

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE MOUNTAIN



Nat Clegg



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Mountain peaks are where heaven and earth touch, are places of divine revelation. An ascent to a mountain top is a symbol of initiation. The symbol is the primary method of communication for the unconscious, and indeed for the entire psyche. While signs are directly tied to a specific idea or object, the symbol has multiple levels of meaning.



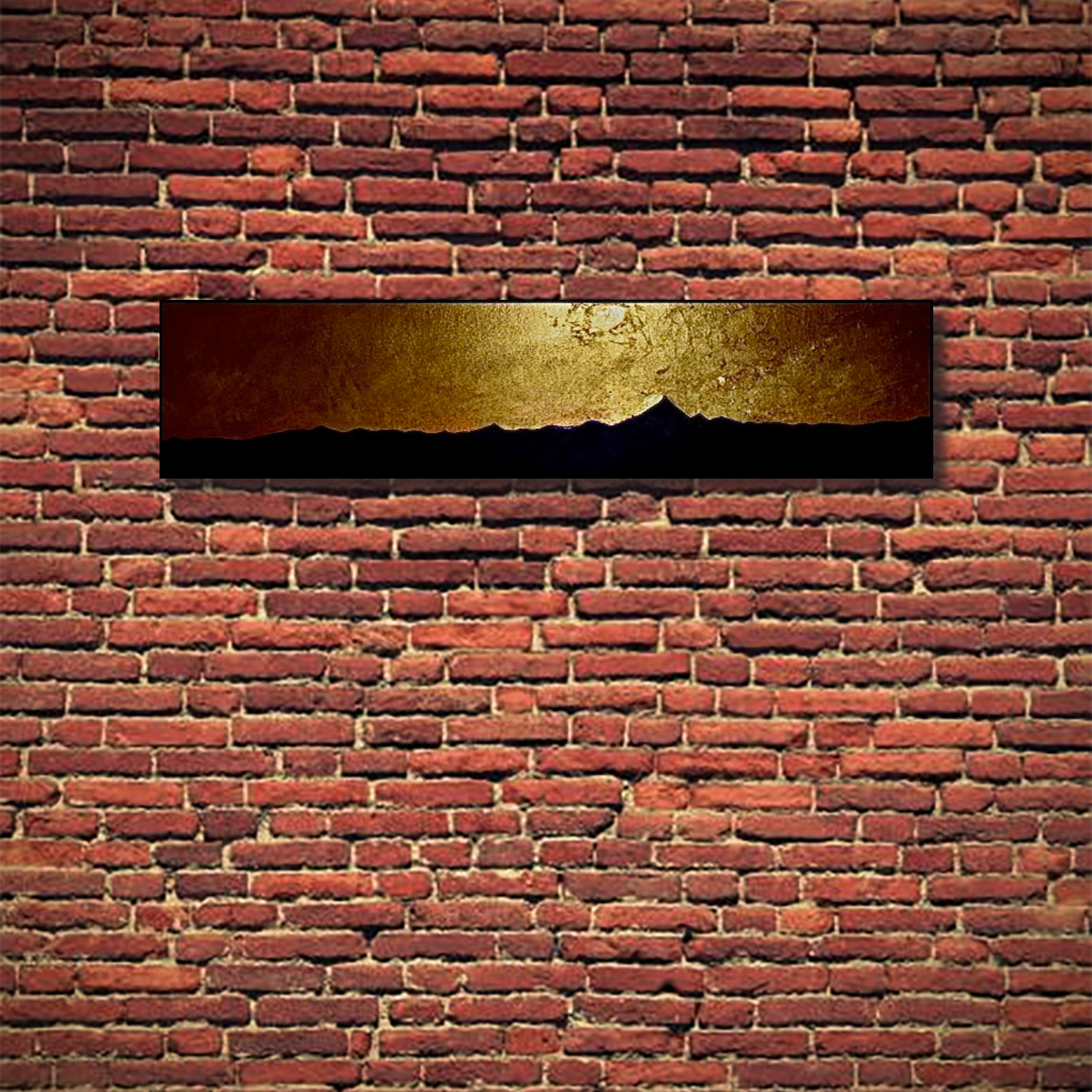
The symbol is the primary method the mind uses to accomplish the task of engaging and dialoguing with content it cannot fully perceive or completely comprehend consciously. Kant springs to mind here – Awe and wonder, the act of being terrified and curious at the same time. The mountain has the symbolism that aims for the mind's inner enhancement and the absolute world of self-consciousness (Elide, 1959).

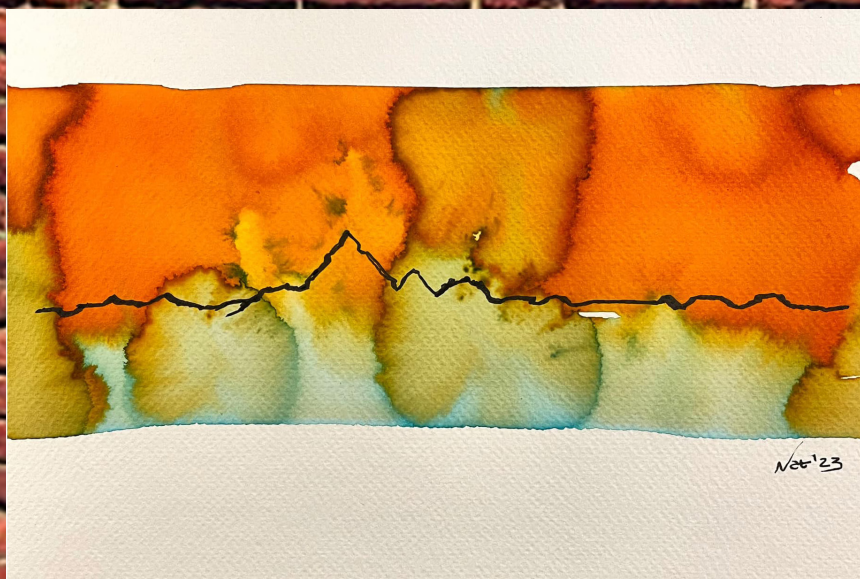
Jung's individuation is to become 'Self,' demonstrating and incorporating the mind that we bring to the world when we are born. "The libido (sexual desire yet it is the life instinct) that is freed from the unconscious by means of the symbol appears as a rejuvenated god." - C. G. Jung

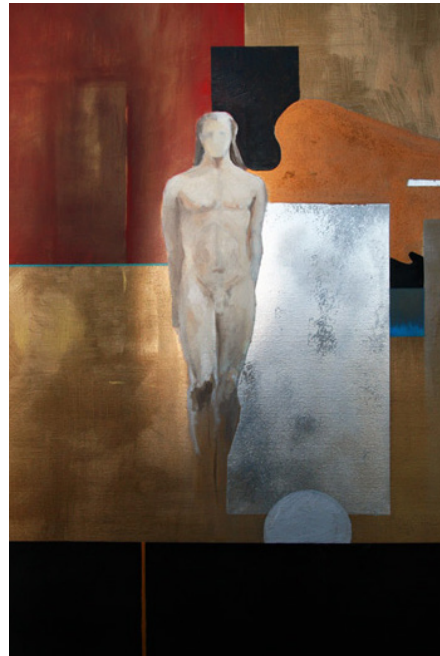
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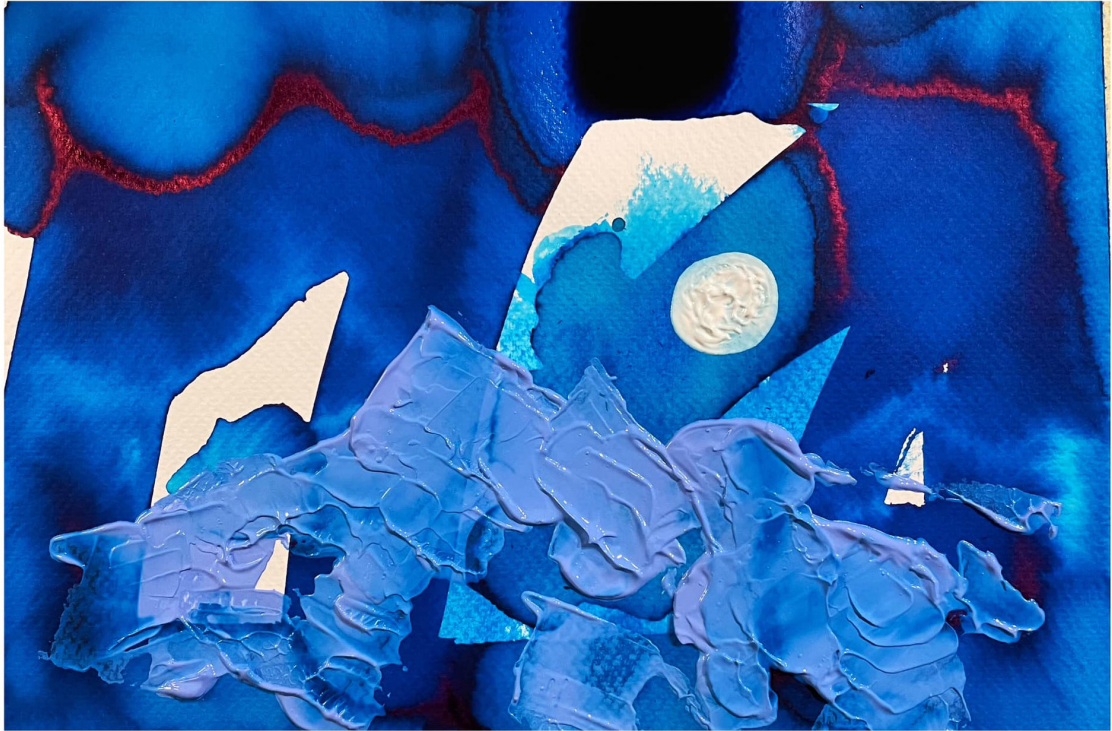


Creativity is not an object out there waiting to be discovered but something that is about a relationship between the knower and the known that is interactive, inseparable and entangled.





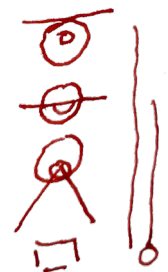






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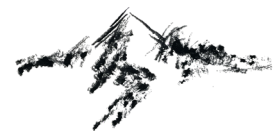
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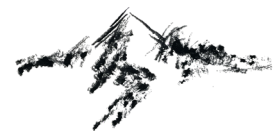
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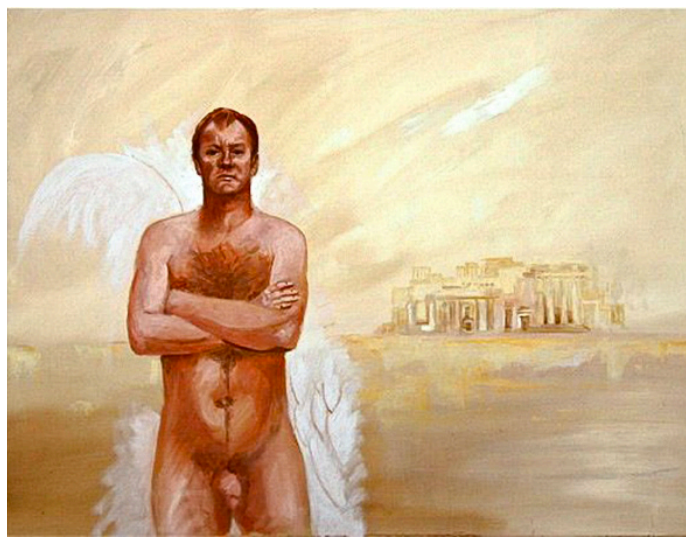




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Whenever illness is associated with loss of soul, the arts emerge spontaneously as remedies, soul medicine. Painting and medicine stimulate the creation of a discipline through which imagination treats itself and recycles its vitality back to the living (Mc Niff, 1992:1).





Appreciating and making art has braced my spiritual and intellectual growth. However, working with others has been a main feature to learning as well. This has manifested in engaging others to expand the role of art in their lives. Helping many people to appreciate what art is and what this may mean for them, how to deconstruct images and objects so that greater understanding may be found. Making art is an extraordinary but vital vehicle to understand the self and others.

Someone once said to me, “you can’t drop out until you have dropped in” that’s why it is important to be ready for people at points in their life journey to help them use art for self awakening, learning, immersion in imagery, metaphor and symbolism, this seems to be a growing feature of my coaching practise. Often discussing art or making art in relation to other forms of communication can expose new meaning, as art may not need to elicit the use of words and language. Ideas can become more fluid, as the rules to what to make or not make, see or not see are the artist’s at that point in time.

Underlying messages communicated through art can help us investigate our irrationality, creativity and human nature. In turn this can often engage us in meaningful dialogue to discover lost fragments of the self. Also, this reveals useful opportunities to remember the past self and the re-member the self again.



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