



DREAMSCAPE

15 September – 28 September

The Nucleus Arts Centre Gallery

AN EXHIBITION OF
SCULPTURE AND
PAINTING
BY EDWINA JAQUES

DREAMS can be wild and wonderful adventures and they can be a place where angels fear to tread, remorselessly terrifying and full of horror. For most people, they tend to be more mundane and a recalling of the day's events. Occasionally, they are predictive and they can serve as a warning.

Dreams have become a kind of mythological beast for scientists and psychologists. Some have said that they are simply the detritus of daily existence and the symbology is ignored. They are of interest to others only in how they might be utilised to understand how the brain functions.

However, for ancient peoples and various contemporary cultures and tribal groups, they are a gift of the gods, allowing insightful knowledge that taps into other realms. This could be of use in healing, awareness of self and aiding the community to create a healthy relationship within their environment and to one another.

The study of dreams is called oneirology. Dreams have been recorded as early as Mesopotamia where they were written down on clay tablets. But it was Sigmund Freud who initiated early psychology as the western world understands it, and used dreams to analyse his patients. His thinking about the unconscious was centred on childhood and sex and in recent times, he has been discredited. Carl Jung, who was his student rejected Freud's approach, and represents another avenue that is based on a more individualised attempt to gain entry into the psyche using personal symbols to help unlock its secrets.

Throughout his life, Jung investigated his own dreams and visions to reference knowledge, culminating in the stunning Red Book that was only published after his death.

The so called “New Age” has given way to a myriad of volumes dedicated to dream interpretation and dictionaries as well as DIY books on the subject. I think that it is fortunate that Joseph of Biblical times did not have access to any of these or Pharaoh’s dream may have ended in disaster for Egypt! Symbols, like daily astrology readings in newspapers, are of necessity all - purpose and may miss the mark completely for many individuals. Digital technology has enabled gaming and films to reach into visual realms that enable a new dream-like reality. The renaissance of dream discovery has opened a can of worms for scientists and psychologists alike who find the need to reassess their ideas about the function of dreams in our lives.

My interest in dreams stems from my curiosity about the human condition and the uniqueness of each person. Each of us has a story to tell and dreams are a means of defining the way in which we view our society and ourselves. Over the past two years, I have been inviting people to tell me their dreams and the response has been surprising and enlightening. For instance, women are much more likely to remember their dreams or to think that they have any significance. Men are more dismissive unless it is a dream that is persistent or frightening and one that they cannot ignore. I am grateful for the willingness and sometimes-incredible bravery that it has taken to share a dream with me. As you will see from the stories and some of the images, the dream world is not an easy place to enter. I believe that there was much wisdom in the ancient idea of shamanism where you were able to talk to someone who could help you to navigate through and make sense of the often-bizarre symbolism of dreams. Some found peace in the image that I have created and for others, it started them on a journey into their past that has proved sometimes beneficial and sometimes terrifying. My hope is that the dreams and images in the exhibition will help others to see their dreams in a new light and encourage them to record them and to take note of what is being imparted. I believe that dreams are not a useless aberration of the brain, but like everything else the body provides, they provide us with an extraordinary useful tool for achieving a better quality of life.

MY PROCESS

After acquiring a dream, I needed to find a way of expressing it visually and of course, the images are driven by my own way of viewing things. I have tried to be objective in translating what I heard into something that speaks of the dreamer - a kind of portrait. I also get a very strong impression about the nature of the dream and that becomes a part of the "portrait". I have not chosen to create works about all of the dreams that I have, but have picked ones that have particularly inspired me and that I thought would help others.

What I do understand from my research and personal experience is that dreams are very necessary to the well being of both our physical and mental wellbeing. Science and a more alternative way of approach are finding more common ground. We need both to create a whole and oneness of spirit.

I offer up my heartfelt thanks to the psychotherapist, Patricia Deardroff of Ann Arbor, Michigan who has been working with dreams for over 25 years. Her generosity and expertise has been invaluable. She has kindly allowed me to make use of her own dreams as well as those of her adopted daughter and I am happy to say that the liaison has been beneficial to both.

Some of dreams suggested sculpture while others I saw clearly as paintings. It is my hope that I was able to convey each dream with honesty and integrity.