy approach just as a main theme or as a spark to attach the ideation in art. Creative term involve with the thought and feeling too. Plus, the depression is also one of the reasons why the therapy needed. It was characterized by the feeling of sadness, lack of motivation and loss of interest. It's often through images and metaphor where the depression can be reveled.

As a result as a artist where by having own studio for making an art, the art therapy are expected to remain active and involved in their own practice by making artwork. This is to train the artist into development and gain the healing process faster by understanding the language in all its various forms. Spending the time in the studio also create the mood of making the art and also healing processes. The opportunities or the connection between the studio practice and also the art history also play the important role and the connection is there. It also helps to develop the idea and technical skill necessary for self-expression through application of the variety of medium and media. It's all about the art exploration too.

As a nutshell, art therapy plays the important role to rebuild again our positive minded and psychical. Art therapy also helps more into healing processes because we are taking the thought and developing the idea with a good experience and pushing the unwanted thoughts out from our mind such a negative thought if they were physical entities.

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