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Indivim-kara: An Exploration of Ego and the Archetypes in Art

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INDIVIM-KARA: AN EXPLORATION OF EGO AND THE ARCHETYPES IN
ART

by
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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Fine Arts
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this document is to demonstrate how I use my art making as an active meditation in order to temporarily subvert ego and create a new subjective reality in visual form. The results of my research will provide the reader with the ability to connect existing philosophies of the Yoga Sutras and Jungian Theory with new art works that explore active meditation, neurosis, and the archetypes of the collective psyche. My goal is to reconstruct these concepts into a visual medium that reshapes facts and theories into images of my own truth, giving free play to fantasy akin to that of magical realism by detailing works from *Corrupted Chakras: A Bestiary, You Want Alchemy, and the State of Mind: Chitta Vritti* series. The reader and viewer will be challenged to think about how the art I make resynthesizes these concepts in a unique way, which communicate my feelings and strivings that ultimately affect a measure of personal and creative transformation.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In the twenty-first century, in order to make a name for themselves, artists develop a myth or sometimes even go so far as to become a living extension and embodiment of their work (what is commonly referred to in business as branding). However, in the process of constructing his or her brand, the artist risks suffering from what I am calling the “I Am Syndrome.” This concept is adapted from the original Vedic philosophy of *ahamkara* or the subjective illusion where one’s mind has bound the concept of self with an external thing. That thing can be a material object or an idea, but the ego is involved in the construction of the illusion. This connection with a thing is inherently limiting and inevitably harmful to the individual causing them to behave in an uncharacteristic and abnormal way. All people, (not exclusive to artists) usually at some point in their lives, suffer from this syndrome.

Andrea Fraser, a performance artist teaching at UCLA, has made art and lectured much about the subject as it pertains to contemporary artists. “An artist is a myth, most artists internalize the myth in the process of their development and then strive to embody and perform it” (Thornton, 295). Even saying the simple, declarative statement, “I am an artist” immediately initiates the myth. The minute the ego begins to identify with that particular title, the unconscious mind assimilates its context (as seen in *Figure 1*). Fraser believed this assimilation leads to three types of artists: the perverse, neurotic, and psychotic - all adjectives indicative of abnormal behavior (Thornton, 296). If being neurotic was not problematic enough, Marina Abramovic, a well-known Serbian artist, also asserts that the mythic ego can, in fact, be dire for

the artist. “Your ego can become an obstacle to your work. If you start believing in your greatness, it is the death of your creativity” (Thornton, 286). The artist suffers in identifying with the rationalization of their artwork and title, probably more so than any other profession given the extremely personal process of making art.

In the “Heart of Yoga,” T.K.V. Desikachar states, “False identity results when we regard mental activity as the very source of perception. Mental attitudes and activities change. They modify themselves according to influences such as moods, habits, and surroundings. Yet, somehow we often assume that they are a constant, unchanging source of perception” (167).

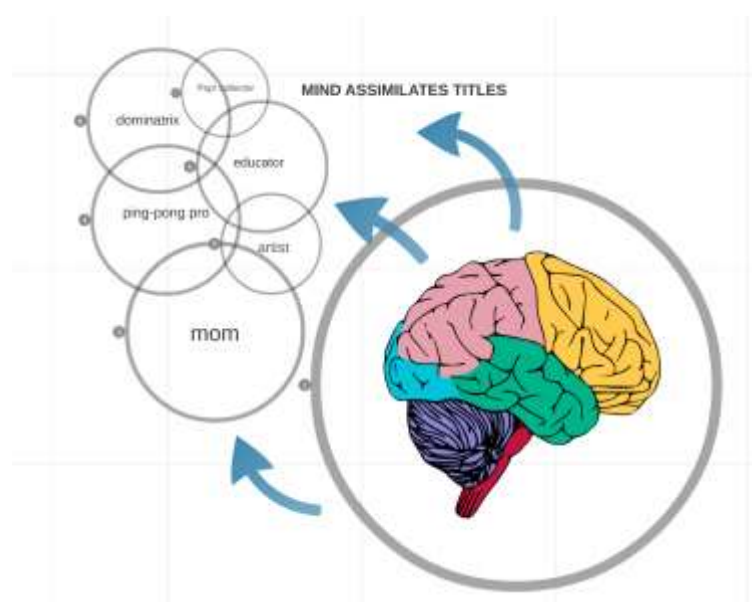


Figure 1, Ahamkara

My philosophy and approach as an artist is to actively practice purifying or abolishing ego on a regular basis in order to avoid suffering (suffering here characterized as ahankara’s effect of impeding creativity and catalyzing neurotic dysfunction in the brain). This approach

means constantly investigating my attitude towards identity and recognizing that we as human beings should make art *without attachment* to the illusion we construct for ourselves. As Abromovic has also said, “I like to go to the source, to all the places in nature that have a certain energy that you can absorb and translate in your own creativity as an artist” (Thornton, 287). Nature is perfect; the ego is infallible. As human beings, our egos are simply not equipped to construct a myth around notions of ‘self’ without running headfirst into ahamkara. All creative people must be cognizant of this theory before they begin casting their lure out into the vast arena of images already saturated with artists and the imagery they create.

One of my primary interests as an artist is to use my art as a tool for personal introspection and self-compassion. One could argue that this kind of practice fails to connect to anything of social relevance because of its exclusionary nature, being too wrapped up within itself. Moreover, that the art must serve a practical function in order to advance society in some way. This logic can be traced as far back as Plato’s era, where he proposed that art must fulfill a social role. However, I assert that utilizing art as active meditation is arguably as socially relevant and necessary for the public as reading, eating well, and exercise because it aids in internally mitigating the chaos of contemporary society which wreaks havoc on the human brain. The active synthesis that comes in marrying judgment with intuition and real problem solving through the process of making art is an essential skill that people can take outside of art making to enact real social change in other realms like business, politics, and science.

I purport that deep down, art comes out of the irrational, instinctual world of the mind. The artist is as the shaman was. It is their job to step into the ethereal or the unseen world, and to then return and share that unique vision with others through their chosen medium. Because I am drawn to the artist as shaman and seer, my art making naturally follows a similar course. It seeks to instill healing and wisdom while also sharing a unique vision, one in which I seek to intellectually reconstruct concrete fact into the shape of new images, or moreover, suitable abstract expressions. As Carl Jung has stated, "...these (types of thinkers) create theories for their own sake, apparently with an eye to real or at least possible facts, but ultimately produce images which no longer express anything externally real, being mere symbols of the ineffable and unknowable" (238- 239, Jung). Taking this thought further I intend that the images I create have meaning, but not in any concrete way. Furthermore, any effort made to 'know' the art would be a fruitless endeavor. The presumption to articulate the imagery under a certain, defined label would also come into direct contest with the principles behind ahamkara. For these reasons, I was drawn to the scholarly ideas behind magical realism, in which I could maintain the art making process as an active meditation to subvert ego while also creating a new subjective reality.

To that end, a clear distinction needs to be addressed when defining and redefining the term magical realism. In the literary tradition, magical realism is used as a social realist mechanism, disguising real issues and hardships of everyday life. "It is a distinctive form of fiction that aims to produce the experience of a non-objective worldview. In the world of magic realism, the narrator speaks of the surreal so naturally it becomes real. Its literary and artistic applications are aimed at re-imagining the world and its reality. It is not an escapist venture but

rather an opportunity to see the fantastic in the everyday” (B.J. Geetha, 1). Some authors and their work best known for utilizing it are Gabriel Marquez’s “One Hundred Years of Solitude”, Isabel Allende’s “The House of the Spirits”, Neil Gaiman’s “American Gods”, Paulo Coelho’s “The Alchemist”, and “Haruki Murakami’s “Norwegian Wood.” However, in my practice, I am downplaying the social mechanism while juxtaposing an element of the unreal in the creation of that new reality.

On the other hand, although I have discussed art methodology as active meditation, an important part of that too involves improvisation. Jung believed that improvisation allows for active creating in accord to one’s inner life and immediate surrounding circumstances; facilitating the artist to act on impulses and visit places normally unexplored in their practice. As an example, all of my sculptures and drawings created were all made using a free form improvisation; allowing my mind’s capacity for closure to act upon the forms. Without improvisation, the work and the concepts it seeks to reveal (like that of magical realism) would not be as effectual.

Setting the more particular concepts aside, art making for me is a generous exercise of reaching within oneself and bringing out an expression that serves to deepen my own understanding (through the process) and potentially connect with the viewer. The acquisition of knowledge gained by both the artist and viewer is arguably one of the more important social functions of my work. I am not interested in using art to propagate ideology, but to unveil and expose to others my own way of seeing through the process. For this reason, my intention of art making should always begin in the *sacred* vein rather than the *profane* (a dichotomy first

introduced by the French sociologist Emile Durkheim), first by utilizing art as a vehicle for personal excavation and then worldly understanding (Durkheim, 42). Theologian of the second century, Clement of Alexandria, was perhaps first to introduce this view with the excerpt, “He who knows himself, knows God” (Harris, 345). This dichotomy is especially pertinent today with the increasing trend towards art as activism. While activism has a valid place in the arts, it can perpetuate sensationalism indicative of the profane. This underlying need for attention by shock goes beyond social engagement and is fundamentally routed in ego. The activist movement also exacts a certain amount of self-sacrifice for ‘the cause’ thereby dehumanizing oneself. The artist becomes their work, and by extension, a tool. The art then is reduced to a squeaky wheel competing to stand out in the cacophony of other squeaky wheels. Ultimately the artist altruistically desires for the viewer to gain something from artwork, not by feeding the ego that is seeking fulfillment through myth (ahamkara), but by imparting the self through the art making of ‘svadhyaya’ or self-inquiry.

CHAPTER TWO: EXHIBITION

As an art maker, I am not a purist; that is to say I do not romanticize the notion of separate schools of art making. Although I do gravitate towards certain materials, the main consideration towards media choice is how it might be utilized as a tool to create art work. I pay special heed to process, which is at times methodical and labor intensive. This mode of working innately has its strengths and drawbacks. Namely it is powerful in its ability to act as an active meditation. When you focus intently on an object, the ego becomes temporarily subverted. In the Sutras, this state is regarded as Asmita Samadhi or the merging of the mind with the object of meditation (demonstrated through method in *Figure 2*).



Figure 2, Asmita Samadhi

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The drawbacks stated plainly, are the time constraints that it can impose on one's productivity. Idea germination in this process stage is perhaps the most crucial. I believe those seeds of ideas that come early to me (and also to other creative people) do not belong to us. To expand, all creative expressions are a reflection of the collective psyche; Carl Jung was the founding father

of this school of thought. The idea is that archetypes (also sometimes referred to historically as muses) exist within a vast unconscious sea and that they manifest themselves into our conscious life through behavior and other expressions. For the artist, tapping into these archetypes becomes essential and primary to idea germination. Jung, like Abramovic, also believed that no visual expression is greater and more perfect than nature. Most beings in nature operate through instinct indicative of the unconscious. For this reason, I am cognizant and take caution when exposing myself to the influence of other visual artists' works. Taking inspiration from *without* can lead to potentially reductive and derivative practices. Exposing yourself to nature provides the necessary primer to access the archetypes existing within the unconscious realm (a philosophy also embodied in the traditional Japanese art-making, whereby Buddhist monks living in isolation depicted nature scenes, while the artists of the court portrayed imperial palace life during the late Edo era).

Jung believed all creative expressions reflect the collective psyche and that they manifest themselves into our conscious life through behavior and other expressions. As artists are prolific expressers, they are perfect barometers for the archetypes. With that said, I believe all artists are influenced most predominately by five particular archetypes more than any other.

First is the animal archetype of the Enduring Horse. This archetype is linked to our innate and instinctual drives. We see the horse as a companion on the artist's journey toward self-discovery. This type has the tendency to be dogged, headstrong and quick to take insult, yet immediately forgiving; qualities I have seen in nearly every artist. The horse also often plays the role of trickster, originating in Celtic folk tales, whereby it

takes the form of shape-shifting Kelpie so that it may dive deeper into the unconscious emotions. This shifting brings us to the second archetype, The Trickster. This Story-based Archetype is always attempting to attain flight but with inevitably perilous ramifications. No matter how hard he tries, he is unable to break away from the human condition. The trickster, like the artist, exists to inquire and not accept things indiscriminately. He is known to change gender, shape, and identity, constantly experimenting like the artist on a never-ending search for himself. Alongside the Trickster is the archetype of the Devious Cat, who though not as visibly prominent as the Enduring Horse, still affects the creative ilk. The cat's traits are indicative of the compulsive to self-serve. This archetype is not a group animal, but a keen spectator, possessing qualities of autonomy, mental acquisitiveness, and intelligence. Those under its influence are usually are very inventive but also cavalier in attitude. This progression brings us to our next and more prominent familial archetype of the Mother. The archetypal Mother prevails over the realm of feelings and intuition. She represents emotional protection, which is also characteristic to the mandala. The mandala is a symbol appropriated from the eastern Hindu Yantra and Buddhist traditions. One of the primary functions of the mandala involves active meditation, therefore the mother archetype serves as the consoling factor to promote calmness; she is intrinsic to Asmita Samadhi (the aforementioned merging of the mind with object). When the artist is making work from a place of feeling and emotion, they are predominately being guided by the archetypal mother. Finally, we arrive at the archetypal Father, the architect of all images pertaining to the creative domain. He is expressed in taking linear action

towards goals and is concerned with events that transpire in the corporeal world that can be modified through use of will. The Father influences artists who depict images of piercing or penetrating. In addition, all imagery involving illumination relate to his masculine attributes.

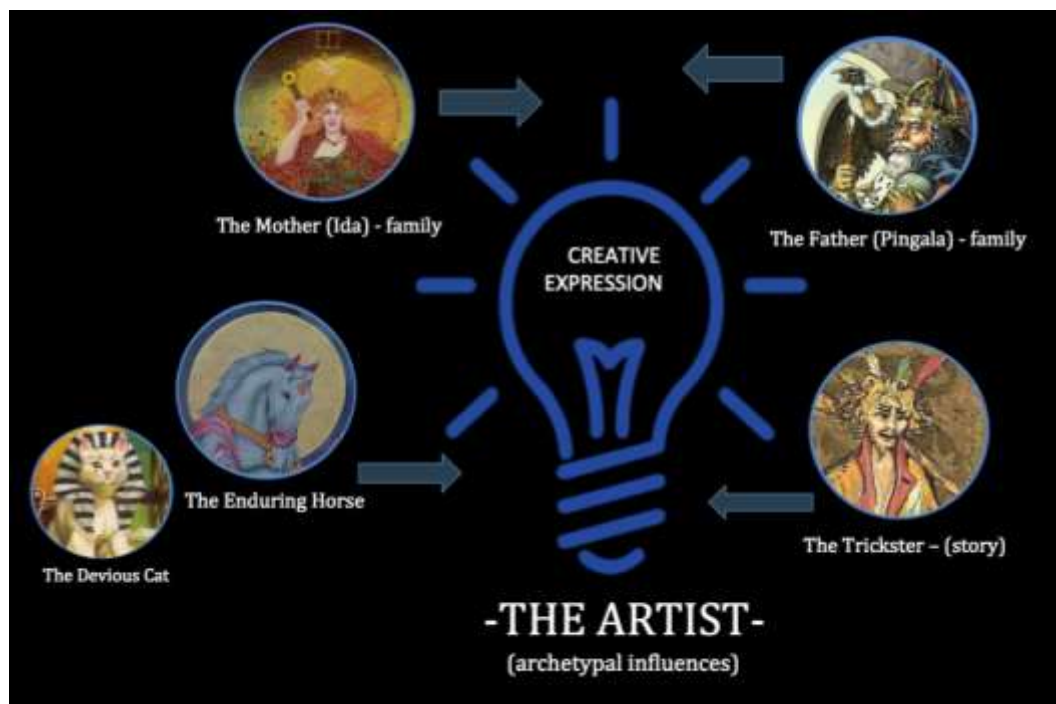


Figure 3, Archetypes

Archetypes manifest themselves symbolically because they are ancient and cross cultures. Therefore, a reoccurring symbol or motif generated by the artist is often a strong indicator of its influence. The particular archetypal influence I came to discover later on in my work was the Mother working in conjunction with the Child. This influence is best articulated in the Russian Folklore surrounding Vasalisa the Beautiful and Baba Yaga. In it, Vasalisa is gifted a tiny wooden doll from her mother that aids and protects her from harm. The doll becomes almost an epigenetic symbol passed down from the nurturing mother of personal power and

invulnerability from external influences. And here it serves a similar function in my earliest work of the program, from the *Conjoined Twins* series - a marriage of my personal biology (of being an identical twin) and the unconscious influence of Mother and Child (shown in *Figure 4*).



Figure 4, "Conjoined Twins" series

Accordingly, there is a definite connecting association between the Mother and Father. These two work in unison as Ida (the left oriented feminine half of the body) and Pingala (the right oriented masculine half). In yogic philosophy both of these channels flow through either side of the spine. The Mother is a nurturing and necessary presence for the artist, whereas the father is controlling. Those artists under a dominant influence of the Father or Pingala usually lack the calm, introspection and receptivity to work in conjunction with other artists. For these reasons, it became very necessary for me to work in collaboration with another artist on a later body of work (of the series, "You Want Alchemy"). Creating balance between both archetypes is the key to forging equanimity

and achieving what Jung called a personal *individuation* or acquisition of a broader personality in order to avoid neurosis. For me, that meant addressing that balance within.

The chakra centers of the body are of particular interest to me: Manipura (crown), Anahata (third-eye), Visuddha (throat), Svadisthana (heart), Sahasrara (solar plexus), Anja (sacral), and Muldahara (root) respectively (illustrated in *Figure 5*). They function independently, but are all co-dependent on one other in order to achieve proper homeostasis or alignment within the human body.

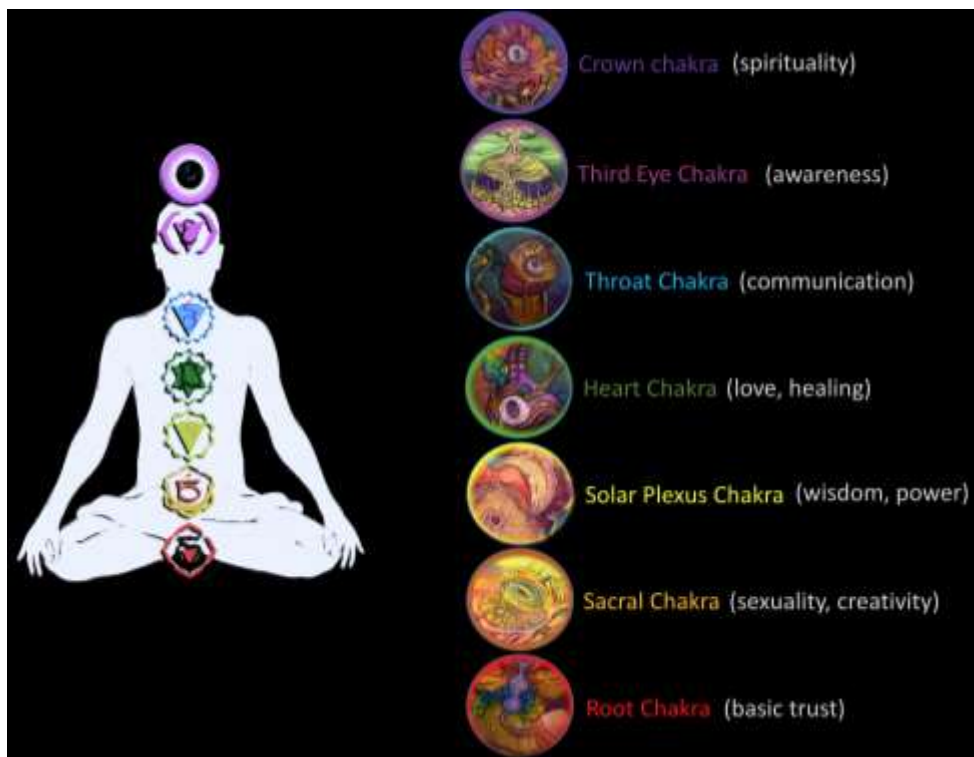


Figure 5, Chakra Chart

This concept naturally leads to a string of inquiries like: Why do they have distinct color identifiers and why do they correlate to specific regions of the subtle body? Most importantly,

why are they chronically problematic by either being too closed, too open, or imbalanced?

Trying to imagine these centers was an attractive idea to address because of their esoteric and abstract nature.



Figure 6, "Visuddha", 2016

Translating these centers into a visual language began with improvisation, embracing uncertainty in order to encourage spontaneity and evolution in the work. The only base criteria were that they had to represent what a blocked (or what came later to be known as ‘corrupted’ chakra point would look like). Moreover, they had to be informed stylistically by two things: human anatomy and elements found in nature. As these chakras are all linked within the subtle

body, I knew that what I needed to discover about one 'creature' was contained in the piece before it. Furthermore, it was important to always leave some loose thread or unresolved issue to carry forward into the next one. After they were completed, I came to realize some things: namely that the Bestiary contained all aspects of human nature - light and dark, beauty and ugliness, good and evil, and the profane and silly (as seen in *Figure 6*). Also, that they had a characteristic of numinosity (or psychic energy) indicative of the Magician (a story archetype that denotes mysterious and powerful characteristics). I would come to discover later that this archetype would become a constant presence in my work.

As Jung states in the text, "Psychology and Alchemy" (Collected Works of C.G. Jung Vol.12),

"The real nature of matter was unknown to the alchemist: he knew it only in hints. In seeking to explore it he projected the unconscious into the darkness of matter in order to illuminate it. ...He experienced his projection as a property of matter; but what he was in reality experiencing was his own unconscious. In this way he recapitulated the whole history of mankind's knowledge of nature.... Such projections repeat themselves whenever man tries to explore an empty darkness and involuntarily fills it with living form"

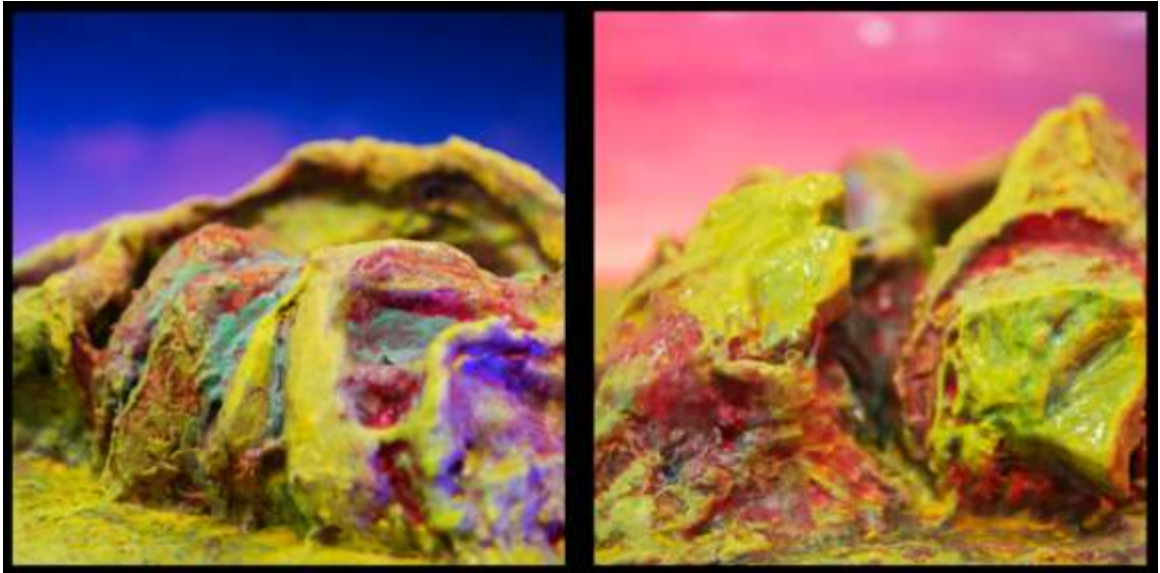


Figure 7, "Noxious Abalone", 2017



Figure 8, "Sweltering Scoria", 2017

The above images (from *Figures 7 and 8*) are some examples from the twenty-two organic relief paintings and photographs arising out of the “You Want Alchemy” series. Ideas surrounding Jung’s inquiry into alchemy were a reoccurring influence to the creation of the work. My goal was to transmute two types of stones (morganite and carnelian) into primordial images of creation: the amassing of cells into matter that take the shape of early life. (Note: morganite is a stone of the heart chakra that stimulates vibrations of love, while carnelian is a stone of the sacral chakra that stimulates vibration of action). Using these materials was a natural progression from the “Chakra Bestiary”, which dealt primarily with the energy centers of the body. After I created the objects, it was important to collaborate with another artist, Nikki Sutterby, to photograph the work against recognizable skylines in order to transcend the physical media - from artifacts on a small scale, to topographical environments that are suggestive of otherworldly spaces. This series is most prominently dealing with the aforementioned magical realism - the combination of real and unreal to create a new, subjective reality. The viewer is put into a vantage point that allows them to peer into the literal mindscape of the artist and into the horizon.

There exists a constant state of mind that we as thinking animals endure called Chitta Vritti or “Monkey Brains.” The principle is that our brains are constantly chattering about everything all the time, which inherently causes suffering. “A disturbed mind can rarely follow a direction. If it ever does, comprehension of the object will be faulty” (Desikachar, 150).



Figure 9, "Chitta Vritti", 2017

This work (seen in *Figure 9*) from the *State of Mind: Chitta Vritti* series deals with transformation - transforming something that does not serve you into something that does. My primary goal was to temporarily quiet the mind as a coping strategy for mitigating neurotic thought processes. The act of methodical art making (an active meditation) can be

an alternative means to achieve clarity akin to the Buddhist tradition of sand painting mandalas. Meditation requires of us to be focused and to concentrate inward on ourselves. We are asked to acknowledge anything that comes up during that introspective evaluation (the chatter), accept it, and then relinquish it. The process by which this work came to be follows a similar parallel – channeling a cacophony of thoughts onto a substrate in order to liberate them. My intent for the viewer is for their eye to follow my mind.

As T.K.V. Desikachar states in the “Heart of Yoga”,
“*Viksipta* is the third level of the mind, where it is moving, but lacks consistent purpose and direction. The mind encounters obstacles and doubts. It alternates between knowing what it wants to do and uncertainty, between confidence and diffidence. This is the most common state (121).

In the *Chitta Vritti* series, objects materialize differently depending upon the different mental states of the observer. To expand, the prominent, more chaotic sections of the drawings serve as a transcription of my perception of others in the moment. When the discussion is terse and serious, the mark making becomes detailed, angular, and constrained; conversely, if the tone is lazy and loose, the lines take on a more free-flowing, circular, swirl-like tenor. (Hence, *I am perceiving you* in the title) The black, negative space represent moments of breathe. Here things begin to make more sense as the composition takes on a more perceivable shape and a measure of clarity is realized, however momentary.

CHAPTER THREE: CONCLUSION

When I first entered the MFA program I sought to step outside of myself in my work. I was interested in escapism, by way of narrative work that had a heavy figural influence. My core intention has not changed now, but it has adapted. Early on, I was seeking for people to ‘understand’ my mode of expression and I was attempting to convey the sacred and interpersonal. To communicate that intention, I began with digital painting. It was a language I understood, and a medium I could utilize with the most mastery. Eventually, experimentation with other media and visual languages became necessary. At times; these experiments were both painful and embarrassing. This common lesson is manifested again and again in the “Trickster” archetype, which serves as an inadvertent teacher to the human condition. Just as the Trickster undertakes many different shapes and forms, I had to explore many different media and methods including acrylic paint, metal, paper pulp, liquid latex, and wax (encaustic?). Early on I had a brief interlude with traditional painting on canvas. But for me, the disparity was akin to operating two different instruments of the same family; like trying to play with the saxophone when you have been using the base clarinet. The formal use of light and shadow, color, and mark making were the same, but I could not find a way to manipulate those materials in the way that best represented my ideas visually. However, from these experimental failures, I learned a valuable lesson: if you engage in enough play and experimentation, you will eventually discover where your strengths lie.

My research into Yogic and Jungian theory was another major educational lesson because I discovered the misuse of Kazimierz Dąbrowski’s theory of positive disintegration. In particular,

it asserts that exerting psychological pressure and anxiety on an individual is necessary for growth (Nelson, 5). I argue that putting undo stress and pressure on an artist in a learning environment may result in two things: 1) they will eventually be forced to adapt and succeed or 2) they will be bested and crack under the weight. I came to understand that Dąbrowski's methodology is dangerous because it can disempower the artist's primary creative force or Father archetype and that its only effective use is with those individuals whose brains are still developing, namely children. With adults, identifying and working with their strengths best facilitates growth as an artist. In order to do this, the artist first needs to observe their art and tendencies toward art making in order to determine which archetypes are influencing their expression; usually surfacing in a repeated behavioral pattern (whether it be through the use a re-occurring symbols, tone, or even color palette). It can also be found in the use of various materials and the methods employed. Once identified, the goal is to create equanimity and balance in the archetype. If the artist has a predominant inclination to work a certain way, introducing new, different methodologies (that compliment that archetype) is a sound approach. Take the example of an artist who works frantically towards recreating a sense of gratifying fulfillment. This artist is attempting to achieve flight like the Trickster. Inevitably, their efforts usually resort in peril. That is because the artist is attempting to use the work to transcend the human condition. What one needs is the intuitive instinct of the Mother, who represents the grounding forces of safety and emotional protection. The artist who integrates the Mother archetype might then adopt the mental ability to methodically investigate their feelings and emotions towards their desire for flight. The intention is not about going against one's natural inclinations and tendencies, but it is about inviting a compliment or sometimes a counter-part in

to create new possibilities. Know that one's work will most likely contain a predominant archetypal theme, (like an epigenetic finger-print on an offspring) and it is best to not try to change it. But if the artist is able to assimilate and achieve balance, then not only will it reflect balance in their art, but also in their psyche, thereby reinforcing Jung's theory of individuation.

As a result of my research and investigation into the Archetypes, I happened upon the Magician through the writings of authors Caroline Myss and Susanna Barlow. The more I probed into the Magician's history, the more connections I made to myself; eventually determining that this archetype affects nearly all aspects of my life. Jung believed that there are two aspects to every individual archetype, the archetype and its shadow. The shadow aspect of the archetype manifests itself in all the negative qualities of the base archetype. Reflecting back on my time entering the MFA program, I exhibited many aspects of the Magician's shadow (also sometimes referred to as the "manipulator"). Secrecy impedes the shadow Magician from reaching a place of self-empowerment. Initially I was unwilling to share any of my art-making processes. Instead, I tried to justify them, often going through considerable measures in order to avoid appearing uneducated or naive. The shadow Magician will trick oneself into believing their justifications or 'illusions' to such an extent, that the truth of reality eventually becomes unperceivable. This illusory nature originates from the fear of being vulnerable. At the present, I am transparent and eager to share any new findings or nuggets of wisdom I discover through my personal practice. Another condition of the Magician's shadow is to unwittingly use intellect to ward off taking direct responsibility for one's actions. If I were criticized, then the discussion would be redirected to the circumstances that created the failure (the facilities, the faculty, or the

curriculum) as opposed to taking personal responsibility for my shortcomings. At some point during my second year of studies, I was able to claim ownership of my failures while also relinquishing the adverse circumstances that were out of my control, thereby bringing in new focus to my work. As these changes were occurring on a psychological level, it was reflected in my work. The shadow has the potential to transform in many variants; as alchemist, improviser, inventor, priest, shaman, or visionary. It wasn't until my second year of studies, when I began work on the Chitta Vritti series, that the Shaman archetype began to commandeer the Shadow. A Shaman has the capability to define spiritual meanings (like those of the Yoga Sutras) in simplified ways that can be understood by their tribe, often through the use of abstraction and metaphor. This archetype makes use of ritual (active meditation) as a "numinous" space for others that creates entry to their unseeable world of personal wisdom. As my work progressed into my third year of studies, the Shaman became restless and eventually adapted a different characteristic; the need to self-transform the defining trait of the Alchemist. During that time, I became fascinated with Jung's ideas surrounding alchemy. I hypothesized how I might utilize and convert base materials containing elements from the previous bodies of work in order to create a physical entry into that unseeable world, beyond the realm of theory that the sutras offered. The result of this undertaking was the physical creation of a body of sculptures, which then became the 'mind-scapes' of the "You Want" Alchemy series. Taking this concept full circle, I want to emphasize that without the practice of Svadhyaya or self-inquiry, I may not have been able to recognize the shadow and then work towards integrating its variants.

Carl Jung made the connection between using art making as active meditation in order to achieve the state of mind Desikachar called Asmita Samadhi (or merging of ego with object).

The attainment of this state is the prime requisite for mitigating neurosis. Note that all of the behaviors exhibited in the shadow aspect of the archetype support and encourage neurotic conduct (in the case of the shadow magician: self-delusion, manipulation, and disempowerment). The ego as myth through Ahamkara (the “I am” syndrome), becomes the enclosing structure that suppresses and keeps out the other archetypes from entering one’s person. My abiding assertion is that to create balance between the archetypes is to create individuation (or personality growth) within the self. Without balance, one’s development as an artist and as an individual becomes blocked. The correlation to the blocking of chakra energies within the body is not a coincidence because the chakras contain all the information of your personal biology and life story. Through the practice of Svadhyaya or self-inquiry, I was able to use my art-making to not only subvert Ahamkara, but to recognize and transform my archetypes and their shadows.

**APPENDIX:
INSTALLATION PHOTOS AND SERIAL BODY FROM “CORRUPTED
CHAKRAS: A BESTIARY”**



Installation view 1, "Numinous", 2017



Installation view 2, "Numinous" 2017



Installation view 3, "Numinous", 2017



"Sahasrara", Corrupted Chakras: A Bestiary, 2016



"Anja", Corrupted Chakras: A Bestiary, 2016



"Visuddha", Corrupted Chakras: A Bestiary, 2016



"Anahata", Corrupted Chakras: A Bestiary, 2016



"Manipura", Corrupted Chakras: A Bestiary, 2016



"Svadisthana", Corrupted Chakras: A Bestiary, 2016



"Muladhara", Corrupted Chakras: A Bestiary, 2016

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