

SERVICE



SEEING THRUART  
Service; Embodying the Image of the Soul

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## **Art-based Painting as a Lens**

Because of the affinity with McNiff, who can be seen as a modern pioneer of an ancient art practice and McNiff's affinity with Jung, as well as the focus on all art as singular: art and art as a painting, I have chosen to use the term art. While Jung focused on drawing, painting, and carving as well as written images, other arts will be introduced, including dance, theatre, music, and other forms of art.

Additionally, though *TRB* was created and its process taught on a primarily individual level, a group and multi-media application seem like contemporary evolutions of this seed idea. My reasoning and art-based and arts-based (as well as applied) research are discussed more fully in the glossary.

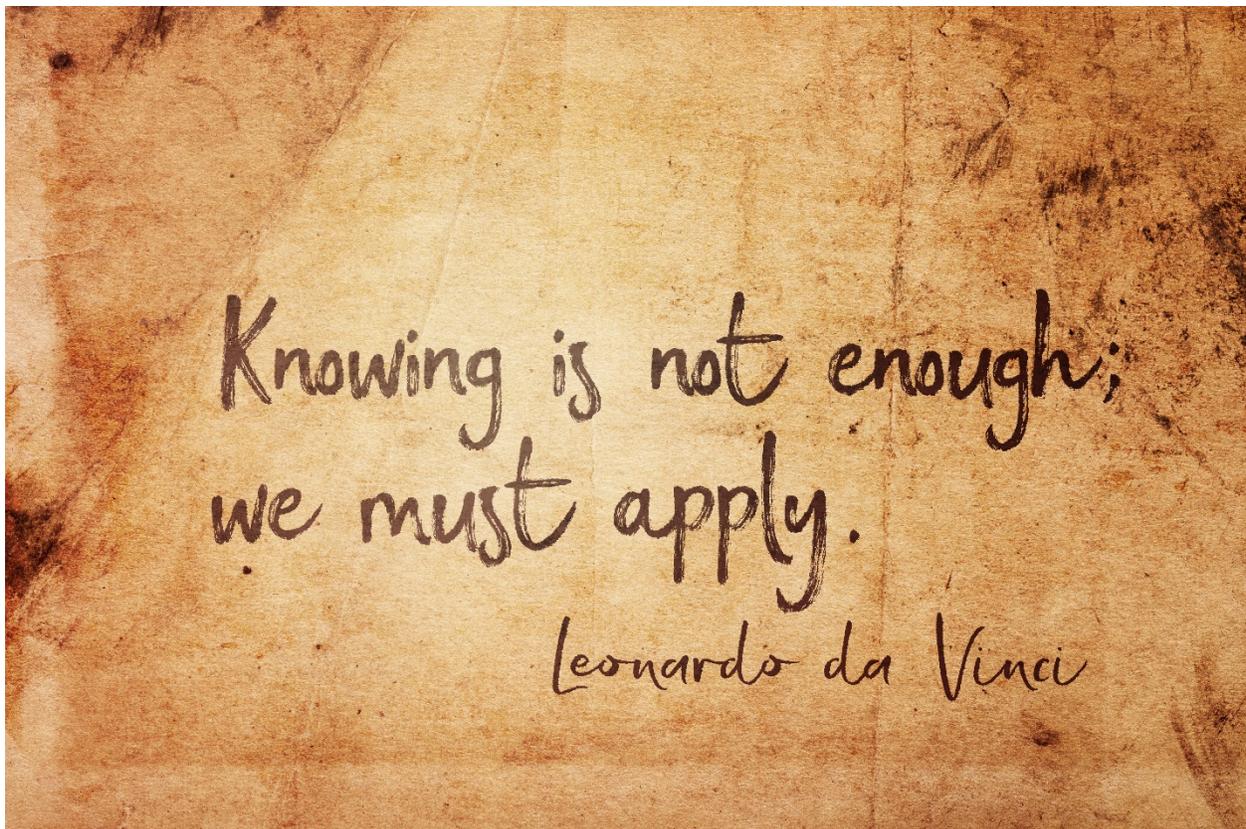


Art in the modern era seems to be marked by a synthesis of forms that span and bridge divides like public and private, self and other through the transcendent function. While art is ever more synthetic and arts-based research is inherently diverse and transdisciplinary, this website will focus on *TRB*'s art-based methodology specifically. In the conclusion, however, there will be a series of suggestions to extend the practice to other mediums of creative expression.



## **Theory and practice**

This website is also an attempt to help reintroduce what Jung called *practica* or practice along with and that gives birth to *theoria* or theory. It recognizes the applied process of art that creates knowledge, exemplified by Jung who said that “everything essential” was decided in *TRB*’s images. In returning to Jung’s images of the soul in this website I will call upon the voices of artists as what Jung called “higher” and “collective” humanity that moves us through the ages and “molds the psychic life of mankind.” So, for example,” I cite Leonardo da Vinci who Jung called a magician. The idea is that Jung’s art methodology is an archetypal soul-based approach.



This website will try to counter these modern movements that Jung noted in which the soul’s images were repressed not only by the Church but by writing down instead of drawing, as he spoke of it in the *Cornwall Seminar* (1923). In returning to the soul’s images, humanity remembers an art way of learning from the past and an older form of visual literacy.



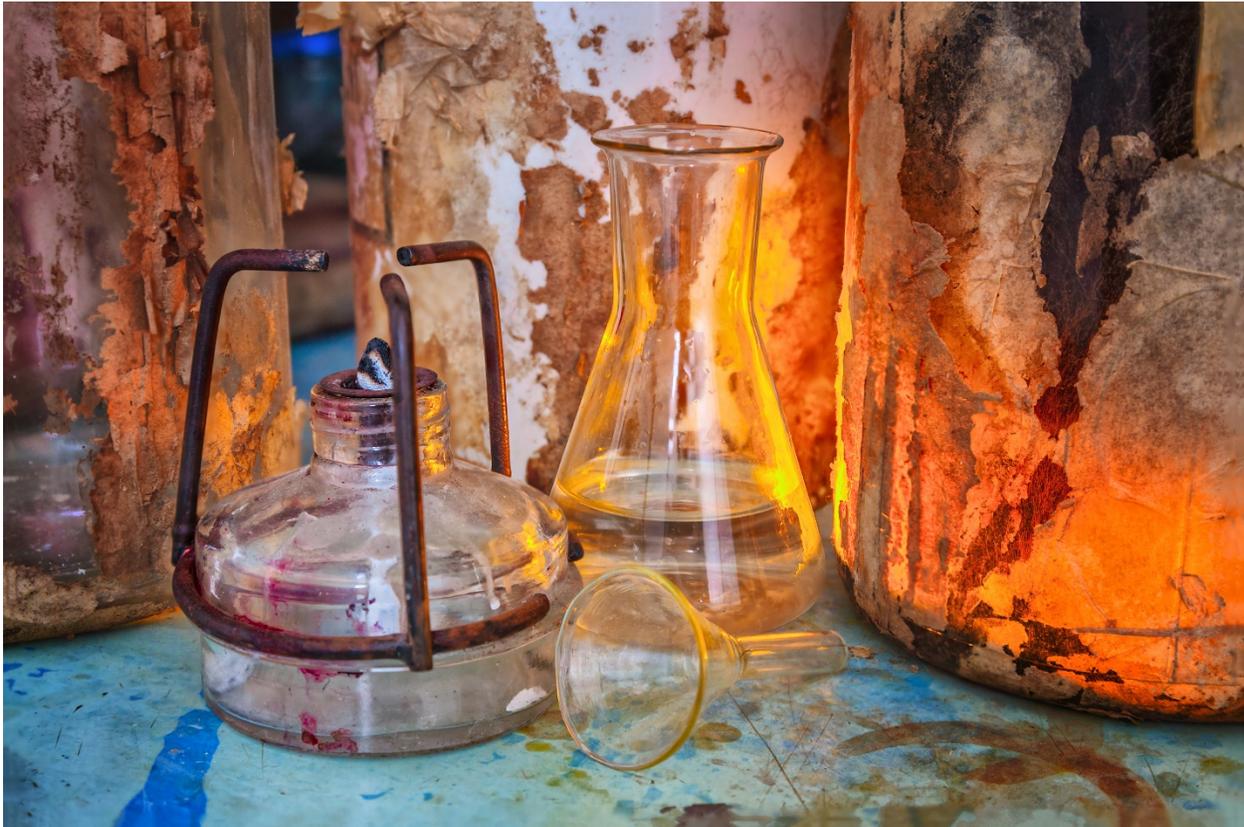
### **Viewing as a theoretical lens**

Art is a practice, and this art process will take on an embodied lens, even in its theoretical perspective. Like the word *idea* (*eidos*, to see), the word *theory* reflects a process of seeing or sight. Based on the Greek root *theoria*, meaning “contemplation, speculation; a looking at, viewing; a sight, show spectacle, things looked at,” ([www.etymonline.com](http://www.etymonline.com)), theory is not only the act of viewing but what is seen. Given the focus on viewing in this art process, the act of viewing, implicit in the etymological root of theory as well as the concept of the soul as a theoretical lens, will be central. Just as a lens (like the eye) can narrow and clarify the focus, I will narrow my focus on the root *theoros*, meaning “spectator” or “viewer” from the root *thea* meaning “a view” ([www.etymonline.com](http://www.etymonline.com)).

In this sense, it is not only the act of viewing and what is viewed but the viewer themselves that will be the focus—reflecting the idea that the artist creates, views, and is created or individuated by art as a process and product: painting a painting.



*Thea* is also the root of theatre, and this theatrical connection can be seen in Jung's repeated reference to *TRB* as a mystery play (Jung, 2009, p. 563) and his employment of a renowned theatrical stage designer, Robert Edmond Jones (2003), to teach his arts-based active imagination.



### **An alchemical lens**

As stated, *TRB* is viewed through an alchemical lens, and this art process will be alchemical as well. Jung (1961) said that his “psychology corresponded to alchemy” (p. 212), and he found an equivalent to *TRB* in an oriental alchemical text, *The Secret of the Golden Flower* (p. 555). In *TRB* Jung (2009) was the creator and the “vessel and womb of life” for his soul (p. 458) who entered him and “went invisibly” with him “on the way of the day” putting the “pieces together meaningfully” so that he could “see the whole in each part” (p. 132). Reflecting this embodied alchemical viewing, Jung referred to *TRB* as the “vessel of my oeuvre” (Blair, 2004, p. 500) a body of work of an artist viewed as a whole. Alchemy can be seen in *TRB* and it can be seen throughout the many images of the website which are gathered to saturate your unconscious with images to move forward into your art-based practice.



It was through the “**help of alchemy,**” that Jung (2009) was able to see the images of the “**original experiences**” as a “**whole**” (p. 555), viewing them through the embodied lens of his soul who saw the whole in the parts as a painting in which many painted strokes are seen together as one. This is a form of embodied knowledge that bridges a monotheistic and polytheistic perspective through the alchemy that underlies both. This union of opposites, characterized in this art process as Eros and Logos is united in an alchemical *coniunctio* of not only male thinking and female viewing but as heaven and earth. Declaring: “I bind the Above with the Below.” in *TRB* (p. 577), the soul echoed the alchemical maxim attributed to the fabled God Hermes: “As above, so below” (1908/2002, p. 7). While the Church glorifies heaven above and demonizes the earth below, *TRB* focused on the forgotten aspects of the serpent or earth soul through art.



### Individuation as an Evolutionary Journey

In *TRB* Jung said to Philemon: “Illustrious one, you teach that man is a gateway? A gateway through which the procession of the Gods passes? Through which the stream of life flows? Through which the entire future streams into the endlessness of the past” (p. 335). To which Philemon replied:

These dead believed in the transformation and development of man. They were convinced of human nothingness and transitoriness. Nothing was clearer to them than this, and yet they knew that man even creates its Gods, and so they knew that the Gods were of no use. Therefore, they had to learn what they did not know, that man is a gateway through which crowds the train of the Gods and the coming and passing of all

times. He does not do it, does not create it, does not suffer it, since he is the being, the sole being, since he is the moment of the world, the eternal moment . . . I served being from time, redeeming it from the fires of time and the darkness of time, from Gods and devils. (p. 536).

“But I said to him. “Illustrious one, when will you give me the dark and golden treasure and its blue starlight” (p. 536).

For more information: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QzoqTQx-lyw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0HwzW38kKU0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNOSeYvgLqk>