
Manila Women's Forum

A Network of Women Professionals

April 2008

The Healing Arts

By Jill Gale de Villa

Our speaker for March was an accomplished architect and designer who retired at 35 (lucky him! and perhaps I should say, “well done!”) from his design and construction firm. Reimon Gutierrez then traveled and began working with Philippine indigenous people to design marketable products from their handicrafts. On the side, he became a bit familiar with Anthroposophy, literally translated as the wisdom of the human being as introduced by Rudolf Steiner in the early 20th century.

At 42 he began taking a course in art as therapy, which he is continuing and applying to design work along with his biodynamic organic farm in Lubao, Pampanga.

Reimon started his discussion by noting that the art therapy course takes 2–3 years in all, and then moved into show-and-tell as the best way to explain what it is all about.

Reimon's first series of paintings were based on a copy of a portrait, with successive copies, accomplished with watercolor on wet paper, gradually dissolving the subject until the artist morphs it into something else. The process takes several weeks, as no more than one painting is done weekly. In Reimon's sequence, the portrait became less and less defined until at last it transformed into a tree.

The second sequence was called The Breathing Exercises, totally accomplished with colors, no outline.

He showed the first part of the sequence which suggested a rainbow. As he showed the succeeding paintings in order, we were enthralled as the rainbow transformed, over the series, gradually into sunset, indigo night, moon, sunrise, and finally a new day. Reimon noted that some people were unable to actually paint the

indigo night—too scary, too dark, but part of the process of working through something with art. Reimon noted that the process of moving through the scenes is done gradually so that it becomes the language of exchange about a problem, and works on the soul. He also briefly talked about the

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Anthroposophy

Anthroposophy is a spiritual philosophy based on the teachings of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). It postulates the existence of an objective, intellectually comprehensible spiritual world that is accessible to direct experience through inner development—more specifically by conscientiously cultivating a form of thinking that is independent of sensory experience. In its investigations of the spiritual world, it aims to attain the precision and clarity of natural science's investigations of the physical world.

Areas of practical applications of anthroposophical ideas include Steiner/Waldorf education, special education (most prominently the Camphill movement), biodynamic agriculture, anthroposophical medicine, and the arts.

The Anthroposophical Society, which Tom Grote called the “most important esoteric society in European history,” has its international center at the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland.



The Representative of Humanity, detail of a sculpture in wood by Rudolf Steiner and Edith Maryon.

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NEXT MWF MEETING ■ **When:** 6:30 p.m. Monday 2008 April 21. **Where:** Lisa Lumbao's home, 26B Casa Real Townhouses, Real Street, Urdaneta Village, Makati City. **What:** Rose Scott, meditator, trainer, facilitator and psychotherapist specializing in marital and family counseling, will demonstrate meditation techniques for relaxation and de-stressing. **Bring:** Something to share for the potluck dinner. **May meeting:** Monday, 2008 May 19.

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properties of the colors—yellow for expansiveness, blue for calming, red for activity.

Clay is also used as a medium, and is easier to work with as it is pliable and “forgiving,” playful and powerful. Reimon spoke about his experience with skin asthma recurring while working with clay during the art therapy course and then being cured by it. Along with other complementary therapies, the cure process involved a painting, which he found very difficult to execute—but with time he moved through the block and finished the painting, and the disease was cured when he broke through the block. (Our dermatologist member was most interested in this, and Reimon said that half his class at the art therapy training comprises medical doctors.)

Art therapists work with a range of people and problems, and dysfunctions. Some work with prisoners, cancer patients, etc. Reimon noted that at his stage of training, the therapists work with patients only on a physician’s recommendation and under the mentorship of an experienced practicing art therapist.

At this point Julia, our host for the evening, had us break for dessert, and Reimon was surrounded by a coterie of people who wanted to know much more. Reimon Gutierrez can be reached at the Institute of Steiner’s in Practice (ISIP) at 6241 B Palma corner Manalac, Poblacion (near Rockwell), Makati City. ISIP has a small biodynamic organic store that sells produce and foodstuff, a bookstore on Anthroposophy and selected topics, a Waldorf-inspired daycare (ages 2 to 6), a clinic for

Anthroposophic medicine, and an apothecary (carrying Weleda products). ISIP also hosts and organizes workshops and trainings on various topics related to living a holistic life. In April, they have Wonder Works (music and crafts for children), The Write Way (creative writing for adolescents), Voice Experience (adult voice exercises), and Piano. Call Pony at 895-8421 for information. ■

Art Therapy

Art therapy is a form of expressive therapy that uses art materials, such as paints, chalk and markers. It is based on the belief that the creative process of art is both healing and life-enhancing.

Art therapists use the creative process and the issues that come up during art therapy to help their clients increase insight and judgment, cope better with stress, work through traumatic experiences, increase cognitive abilities, have better relationships

with family and friends, and to just be able to enjoy the life-affirming pleasures of the creative experience.

The term art therapist is reserved for those that are professionals trained in both art and therapy and hold a master’s degree in art therapy or a related field offered in BS and BA degrees.

Some examples of art therapy assessments are the Diagnostic Drawing Series (DDS), the Mandala Assessment Research Instrument (MARI), and House–Tree–Person (HTP).

Manila Women’s Forum

Manila Women’s Forum (MWF) is a cross-cultural network for women. It provides opportunities to build friendships, to talk to women of various cultures, and to share information about resources. Our meetings are intended to provide intellectual stimulation and lead to personal and professional development. All women are welcome to join. The current officers are **Lisa Lumbao**, Chair, Programs, Treasurer, and Newsletter. **Shari Virjee**, MWF Membership Message Board and Assistant Chair. **Cecilia Leung** and **Julia Holz**, Programs. **Lisa Stuart**, MWF Membership Message Board Moderator. **Beulah P. Taguiwalo**, Newsletter, Website.

Cost of membership is P300 per year. Members receive a copy of the current mailing list in addition to the newsletter, which is also sent to non-members. A contribution is collected at each monthly meeting: P20 for members, and P40 for non-members. Please contact Lisa Lumbao at Tel. 813-0168, or at lumbao@mozcom.com for more information about MWF.

Visit our website – a work in progress
www.geocities.com/manilawomensforum

MWF Newsletter
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