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the Emergence Explorer

Questions for the Week of April 24, 2006



On "Teaching Art"

Questions asked after reading the article:

["The Conscious, Subconscious, and Unconscious, a New Look at an Old Metaphor."](#)



- What are the first steps in founding a school?
- Do the layers of aloneness apply to creating a piece of art?
- Is the moment when something actually becomes art equivalent to an emergence?

Do you know?

This Week's Ten Questions

[These questions were posed by Austin S.]

[Question 1] What are the fundamentals of founding a school? What are the first actual steps in founding a school?

[Answer] This is a great question. It is also far too complex for a simple answer. What I can say is, the actual first steps would need to include a philosophy and a statement of purpose. Writing these two things

out would be two great first steps.

For instance, a philosophy might be that the school of art would focus primarily on teaching students to question what they see and what do not see, even to the degree that these students learn to question their own eyes. In addition, students might be required to develop a personal meditation practice, a self induced space for the purpose of developing an imaginary visual canvas on which to create spiritual masterpieces.

As for the more pragmatic aspects of the school, start with this. Most schools, including most schools of art, focus too much on students parroting and not enough teaching them to reinvent the wheel. Your school might require students to reinvent many wheels. For instance, students might be asked to not only imitate the masters but also to revisit what the student believes to have been this master's spiritual space. What I mean by this is, students might actually be required to spend weeks, living and or working in arrangements similar to those in which they believe the artist actually lived, including that the student would have to create a new work in the artist's style.

Creativity is the heart and soul of each and every school. Conversely, parroting is the death of every school. Start here. Work outward.

[Question 2] In founding a school, must each layer be honored and expressed functionally, medically, and visually?

[Answer] Yes. In fact, in founding a school of art, I believe one would have to think through a lot of what each layer might hold, including things like the Layer 10 experiences I suggested in the prior question, as well as visual analogies for Layer 1.

[Question 3] Can an artist with blocks in and around art found a school of art before having healed his blocks about art? Similarly, can people in any particular field found a school in that field before having healed their blocks in that area?

[Answer] Can a therapist who still has BLocks help someone else heal? Does a bear go in the woods?

A very loving therapist I saw years ago once told me that I should think about volunteering to counsel people. At the time, I thought I was one of the sickest people on the planet. Thus I asked her the same question. Her response? She said that as long as I was working on my issues, that it was fine to become a therapist.

Her belief in me has often buoyed me up in times wherein I thought I was not qualified to be a therapist. Ironically, I can nether remember her face nor her name. I was not yet conscious enough to access such things. Even so, I will remember her kindness forever and believe that through me, her kindness has been visited on many people she has never met. As I believe my kindness to you will effect others I never meet as well.

[Question 4] If wounds in and around art are what create the artist, will there be a drive to create once these wounds are healed?

[Answer] Yes. In fact, not only will this drive still exist after healing. It will also be greater. Why? Because healing opens the door to a myriad of creative possibilities, especially with regard to the life area which had been BLocked. You literally begin to see beauty where you previously could see none.

Moreover, seeing this beauty creates an ongoing desire in the artist to explore it and to create more beauty

in a similar vein. Thus, there is no need to worry healing will ruin your creative drive. Healing never makes you love something less. It only opens your eyes to the beauty which was right in front of you all the time but which you had never noticed.

As for your first statement; that wounds in and around art are what create the artist, know that in all likelihood, the drive to be an artist gets created the artists' need to heal, not by their injuries. This healing includes putting what happened to them into some form of visual dialogue. Thus, whether painter, writer, poet, or musician, what artists create literally gives voice to what they had previously been unable to put into words, often because what happened to them was beyond words. No coincidence, I spent my childhood in a silent house with a catatonic schizophrenic mother while my father worked long hours, and that I now have an almost unending drive to write, talk, and teach for a living. To put what I saw and felt into words.

[Question 5] Can emergence principles be applied to prayer and meditation?

[Answer] Emergence is prayer and meditation. Of course, the form has evolved. And the focus. Still, healing whatever blocks your ability to love is probably the greatest goal in any prayer and meditation practice.

[Question 6] Is there a process that can be created using the layers to help find the missing element in these spiritual practices?

[Answer] Since all wounds are simply a blocked ability to visualize of the scene of the mind, seeing the missing elements is the goal of all healing. Moreover, since healing always involves a movement from the outer layers to the inner layers, knowing and navigating the layers themselves are always an integral part of healing.

Said in other words, exploring one's spiritual practices to discover what one cannot picture is the heart and soul of many, many existing spiritual practices. They just never refer to doing this directly. Theoretically, at least.

[Question 7] What layers are in play during prayer and meditation?

[Answer] All of them. Just as all of them are involved in any fully alive experience.

[Question 8] Do the layers of aloneness apply to creating a piece of art?

[Answer] Definitely. In fact, we could say that creating art and one's spiritual practices are simply the same thing in different forms, that creating art is a spiritual practice.

[Question 9] Is the moment when something actually becomes art equivalent to an emergence?

[Answer] Absolutely. No coincidence, years ago, I learned this very thing from a fine artist. At the time, I was writing a book about why people hide their spiritual beliefs. As part of my research, I interviewed a number of very creative people, among them, this man whose work had been show throughout Europe. When I asked him how he knew when a painting was done, he told me, "I paint until I have an aha." This was a year before I discovered Emergence.

[Question 10] What layers are in play when an artist feels inferior to some peers and superior to others?

[Answer] Without more details, your question is a hard one to answer. What I can say though is that, when an artist feels inferior to some peers and superior to others, he or she is not in Layers 10 through 7. Thus, this very thing is one form of what blocks artists' creativity. They literally are not in position to

create as they are detached from life. Why?

All critique comes from the eyes of an external "watcher" rather than from some internal "self" view. Thus, when you react to someone, even yourself, as if you, or they, are personally inferior or superior, then you are in one of the outer layers. Most likely, you are in Layer 2.

The interesting thing to know here is, since almost all creativity occurs in the inner layers (it occurs while transversing Layers 10 - 7), when artists get stuck in an external view (Layers 6 through 1), they will be unable to create. They will literally experience a creative "block."



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Emergence Questions of the Week: On Teaching Art

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