

‘THE UNIVERSAL EMBRACE:
CONSIDERING PHI, SPIRIT & SOCIETY’

This exegetical component acts in congruity with the creative component @

www.theuniversalembrace.com

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of:

Masters of Education by Research,

Victoria University, Melbourne, 2012-2014.

by

Richard William McLean

Please thoroughly view and review the interactive website before reading.

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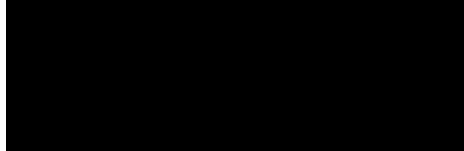
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'I, Richard McLean declare that the Masters by Research title 'The Universal Embrace: Considering Phi, Spirit & Society' is no more than 60,000 words in length including quotes, and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work'.

Signature:



Date: 19/07/2014



ABSTRACT

The combined creative and exegetical components of 'The Universal Embrace' tease out philosophies in regard to human nature and experiences, not only unique to a same sex embrace but an overall essential expression of love and triumph. This exegesis utilises a living arts based inquiry to explore the relationship with the self, the relationship with another, and a relationship to not only spirituality but greater society and the universe. This is the essence of this study whilst contrasting and comparing concepts such as science and the soul. The creative component consists of a complex online interactive design of two men embracing that examines the metaphysical complexities of a singular moment in time, that engages with the experiencer allowing them to explore the design and consider their own complex ontologies in terms of physical, emotional, spiritual and politicised lenses. The exegesis also asks the participant to reflect on these themes under an A/r/tographical methodology. The theoretical framework draws upon metaphysics and reconciliation with the self. The essence of this project is rooted in qualitative research under the methodological auspice of A/r/tography and considering queer theory as the two people in this artistic embrace, incidentally, are men. The project combines digital and traditional means of making art in an artistic statement contributing to the common good, and also contributes to Arts/Education frameworks and pushes the limits of an artistic online web based study. Under an A/r/tographical model, it exists in terms of practice-based research and draws from personal narrative and lived experience, acting in congruency with an equal written component that is expressed in this exegesis. The overall design aims to consider historical and present artistic statements of embraces from across cultures and time and re-contextualise a modern embrace in a contemporary format that politicizes the event, drawing from personal lived experience and narrative, and is expressed through current web-based state of the art technologies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I consider myself one of the luckiest people I know and in this moment I am full of gratitude for the prosperity and richness in my life in the wealth of support from friends, teachers, students, family, angels, (and sometimes the demons), past loves and lover. When I began this Masters study, (I did not even know what a Masters qualification actually meant or required me to do), I had one goal: that was, pursuing an active and respectable life which had some structure and rhythm to it, to have something to be proud of and something to work on-and to offer some stability in my otherwise hectic mindset, often tainted by what some describe as mental illness. I would prefer to describe this as acute sensitivity. I thought it would benefit me socially, professionally and creatively. I am happy to say, as I write this acknowledgement-I think it has.

At the time of presenting ideas to my local Victoria University, Melbourne, I had in mind to do something both drawing from my traditional and digital skills in a creative context. I put a rough proposal together, and first contact with Victoria University inspired me in its value. I pursued, and even though I had not officially studied since 1995, I met Professor Maureen Ryan at Victoria University and my life course altered for the better.

I cannot remember details of how I became engaged, but I remember she was encouraging and friendly. I met with her a few times whilst navigating the bureaucracy of rejoining a University. I remember trying to find supervisors, and without a crystal clear idea of what it was that I wanted to do, none came.

With intuition guiding me, which is such an important theme in this work too, I decided mathematics would be a part of the nature of the art I was going to create within a holistic and creative context. I suspect Maureen had spoken to Dr Neil Hooley, and I think he was swayed to supervise with the promise of it being at least half scientific or to do with mathematics. It was with much excitement when I asked Maureen, ‘So...does this mean I’ll have two supervisors and I can start-that I will be a student again-can I actually go home and tell my partner that??’, introducing Steve at the same time. She smiled noting my enthusiasm and she relayed that I could. I could feel a semblance of meaning coming back to my life and definitely to my routine.

Maureen, you have been oh so gentle in the face some someone so naive in terms of research and development! You have been kind in your time and in your patience with me, and I thank you

wholeheartedly for this, without which this narrative research and art would not have been possible. You are an inspiration.

I also could not have don't this without Dr Neil Hooley. Neil, what can I say other than when we worked together art and science collided! (Well, in kind of an overlapping two-circled venn diagrammatic way!) I am greatly indebted to you as well for your ongoing support with meetings and the excruciating way you would not comment on my progress. Somehow it kept me aiming higher. There was poetry and meaningfulness in our conversations and relationship. Thank you.

Steve just came home from work as I was typing this. I had not noticed it got dark as I often do working here at my computer. 'Does this help?' he says as he walks through and switches the light on. Steve, you are one of the loves of my life and my personal best! Life has been a roller coaster throughout this study, and I can say with absolute surety, if it ended now, it would be entirely worth it. It will not though, and I owe my deepest gratitude to your care, your interest, your support in many many different ways, and your quirkiness that always keeps me intrigued. You never gave up on me. You were my muse for the entire genesis of the study and I love you. You have helped me to love me.

Thanks also to the best company ever, whom made this house a home, Steinberg and Chopper - and the chirps of budgies Ralph and Rhonda.



*Dedicated to the memory of Nana,
always watching over and believing,
and also the cherished memories
of Wez.*



“A paranoid-schizophrenic is a guy who just found out what’s going on.”

— William Burroughs.

“The most beautiful experience we can have is the mysterious - the fundamental emotion which stands at the cradle of true art and true science.”

— Albert Einstein.



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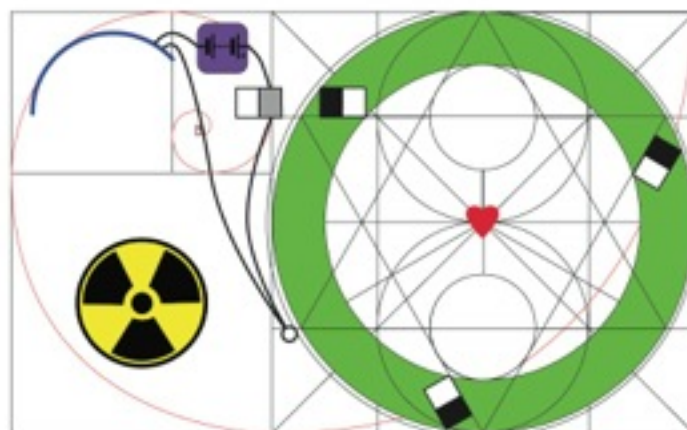
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6. Introducing the creative outcomes of The Universal Embrace: Considering Phi, Spirit & Society.

How do the three creative components of The Universal Embrace, the children's book, and the kinetic energy machine rhizomatically join and relate to each other?

The focus and key themes of the study were further self actualisation with the reflexive self, connectivity and creativity, with the computer acting as a vehicle of expression for emotion, science and art. Within this context I have created numerous different creative processes and products. All of them have one underlying theme, that is to love: love of the inner child, love of the inner adolescent, acceptance and love of the self and another, society and the broader universe.

The Universal Embrace is the main final creative component, along with the entire designing of the interface of the website. Before I was creating The Universal Embrace, I was working on the gyroscope machine. In essence I found it unexpectedly related to the Universal Embrace in a number of ways; that energy and love are interchangeable and endless, and of course that in the later versions of the gyroscope machine, it fit beautifully and naturally into the golden section that I was designing for The Universal Embrace. The pivotal centre of the gyroscope, which is the focus point of the kinetic moving nature of the machine, was also the place where the two heart chakras of the two people meet under the same template within The Universal Embrace. In this way the two creative components are interchangeable in the structure of their design. Love was the intention and energy behind The Universal Embrace-to make humanity suffer less.



The children's book 'Grogan the Monster in...What Do You Love?', rhizomatically links in many ways, most notably to honour all parts of your collective life and nurture that person through lives difficulties. In the narrative I wrote to my fifteen year old self, (who was fascinated with free energy), I finally let go of all fear and judgement and started to design the gyroscope idea, working passionately for long hours animating and narrating it in a Youtube presentation (McLean, 2014). In writing and illustrating the book I was honouring the inner child, as it was fun and light hearted to make and design. With the energy machine I was honouring the inner adolescent who was always told by science teachers and elders the concept was ridiculous. As they say those that danced looked strange to the people whom could not hear the music. Grogan the monster began as a personal project but ended up being extricably linked to this narrative by honouring the inner child.



To compare, indeed some of my previous art, was so serious and melancholy. When I dedicated a day a week to illustrate the children's book, it gave me the opportunity to be young again, to play. To have fun, and you can see within the illustrations and the interactivity of the iBook that it was just such a joy to create, if very labor intensive. (It took me two years to illustrate, complete and publish for an adult to read the book in 30 seconds).

I think the necessity of the children's book 'Grogan the Monster in ...What Do You Love?' was also an exercise in gratefulness that I really needed to focus on lest my thoughts around my Masters study of the Universal Embrace become too serious or dark.

Together these three creative components allowed me to harness the inner child, the inner adolescent, and the reflexive present self in equal measure. In this way a story of my life was re-told in the way that I wanted it to be heard, Stasko's 're-creating the self' (Beattie, 2009, p. pp 114). Indeed although I have had successful exhibitions and achievements I am proud of, I wanted to distance myself somewhat from any semblance of madness or discordancy, and some of the darker chemically deranged art of years gone by. I was seeking atonement through study from the demons of the past, to reconnect with the innocence I was blessed and born with.



7. Methodology

In terms of the most relevant methodology, '*A/r/tography is inherently about self as artist/researcher/teacher. To be engaged in the practice of a/r/tography means to inquire in the world through an ongoing process of art making in any art-form and writing not separate or illustrative of each other but interconnected and woven through each other to create additional and/or enhanced meanings*' (Irwin, 2005). I found A/r/tography to be the most relevant methodology because identifying my role in terms of self as artist/researcher/teacher suits the processes of the intended and then the completed work of 'The Universal Embrace'. I am first and foremost an artist by nature, and by engaging in the research I will embellish my scholarly and professional self through complementary writing of the work. While engaged in this study, I started to teach drawing classes to marginalised people in my local community affected by mental illness. It was great to be inspired by my students. I also like to think that the expression of The Universal Embrace gives people an opportunity to learn and be challenged about how I present the emotional, physical, spiritual and politicised aspects of a gay embrace and relate it to their own lives and ontologies.

Along with the creative component, the concept of 'writing an artwork' (Evans, 2003), in the form of an exegesis is important documentation and exploration of the junctures of the process and result, making one element naked through lack of the other. This a/r/tographical method justifies the more or less equal importance allocated in this study to the written work and the creative component.

My writing style throughout the project has been self reflexive and light hearted, not bound up in overly scholarly language whilst still attaining a level of arts based research that as Patricia Leavy puts it, 'is based on the assumption that art can teach us in ways that other forms cannot' (Leavy, 2014a).

The methodology of A/r/tography emphasizes the growing reflexive self-awareness through arts-based living inquiry in creating the work. That it draws from and celebrates subjective narrative of processes and discoveries as self-development is pivotal, in the ongoing journey of reconciliation with self and the macroscopic broader world. The actual 'Universal Embrace' creative component has aimed to be accessible to and be able to be related to by all viewers according to their own reflective ontologies and relationship to the world. The work says 'This is me', and also asks 'Who are you?' Grogan the specifically asks, 'What Do You Love?'

As Pinar states, in his foreword to 'A/r/tography, Rendering the Self Through Arts-Based Living Inquiry' (Irwin & De Cosson, 2004), 'artist-teacher-researchers dwell with 'in between' spaces, spaces that are neither this nor that, but this *and* that'. (Pinar, 2002, p. 9) In this way the identity of the artist as self, and the researcher/teacher are expressed in a way that is self rendering in terms of reflexivity. I concur and acknowledge that A/r/tography is a 'living inquiry of unfolding art-forms and text that intentionally unsettles perception and complicates understandings through its rhizomatic relationality' (B. Irwin, Springgay, Grauer, Xiong, Bickel, 2006, p. 18). This for me has been a great challenge, a necessary component of the transformative effect the research has had on me professionally, personally, and in scholarly terms. It takes into account the reconstruction of a life and its emotional, spiritual and physical properties that relate in rhizomatic ways across the www.theuniversalembrace.com website and its associated creative projects and properties.

A/r/tography suited the intentions of the work, and opened a dialogue for discourse that both created tensions and connected ideas and data. It leaves room for the unfurling of the work, that's exact nature cannot be predetermined even though it has a framework, and it is upon this premise that the work can comfortably exist under the auspice of practice based research. In terms of this proposed narrative, arts-based approach to pedagogy, the importance of stories that link personal, professional and scholarly aspects is acknowledged 'through inquiry, dialogue, interaction and integration' (Beattie, 2009, p. 4).

A/r/tography is 'a form of Practice Based Research steeped in the arts and education'. (B. Irwin, Springgay, Grauer, Xiong, Bickel, 2006, p. 2). It is important that this work identify simultaneously with both methodologies, and I have found they intersect in various important ways:

- 1) The audience and artist/narrator having a collaborative experience,
- 2) Both engage in an activity 'that requires systemic forms of information, analysis, and reflection'(Candy, 2006).
- 3) Learning occurs for both the creator of the work, and the audience that engages with the work. Both parties are enriched and challenged when it is shared, published and exhibited.



Importantly too, particular to this project, there will be a continuing of peer evaluation and response / discussion in the form of a blog which gives the project longevity after its completion for the purposes of the Masters study.

The A/r/tographical component suitably positions the self in terms of the artist, the researcher, and the teacher, to co-create via writing and creative component, to 're-search(ing) the world to enhance understanding' (Rita L Irwin, 2006, p. 2) of the tensions of beauty and also the complexities of an embrace through physical, spiritual, emotional and politicised lenses. This proposal is constructed in a modern day location, and exist in and within its 'politically informed methodology of (a) situation' (B. Irwin, Springgay, Grauer, Xiong, Bickel, 2006, p. 2).

Some existing knowledge such as the golden rectangle as the screen base for the interactive design that takes into account divine proportions embed the narrative described earlier into this new work. It seeks to visually resonate and also psychologically and spiritually.

As noted earlier my artistic identity has been framed in part within a lifelong fascination with shapes and how they fit together, as described in the metaphorical animation that I published on the iBooks store (McLean, 2012), and later reworked into a component of The Universal Embrace's website.

This animation is a technical metaphor for the time that is needed to elapse to experience the work, and crystalizes the idea of utilizing phi derived proportions. As such the genesis of forms in form-space drawing link with designing an interactive artwork with visual and metaphysical reach.

In researching the conscious knowledge of shapes, Verstockt states the practical application of geometry dates from Vitruvius in the 5th century BC, yet in western civilization took until Euclid in 300BC in his work *Elements of Geometry* in Alexandria. He goes on to say that civilization went through profound change when the circle, square, and triangle were identified, and attributed to a higher level of intelligence and culture, vastly transforming human history in a huge step forward (Verstockt, 1987, p. 87). This 'period of play', characterized by the term Homo Ludens, (meaning 'to play') from the book of the same name by Johan Huizinga (Huizinga, 1970) presents a way in which understanding the circle, square and triangle within The Universal Embrace might 'communicate with the super human: the cosmos, the principles of life, the divinity' (Verstockt, 1987, p. 88). The importance of play within my research is reinforced by practice based method in the context of narrative further explored by example of Carly Stasko below, and also lends its characteristics through the divinity of mathematical shapes and concepts. Playing, the idea that what you create has unexpected outcomes, has characterised my work and also the work of Carly Stasko whom defined revolutionary healing (Stasko, 2009). There was similarly also a sense in both Stasko's work and mine that there had been a similarly courageous challenge that needed to be overcome, Stasko's being cancer in a more immediate time frame, yet mine being schizophrenia which had been reoccurring for over twenty years. The concept of culture jamming in Stasko's work reminded me of some of the illustrations I had completed for Ego & Soul, and definitely reminded me of the broad nature of different art forms that could be utilised in my creative meanderings. Throughout my study I kept coming up

with very different looking ideas illustrations and concepts that I would weave together through the art of writing in rhizomatic ways.

Skinner (2006) introduces the concept of the sacred nature of shapes rooted in geometry. He goes on to say geometry originally had its roots in the measurement of land at a more exalted level, distinguishes between the domain of the sacred and the profane (Skinner, 2006, p. 6). This relates to my proposal in terms of the tensions between banality (the profane) and divinity (the sacred). These are two points that I intend to explore: the tension between aesthetic design derived from divinity, whilst exploring a divine energy, love, not excluding the banal features that in part contextualize 'The Universal Embrace'. This process was intended to create rhizomatic relations and tensions whilst not underemphasising the extensions of reconciliation of the self and the self within the world.

In terms of Practice Based Research, 'by its very nature, interactive art has particular characteristics that necessitate a different form of enquiry to conventional areas of discourse in this field. The involvement of the audience in the active experience of the work, for one thing, is a radical departure from normal expectations of our relationship to artworks' (Candy, 2006). In this way, Practice Based research attempts to address interactivity and helps position my proposal in such terms and further stretch the interactive properties utilising A/r/tography and its research methods.

Further identifying with Practice Based Research, means engaging in original investigation in order to gain new knowledge, through the practice of art and the outcomes of that practice (Candy, 2006). This is a fitting description of the present project. There is great value in poetically and pragmatically linking the written word and the process/ construction of this work, each enriching the other.

8. Data collection and literature review

The data collection of valid images relevant to this research through various sources is important in reviewing past historical and contemporary embraces, and in considering how artists have expressed spiritual, emotional, physical and politicised qualities within their artworks. In this literature review, I focus on well known embraces, and other existing technological means of the expression of aspects of what I intend to build on and reference in the website www.theuniversalembrace.com.

One of the most famous images of the 20th century, from the front cover of Time Magazine in 1945 when Japan surrendered explores the political landscape and contextualize the image of the 'Times Square Kiss', by Alfred Eisenstaedt (Eisenstaedt, 1945). In these images, spirit and emotion are present, yet they are made static as is the nature of photography. (Source: <http://life.time.com/world-war-ii/v-j-day-1945-a-nation-lets-loose/#1>) Over time the apparently staged original kiss has been re-interpreted!



Contemporary photography of an embrace includes the Vancouver Hockey riots, that ended up in this world of social media with the photo that emerged 'going viral'. This highlights the impact of technology and of the environment and www.theuniversalembrace.com

again politicizes and contextualizes the embrace (Jones, 2011). (Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-13807494>)



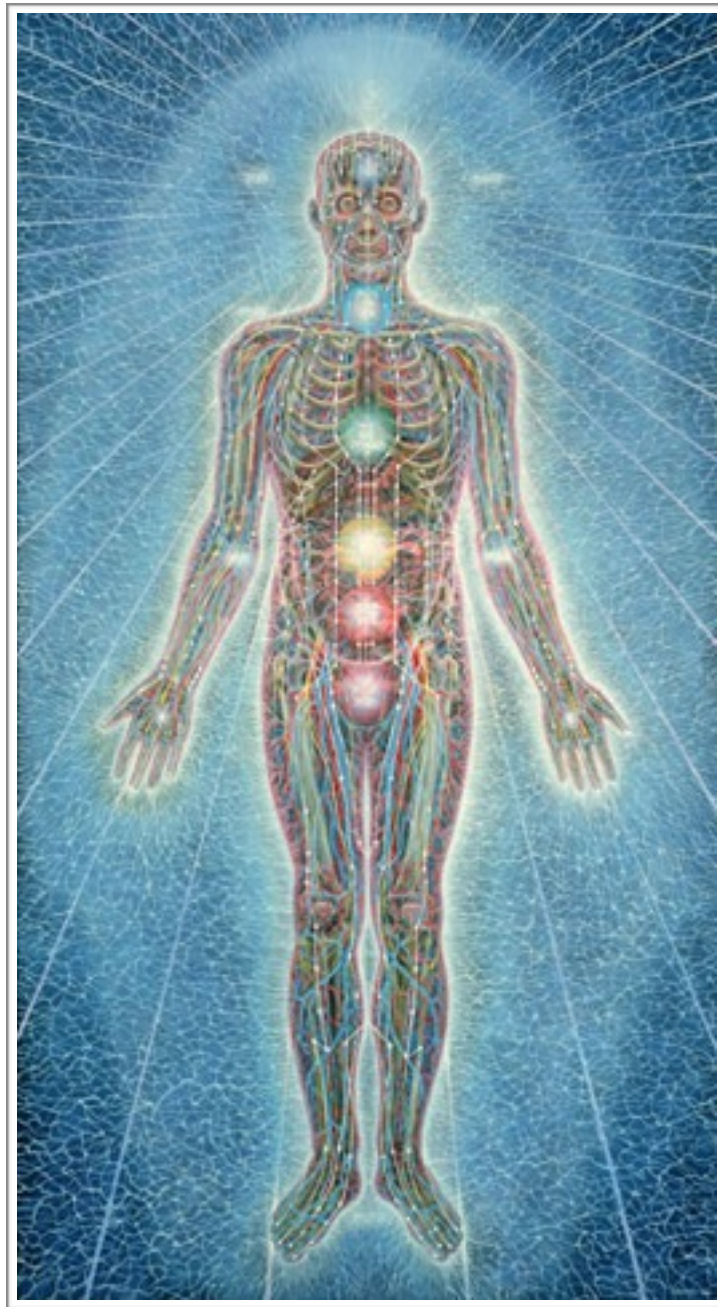
To express conceptualized spirituality and to contextualise the embrace within a current environment via interactivity is a great and exciting challenge, in line with Stasko's definition of (RE)volutionary Healing that needs courage and play (Beattie, 2009, p. pp 114). In essence, I am surprised by the end product of The Universal Embrace, for in my playfulness I had no idea what I might create!

The Universal Embrace's aims relate to photographs only in the way that it focuses on a constructed sliver of time, much like a photograph. The greater contribution is that this sliver of time is interchangeable by its interactive nature of adding and subtracting qualities of the embrace, both simplifying and complicating the computer users experience, and pushing the boundaries of what is it to be creative within the context of A/r/tography.

Other artworks immediately come to mind such as ‘The Kiss’, by Gustav Klimt, an early modern contemporary image of an embrace from 1907-8. It is indicative of a lovers embrace, yet within the context of Europe and of embrace as greetings, it must be understood and considered that the idea of a greeting embraces are not universal across cultures, and different customs are used in different parts of the world (Source: <http://www.wikipaintings.org/en/gustav-klimt/the-kiss-1908>).



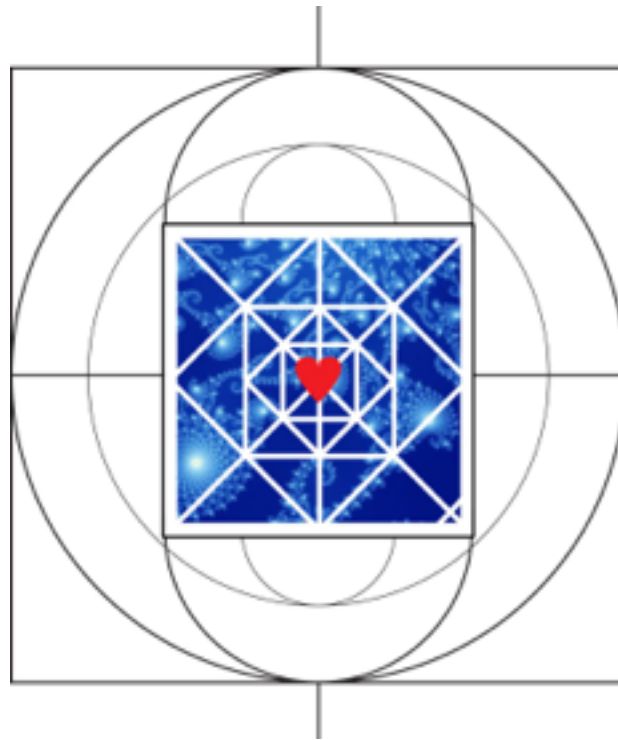
The work of Alex Grey (1985) is paramount to my anticipated expressions of the spiritual in his groundbreaking work of representing the singular human figures in its their dimensional qualities of bones, blood vessels and perceived ethnicities along with their imagined spiritual aspects of the subjects. Greys digital multimedia presentation of ‘The Chapel of Sacred Mirrors’, (Grey, 1985) precedes my ideas and shows via his website, <http://www.cosm.org> how successfully multimedia can express multi dimensional qualities of people.



My work will potentially exhibited to everyone with access to the world wide web. To further give life and interactivity to the project beyond its publication, a blog site where people can leave comments and critiques will be included within the web design, encouraging people to communicate to both myself and others under the auspice of the site.

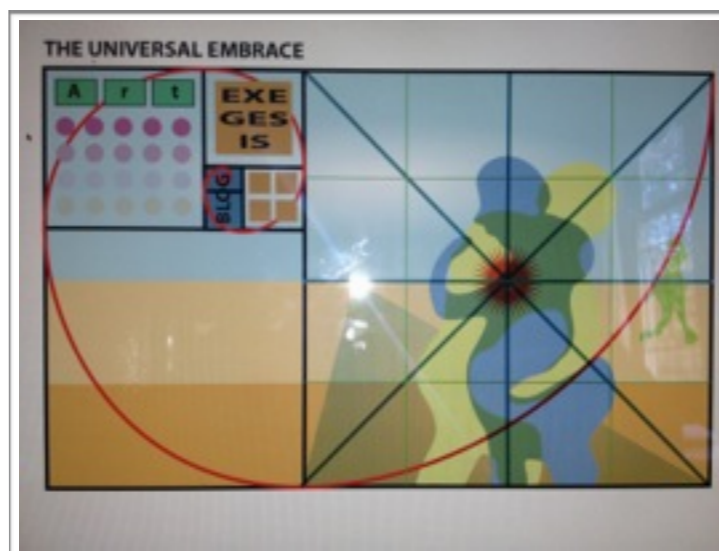
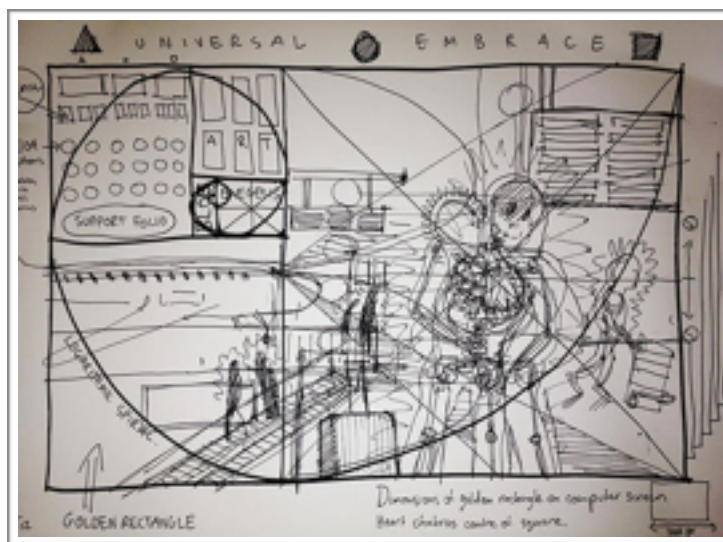
In terms of the aesthetics of drawing from the golden mean as derived from phi in the overall design of 'The Universal Embrace', there are a number of ideas to consider. One relates to the usability of web design. One study placed website

design into the two components ‘classical aesthetics’, and ‘expressive aesthetics’, the former from antiquity to the eighteenth century, and the latter relating to more modern usability interfaces of website design (Talia Lavie, 2004). They go on to say that expressive aesthetics is enhanced by being able to break design conventions. I operate under this antithesis by attempting to marry a ‘classical aesthetic’ from history and use its template for a complex and also aesthetically appealing design which I think will be very challenging. I am reminded of the anonymous quote, ‘everything is designed, few things are designed well’, hence the challenge under the auspice of an informed narrative starts with a courageous concept, which ties in with Carly Stasko’s quest for meaning in four parts being a challenge, then courageous, then the act of playing and the final stage of love (Stasko, 2009, p. 86).



Another study of the aesthetics of web design relates to color theory and the success of a site is said to resonate with its beauty of a particular site. Visual balance of a site gives a psychological sense of equilibrium and also mentions the application of the golden mean both in horizontal and vertical resonant ways. Also, by intentionally changing the color balance to be unpleasant, a method of recording an unfavourable usability was documented (Laurie Brady, 2003). I aimed to design with a sense of usability in the interface and a natural sense of equilibrium through colour and design.

There is also the concept of data in art and interactive design. Art created from data is interestingly being used more frequently in projects around the world. Interactive installations have begun to include scannable codes people can use their smart phone with that offers a broader and more engaging experience (Antony Funnell, 2012). 'The Universal Embrace' likewise aims to use creative data from art that informs the final piece, including data as text from literary sources, and other relevant visual sources referencing the themes explained above. The concept of phi as data unfolding to negate the golden mean is central to The Universal Embraces design. The support drawing below starts with designing the work in a traditional way, as all digital work should, whilst the following image goes further to explain how the concept is transformed in a digital way through color and design to clearly illustrate how an eventually interactive work is allowed to flourish in a clearer way.



Carly Stasko describes relating to the universe rather than reacting to it (Beattie, 2009, p. pp 109), and that ‘this form of relational pedagogy is about seeking out connections, cohesion and resonance’. Within The Universal Embrace I think this is achieved in the outcomes in that I have recreated a relationship with the inner child, adolescent and present being, whilst also relating to another and placing the entire concept in the context of society and the broader universe. Likewise in Carly Stasko’s work she places herself within a context of her society by culture jamming, placing her work within a society much like I have placed The Universal Embrace within an online digital environment. My experiences and reflections during the lived inquiry of the study come from across the timeline of my life.



Om Ma Ni Pad Me Hum is an ancient sanskrit mantra that translates as The Buddhist Sacred Flower. Its qualities of each syllable are: Generosity, Ethics, Patience, Diligence, Renunciation and Wisdom. While engaged in this study and travelling overseas I decided to get the mantra tattoos on my arm in a cyclic way that refers to it appearing on prayer wheels as it is a cyclic mantra. It appears in within the design of The Universal Embrace and has had a positive mindful affirmation on the nature of creating this work.

9. Reflexive narrative to inner adolescent

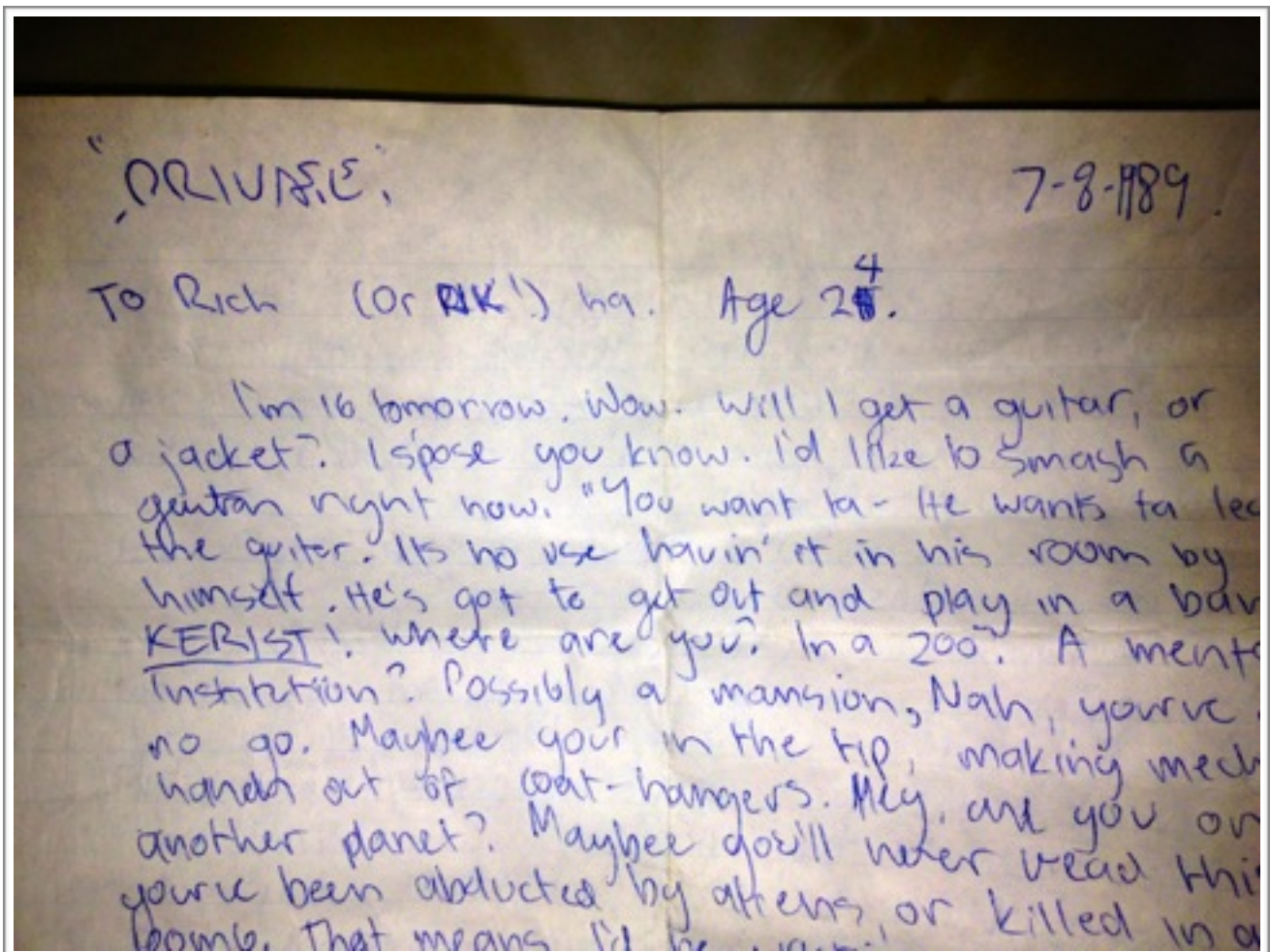
During this study which looked back and recreated the self by looking over a life, I very fortunately found a letter I had written to my future self from when I was just fifteen years old. In this section, I have the chance opportunity to give comfort and nurture my inner adolescent through his many worries and encourage his ideas in a way that gives birth to an important dialogue. It has been unexpectedly central to the nature and structure of this study.

15 year-old Rich:

'PRIVATE'

7.8.1989

To Rich (or RIK!) ha Age 24



As a 40 year old at present: I'm sorry 15 year old Rich, (Yes, it is Rich still!), I know this letter was intended for you when you were 24, I can remember how you thought that was so far into the future. I'm grateful you wrote me this little time capsule; but I have to tell you I'm 40 years old now when I'm replying to your letter. Whats more I think I'm being brave in that I'm publishing the response to a complex life you have lived, as I study a Masters of Education at Victoria University, Footscray. Bet you did not think you would be doing that! Actually, I don't even think you could have imagined yourself as a 40 year old-but here I am!

15 year-old Rich: I'm 16 tomorrow. Wow. Will I get a guitar, or a jacket? I s'pose you know. I'd like to smash a guitar right now. *(The following is my fifteen year old interpretation of my father):* "You want ta - He wants ta learn the guitar. It's no use havin' it in his room by himself. He's got to get out and play in a band!" KERIST!'

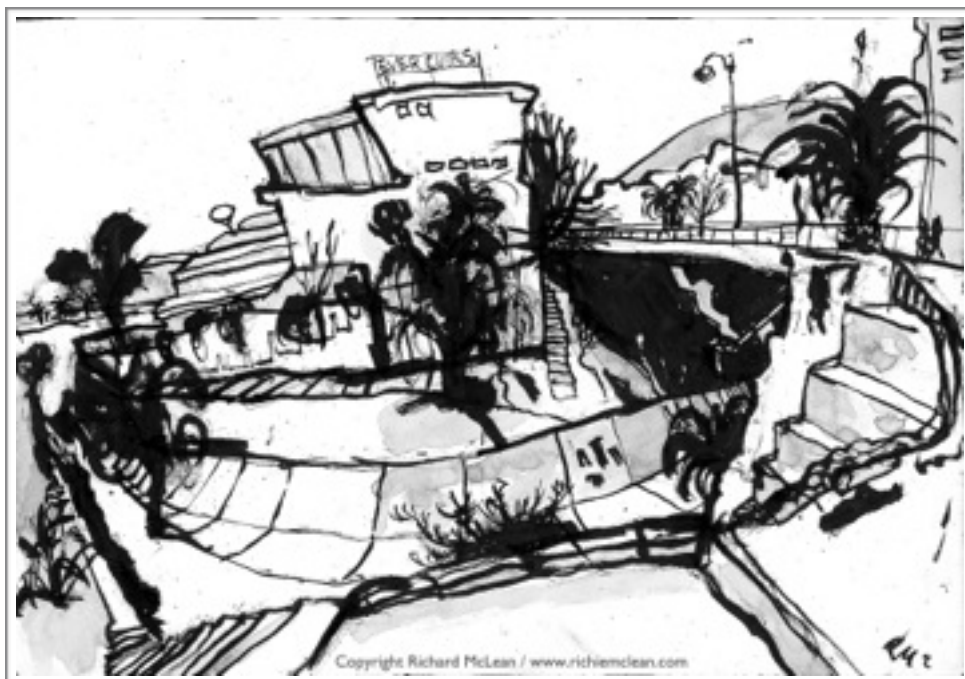
As a 40 year old at present: I can't remember what it was like for you on this day, but your letter gives me an idea. My memory is not clear, but I'm pretty sure you received an electric blue guitar from Mum and Dad. You used to play it all the time and I still have it, with its many decorations, stickers and graffiti placed on it over the years. You have bought and sold lots of guitars through hard financial times, yet the blue guitar is worthless and you hang onto it for sentimental reasons, maybe to remember the time spent as a very young adult. Guitars became a vehicle for your expression in later life.



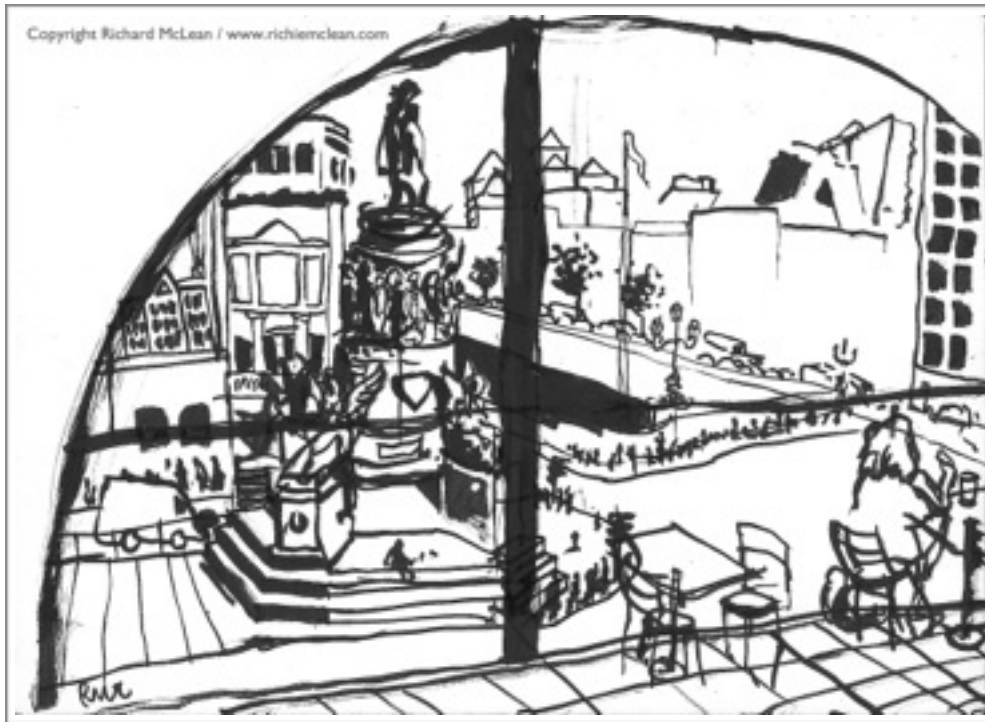
You used to hide dope in the battery compartment later on when you were at art school (Yes, you went to a prestigious Art School-but you didn't expect that after wanting to leave school as a surly teenager in year 10!).

As a 40 year old at present: I can sense your anger, and know the anger that was much internalised for you, and seemingly from parental expectations... I know Dad used to say you needed to play with other people, and that frustrated the hell out of you - that's because you were quite isolated in a way-he only wanted the best for you. In many ways you are similar to your Dad, in many ways, different. In actual fact, you did get out there and play in bands-you were the lead singer and guitarist-right up until you were about 28.

As a 40 year old at present: You played lots of clubs and band venues around Melbourne and even in Canberra. You did studio recordings with various bands in a few different incarnations, with your friend Greg Kirby, whom you had not met yet-but I remember you remembering the name 'Greg Kirby' at the year 7 roll call-as if were fated you would meet him. You even recorded a CD with your brother, before he moved overseas to Ireland to live for some years. You also, were fortunate enough to travel quite extensively, and made drawings along the way.



Agadir, Morocco.



Dublin, Ireland.

As a 40 year old at present: The music you played was punk rock / pop, and as expressed in your letter, you were a young existentialist that liked to record where you are at in art, music and writing. There was some success with your band, or at least personal gratification, and it seemed to be a method in which you could channel your frustrations about sexuality and your struggles with mental illness, for unfortunately for you, you would develop a full blown psychosis and a diagnosis of schizophrenia by the time you were 20, and have reoccurring psychosis for the next 20 years. Despite this, you have been an extraordinary survivor with great resilience, and contributed to society in many ways, even writing a book 'Recovered, Not Cured, a journey through schizophrenia' about your journey to comparative wellness through your illness and struggles (McLean, 2003).

As a 40 year old at present: You were and are a complex person, but you have found many friends and much more peace in your life despite some massive obstacles. Your life has never been dull in terms of creativity, although it has been questionable in terms of its inward existentialism that was driven by some bad choices. Nevertheless, your art is collected in galleries, and institutions. You just received a call today at age 40-with a gallery offering a space to exhibit in next month. Your life and art was celebrated in a documentary that has been used to reduce stigmas and

misconceptions about mental illness, and you have been generally fortunate in your life. You still consider yourself one of the luckies people you know. At the present time-you have never been happier.

15 year-old Rich: Where are you? In a zoo? A mental institution? Possibly a mansion, Nah you've got no go. Maybe you're in the tip, making mechanical hands out of coat hangers. Hey, are you on another planet? Maybe you'll never read this. Maybe you've been abducted by aliens, or killed in a nuc bomb. That means I'd be wasting my time right now, but that doesn't matter, I do it all the time.

As a 40 year old at present: Where am I you ask? I am in Footscray in the west of Melbourne in a big old house typing on a computer, which has revolutionised modern society, like your sketch suggested from university when you were twenty years old was extremely intuitive about. It looks like the concept of an iPad and your intuition with ideas is strong. In your time up until now, you have struggled a lot and moved a lot, but it is fair to say that you have grown in many ways through these processes.



In actual fact you just got off the phone to your Dad and Mum, who bought a new dog from a lady they said I would be so 'in tune' with-they offered her number. She says there is no such thing as schizophrenia (a concept which you have identified with for a long time), -and you are likely to call her! Your Mum and Dad accept you as different, spiritual and somehow in touch with something they are not. In the present tense, you are very appreciative of this fact. They understand by not understanding, and have done the best they can to raise you with the knowledge they had despite you feeling misunderstood and neglected sometimes.

To date, after you left home in Keysborough at age about twenty-one where you lived with Mum, Dad, Jodie and Brad, you have lived in the following places:

Mordialloc, with Steven Teitjens, who is still a close friend of yours today, and for whom you were best man at his wedding,

Back at Keysborough again with your parents,

Then you moved into a run down property, (that really needed demolishing), in Edithvale with your associate friend through Karen, whom you dated for a short time, Dee, and another girl, Tory. Here, you recorded music with your band 'Less', a self depreciating name of which you have mastered in your life-stop it!

After that you moved home again for a while, and shortly after, needing help with feeling comfortable in your own skin in terms of sexuality, you moved out with your cousin Duncan in Preston who was outwardly gay.

From Preston, you more accepted your sexuality, and moved in with a new friend Shannon to Clifton Hill. (That's where you recorded the CD for the band 'Welcome to Tuesday' with your brother and Kirbs). Shannon moved out shortly after and you stayed there for a number of years whilst you worked as an illustrator first for 'The Herald Sun' and then for 'The Age' (Yes, you got to do your dream job!).

From Clifton Hill, you moved to the western suburbs where you live now, although first stop was West Footscray with Paul. Paul has since passed away.

From there, you bought a golden retriever that you have adored for nearly ten years. You named him after Saul Steinberg the illustrator from The New Yorker, 'Steinberg' of whose work you were blown away with at university. By then you were working in a psychiatric service advocating for those people who utilised the service. You were busted with the dog at the rental and you were forced to move out to Seddon, where you lived with a cross dresser, and you fell away from society and into a life of bad choices with drugs. Your art suffered.

From here, you were destitute. It was fortunate you had written a book about schizophrenia, and befriended Roscoe at the book launch- who came to your house one day and moved you to country Eildon.

After Roscoe became unwell, you fled back to your Mum and Dad's place, and collected your things over time. You are still great friends with Ross.

Living with your parents again was hard for you, and you had met a younger fellow, Shane. You cashed in your super, (you had been unemployed for quite some time), and you moved to Phillip Island, which you loved so much growing up. Shane went with you, and you both lasted about a year. It's clear to me that you dated a younger guy so you could exist in that space which was 'out and proud', as he was, to compensate for your 'lost youth'. It was another big learning curve, and you ended up-you guessed it-at your Mum and Dad's.

After a time you moved to Mordialloc, which is where your Mum grew up. While you were there, you met the most wonderful man, Steve. Although you were doubtful at the start, he moved in after six months, a time in Buddhist philosophy that recommends you know someone for that time before you live together. You both moved to Footscray where you have a studio and have been accepted with a scholarship to study a Masters in Education, which is the auspice under why I am writing this to you, my inner adolescent.



Interestingly enough-you ask if I am in a mental institution, how your young mind was intuitively tuned to the life you would play out. You had become an advocate for mental health after writing a book on your experience with schizophrenia. You had some very tough years, but-you are well and you seem to have overcome extraordinary odds, including overdoses, (which you have hardly mentioned to anyone as a great shame), to turn your life around. You have helped many and although you have not changed the world, you have indeed contributed to it changing. You have spoken internationally and on Australian television and a lot of radio, and your book has been available for 10 years and sold over 11,000 copies-even translated to Japanese. You spoke in Australian Parliament and also overseas in revered institutions. Although your future intuition on ‘madness’ was accurate, you cope, and you do well. You have little in the bank, although is that what’s important?

Much of the happiness of the last few years has been attributed to you making conscious decisions about changing your life, learning personally, and accepting the love and teachings that your partner Steve had to offer. Steve seemed to be sent at the right time in a fatalistic sense. He has taught you so much, and the rebellion of meaningless sex no longer applies to your life, I’m happy to say. At the age of 40, you are more together and have never been closer to anyone in your life. He is a blessing and the muse for your work ‘The Universal Embrace’.



15 year-old Rich: I bet you're really cut you haven't done anything in your childhood. What a waste. Have you still got mates like Grant Jacobs? You God damn bore. I've got heaps of homework tonight, BIO, CHEM, MAT A, ENG etc.

As a 40 year old at present: You did what you could-you are hard on yourself, and for the most part-you still are. You could be wise even now to give yourself a break from time to time. This does not mean work less-it means to be satisfied with your accomplishments. You have not changed the world in a massive way, but rest assured you have changed the people around you, mostly for the better. You have been an inspiration to many, and helped a lot of people too.

You don't still have friends like him, either. In actual fact there are few people from high school you chat with. You are blessed with many friends. Your beloved lifetime friend, Wez, whom you met in grade one, passed away last November 2012 after a life of alcoholism and also, coincidentally enough, schizophrenia. You were a great support for one another, and he came to say goodbye one night to you before you knew he had passed over-this made sense later that week in retrospect when your parents drove from Keysborough to Footscray to tell you of his passing. You organised his wake- and you remarked how those people who were so mean to you in your adolescent life had not changed at all. Even now,

in this moment, the crystallisation of what your life experiences have been have made you quietly proud, and very grateful.

Your Mum gave you a drawing you did from when you were a child at your 40th. I remember doing this, and if I was asked, would say I've felt that I'm an old soul in a new place. I have always felt this. I reflect on the length of the horns on the goat indicating age, alone and looking over the landscape, drawn when quite young, but relating to an entity that is old and happily isolated.

I noticed you changed the subject quickly to homework-its true, you were good at adapting to school and you excelled in your Bachelor of Fine Art. You continue to push yourself and it has enriched your life.

15 year-old Rich: I hope now that you're a success in life. You can't change me now, but I can change u can't I? You're at my mercy, Under my power. Are you an enigmatic presence packing red death now? Maybe I'll feel your feelings when I'm 24 at this moment. 25! Gee! half way to 50! I remember when I thought I was old at 10!!

As a 40 year old at present: Oh Rich of 15, success is a long winding road-but you have had your achievements in your life. You have done and experienced a lot more than others can say. You have been overseas, by yourself and with others, about seven times... Artistically, your life has always been a meandering journey of expression and reflection, and this continues in the current time. You were a risk taker though, and you are grateful for your health and the people in your life. If I could have reassured you then when you were fifteen, I know it would have given you great comfort.

15 year-old Rich: I want you to read this to your wife or best buddy. If you're laughing, best wife or buddy, or rather, best buddy or wife, I give permission for RICHARD WILLIAM MCLEAN to either bash you, or hmmm!

As a 40 year old at present: Oh young Rich, you were so aware of fluctuating sexuality, but you felt the need to use the term 'best buddy', if you had a male partner! I remember you writing this, and I know what you meant. In that time, in that space, in that environment, in that age, there was no room for you to confidently express your sexuality. Things in society have changed since then, and peoples attitudes have changed. You are very aware of yourself sexually these

days, and comfortable. It sounds like you in yourself were comfortable back then, at 15, and I remember being a child attracted to both boys and girls at primary school. Such is the untarnished and unfettered self reflexivity of a frustrated 15 year old-that you had to write it in code.

This would be a recurring theme in your art, doing things in code, and deluding yourself about the facts. While this was certain, your intuitiveness with creativity often led to great insights.

15 year-old Rich: How's the world looking now? Overcrowded, polluted, overused, exhausted? Or have the extra terr's taken over to control we numbskulls? I bet there's smog everywhere. All those poor species deceased.

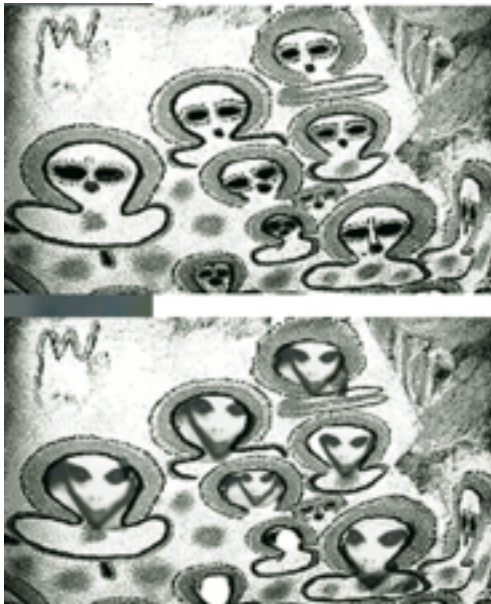
As a 40 year old at present: Poor 15 year old Rich, your pessimism about the world has held you back through your life. Even to now. You do venture into positiveness, but you still feel a great responsibility for the world, carrying it on your shoulders, which has been to your detriment, but also fired some creative processes.

Your intuition speaks well. Yes the world has problems, but you knew that already. I'm sad that growing up in a cold war era, and knowing about the end of WW2 led you to an uneasy fear of nuclear war. I understand that as a child you could not really grasp why the people and leaders you are supposed to look up to would have these devastating devices. These kind of negative thoughts almost certainly led to your unravelling, in your pessimism.

For the record, there have been no nukes used in wartime since the two you knew about at the end of WW2, but there have been two devastating nuclear accidents, one in Chernobyl, in Russia, (which has now dismantled), and one in Fukushima, in Japan, after a devastating earthquake that triggered a tsunami that killed many people. The devastating legacy of that pollution is slowly being made public.

You really could have used a sign of the lords prayer on your wall when you were young-as you do now-which of course is - 'Lord grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference'.

Funny you should mention extra terrestrials. For you, seeing beings in your room or sensing them was so real to you, even as a child. This became more real in adult life and adolescence when you have had profound experiences with beings and hearing other people's experiences you relate to that have experienced similar phenomena.



You have egotistically looked into shamanism with your work, and you have been led by negative entities into dark corridors. You are a person blessed and cursed with seeing these types of occurrences, and in your adult life, have managed to rid yourself of negative presences, interestingly though prayer and shamanic processes you in present time don't talk to many people about. You must know however, that metaphorically you have been told that you continue to shine light into dark places, acting as a spiritual guide somewhat, in a world that needs transformation. So yes, in actual fact, you had already been

compromised with darkness in your life metaphysically, but out of that grew the light.

15 year-old Rich: Hey, have you seen an OILS concert yet? Or have you grown out of kids stuff like everyone else?

As a 40 year old at present: I remember with this question to my future self, that you as a 15 year old were dealing with a lot, maybe too much for a person so young. Metaphysics, sexuality, discordancy, nuclear war, etc. To have you ask if I have been to a concert reminds me of how young you were, like a normal kid, yet how you had been burdened with so

much. The answer is YES! You have seen a few Midnight Oil concerts-the best one was where you went with Wez at the Palace. It was amazing and to date one of your favourite gigs!

I'm glad you experienced some normality in your adolescence, and in fact, in year 10, you convinced your Dad to purchase 27 tickets to one of their shows at Rod Laver Arena for all of your many friends at school. Your parents didn't always understand-but they supported you in everything you did and do.

You did grow out of performing music however, and you are very nostalgic about the performances and recordings you have made...they were a part of your journey of self actualisation.

15 year-old Rich: If kids ran the world, we'd be right. PTO

As a 40 year old at present: I still agree with you there. There is something about being unconditioned that would lead the world to be a better place. Indeed, there is a saying, a Buddhist saying, that says something like 'education is the sum of prejudices you acquire before turning twenty one'. You appreciate Buddhism.

15 year-old Rich: Maybe I should leave a sample of air for ya!

As a 40 year old at present: There is that quirky yet depreciating humour of the state of world events and circumstances. Perhaps you should have, the world, as you knew then, has been through horrendous tragedies and is a lot more polluted now than in the history of mankind. It is actually quite apocalyptic by some scientific measures, and whilst trying to support the good will of saving the environment, you are still pessimistic about the futility of the human race and prefer to focus on its survival, focus on the intentions of good will in a buddhist sense while you are here. Some might say that without discussing these themes when you were that age with others, you had a gift of intuition that would both burden and inspire you throughout your life.

15 year-old Rich: Do you still like 60's music? I'm into it, man. I'd hate if someone reads this. I hope guilt looms over their heads until they tell me!!

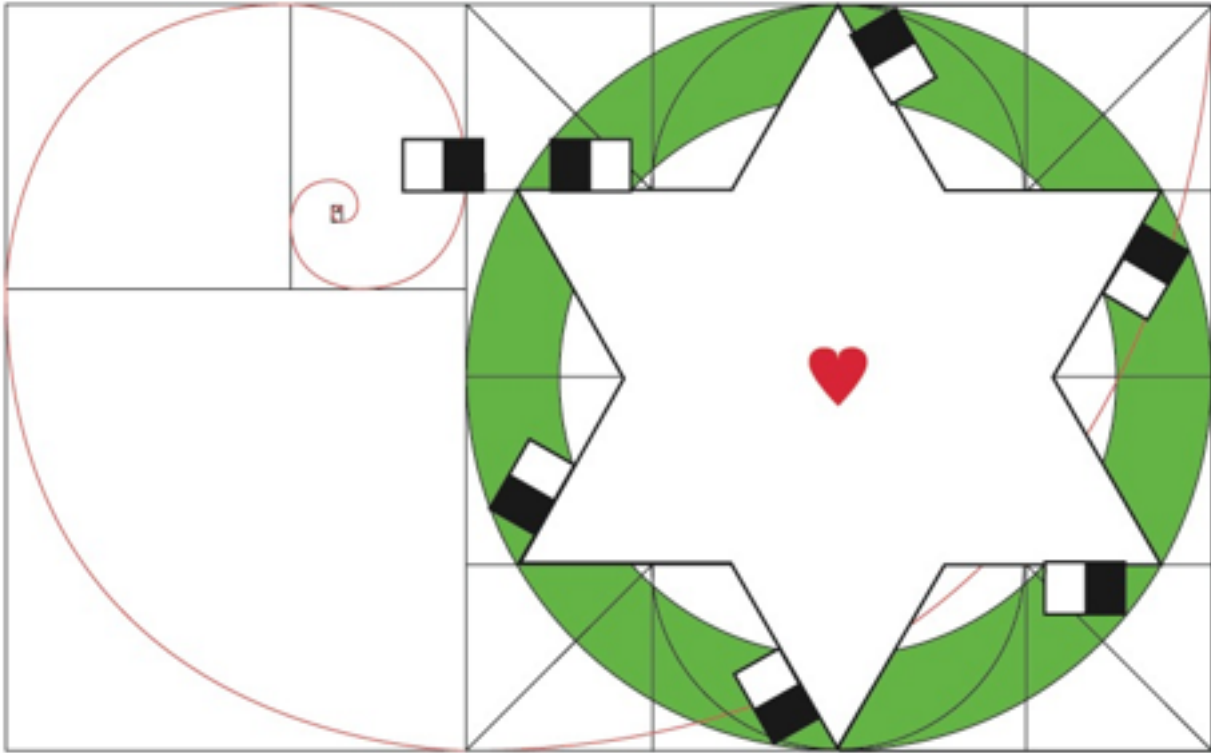
As a 40 year old at present: Yes! You still like 60's music. Its a funny thing-you were attracted to the homoeroticism and sadness of the program 'Tour of Duty', and had all the episodes on video, (videos don't exist anymore!), and you knew through music the political landscape of the world that came before you, perhaps even more so than your own Mum and Dad, who had lived through it. You had an acute eye for transformation through art and music and this was also a help and a hindrance in your life.

You'd hate if someone reads this? Well, I'm happy to say you are so comfortable with who you are that the letter is going to be published as part of a narrative journey to your childhood and back to the present. You always have been an 'over-sharer', since coming out both in terms of sexuality and being honest about your experiences with mental illness. You both enjoy not having to hide anything anymore, yet somehow you also feel quite transparent-yet this is your choice as a creator-to make yourself vulnerable as an artist.

15 year-old Rich: (Points to a cartoon character) Is he a success? Maybe he is your only friend. If he is, do something about it.

As a 40 year old at present: You loved to draw the character 'Heudo' the metaphorical reptile. The main human in it I remember was called Rik, and had a haircut like me at the time. It was another stepping stone of discovery for you, and although in yourself you felt very alone for much of adolescence and through what you identified with as schizophrenia, you always had the capacity to attract many different types of people into your life. You were non-judgemental, and accepted goths, spiritual people, even satanists, musos, artists, and people whom you knew had not expanded their mind enough to let this happen. The lonely, so to speak, journey you went on was also, a curse and a blessing. You, in your life, if you needed it, were never without someone to talk to. If you were, you could quickly rectify that by having philosophical conversations with strangers and other people you would meet.

15 year-old Rich: I tried to invent a flying saucer today. By a gyroscope I copied, or magnetic powered. or a combination of both with a huge fan. Maybe you've got one!



As a 40 year old at present: Yes, indeed you had has that fascination for years and years, after you saw a program on free energy on the then futuristic but now kitsch television show 'Beyond 2000'. Its now 2014 and those shows you longed to see are extremely dated!

You really wanted to save the world, and set your mind to it. Can I tell you, that as an adult, just before you started your Masters work in 2011, you designed a conceptual animation that goes part way to your goal of making an endless gyroscope machine. With insight, I've realised it was a symbolic gesture of relating to a troublesome sexuality, but this is the alchemy in which your art exists. I could confidently say that you have been guided, and that the Jungian idea of synchronicity, that meaningful co-incidences have spiritual significance, has been at play throughout your life.

The design you had the idea for is included in this interactive project. Where it goes will be determined by a positive mindset. The linking to you, at 15, is still valid to me now, I guess you could say it was something I had never finished and that I didn't have the means to do. Now, I forgave how 'delusional' it might have been to put effort onto this idea of late, and your ideas are alive in my life now.

15 year-old Rich: What have you lived life for? Was it worth it? Do you wish I'd been popular in school or just 'RICH' that everybody knows?

As a 40 year old at present: Young Rich, Im pretty sure I can say with confidence you were born for a reason, to contribute to the broad experience of human existence and to, if I was speaking spiritually, learn as the earth is a school, so that you can learn and grow. The earth hand your manifestation as a spiritual being in your body, has seen you overcome many obstacles. If I could have slipped into your mind then, and told you something about your life, it would be this:

You are blessed although you have had trauma. You have learnt through bad decisions. You have been a beacon of hope for others. You wrote and performed in your own bands. You have exhibited art for many years. You are very loved, if a little misunderstood by your family. You have been blessed with some spiritual/intuitive gifts over your life which I now had hoped you had paid more attention to. You have sold thousands of books that your wrote and travelled around the world a few times. You are in a fortunate country and you live in a state of luxury only Kings and Queens lived only 200 years before your birth. But the thing you have lived for-is to learn through experience and reflection, like I am doing right now. In this you are contributing cosmically to a grand design. You have met famous people and listened to spiritual leaders, both famous and infamous. Life is not easy, but you agreed to that before you came here I have realised, as part of your life purpose, your shamanic 'soul contract', if it were.

15 year-old Rich: What are ya? Biekie, hiker, hobo, millionaire?

As a 40 year old at present: Your suggestion here is that I am somehow so different, that I would be unconnected to a normal society. In this regard, there is some truth to that I must concur. I feel for the 15 year old that was so overwhelmed he might check out of society as a way to preserve yourself in such a hostile place, or so it seemed to you. Sometimes, you were disconnected-for your own preservation, sometimes you were so disconnected, reality became cloaks and daggers, and your delusions, which make some sense in retrospect, took over your life and prevented you from engaging in (I hate the word 'normal'), normal things. You are not a millionaire, but you are rich, in many many ways, which you have much gratitude for.



15 year-old Rich: I bet you're average, nothing special. Do I hate you? No, just wondering. Maybe I'll find a source of inner strength, and do something with my life, maybe I won't.

As a 40 year old at present: Again with the self depreciation, which would follow like a curse through life... I know you were told you were special as a child, but I also know the frustrations from inter dimensionality and fears born of the modern world that 'normal' people did not understand. In actual fact, you invited this consciously. I remember you saying to 'the universe' that you would offer your mind and body and soul to help stop a nuclear war. Its quite unfathomable you might do this-I think you were about 15 or 16. Its about the time you consciously remembered encounters. I also remember when you were younger, you drew a landing pad for UFO's on the shed roof with a crayon- which is still there-and it was a metaphor for opening up those multi dimensional qualities to your metaphysical experiences.

Your strong moral compass was debilitating with a feeling of responsibility for the world. In some ways this is true to this day.

If I could say-Rich at 15-I like you. I even loved you, as I love you now. You were an extremely sensitive person thrown into a complex place that you could hardly bear, and you survived with the best attributes you have. But you made a hell of a lot of mistakes later on that's for sure! But, this is normal, and you have grown from them. Recently, you went on a trip to Thailand with your partner Steve, and on a whim, you got an image of your inner child tattooed on your foot. It seems that event acted in congruity with this response to your letter. This follow up writing was to say and enforce that as I look back, I love you and want to say-that you are going to be ok, happy, grateful, blessed, and a very fortunate person despite your many learning obstacles. You are grateful and loving and have not been broken yet! If I could say one thing to you however-it would be not to pick up smoking. I know it was rebellion, but I'm still smoking and it's hard to give up! I would say this to any child or adolescent, too.

15 year-old Rich: Want to know what's in your room?

As a 40 year old at present: Yes! I have read this letter and I will break up your text because I remember nearly all of these things that were in your room! Maybe I should tell you what's in our room now though?

We have a wooden floorboard big bedroom with a beautiful window to look out from. There is an image on the wall you created called 'sweet peace', and you have nostalgically saved it from being sold at exhibitions, because the day you created it it gave you such a feeling of accomplishment and serenity. It is an image of a lotus flower, the enlightened soul growing from the dark of the weeds and mud, quite a metaphor for your how you feel about your life now.

On your bedside drawer, there are essential oils and incense you use for burning in the room and house; on the shelf opposite the bed there are many crystals you have collected over your life, and there is a bowl of them on your bedside table as well. You use white sage to cleanse the room and you still burn incense like you did when you were 15.

You marvel at the crystals all the time, and clean them under full moons to keep them in pristine condition. Some may say you are Wiccan in religion, lending a lot from Buddhism. Under the picture 'sweet peace', you have a poem that was read to you about Archangel Michael, which is all about not being more than God with the ego-a lesson you struggle with as you feel reticent to promote yourself at times with your art, and other times placing too much importance on them. In any case, it has been important for this study to hang on to so many drawings letters and memories from your childhood.

15 year-old Rich: 2 x Oils articles, A Rockhampton and Canberra flag on a bamboo pole, a Halls Gap and Sydney badge,

As a 40 year old at present: This delights me at this age, because although you were fraught with philosophical dilemmas about your place in the world and worrying about the world, you were a band loving, poster bearing normal kid in ways!

15 year-old Rich: a homemade crayon,

As a 40 year old at present: This speaks to me on many levels! I remember you making the crayon, it was melted with flame out of other crayons and was multi coloured. Even back then you were not only making art, but you were very philosophical about even making the substance that would make the art-somehow this was a metaphor for you as a deep thinker

15 year-old Rich: environmental balance symbol,

As a 40 year old at present: I remember your environmental balance symbol-it was very coloured and expressive and you had melted crayon wax on it to give it bulk and texture. I remember it was a planet with a line through the equator, in this way you were aware of the respect of the natural balance of the planet, and you were an avid lover of David Attenborough and had many books, especially on lizards and birds.

jars and bottles full of marbles, my license, heudo, surfing posters, road-sign dartboard reptile articles, energy for life poster, 2 x free flow design, an E.T. pamphlet, postcards, photos, garfield in a noose,

As a 40 year old at present: I remember all these things! I especially remember the garfield in a noose-in your reading, which extended also to music and all aspects of your life-you were not interested in the cliché or the normal, you were interested in the destruction of what was considered commercialised, general or apathetic in your eyes. To have garfield-the worlds most famous and as you thought-monotonous homogeneous cartoon strip in a noose, it was saying a big 'fuck you' to normality, and to bring on the diversity! Even then you displayed the characteristics that would drive your interests in a non conventional way. The shock of hanging a small toy fuelled the aspect of you that to make a point you had to go out on a limb-this did trip you up later in life with your experimentation with drugs, which exacerbated your illness-you were even addicted to crystal meth for a time before one of your soul buddies - Ross - rescued you, for which you are still grateful.

15 year-old Rich: a plastic hand,

As a 40 year old at present: The plastic hand was an extendable hand that you squeeze and the hand moves-you loved it and it was your dad whom bought you it from one of your almost yearly trips to the royal Melbourne show. It was special to you because you were fascinated by it, and you were nostalgic about it because your dad bought it for you. One of the reasons you were accepted into VCA was the fact you had constructed a movable hand from coat hangers, string, and elastic from old car inner tubes. It was an early kinetic sculpture!

15 year-old Rich: a paper 'sprint' hand, a goanna photo with me

As a 40 year old at present: You used to get homesick as a child, but in year seven you went on a holiday to Hattah lakes near Mildura - and yes, you bought secret cages in the bottom of your bags to take your catch of lizards home. You could not believe your luck when a goanna climbed a tree sunning itself-and you and grant waited all afternoon till sundown when it climbed down, and you brazenly caught it! In the photo, which is still on mums mantelpiece at your

parents house, you were wearing full fluorescent tank top and shorts that you got in surfers paradise, and you look ridiculous!



15 year-old Rich: and a paper starfish, a red barren paper aeroplane, a spiderman, Mickey mouse badges, a guitar strap, Footrot Flats picture, list of twenty elements,

As a 40 year old at present: You were and still are fascinated by science. You finally let go of Footrot Flats with your last move with Steve, and donated them to the children of the poor guy that had to mow your lawns... I'm sure he didn't look forward to your requests to mow the lawn, it was more like you had to fell the back yard with his ride on lawnmower!

15 year-old Rich: ribbons, cars, piles of old rubbish, old broken typewriter,

As a 40 year old at present: I remember that typewriter well. When you and your sister were young you would practise typing your names on it. You both had catch cries too you would write, over and over again. Your sister would write 'This is the story of Dr Jeckyl and Mr Hyde', over and over. Sensing something base and metaphysical though, you would type an interesting message over and over, as if you knew as a child where you would end up after this life had run its course. You would type 'Back to the place of origin'. In a way, writing this narrative is doing just that.

15 year-old Rich: a desk, (homemade), full of graffiti,

As a 40 year old at present: You know what, you loved making things out of wood and decorating them yourself. When you were younger, you would carve boats-you also made a paddle boat (which sank in the pool and mum cracked a bottle of champagne for its maiden voyage!) It was so funny and a happy time recorded in photographs of an epic fail! I can tell you now, that the desk you have now is actually propped up on some books you self published and still have copies of-the top of the desk is an old door! You were always one to make light of not having things, or you would entertain yourself, and be satisfied with it. It was a good quality to have to be an artist.

15 year-old Rich: a 'telephone book money box',

As a 40 year old at present: I remember that book too! Later on you worked at Kmart, and you used to hide the \$26 dollars you would earn on the inside of the book-which was hollowed out so it would look like an ordinary book. During your childhood you were always making cubbies and going to secret locations, life was mysterious and adventurous, and in later years, as soon as you were allowed, you Wez and grant would catch the train to Stawell and ride your bikes to the Grampians to catch lizards.

15 year-old Rich: bed, tape recorder, tapes, dog with specs, gecko cage,

As a 40 year old at present: Those geckos were from a trip your dad took you on to broken hill where you collected and caught lizards that you kept as pets for years. You also made the cage, with a perspex front and a blue night light so you could watch them emerge at night time and feed them mealy worms.

15 year-old Rich: chair, amp, guitar bean bag heaps of school books, plants, (one meditating under a triangle).

As a 40 year old at present: Where does a 15 year old get the idea to get a plant to meditate under a triangle? perhaps it was from 'a country practise', where one of the characters was a bit eccentric, or perhaps it was from 'the curiosity show' where they demonstrated how meat would not rot as well under a triangle form. To this you were fascinated with the pyramids and archeology and its mysteries and are still an avid watcher of documentaries.

15 year-old Rich: Just got 'Place without a postcard' - Midnight Oil from Kerrie + Mark + Karen + Christian for b'day. Got Brut 33 from Sara. Kerrie's surprise party tomorrow. gonna be good.

As a 40 year old at present: Brut 33! How funny! Sarah is now a lawyer, and you met her years later. You had such diverse friends. I think its because you thought you were so different, that you could accept all sorts of different people. You followed with this attribute throughout your life.

15 year-old Rich: By god, tomorrows gonna be alright.

As a 40 year old at present: I like your optimism, and during your life, there is just this inner feeling of invincibility, that you will die someday, and that is ok. Even now, you accept that and really appreciate the buddhist view of considering your own death every day. Well, tomorrow speaking as a general rule WAS ok-you survived-one of your ex girlfriends always marvelled about how you would land on your feet. I'm still not sure if this is fate or a quality you possess. But to be sure in this moment, you are in a beautiful house, about to hold some drawing classes for marginalised people, (whom you always relate to in some familial way), sitting near the heater, with your faithful dog Steinberg and Steve's dog Chopper-waiting for him to come home from work.

15 year-old Rich: I'll try and make ya great, Rich!

As a 40 year old at present: I wish I had remembered this slice of optimism in some points in my life young rich, but you have persevered through your mistakes and misgivings, and achieved a lot. Tomorrow was great-life has been worthwhile, and you were born into a time and a place and a reason in history, maybe not to be the greatest, but to keep being passionate about small things that you can do with honesty and greatness.

15 year-old Rich:

Best wishes,

Rich.

As a 40 year old at present: What a wonderful opportunity in self actualisation that I have been able to respond to this letter. What an incredible amount of themes that were taken through to my adult life, and what a ride since then! Its almost impossible to think that I had written this letter with so many synchronicities and so much meaning by replying. Young rich, I'm glad you considered me in the future. I can now more comfortably release the past with ease, and am so grateful for my life and its lessons. Hopefully this healing process by which I have comforted my inner adolescent can soften the blow of other people considering their own upbringing in the light of the (T)eaching qualities of A/r/tography.



There are many themes of this letter which are confronted within The Universal Embrace. Firstly, there is the intuitive subject of madness, which would become a later feature of my life. Within this dialogue I try to distance myself from the trials of being symptomatic to overcome a challenge which has been there with me for a long time. It has taken herculean effort, but I am satisfied my creating processes have added content and information that will enrich the good will of the world and society.

One of the concerns I had when very young was that of the environment and pollution in the world, and worrying about the state of the world too, something which carries through to the present day. Interestingly, I have turned a possibly neurotic predisposition in terms of cyclic thoughts and translated that through my fascination of mathematics and animation into a design which I would hope in present tense to contribute to the green energy supply of the planet.

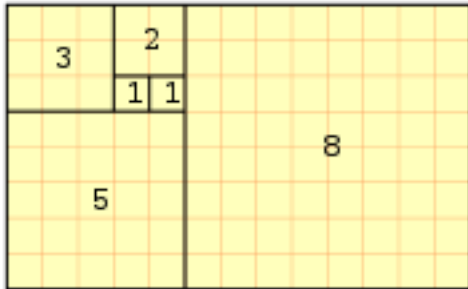
Another theme of adolescence was study, which I have carried through to the present day, most likely used as an intellectual way of being interested in life when sexuality was so burdensome for me at that age. In an ever evolving self actualisation, my sexuality has become a celebratory focus of the study within The Universal Embrace. I hope that in terms of A/r/tography the method of teaching and sharing experience and art about sexuality will lead to it being more accepted to people whom may see it as troublesome.

This really is a time when I can make peace and notice the changes that have occurred within my life and make sense of them. The letter has been an important document in considering a multi dimensional embrace with relation to the self and self actualisation, the journey across a life.

In the next section, I consider and explicate the intuitive initial themes of Phi, Spirit and Society in three parts.

10. PHI

10.1 Introducing Phi intuitively and mathematically.



The Golden Ratio's origin, often referred to as the term 'The Divine Proportion' is the English translation taken from the book "De divina proportione" (On the Divine Proportion), written in 1509 by Luca Pacioli and illustrated by Leonardo da Vinci. The title expresses the thought that this golden ratio proportion of design found in nature and in the human form is an expression of God, our Creator. So why was I attracted to it? I think it was ultimately about confronting imperfections. Is it part of the process of confronting imperfections. At the start of the study my intuitive feeling of Phi was in relation to the concept of resonance and acquiring a more resonant state, however throughout my study I realised that both light and dark can be resonant under such an all encompassing auspice. To live in harmony but not neglect the bad things negates a whole lived experience and not just a yearning for an ideal one. The poem below suggests our innate prejudices and ignorance I have found in this narrative are relieved by understanding some of the ethics of mathematics.

This, therefore, is Mathematics:

She reminds you of the invisible forms of the soul;

she gives life to her own discoveries;

she awakens the mind and purifies the intellect;

she brings to light our intrinsic ideas;

she abolishes oblivion and ignorance which are ours by birth ...

Diadochus Proclus (410-485)

www.theuniversalembrace.com

When considering a topic for this Masters study, I was attracted to the idea of phi and resonance as a result of the Golden Ratio as an inroad to designing art. However the differing pi is used to represent the ratio of the circumference to the diameter of a circle and is the number 3.142. For me the resonant Phi it is a sacred and special number, also called an irrational number, and I was attracted to it because of the idea of sacred resonance and how I might creatively express this in terms of my life. According to Livio (2002) such numbers it seems, have 'awed mathematicians since antiquity'.

Upon explaining the creative component of 'The Universal Embrace' concept to my supervisor, he said he understood, but what did it mean, in broader terms? I forget what I said but I wish I had recorded it. The dialogue I remember had a resonance, a resolution about it, another major theme in this study. It followed along the lines of creating something macroscopic and microscopic, through archetypal divisions and references to divinity and alternately banality, creating tensions between the two, and re-creating the self through an ongoing narrative. It was all encompassing of order versus chaos, perhaps a metaphor for life. We were getting somewhere. This 'somewhere' even symbolically was the same as the chaos and order I felt as a fifteen year old, although having had to be courageous about my condition, I was willing to confront the order and chaos in a scholarly way based on narrative and art.

10.2 Why 'Phi, Spirit & Society'?

I named the exegesis 'Considering Phi, Spirit & Society', on instinct, and the main creative component, 'The Universal Embrace'. The word 'universe' was to relate love not exclusive to gay relationships. The visual interactive project consists of two men embracing. There, quite simply, was an observation from my life of two adult gay men, my partner and I. This was quite a departure from other artwork I had created in the past such as in the self published book, 'Strange Currencies of Ego & Soul' (McLean, 2008), that was not celebratory of sexuality in any way. Indeed, the artwork contained within that book was typical of a person who had not come to terms with his sexuality and held a lot of anger towards society and indeed towards himself. For this Masters study however, I wanted to celebrate the union of my partnership, and this was a process that took many years to arrive at artistically, emotionally and in terms of self actualisation and acceptance of my own sexuality. It was courageous but overdue to express this area of prior non acceptance. In terms of Carly Stasko's idea of (RE)volutionary Healing, I definitely had set myself a challenge, which

required courage and following Stasko's model, needed importantly to play and move through final stages of love (Beattie 2009).



The title of the exegesis shaped the narrative around a personal unfolding of dialogue, considering two men embracing, my status as a gay ‘spiritual’ man and my place in the present time within which I was creating the work. Placing the embrace in the context of current antipodean society was appropriate and inescapable. Placing it in terms of available technology was of pivotal importance as well. By design, it cross references the past and the unfolding of a person, a localised environment that places the event within a local and even religious context, and of course the multi dimensional aspects of the embrace created through emotional, physical, spiritual, and politicised lenses.



All of these lenses vibrate in a particular time in a resonant state of awareness. The resonance is both individual and located in the context of current society. Psychologically, the resonance of phi metaphorically relates to the relationship with self, the relation with another, and the relation to a particular society and the broader universe. It is also located in the context of present time, and also in the context of the universal human experience and technology.

In my early twenties I read the work of Paul Davies 'The Mind of God', about fractals and the structural genesis of patterns in maths and how this was extricably linked to the universe, to physical matter and its outer worlds that were based in physics and concepts of patterns (Davies, 1992). As a child I marvelled at the shapes I saw in nature, spider webs and pine cones, that everything seemed to have a structure that was both constant and variable in terms of the shapes of say, a plant, or the scales on my pet lizards. That there is a rhythm to shapes in the universe, or my microscopic universe as a child, led me to a fascination with shapes, design and mathematics. A friend who I lived with for a time printed up a sticker, 'There is music in nature to those that listen'. I found it poignant. Later in my teens whilst learning the guitar, I remember noting on a piece of paper stuck to my bedroom wall, 'You have twelve notes to make anything you want out of', hinting at the endless possibility of riffs and melodies out of a basic western paradigm of twelve musically resonant notes. I was well aware of energies. (I ended up playing guitar and performing for years afterwards up until the age of about 28). The feeling of the written note was, as I can recall, you are free to make whatever you want-so do not miss the opportunity.



As noted above, I enjoyed the type of philosophy that Paul Davies offered and have always had a fascination with shapes, mathematics, and also free energy within an environmental context. Science and metaphysics had always fascinated me spurred on my childhood experiences and encouraged with books.

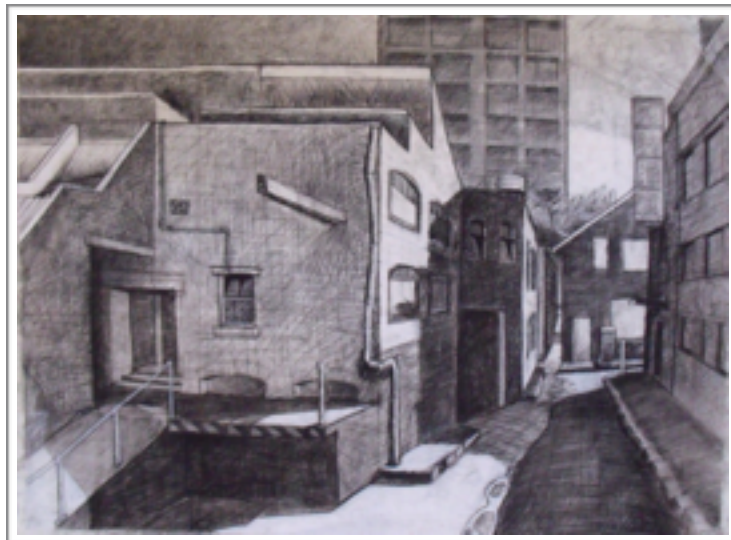
While completing my Bachelor of Fine Art degree at university, I bought a book called 'The Genesis of Forms' by Mark Verstockett, (Verstockett, 1987) and in it there were the visual expressions of various artists who had been invited to make a design or drawing from the three basic shapes of circle, square and triangle. The diversity from across cultures and times astounded and fascinated me. It is still one of my favourite books and it was a natural attraction to geometry that inspired the work on the conceptual animation titled 'The Free Energy Love Machine', that accompanies this Masters study. Sub consciously I designed the motif into tattoos I have on my body...



Likewise, in the dialogue I had with my 15 year old self, which is included in the creative component of this Masters, I describe things in my room, and I remember with clarity these things and designs, and the idea of making an 'anti gravity gyroscope' from when I was that age. The underlying theme is a fascination with shapes and invention, that

stems from a resonant fascination with basic shapes. In present time, the vehicle of technology makes the visual representation of these shapes in static and other forms possible. (It is made illustratable via digital animation by the vehicle of technology and the computer). It was clear I was interested in the genesis of forms, invention, and creating machines at the time I was 15 and younger. In my younger years, I created shapes with technical lego. Even younger still, it was building blocks that captured my attention. I was fascinated with nature and history and saw patterns in nature while playing as a child. If there was maths and golden proportions in nature, it seemed that natural resonances also existed in other dimensional lenses such as the emotional and also in the attraction of and to a partner. There have been studies of psychology that refer to the resonance of the golden mean and Phi (Livio, 2008) which relates various states of consciousness that relate to the measurable megahertz of brainwaves.

Philosophically, metaphorically, and visually, I needed a temple that would encompass all of the dark and light within which I could construct an embrace. In a tumultuous life I craved some semblance of 'normal' in my philosophical ideas. I rediscovered that vehicle in the Golden Mean. In my undergraduate classes we studied the golden mean, and its relationship to architecture and also to visual art. Under the direction of Melbourne artist, Rick Amor, we started to make drawings with an underlying grid of the golden mean.



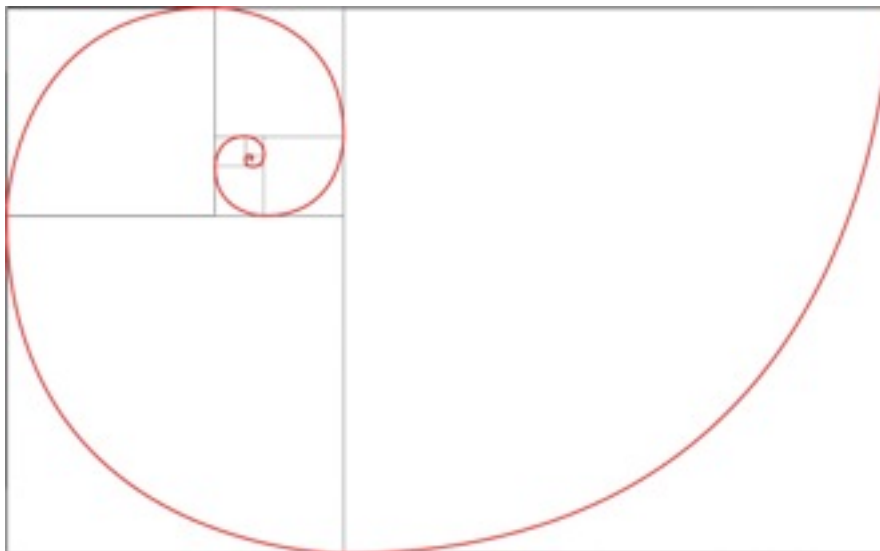
Study under the guidance of artist Rick Amor. (1991).

10.3 Remembering the Golden Section.

The understanding of mathematics is necessary for a sound grasp of ethics.

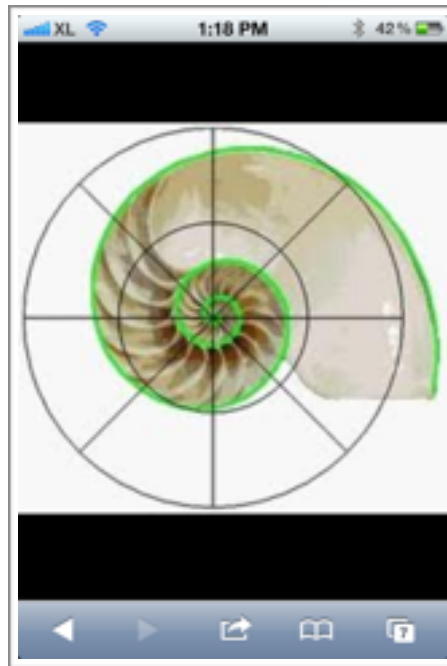
Socrates (469-399 B. C. E)

When I was searching for a template to visually construct 'The Universal Embrace', I intuitively knew what I had to do, which was to utilise the golden rectangle, and the unfurling nature of a fibonacci spiral. In this, phi is visually described resulting from the fibonacci sequence of numbers. In the visual dialogue, the largest square of phi on the right of the design is the present. This relates to the nature of Buddhist philosophy in that the present needs to be considered and lived thoroughly, and not to live in the past or the future and die having not really lived. I designed the golden rectangle unfurling from the top left to the right. This is because in the west we read from left to right, and I wanted intuitively for this narrative to unfold in a direction of moving forward, in an ever evolving way. The unfurling of the fibonacci spiral in 'The Universal Embrace', turns anti-clockwise; for the distinct reason that the shape of the fibonacci spiral might conceptually hold water in its vessel - and water is the symbol of emotion. I wanted the emotion of love and self love to run through the project as a positive affirmation of being a meaningful gift to those that view it and also to contribute to the greater good.



The fibonacci spiral I constructed, with the past being in the top left, unfurling to the largest segment of Phi on the right, representing the present.

To me, the unfurling of that spiral which can be found in rougher proportions in nature such as in nautilus shells and tree fern fronds, was spiritual growth, an unfurling and a progression of ideas, and it resonated with the feelings of patterns in nature I observed as a child.



To me, designed within a rectangle and constricted, it expressed the all and the nothing, the endless beginning and the unfathomable end which was a metaphor for how my life turned out in sometimes surprising ways. Overall it expresses the acceptance of the way my life was and is.

The largest section of phi, the large square on the right of the design, represents the present, which is where the embrace occurs and the heart chakras of the two people meet right in the centre of the matrix, so as to imply in the design that matters of the heart are of the most central importance in life in the present time. The unfurling nature of the smaller divisions represent the unfurling past, back into my narrative history, the genesis of where I am now, whilst still retaining a focus on the present.

10.4 Relationships

Under a divine rectangle the result of phi and fibonacci numbers, ‘The Universal Embrace’ allowed the many manifestations of light and dark in positive and negative emotions, experiences, and relationships. These did not relate only to the visual, but also reflexively, related to the light and dark in my narrative. This enabled an exploration of old wounds and achievements, and scrutinising my own relationships. As it turned out, ‘The Universal Embrace’ was not only a celebration of a relationship and a reconciliation in terms of myself, but it explored the many dimensions of a relationship including stressful times, and joyful times over the duration of the study and previous years. In this way the study surprised me in ways I had not expected.

‘The Universal Embrace’ acts as a microcosm of myself and my partner, but speaking more broadly and in a macrocosmic way, it seeks to describe all manner of spectrums of the miracle of love. Macrocosmically, it focuses on the relationship with the self in the context of others, seeking and resulting in further self actualisation within the process. The macroscopic and the microscopic has been a theme in past work as well.



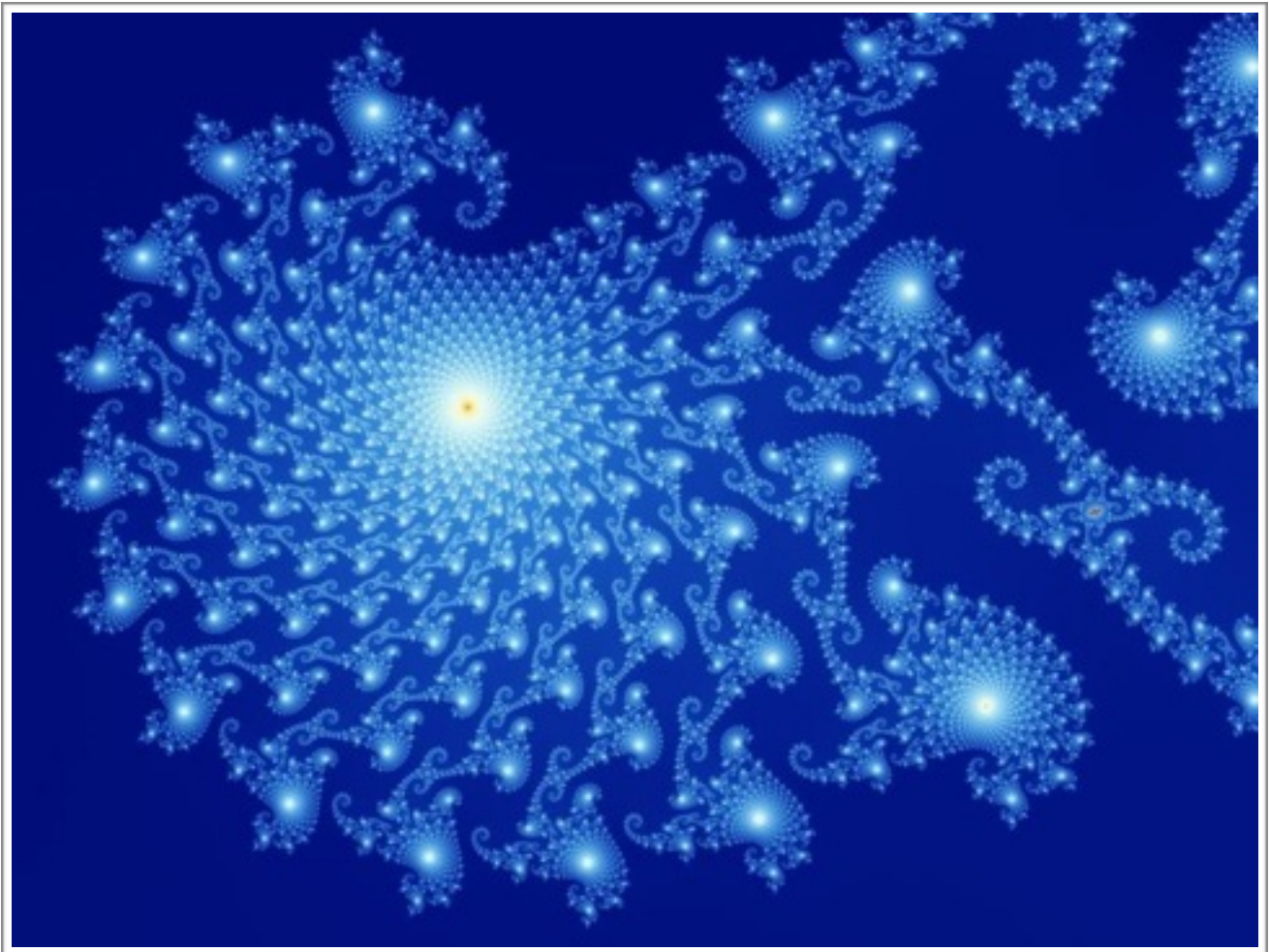
Plato said that 'geometry existed before the creation', and whilst this may have been more in reference to physical reality, I also extend the concept to the broad spectrum of human experience, including emotions and energy transfers, that can somehow manifest under this template of a divine grid or idea. In the final interactive piece of the universal embrace, set to a resonant hum audio background, this can be seen in the construction and deconstruction of the work and its feathered out realities which includes both the seen and the un-seen.

There is something incredibly harmonious about the people, me included, in 'The Universal Embrace'. It happens at a peaceful place of prayer-the local Buddhist centre close to my home, and delights in the seen and unseen dimensions of the event. A relationship is a complicated thing, but the moment of an embrace, even through it was constructed just like 'The Times Square Kiss', served as a starting point to celebrate love and positivity. I would even go so far to say as that it celebrates a victory of self actualisation, for I had never in my art explored being gay as a positive thing, only one marred by discordance and despair. In later years Maslow's heir achy of needs was re-interpreted to add 'transcendence' as a higher level achievement akin to being at peace spiritually. I think in this work I have managed to express that in terms of accepting the self as a creative spiritual gay man and my place in the universe.

Importantly not only resonance and harmony feature visually and philosophically in The Universal Embrace's creative component and narrative but due to lived experience, trauma and imperfections and disharmony feature as well. As sure as this embrace is a loving one the eventual passing of the two people are referenced in the form of the skeletons appearing in the final design. In this way there is not a morbid fascination with death but an acceptance of the reality of the eventual physical parting of the two people from the material world. From this, a perspective of what is important and real is magnified through a lens highlighting the reality of the relationship and the validity of that relationship within society. Death was not morbidly focussed on, but naturally accepted within this study.

The Universal Embrace is a concept that autobiographically described my romantic relationship, and continues to do so through good and hard times. We even broke up for a short while, and I wondered where my study was going. I found it hard to reflect on my work when we were not in a good space within the relationship or when we were apart. It was because of this that I realised the positive and negative dimensions of a relationship must be acknowledged. This rich

multi dimensional quality was something that was possible under the endless possibilities of the philosophy of phi. There is something existentially fascinating about a shape that is whole and never-ending, in that all positive and negative philosophies, entities, energies and emotions exist somewhere within its universality in a metaphorical way. (See figure below, the unity of a Mandelbrot set, which is absolutely complete as a mathematical entity). (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mandel_zoom_12_satellite_spirally_wheel_with_julia_islands.jpg)



I had been avoiding my work because of some problems within our relationship. However under the auspice of the concept of phi, I felt able to confront the fears not only in a self reflexive way, but in a broader sense of the resonance and discordancy not only within myself, but within the relationship. When I realised that both resonant and discordant feelings operate under an auspice of the totality of phi, I managed to re engage with writing my narrative.

Relationships are not always perfect and are always in a state of flux. Throughout the whole Masters study my writing and art was in a state of flux and change with plenty of new surprises. This is the case for relationships with the self and for relationships to others as well. In my work, I was scared to confront the darker and discordant sides of myself and my relationship to my partner. Recently I remembered the quote, 'what would I do if I knew I could not fail?' I made a note of it and I applied it in that moment to this work, especially the kinetic gyroscope and my life goals.

I had been mortified of the end of the relationship when perhaps I should have embraced the changing nature of it, and acknowledged that some things are out of my control and relinquishing that control leads to growth. This was not clear to me but now that I have observed that the entire matrix of phi and creation can envelop both light and dark emotions and situations, I am better able to deal with the changing nature of my relationship, to accept the good and the bad, and get back to work. In the end, my relationship with the auto ethnographic self and with my partner is enduring, even stronger for the reflection and the conflict that lead to growth and more resonant. I also believe I had made a diverse creative artistic statement over the course of this work. I feel physically and somewhat spiritually atoned that if I was hit by a bus this afternoon I would have made a reasonable and positive artistic statement for the world, and lived passionately.

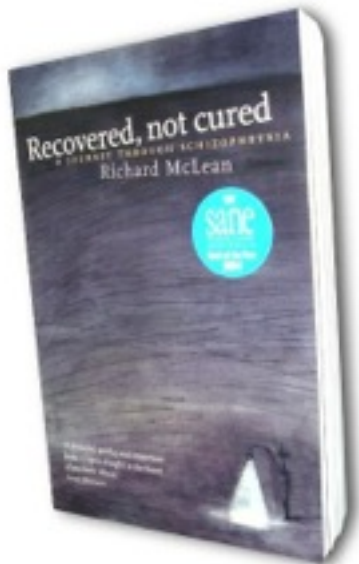
In this study, I narrated a response to my inner child/adolescent from my current perspective as a 40 year old person. Rhizomatically, it ties together the self actualisation throughout a lifetime and also heals the inner adolescent within and reassures that life has worked out. My partner also had to narrate his relationship to his inner child which has caused some uncertainty within the relationship of recent times. In the truest description of the focus on love for The Universal Embrace, it has occurred to me that although the relationship was torn apart, because of our fears and life long wounds from living, even before we had met each other, we have decided to nurture and support our inner selves and create a dialogue where we can share this and grow together, and as individuals. This I think, is partly what 'The Universal Embrace' project is about, personally and reflectively because the narrative is extricably linked to my inner life and auto ethnography.

Phi has a unique number, so too the nature of our fates that we have a singular path as a metaphor of an unwavering mathematical concept. Even if we walk off that path that leads to uncertainty, for certain that uncertainty actually is our

lives path in a fated way. In other words, we appear to have one linear existence and unfolding of life which includes choices that affect the outcome of our lives, and that once self aware we can make choices to direct our life outcomes. Some things however, are beyond our control, and in the middle of this juxtaposition is faith and courage to act cushioning the changing nature of our lives. The essence of love within 'The Universal Embrace' is constant, like the endless energy machines kinetic workings,. Both paths and infinities are also fraught with mistakes and learning.

In terms of my lived experience of living with what is described as schizophrenia, I realise that all types of discordancy can arise on a world where divine lattices, like the Paul Davies 'Mind of God' concept, bear our makeup as physical spiritual and emotional beings. This includes what I now consider my psychosis to be - a drug induced psycho-spiritual-sexual crisis that arose because I did not ever have the support networks to fully realise who I am. William Burroughs once said 'a paranoid schizophrenic is a person who just found out whats going on.' To a degree I concur because when you are acutely sensitive, the discordant and violent and chaotic nature of reality comes rushing to the awareness of the self and the world.

I was also attracted to phi because in my life I have suffered a lot of emotional pain, and indeed a lot of loneliness. This is due to a number of things but a big part of my experience is dealing with schizophrenia/mental illness and psychosexual crisis fuelled by drugs. I was actually seeking a more resonant state. When I met my partner, I think he was the only one who did not judge me on my experience or sufferance of ongoing symptoms and my diagnosis. In this way, when my partner came into my life, my relationship to the word 'schizophrenia' was not an issue, and I think subconsciously this gave me great relief. This is because I had identified with the word so much to help rationalise my experiences and has even published an autobiography, *Recovered, Not Cured, a journey through schizophrenia* (McLean, 2002). Of late, his opinion arose that it is hard to deal with my illness, which is understandable, which upset me and I don't think I have given it much attention because when we met it meant my illness was not an issue, and this had troubled me for many years. It reminded me that although I am contributing to the world as a research student and creative person, that somehow I would have to negate my 'accute sensitivity' into this narrative.



Now, in the dark and light of seeing a full spectrum relationship under the metaphorical auspices of phi, I realise that it is still very hard for my partner to deal with my occasional un-wellness and I can now begin to confront it in a positive way whereby his concerns will be heard. Phi, for me, in the beginning, was like a yearning for a resonant version of sanity, but phi, has turned out after all to be 'all of the above', encompassing both positive and negative experiences.

Likewise he has issues I find hard to deal with, and although this is very difficult for both of us, my partner in the present time is setting the pace for dealing with my inner feelings, conflicts and grievances, and a whole lifetime lived before we met each other. It has inspired me to confront my own issues in regards to healthily resonating and reconciling with my own self - and for this dialogue and life thrown challenge I am extremely grateful, if a little scared. The nature of The Universal Embrace reaches for self reflection and further actualisation through its design, lived experience and narrative.

Sometimes I believe the burden of mental illness manifested in the exact thoroughfare that mimicked schizophrenia for me to be able to write my autobiography, 'Recovered, Not Cured...' like I almost took it on to distract, to heal myself because I was not ready to heal on my own. A spiritual worker whom I now still occasionally see once told me I do not have schizophrenia and I had assumed the role to teach others how to negate getting through it as part of my life's mission, or my 'soul contract'-who's to say? I guess in regards to the notion of a 'soul contract' I feel you choose a life before you manifest in your body for the purpose you have agreed to in order for your soul to grow, and I think many times during that agreed life it is unclear to you why you may have chosen this. I guess it comes down to a matter of faith - which as I said I think is tested throughout a life.

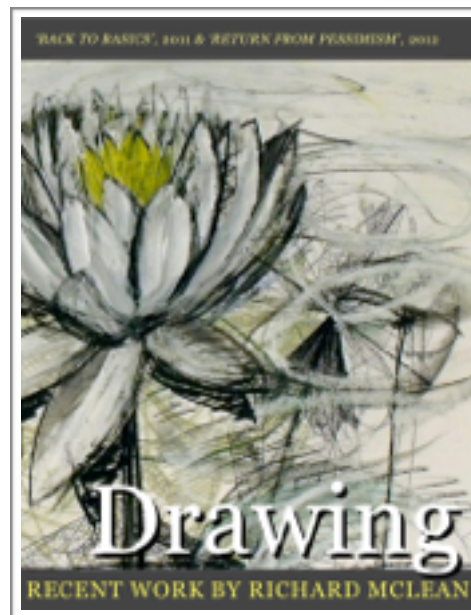
10.5 Creative Outcomes

Just like our and my paths diverted along the way of life and indeed, that path becoming my life and experienced destiny, so too did my creative path stray while completing The Universal Embrace. There are three side projects that

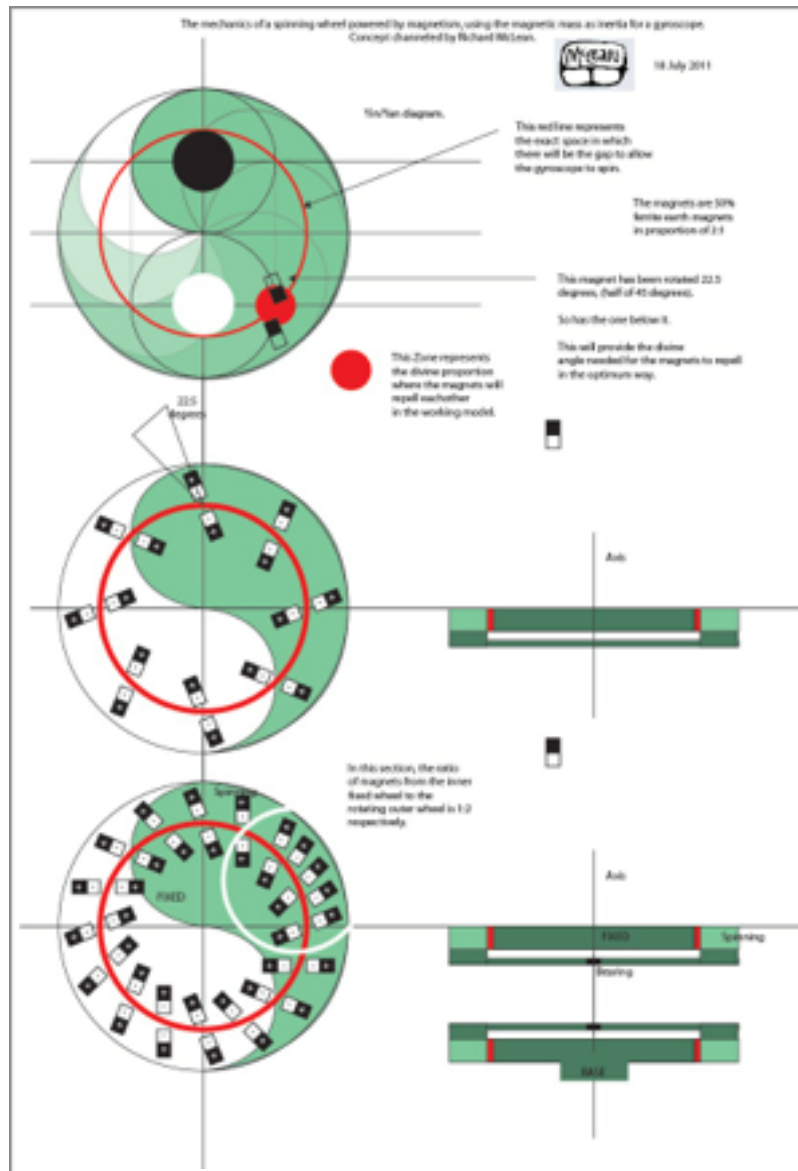
arose from the lived inquiry that arose from the important role of playing. They all related to the resonance of phi and with healing psychologically:

- 1) I put an iBook together and published it on the iBooks store called 'Recent Drawings, towards A/r/tography'.

This book was important because it allowed me to mix traditional media with digital media and to learn more about the world of self publishing. The book also contained some examples of how I have used golden proportions in the past to make work that was executed in traditional formats, yet explained digitally. It also contained an original animated design for a gyroscope that was made from the genesis of forms, a circle, square, and triangle. This schematic diagram of an animated machine was further worked on during my study and became a component of my narrative path as a more refined concept in the kinetic gyroscope animation.



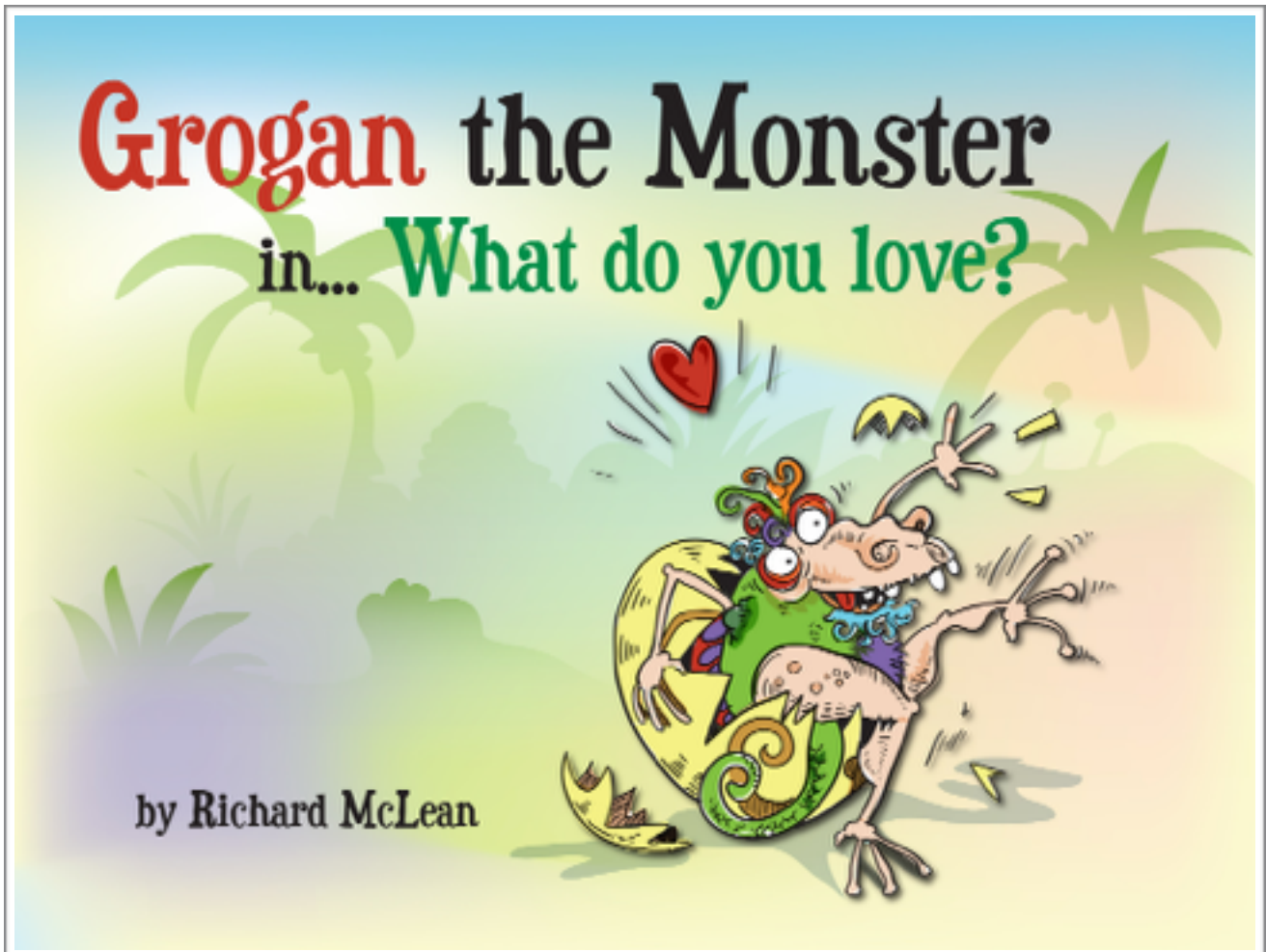
- 2) This design was given another workout when I animated it again and placed it within the context of my study. At the essence of it is honouring the inner adolescent from whence the idea came (more or less), and also thinking positively about not being able to fail-that it would be a success, unlike feedback I was conditioned with from the time. It led me to believe in myself and actually put pen to paper-or Wacom tablet to illustrator and iMovie-and animate it. I delighted in the end result and put a rushed recorded narrative that was recorded over the top to explain how it worked. In this way the dimensions of the pragmatic and the intuitive were beautifully married. Following is an early sketch from 2011 which was a stepping stone in the process of animating the design on



www.theuniversalembrace.com. This idea had been alive for a long time, I am grateful to have had the opportunity to pursue it.

- 3) I had been playing with the idea of publishing a children's book for some time. As a side thought of my Masters study, I started to put together a character I had created called Grogan the Monster, into a book in which he shows gratitude for everything around him. In this way I was exercising gratitude within my life which was very healthy and needed, and at the same time I was delighting in making the illustrations that went into the book. It allowed me to get in touch with my inner child. As it evolved and was finished with a multimedia overlay, I then published it to the iBook store. It all happened about the time I found a letter from myself to my future self when I was about fifteen. I started having memories, good and bad, from when I was a child and adolescent, and I could

imagine the room that I stayed in and the events of days. In that moment, I imagined the book I would like to read, maybe the book my adult self would give to that inner child, and ‘Grogan the Monster in ‘What Do You Love?’ was born. The resonate state of love and gratitude is a feature of this publication.



- 4) The main component of the Universal Embrace which features on www.theuniversalembrace.com. (*Refer in detail to the website*).

I like to think that in the four creative projects described above, that I have worked with imagination and multidimensionality. Indeed, all of the projects look very different, but I like to think that the translation of ideas, how they manifest and what they look like, are a product of passionate imagination!

10.6 The Genesis of Phi

The question does come up of 'where did the attraction to Phi come up'? I have tried to describe that complexity above, yet is also begs the question, where do ideas even arrive from? And where do they go unless you translate them into either art, science or (a combination of) both? As described in *The Universal Embrace*, we live in a complex multi dimensional world that all elements more or less act in congruency with each other. I still think it is of the highest regard to make art, and live life like it is also art. Even higher to make art-and record ideas before they vanish.

What I was really interested in when engaging the concept of Phi was 'the sweet spot' of a cricket bat-the ideal resonant state of things that I believe ended up in the manifestation of reality, as we know it. For I believe that (which is scientifically backed up), that everything is a manifestation of energy, and that energy transposes to every nature of our existence, the energy of our physical bodies and the comings and goings of water through our bodies, the light from this computer screen, and the cosmic ballet of interaction of ideas with people. This perspective lends a lot from Eastern philosophies. Even the kinetic energy machine speaks of the translation of energies, from inherent solar, magnetic and inertia of gravity that translates into electricity. When someone views a 'Grogan the Monster...' book the physical object is translated through words and images into positive gratitude and humour.

Even to go further, as someone experiencing high levels of anxiety and a diagnosis of schizophrenia, I was interested in the mind and how it worked-so in my early reading years I would leap from written work like Paul Davies, and onto the likes of philosophies of psychoanalyst Carl Jung. I marvelled at his theories of synchronicity and archetypes, and related it to the art I had studied. Via following my authentic self through an arts based lived experience narrative, I have found synchronicities and ideas over the length of my life which has culminated in creativity within this study. Even as 'The Universal Embrace' unfolded, I marvelled at how the digitally taken photo of my local buddhist temple fitted so well into the design as it evolved, as if it were 'meant to be'. So too like the bridge in that photo that is a metaphorical link to the present from the past. It symbolised the journey philosophically in terms of the written narrative about my past. Suddenly, every piece of art slipped into a dimension of an archetype, both visually and thematically. My art from five years ago was a cathartic attempt and a method to understanding mind, but this present work of 'The Universal

Embrace' seems to come from a more solid place that is more well balanced in its nature, free from learned negativity and prejudices.



I also pondered on the discordant and the 'sane', in terms of the Jungian quote of 'meaningful coincidence can have spiritual significance'. In a way this quote validates the journey of discovery, that you rise through making art into higher realms of consciousness over time. However that 'meaningful co-incidence, so prevalent in a psychosis and also so destructive, can be less bleak in other times through self healing. One African shaman even went so far as to say that the west treats mental illness as such but shamanic cultures treat mental illness as a spiritual gift in which the society has to nurture in order for the person to self heal and let those gifts of healing for others come through (Marohn, 2014).

10.7 The Golden Mean

In 1996, I completed a piece of art entitled 'The Golden Mean'. Within it, were the taught proportions of how to divide up the picture plane in its just proportions to draw a portrait of a face. Within it however, I imposed a photograph of me pulling a distorted expression. In this drawing, began the dialogue to discuss what was resonant and 'proper', yet somehow under this divine auspice was a contorted face of instability (see above). This early idea preceded my

concepts that came to fruition in The Universal Embrace and reveal again a life long fascination that is only realising its potential with this project.



I felt like I had discovered a blanket ethos I could place over art-and further understand and push my own art to its extremities of understanding. In relation to phi, this old feeling that there is a base, a template, for everything that is and ever was and ever will be-fascinated me. As an avid observer of nature I saw this mechanism in the plants and the world of nature around me as a child.

When I started planning this narrative, I came up with a drawing on which an interactivity would be placed. Because life experience has shown both the dark and light sides of reality and emotion, phi and the golden rectangle was a concept I felt I could work with under that encompassing template, I could construct or design anything at all. Whatever came to be would fit comfortably under that all encompassing auspice, although the all over intention was that of love and good will. In this way, metaphorically, anything was possible to describe in this space. Love, madness, schizophrenia, success, failure, etc. The possibilities to describe both the dark and light of experience and consciousness was necessary and also liberating.

What I chose to describe, is an embrace between two men, which diaristically speaking - was my partner and I. This was a real turn for me. In the many years I have made art, sexuality was suggested, pained over, distorted and feared, yet here at age 40 I feel that a celebration of the narrative of my comfort in this relationship was a good way to keep the project positive and optimistic, and contribute to the well being and greater good of society. I was also being good to myself and I was being good to the world and my relationship with resonance and peace. I also had the opportunity to comfort my inner adolescent through the letter I wrote to my fifteen year old self as a forty year old.

I have had quite a few partners in my life, and the transient nature of relationships for me personally has happened over a number of times. Yet despite how solid I feel in my relationship now, The Universal Embrace focuses on an event-a thing that occurs in a particular environment, in a sliver of time.

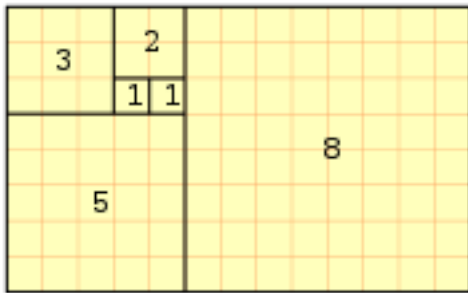
Interestingly though, the focus on this moment visually and philosophically has awakened the feeling of timelessness to all experiences. This sense of timelessness, the soul, was also transferred into the animated Energy Love Machine which appeared as another section of this study, with its endless physical workings, and possible conceptual animation of my own neurosis of the past and possibly the present.

Within this environment, there is a moment, and during the interactivity, different themes are pursued through elements of emotional, physical, spiritual and politicised lenses.

While writing my narrative, I have come across confronting the self, and also re-creating the self. Re-creating the self in terms of A/r/tography has been wonderfully liberating. This is a celebration of life and love, in all its dimensional qualities. It also pushes my past of living with schizophrenia, to a lesser extent, into the past, to a degree lesser considered, which I feel very comfortable with in recreating the present literally and visually.

Even in terms of the Universal Embrace's structure, the genesis of the present is in the past, yet the unfolding past that results in the largest square where the embrace occurs fades into the background, a smaller, but all together necessary component. In a way I am describing life in quite an eastern philosophical way with emphasis on the present, just like life.

10.8 Fibonacci sequence as creation.

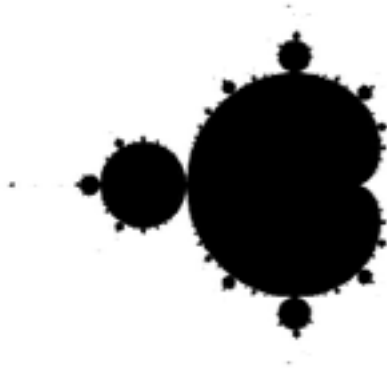


Look at the diagram above about how the fibonacci spiral is formed by the process of the addition of two numbers equals the third number. IE: $1 + 1 = 2$, $2 + 3 = 5$, then $5 + 8 = 13$. I am quite fascinated with this as a metaphor of universal creation because in regard to the genesis of $1+1=2$, then $2+1=3$, it seems an impossibility. '1 + 1', for me signals creation of the universe as a metaphor. I realise the process of adding two previous numbers that equal the next third and so on, but if we look at the genesis of the pattern, it does not seem accurate. For example, a fibonacci sequence from the genesis is: 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89, 144, 233, 377, 610, 987, 1597, 2584, 4181, 6765, 10946, 17711, 28657, 46368, 75025, 121393, 196418, 317811...

However, if we look backwards at the geometric shapes of that square 13 to 8 is the same as 8 to 5, equals 5 to 3, eventuates in 2 to 1, that there is an impossibility 1 is the same to 1 within that sequence. $1 + 1$ therefore, mathematically is a theoretical genesis. Phi now seems under creation an unwavering metaphor for fate.

Therefore, we can express this in numbers, but it does not apply to our golden rectangle graph of squares. In reality, it is a theoretical concept. In this way I think there is within the spiral, an infiniteness of expression, that if you zoomed up on the shape, you would see again and again the finite proportions that exist. So we have two ways of looking at the fibonacci spiral which is in our golden rectangle, 1) which seems not to compute but will describe with numbers in the fibonacci spiral, and 2) which suggests that metaphorically, as with life and living, that there is an endlessness, cyclic or infinity to existence. In regard to 'The Universal Embrace', we can see a dual axis of description much the same, that a moment captured in time is metaphorically endless and connected to everything else, but that the physical beings embracing within a relationship are of a finite existence.

Phi as a concept in this study relates to resonance and in the celebration of love and commitment—a divine energy that has found its essence at this time in my relationship and life. However phi was not always celebrated as a sacred number. In his book ‘The Golden Ratio,’ Mario Livio describes Pythagoras’ school and philosophy as the study of whole numbers and their ratios, and notes that the discovery of the magical number phi was considered a ‘cosmic error’; and was suppressed (Livio, 2008, p. pp 5). So historically what I was attracted to by intuition in current time was interestingly suppressed by whole historical schools of mathematics. My feelings on the concept are indeed very different from that time.



Phi started for me intuitively with a yearning for order and clarity but ended up reconstructing the self through good times and bad, ultimately though, finding that clarity through a process of making art and also through reflexive and reflective writing. Through this I gained knowledge and a greater ethical understanding of the nature of marrying the pragmatic with the esoteric, linking life, art, and experience rhizomatically through the lens of phi both experientially and psychologically. Throughout the a/r/tographical process, I had both made ground in the concept of re-creating the self and existed within the universe instead of reacting to it.

11. SPIRIT

In order to understand the way our brains behave, we can observe our emotions and their effects. In the past, it seemed as though science and spirituality were opposed to each other. However, it's not a useful division to maintain, because the one tradition deals with knowledge of the material world and the other with the inner world of the mind; we need to know about both. -His Holiness the Dalai Lama (Beasley, 2014, p. xiii).

11.1 Rainbow Christ

During this study, I created a political piece of art for an exhibition at Gasworks Arts Park for the queer Mid-summa festival in Melbourne. I wondered if creating the piece 'Rainbow Christ' was dismissive of any ideology or disrespectful to anyone. Looking back at the time just before I created it, I filmed some footage on my phone of a plane, flying over the crucifix of a church and then across a telephone pole. It bears a striking similarity of themes to the work of 'Rainbow Christ', and the moment of reflecting on 'Rainbow Christ', I knew I have expressed myself with absolute truth, worthy of a sacred blessing - of blessing myself. I no longer worried that the work was sacrilegious.



'Rainbow Christ' is a digital alteration of a traditional drawing, metaphorically bringing its concepts into the present. It speaks of Christ's love for all, and the opposite positions of the institution of the church and its often judgemental nature of the GLBTI community.'

It also appeared in Alex Grey's latest journal of community visionary culture (Alex Grey, 2014, p. pp 179).

"If you want to understand the universe, think of energy, frequency, and vibration." –Nikola Tesla

11.2 A prayer.

In the manner of finding notes written to myself during my life, I am just about to relate a prayer I wrote to myself before I met Steve in 2010, as a doorway into discussing the difficult research and reflections on the chapter of 'Spirit'.

I bless myself.

Leave the Ego behind, a prayer to spirit.

I have emotions; yet I am not the sum of those emotions.

I have shared creations, yet they remain a record of the time-I am not only those creations.

I have a body, but I am greater than my physical body suggests.

I have an illness, and I suffer, but I would not trade the pain for what I've learnt.

I have fears, but I am not those fears.

I have some money, but that money does not make me.

I will pass over, and I accept this.

I have an ego and identity, 'Richard William McLean', but the ego is corruptible and to be dis-assembled.

I ask for spiritual, physical, and emotional protection for myself and those I love and touch every day and give thanks everyday.

I am kind, and give thanks to something greater than myself for that kindness.

I have kinks in my armour, and accept faith to amend them.

I am sorry. As my toe touches the ground and the earth be my witness, and the reply is, you are forgiven.

I love you, and the reply is: 'You are loved!'

I am lots of things, but no section or element of them is me.

I bless myself.

Thank you.

I am.

11.3 Remembering Wez, confronting death.

During this study, my best friend Wez passed over. Although it was vaguely expected it was still a shock. I had known him since grade one when we were six or seven, and remember the day I met him, introduced by another childhood friend. His name was Wez, 'Wez with a 'Z!'' as he used to joke later in high school, and there is a part dedication to him for this project, the rest to my dear old Nana, whom I feel is close, and always believed in me. She



joked she would 'tap me on the shoulder' when this work had finished. The first drawing of the visual reference material on www.theuniversalembrace.com website was a picture of myself holding a small figure which explored seen and unseen energies. It was intuitively drawn in the hour of my Nana's passing, and I felt like I was there for her although I was a long distance away. It feels like a sacred image to me of special significance.

It has been just over a year since Wez passed over. At the time of this writing, and all that time and for the time before, I had kept some big block/shards of glass out the front of our house that he had given me; he thought I

might like these big pieces of blue glass. I did, and put an intention in them to protect the house, and also to remember him by. They are worthless, but beautiful. It is also a strong reminder of the generous and kind person he was in many ways, and I rejoice in remembering him laughing, and the good times we had.

I had gone to my psychologist one particular morning to discuss my own issues and those associated with my partner Steve. Therapy can be challenging, and issues were brought up that seemed to drain me; complex issues I was trying my best to get some traction on. It was hard work. On my way there, I had spied a sign for 'healing sessions' at a crystal shop. I would have preferred to go there on this particular day. After my psychology session, I got a parking ticket to my disgust for being a couple of minutes late, and having the fine anyway for parking too long. I walked instead to the healer, made an appointment, then waited a while before we started.

I think I needed a less pragmatic way than psychology of looking at things, trust in the universe of some spiritual alignment, and elected to offer to accept the healing from a man named Michelle, for my highest good and greatest joy. This was my affirmation and intention for the session before I went in - a way of asking the highest loving divinity for protection. I often rejoice in the mystery of life, and often take comfort in places where I can be challenged and feel I am led to sound counsel.

The healer and I did some reiki where I felt definite tensions in my body moving and stretching. Then we talked for about an hour, and we covered a lot of ground. In the conversation, specific to Wez, I had mentioned his passing and wondered if he was in a good place. There was no funeral, and I had organised a wake for his friends and some of his family. I said a few words about being grateful for the time we had with Wez, then sat down. It started to thunder and rain, and at the time I briefly wondered if he might be angry or upset in my grief.

About two years before, Wez confided in me that his doctor said that he would probably die within the foreseeable future. I had tried everything to get him off alcohol, I took him out dancing and partying, I bought him clothes, and I tried to bribe him with a holiday to Bali or buy him a motorbike if he would just cut down his alcohol use. To no avail. Wez always had at his essence an inner joy, and was a positive and loving man, but the demons of mental illness and alcoholism took him in the end. He also suffered from mental health issues with a diagnosis of

schizophrenia, which we both thought was very co-incidental. We both provided each other with great help and support in times of discordancy.

In those days, we talked about dying. I had spoken to my previous psychologist about my worries, and he suggested I prepare for his parting. It spooked me and I was sad. I did not want to hear it. So I used to put on a brave face and try gently to bring it up with him from time to time.

So Wez and I would talk. He wanted nothing to do with my spirituality, and did not entertain the idea of a heaven or afterlife. 'When you are dead you're just dust and bones!' Wez would bluntly say. I repeatedly and always gently rebutted: 'Never say never, Wez!' in the hope that a spiritual awakening might assist his condition, recovery and wellness.

I am with Michelle and I am talking about Wez. 'I wonder if he is in a good place?' I wondered out loud. 'Let's ask him, he's here!', exclaimed Michelle.

I was surprised. 'Heaven is a pretty good place!', said Michelle, as if speaking Wez's words and a little in his tone. I was so relieved, but I was a little dubious to accept this as a channeling, or indeed that Wez was present. It did not seem totally unreasonable though in that moment. Just as I am writing this a song Wez used to sing to me with the words 'I'll stand by you!', has just come on my music player. As Jung says, meaningful coincidence has spiritual significance; it seems he is here with me now.

Michelle moved back and forward from the narrative of Wez to his narrative healing, in which he said even people who do bad things get to heaven, even as bad as Wez or anyone else. He said we all do bad things. I wondered what that would be, I knew Wez as a giving and gentle man. I forget how things happened next, but I felt I wanted to ask Wez a direct question.

‘Ask him what he thinks now of when you die you are just dust and bones’, I asked Michelle. This was a way of my pragmatic mind testing to see what would be the result. I was not fully letting go into the experience. The rational servant was taking over, and not the intuitive gift.

‘He says ‘Never say never’’, said Michelle. I smiled, because that’s what I used to say to him, ‘Never say never, Wez!’ Upon reflection later, it made me happy. It was sound counsel and I remember that day a lot clearer than any of the many sessions I have had with psychology and psychiatry.

It is interesting how memory works like that. Sometimes, I have had profound experiences that I can remember clearly, situations, places, smells. In the rigmarole of day to day life however, a lot is lost. When you have an experience that’s meaningful or profound, or even feels like an epiphany, you remember it for a long time. I think that experience of the release of worry about Wez was one of those times.

Later we were still talking and I had asked the best ways to protect myself spiritually, and general questions relating to life and spiritual matters. ‘So, don’t forget to ask the archangels for protection at night?’ I remind myself out loud. ‘‘And don’t forget about me!’’, your friend says’’ said Michelle, quoting Wez.

‘I won’t forget about you Wez!’ , I replied aloud. ‘We’ll dance again one day’ , said Wez. And I felt content.

11.4 Invisible narratives.

This narrative opens up a dialogue of sorts that mimics The Universal Embrace visually by ‘seeing the unseen’, or letting us ‘read between the lines’. In the words above, the relationally between physical and passed people is expressed. Carly Stasko said in her ‘Re-volutionary healing’, that a work must start with a challenge, then courage, then play, then love (Beattie, 2009, p. pp 114) . In terms of creating meaning, the experience above was an example of a pivotal moment in which I place myself and everyone in the context of mortality.

11.5 The Universal Embrace.

‘Universal’ applies to all peoples, energetic and sentient beings, living, past and future, and underlines the commonness, the reconciliation with the self and the resonance with the macroscopic creator and the microscopic God-self.

Originally, I came up with the terms, ‘Phi, Spirit and Society’ as themes for the narratives in this exegesis because in them I could existentially explore pragmatic and also complex themes, yet also the bigger 'meaning of life' questions, and reflection. I was also interested to construct an idea where I could explore the complexity of two people embracing, in particular to celebrate my sexuality of being a gay man much like the artist William Yang has done in his creative narrative (Feneley, 1998). It has helped me shape the process, to draw together art and science and in the same way, provide a way of defining and understanding relationships. In particular the number of relationships I was considering evolved like a trinity of the circle square and triangle, in that they were the relationship with the self, the relationship to others, and the relationship to broader society and the universe.

In a way, phi is a totally unique number that has been calculated to about 20 billion decimal points thus far. It has an endless yet paradoxically finite philosophical uniqueness. I think that is a great metaphor for life and its experiences.

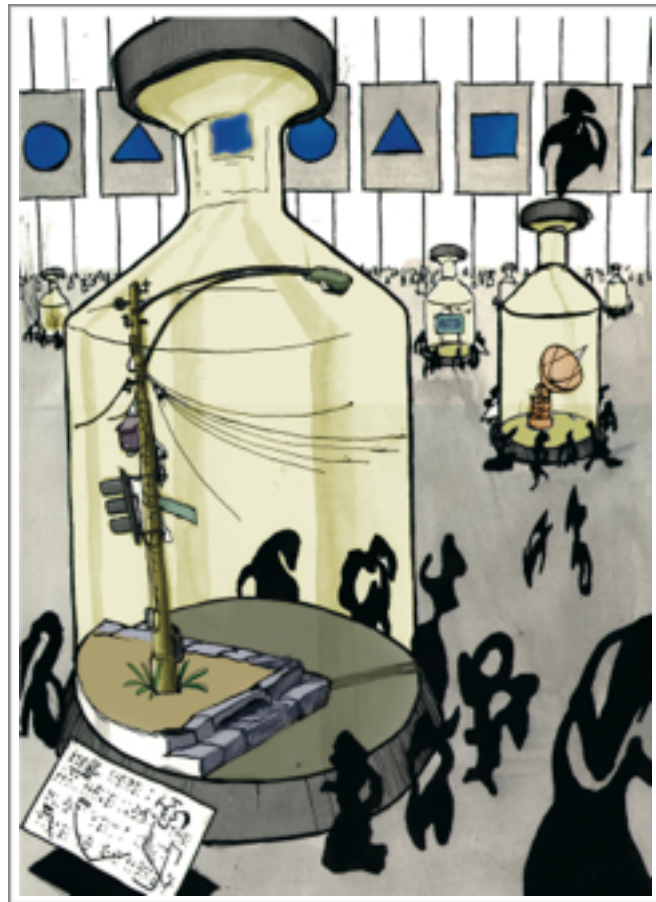
It is also a fitting metaphor for how the mind, and its choices and education can evolve over time, always unique, always changing with more information and experiences. I think it is also necessary to articulate, or at least I subscribe to a belief that I am a subset of something greater than myself. It is the macroscopic and microscopic. I am a part of everything and everything is a part of me. In this way the self is related to another in the universal embrace, in that we all belong, in some way, to the same thing and to one another.

In a society this is a way of communicating and having some order, peace, meaning and contentment. Mary Beattie in her book 'The Quest for Meaning' refers to Dewey's interpretation of education, as the 'reconstruction of experience' (Beattie, 2009 pp 29), a process by which 'The Universal Embrace' has been written both in a constructivist way visually and through narrative, especially in my re-written dialogue to my inner adolescent.

In a biological sense, direct communication and order or disorder exist within the biological family, the relationship to our mothers and fathers, grandparents and siblings. In broader life, friends and acquaintances also become sisters and brothers, mentors and parental figures in life. In a way, Jungian archetypes resonate with familiar orders of our feelings of a masculine god, or a mother earth, a virgin saint or a chosen one, and these can exist across all family, religion, our place, and our acquaintances and friendships. I am aware that as an artist I have a strong sense of existentialism. All of these rhizomatic relations have and can create meaning in our lives. In a way my relationship with my partner and his relationship to my person have changed us both from being quite reckless and discordant to one that bears more harmony and responsibility.

It is my feeling we all choose our path before we come here, manifesting on earth in human form. Importantly, we must all consider ourselves relative to the time we live and the technologies available to us to help understand the world. A civilisation far in the future may study our technology as a point of interest in which technological singularity might exist.

The following drawing was from when I was nineteen. In it, beings have liberated themselves from space/time by understanding the building blocks - the circle, square, triangle of all things - and the genesis of all forms. They hang around the anthropomorphic telephone pole, which is autobiographical in nature. Looking back, I feel there were negative entities surrounding me at the time.



11.6 Death Meets Science and Singularity?

Technological singularity is a concept put forward by some futurists that describe a time when artificial intelligence eclipses and passes human intelligence. In theory once an intelligent machine is capable of replicating itself to even more intelligent dimensions, it is anticipated as the 'event horizon' beyond which humanity's relationship to the world and machines becomes unknown and unforeseeable (Carvalko, 2012). This theory provides an interesting perception on death in the context of a possibly immortal science.

Death is a mystery informed by religious belief and myth and inescapable to all. To consider another way of justifying 'spirituality' is that we could all be an experiment or game on someone's computer billions of years into the future, that could also potentially be a rational possibility. The potential age of technological singularity is nigh and a new renaissance of looking at life may be in order.

I am becoming more interested in the way science is meeting human reproduction, about how we can use eugenics to make a version of people that is reasonably 'better' in some shape or form, or selecting better attributes in terms of eliminating disease, but also in terms of what people *think* we should be like. I consider this to be very dangerous and rich with ethical concerns (Buchanan, 2007). In another dimensional look at the eugenics of the genome which this article addresses, how might we attach that principle to our thoughts and actions in general throughout life? Perhaps the best quote I remember that relates to this is:

"Your beliefs become your thoughts,

Your thoughts become your words,

Your words become your actions,

Your actions become your habits,

Your habits become your values,

Your values become your destiny."

Mahatma Gandhi

Following that phrase, what initial beliefs about beauty or aesthetics in the creation of people might a current humanity propose?

My feeling, my esoteric self or my spirituality to me in this way is highlighted, revered and celebrated, for science and the human ego might create something quite corrupt. For even in terms of technological singularity, whereby machines may make decisions with eugenics, there can be no consciousness or soul in the machine, lest science is yet to discover the soul. Indeed science and the soul may not be as separate as we intuitively think given new quantum theories. Even in recent research, quantum physicists have suggested a multiverse, in which there are endless universes which may be slightly different, bringing to light that our experience of reality is influenced by our thoughts and mindfulness. Even, quantum theorists have suggested the first ‘proof’ of the soul existing in another universe after passing over. Dr. Robert Lanza’s book “Biocentrism: How Life and Consciousness Are the Keys to Understanding the Nature of the Universe“ suggests that the soul can exist beyond physical death (<http://www.spiritscienceandmetaphysics.com>, 2014). It references eastern cultural philosophies about energy being recycled and reborn. It may even be a part of the new renaissance that science discovers the soul.

What I consider the ego though, and indeed the essence of the human condition, is corruptible, and what we desire in terms of manipulating how people are or can be is both fascinating and frightening to think about. All one has to do is look at the content of and the way we manipulate the media now and how we design our clothes and fashions of the moment, ever changing and ever chopping, dying, tanning, getting surgery and false teeth, to imagine how the mind might construct another being. We are flawed with vanity in the most vainly deluded of ways.

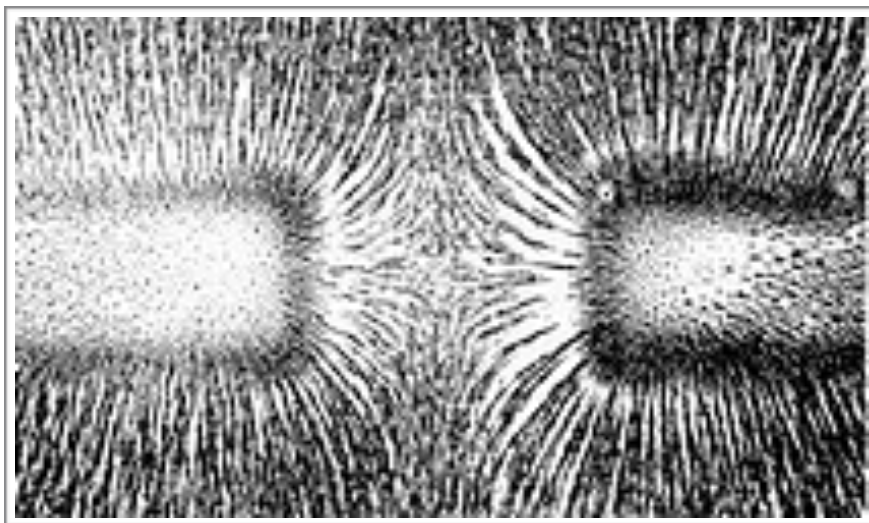
Vanity is such an ugly thing I have always thought, and although I myself have been vain in my experiences in life, I still have a distaste for it. If I had the chance to nominate a person or political paradigm, ideology or entity to make the next human by design, whom might it be? A scientist, skeptic, or spiritualist? An atheist, agnostic, or believer? It

is a fitting question because we are starting to understand the genome and be able to manipulate it with finesse, even possibly by autonomous intelligence.

Following on from the concept of spirit in the context of intelligent machines, I am also fascinated about how ‘spirituality’, or indeed the spirit, which I will further define later, relates to the idea of the technological singularity. That is the point where humans have created a machine that has greater capabilities of the human brain and can reproduce itself, might manifest in our lifetimes. My feeling is that has already happened and it is reverse engineering itself into human consciousness anyway, in a manner which the future evolves with the present. At the moment of technological singularity, some futurists suggest that, humans will become obsolete, and the projection of humanity will be changed forever (Carvalko, 2012). Indeed the first machine we make that can reproduce smarter machines than itself will theoretically be the last machine we make. Beyond that is the theorised tipping point of the ‘event horizon’, much like a black hole where even light cannot escape, beyond which is unfathomable. There has been speculation of whether this ‘point of no return’, much like the event horizon, or singularity of a black hole, is going to be a positive or negative thing (Grossman, 2011).

Think of it in terms of automated drone strikes that are happening now and what consequences that has for the killing of people by machines that can make autonomous decisions? The technological singularity may be closer than we think, and the implication of computers making autonomous decisions, the incredible amount of data and personal data in the world is frightening for individuals, and I think this unravelling reality needs a further look. This narrative is written in a time when if you update a friends photo to Facebook, the person by virtue of data matching and face recognition will nominate the person to be tagged. Facebook can also automatically trace websites you visit and things you ‘like’ and share to inform advertising on your profile. It is also written in a time when I can actually ask my phone vocally, ‘What is the technological singularity’, and SIRI - the helper on iPhones, will answer my question. ‘She’ also tells me that she can learn. One thing is for certain-that intelligent machines will certainly be androgynous despite the outward appearance.

What we can be sure of though I think, is that there will be no ‘ghost in the machine’, that the intelligent supercomputer will have no soul, no spirit, it will exist under man-made law, and not spirit law, lest science discover the soul. This is the defining difference from where I intuitively used the terms ‘phi, spirit, and society’ in this study. It is leading somewhere. Maths, binary code, in opposition and or assimilation with the concept of the soul. In my work with this Masters study, I have explored psychologically the relationship with the self, to another and the broader world and universe via an arts based pedagogy of writing, reflection and art. The animated schematic digram of The Love Machine operates endlessly like love and the contrast of such an emotionally dormant perpetual machine is stark against the nature of human love. It draws contrast with the endlessness and I think incorruptible nature of the spirit. I may go so far as to even suggest that from the time the idea came, that I considered male to male romantic love - to be impossible. In this way the negative repelling of the kinetic sculpture that makes it work metaphorically is represented from my ideas of sexuality at that time. ([http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Magnetic field of bar magnets repelling.png](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Magnetic_field_of_bar_magnets_repelling.png))



In 1996 when I first studied computer animated art and design, I illustrated the notion of a biological looking ant whose antennae were communicating with a ‘man made’ ant that had the appearance of a computer chip, with a barcode and copyright symbol on its back. The legs that protrude into the motherboard were its legs. In this way, with the concepts of copyrighting technological advances in crop production, and patenting medications, the ant illustration was a foreboding of what was to come. Even now Harvard University is piloting a program which may, in www.theuniversalembrace.com

the shadow of world bee pollinating populations dying, the possibility of armies of flying ‘RoboBees’ that will save the human species by artificially pollinating crops (<http://robobees.seas.harvard.edu>, 2014). Albert Einstein said if there were no bees the human race would die within two years. This brings a feeling of environmental crisis and catastrophe, and that technology could clearly save or destroy the human race. In this potential cataclysmic context, the possibility of machine or artificial intelligence inspired intelligence and existence in an unsustainable world is brought to the fore.

In essence, my experiences of synchronicity and consciousness, the dark and the light, the construction and deconstruction of thought, life and wellness have led me to have a belief in things spiritual-but how might we define that? That will evolve and form later in this piece of narrative writing. It will also relate intrinsically back to the concept of ‘The Universal Embrace’.

11.7 Meaning and re-creating the self

Carl Jung says that man cannot bear a meaningless existence. We need to find meaning in the lives that we lead. There are all sorts of themes that every person goes through: love, sadness, meaningful co-incidences, (Jungian synchronicity), de ja vu, exposure to different religions, and maybe you as a person has subscribed to a religion, or been born into one by default. I was never one of those people. My family was not church go-ers or the like. I had the opportunity to explore the world on my own terms without the influence greatly from family. Religion does not guarantee meaning, yet in the lack of it in my life I still have struggled and struggle to find meaning sometimes. I am really beginning to understand the meaning of Stasko’s concept of Revolutionary healing that *re-creates* the self though this study. That is the steps of: challenge, courage, playing and finally Love. This Masters research has taught me to reflect more, to consider my past and the role my art plays, philosophical questions such as where do ideas come from, and other complex issues. It has made me a more astute observer of technology and humanity and of the correlations and contrasts between the two. It has also allowed greater self acceptance than I have ever had in my life, of letting go, and letting things lay as they are whilst still finding that I am meaningfully contributing, and that I

have already contributed so much to society; it brings more meaning, to my life and my relationship with the self, others and society and indeed the universe at large. In terms of A/r/tography I believe this dialogue is art, research and teaching.

If I had to describe myself within a religious context, I would most poetically and simply aspire to Buddhism. The Dalai Lama has said ‘don’t use Buddhism to become a Buddhist, use it to better the person you already are.’ I subscribe to this notion whilst enriching my ideas of the universe and life by reading a lot. I borrow wisdom and inspiration from many people's ideologies and sources, including nature. I also intuitively illustrate my intuitive ideas

for personal reflection and growth into my art, such as the following titled ‘*The State of things right now*’ describing a metaphorical visualisation of reincarnation and energies:



(Left: ‘*The state of things right now*’ (2010)).

For me, as a spiritualist, and someone whom has what would be described as metaphysical experiences, I consider the ego can transcend physical death. I consider the personality of a person transcends death. This is because of my subjective experiences of out of body experiences, revealing to me a subtle body outside of the physical body, and also by examples such as the two following. These examples that have happened recently, I describe them hesitantly so, as I see the events as very special, yet I don't want any dimensions of my own ego claiming miracle powers, so the following is said with a pinch of salt. I only say this because these spiritual experiences are very sacred to me and sometimes to others and I do not want to use my ego-identity to take away from their significance.

A few months ago, I was talking to a friend who was explaining her complex family. She mentioned she had a brother who she did not make amends with while he was alive. I am a person who seems to receive messages from the ego/personality after death from people who have passed that relates to the person I am talking to. I cannot control when these feelings or 'knowings' happen, so do not ask for a lotto ticket number! (That's not how I perceive spirit works, spirit works for the highest good of all excluding any physical or monetary worldly desire or egotistical idea).

Immediately I got the feeling of letters, as I most always do when this chance event occurs. (As I said I cannot do it or perform it on cue). I asked my friend if there was an 'A' and an 'R' in her brother's name, as I was getting these letters through quite strongly. To my mild surprise, she proclaimed her brother's name was 'Ari'.

There was a dialogue, and somehow, the mediumship I was channeling helped the situation, and balanced out the misunderstanding of the grievances between the living person, and the deceased. It is not my doing however. I consider it to be universal in experience. I had not done anything, it just seems I am 'the weakest link' when someone who has passed wants to contact the person I am speaking to. It is not my desire to bring these things up, but a process by which the interconnectedness of all of us, past and present, alive or passed over, is implied. We are a part of, not reacting to, the universe. The identity of Richard is not a gift - the universe is a gift and it is usually the person I am communicating with in front of me's question that they need some healing.

When this happens, words, letters, and sometimes names come to me. I cannot control it and I propose that it is not me who is doing anything-I am just the messenger. In fact, it is the person who I am talking to in real life that needs the reconciliation. I just seem to be the 'weakest link' for ego/person identities on the other side seeking a connection from what we call death. This is my experience that justifies a belief in spirituality.

In any case I cannot explain it and dare not claim any majestic gifts as I do not understand how it all works. I just do the best I can in the most compassionate way with the people with whom I touch and talk to. For this I take guidance of the qualities of compassion and kindness expressed by all religions. For Christ was not a Christian, Mohammed was not Islamic, and Buddha was not a Buddhist, their language and message from what I can gather and am told is one of Love.

Then a few weeks later another event occurred. I had a meeting with my supervisor. I am not sure how he will react when he sees this dialogue that happened within my narrative, but we had discussed how part of the narrative was not only mine, but the fortnightly conversations I have had with our meetings. This is a poignant story because he is an atheist. A number of times we had all wished we recorded our conversations because some solid ideas about narrative and my study have been realised between us.

As my supervisor and I were talking, the name 'Katherine' came into my head. We were in deep philosophical discussion yet I could not concentrate. My mind wandered off and I was not focussing on what he was saying. I tried to redirect my intent to the conversation, yet I was being distracted. It was quite clear. It was a name. Katherine. I did not want to take the risk of saying something so random however, and I interrupted the conversation with him to ask a strange question: 'Is there anyone in your family starting with the letter 'K'?

He looks quizzical and then answered, yes, but not here. 'They are not far away!' I reassured. And for me, they were not. Near the end of our meeting, after talking some more, I was so sure of the name I asked 'Is it Katherine?' 'Yes,

Katherine with a 'K', he offered. I was pleased. The tensions between this dialogue spiritually were being resolved, felt like my work was done.

In the next few weeks this was left unspoken. I was going to leave it but in the interests of his opinion and my feelings of the event I brought it up with him again. How might I pick the name of his dear mother, whom is so proud, out of the myriad of names, first go?

We had a lively discussion on intuition and his projection of the assumption that the brains intuition travels at the speed of light, and that's how it might be explained. He offered that it was just a process by which science was yet to discover. I was open to the idea-but I felt what I felt. He reiterated how it may *seem* to be of spiritual significance but it is just a science we do not understand yet. This is probably a key question in your discussions about Spirit, likewise the point earlier about eastern religions and technology and the processes of re-creation I felt, in my capacity as a messenger I had related the right information, and decided to leave it at that. And that's what I will do in this narrative about that event.

These experiences do in some way to explain my feelings and position in relation to the word *spirit* in terms of the intuitive title Phi, *Spirit* and Society. It may as well be the analogous words of science, soul, and the world.

11.8 Spirits in the material world

The Dalai Lama, whom I consider a very wise and enlightened being, has said that he needs no temples for his religion, that his real religion is kindness. It's interesting to note how I subscribe to this even though throughout my life, I have come across burdens and hurdles that would stop me from being kind to the most important person of all-myself. I must say I'm getting better at that though, and it really has been Steve whom has helped facilitate that. This is partly why I wanted to celebrate the union of our friendship, partnership, and camaraderie in 'The Universal

Embrace'. It is about kindness to self, kindness to others, and has an implied message of equality for people of all faiths and sexualities, contrasting with at least Australia's woeful stance of marriage equality.

One little practice of mine and because I like to express gratitude to let the 'good' and the prosperous in, I often light a candle at home at night at the end of the day. Sometimes I like to think mindfully of all the people I appreciate and love and touch, and thank and bless them in my mind. It's a sure way of falling asleep, and makes you feel good.

This is part of the essence of spirit for me-gratitude and kindness and is another deciding quality of definition in terms of my expression of a union in The Universal Embrace. After many years of not having the opportunity to express my sexuality, or indeed, being in a state of denial about it in teen years and in my early 20's, this is a clear celebration of love Steve and I have for each-other captured in one moment.

Just before I met Steve, I had stopped drinking, exercised every day, spent some valuable time by myself and considered where I was and what I was doing wrong that I was not happy. At this time, I knew I had to start making art again. I sat down at what was in front of me and drew this: *Apart with Faith*. (2010).



I ended up drawing the piece I later titled 'Apart with Faith', and this was clearly an image of hope that in the anthropomorphic chairs, that someone, an unknown someone, would be by my side. Well, that is how I interpret it in retrospect. My intuition seems to always make sense in hindsight. In the background of the drawing, you can see my salt lamp. A salt lamp, by way of esoteric connotations, is supposed to release ions into the air, that neutralize any static and other unnatural impurities in the house. The focus therefore, was the spiritual totem, the *faith*. The chairs anthropomorphically represented the coupling about to transpire. I drew the result whilst I was dating Steve, and this was the result:



Company, (2010).

In this way I like to think the faith in the esoteric drew Steve to me, or each-other. I'm a believer in mindfulness, and that what you put out, you receive in return. I believe that you have to experience a lot before you can make some keen observations about the world, that your thoughts and morals and even your prejudices, are ever changing and evolving, and with good intent, to a better place and to more contentment.

I'm a big believer in my saying 'I love to love, hate to hate!' Of course, this is not a very good example in the context of me often giving fantastic advice to other people, but not taking my own advice!

I believe we all have a natural spiritual intelligence that even goes down to the atomic scale. Paul Davies wrote about the 'Mind of God' in terms of patterns and physics, and how matter becomes more complicated through time to a grand design (Davies, 1992). Plato said that 'the geometry existed before creation'. This is of course, because every physicality occurs under the auspice of science/physics in theory. This does not in my opinion, exclude spirit.

To the contrary though, if you look at atomic structure, 99.999999999999 of all matter is empty-not air, because air IS something, but actually empty. So we must concede that through our knowledge of science our bodies and our thoughts exist in an energetic manifestation that keeps us falling through the chair we are sitting on!

Einstein also mentioned: 'So far as the theories of mathematics are about reality, they are not certain; so far as they are certain, they are not about reality.' The type of dichotomies are the substance of the school of the university of life. Such opposite notions and uncertainty at the same time say that rhizomatic relationality is the key sweet spot of the outcomes of this dialogue, and constructed and deconstructed in the pixel based technological vehicle of 'The Universal Embrace'.

There is another idea that I would like to mention here, that is that time is the one thing that stops everything happening at once! It really is food for thought, everything in an instant, the different dimensional qualities of existence and the tensions between choice and fate.

Through my work and creativity as described in this project, I think it looks like there is a fated-ness, sometimes, even a prophetic quality to some work as if when you are being creative you can access the divine. In my opinion I think this is true of art made out of suffering and trauma and also love and joy. The thing that makes this type of spiritual art important is that it is merely a 'record of the time', and that if the physical manifestation of that is kept or stored, such as a letter or piece of art in a time capsule, a dialogue can be made with it from the future.

Being digital art, as long as there is a vehicle to express web pages, my work will be available for all with access to the internet to see. In this way there is kind of a digital record of my processes which does not die, unlike the mortal shell that is my body.

Its a funny thing, even in my many adolescent adventures with my oldest friend Wez, who has now passed over, I used to say 'TIME IS AN ILLUSION!', with great gusto. I remember he used to mock me about it in a joking way- and that in future he would become so hopeless, perplexed and listless with his situation, that he would tell me: "There is nothing but dust and bones when you die!" You could feel an energetic and stubborn wall when you tried to talk otherwise, but Wez was a very enlightened man, knew me well and spoke in sound counsel. I had the feeling that there was a blockage with Wez, and that he suppressed his spiritual intelligence. I could see it and feel it, but he would not acknowledge it. To this we were very connected and I am so grateful for having him in my life for the time I did (34 years).

The night he passed away, which I didn't know about, I was awake in the lounge. I suddenly got the feeling someone could be beside me. I reached out a hand and held theirs. I corrected myself, thinking it was silly. Then, when the feeling was there, and not knowing whom it was, I reached my hand out again and clasped my other hand over theirs.

The next day, my parents came over and told me the bad news that he had passed. Upon reflecting, even if it is to satisfy my own goodbye to Wez, it made sense that he would say goodbye. I can not seem to rationalize it any other way, and for the potential grief I could have amassed - it was not so bad. Wez would not want me to go through life mourning for too long, and that spiritual experience made it all the easier to grieve and let go. I still miss him, but I feel he is learning what he needed to, which comes at different times in different lives in different ways to all people.

In terms of the universal embrace, we learn, we challenge, we grow, we *belong* to one another in many ways.



12. SOCIETY

12.1 A narrative third person account - the self in society.

Overall you like yourself in the context of your society and believe yourself to be a kind and spiritual man who gives and offers a lot to the world. With this aspect, you are content.

The aspect you are not so content about however, is the face that you need to show to seek approval or encouragement from outside sources-you would rather under-sell yourself than over-sell yourself. Humility in your opinion is better than arrogance. You are afraid to be proud of what you have achieved sometimes. Indeed Steve, your partner of nearly five years says that you will never be satisfied. He jokes you will die of worry, whilst still being half serious.

What would it be like to negate all fear of criticism? said your life coach. "Well, it is something I would have to work on". You had a blockage on writing about 'Society' for the purpose of this Masters study. The way to go forward, you seemed to solve while you were speaking on the phone to her in your own words, was to write that you are vulnerable, write that you are scared of being grandiose, write you are scared of being symptomatic, and once you write those things down, you will be able to create a space in which you will be able to make some traction in terms of 'The Universal Embrace', and getting some traction with your writing!' Writing about negative experiences for a narrative audience gives rise to resonance with an audience and the alchemy to change and be mindful of them so you can turn them into positive ones.

Maybe the fear of being criticised, the feeling of 'not being good enough', a silent and almost sub-conscious self stigmatic script, is what drives you and your creativity to some degree, maybe in part it is why you have invented a free energy machine that appears to mimic the psychology of endless worry, wasted endlessness and neurosis? On the

flip side is the endlessness of love. Even now you are afraid to put the idea of the magnet machine forward because you have not had any validation from outside sources and you are markedly afraid that is it just going to describe in great detail-the madness that you have tried to escape for most of your life. Still, in another way of looking at it, you told a friend last night that if you *know* you are mad-then-you cannot be. Do you know what you are doing? In these words you have begun to write about your narrative in terms of the self in society, and in terms of self actualisation within that society. It is clear there is still a process towards further self actualisation.

Salvador Dali said he was a 'madman but not mad', and he is a profound figure of 20th century art. There are so many people you admire, and if the inner critic did not block out the praise, you still receive emails from around the world thanking you for writing your memoir on schizophrenia.

Start paying attention. Stop judging yourself, as you do that too harshly. The messages of the new age positive affirmation 'cults' do not work for you so move on, but there is no need to stay away from meaningfulness in the balance between dark and light. It is that eventual expression of loving yourself and loving Steve, that you are gently pushing out further and further into the world and those you love and touch, and bears the mark of poetry, conflict, love and creation. It has great meaningfulness..

You have a purpose too, and whether you know it or not, you are sure the universe is unfolding the way it should be.

Let Go!

You feel you have a divine purpose, but you are afraid to make yourself vulnerable yet again and are avoiding writing on society because of past problems you have held.

Dear reader, I have not have understood this fear of judgement or criticism before now and share and resolve that it is ok to do the best you can with the ability and experiences you have had.

Steve has been such a vehicle for you letting yourself actually be yourself without fear of judgement. He is a blessing for you, as you are to him.

You started The Universal Embrace with some creative themes of phi-divinity-resonance-the society and mindset you live in, and also the metaphysical nature of your experiences and your ideas of who you are. This is your path now to explore.

Remember that its ok to be yourself, and think of the many people, including yourself, whom have to make some space to really be yourself without fear or judgement or any other negative connotation. (Maybe including you, dear reader!)

As you once wrote yourself in a song, there is such beauty in un-resolution.

In this way you will begin to unfold and write about the world you live in as a gay man. You may not have to delve into the politics of gay marriage and adoption, etc etc, or in fact be any expert on any of the above-because your life is yours and all you need to know is that you are doing the right thing in the right moment!

Now, we can begin.

12.2 To be gay; to be courageous.

One thing I had been nervous about in regard to writing about my awareness of sexuality in terms of society in ‘The Universal Embrace’, was how to approach it, and how to manifest my words, when, as celebrating a gay embrace, and indeed my self actualised joy, I thought I might not be the right type of advocate for that topic. I hesitated that I was not the most knowledgeable person about wide reaching gay culture and GLBTI issues. What about gay rights, international gay laws condemning and killing people in countries around the world? What about adoption and rainbow families and being 100% committed to ‘gay’? How convincing, beyond my obvious comfort of being in a same sex relationship, to be knowledgeable about broader issues?

I needed to express the inadequacies I felt and think of the situation I was describing in the context of a life. It’s true, I am happiest when I am in a relationship with a man. It's just not the sex, its the intimacy, and the camaraderie. It's who my partner is as a person. It's about sharing a house, and having our respective dogs get on so well, and having a shared life and companionship. Suddenly, although I like to think I have grown to accept who I am and mould into my shell when society and peers and family said or by way of not mentioning it, said otherwise growing up - I needn't be the holy grail of all things ‘gay’. All I need to do is to express myself - for that is enough in a small contribution to a big world. And that's what I will be doing in this section of writing.

I must say though when we as gay men are growing up, we have no people or role models to look towards in terms of a long lasting solid relationship that would be quantified by marriage. I think if younger gay people had the option to marry it would give a sense for them as being self assured that there is not anything wrong with them and that their feelings are natural and ok. I believe this work may contribute to that narrative.

In terms of self and society, three quotes immediately come to mind, from a broad ideological sources. I often find comfort from within different ideologies. The first is from Pablo Picasso who said 'The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.' In a way that is what I have done throughout my life with my creativity.

An artist makes themselves vulnerable by sharing images words, music, whatever it is, and in making yourself vulnerable connect to other people in the same boat through resonance of a mood, feeling, lyric, or image. It can also be a frightening process of leaving yourself wide open to be criticised and judged, but that is part of the process. Feel the fear and do it anyway.

It is what I have done with my writing, and my art, and my discoveries of study in words and images in this Autobiographical narrative. Now, as I work hard on writing this narrative and the constant updates to my website, its almost a stream of consciousness that is evolving. This is giving away my ideas, expressing my thought, and sharing my inventions of the kinetic gyroscope, all via a very public electronic interface.

This is interesting in terms of technology because of my art a) depending on the hardware to take the experimenter to the site and of course b) electricity which powers them. It also exists in photons of colour and not in hard copy. (Although a copy of 'Grogan the Monster' and 'Back to Basics' has since been published physically). In some respects it relies on people being able to read the English language, although that is not totally necessary to experience the visual and short film animations and concepts that are described in a somewhat universal visual esperanto. However, with Google Translate there is the ability to translate sources of texts into other languages, and for these types of technological feats the whole Masters Study of 'The Universal Embrace' is available worldwide. But what of this website and narrative appearing on a published world stage?

Right now, in 2014, out of all the countries on earth, by the hand of man-made law, (often influenced by culture or religious beliefs), it is illegal to even be gay in 77 of them. I consider being very fortunate here in Australia although marriage equality still eludes us. In some of these countries like Uganda being gay recently demanded the death penalty, only to be relieved because the US government pulled out its aid to Uganda because of the disturbing human rights abuse. The Sultan of Brunei recently reintroduced sharia law saying homosexuals can be stoned to death. It's a sad reality in these countries, but presently, I feel safe in my home in Melbourne, Australia. I post information about my life to the world and feel in safe harbour. I feel comfortable kissing my partner in the street and going to family

occasions and out to dinner. But in other countries I may be seen as evil or deranged or un-Godly. To date I have not had any negative public backlash in the form of emails in the context of publishing worldwide. I trust the people whom need to see it, will.

In the narrative letter to my inner adolescent that accompanies this study, it struck me that I might hide the fact I thought I might be at least bisexual in the letter, which was I felt I needed to do because I was not comfortable with my elders' or society's repulsions and judgements or even ignorance about homosexuality. I was afraid someone might find the letter. I was fifteen. When I finished the letter I stapled it shut many times and hid it in a book - stapled many times shut - and that's where I found it last year. I really do believe the first psychotic episode I suffered later on in my teens stemmed from a psycho-spiritual crisis of sexuality brought on by drug abuse, self censorship and self loathing because I did not want to accept I was gay. (I did not really come out to myself until about age 26). 'Schizophrenia' therefore may just be a word that describes a collection of symptoms that are a rational reaction to an implausible modern world and circumstance of the time.

The second philosophical quote that crossed my mind is a Buddhist one. It is interesting how in my philosophies of life I draw on religious texts, quotes, and random sources to weave my fabric of a belief system, forever changing. The quote is from Buddha, To honour the self, and that no person deserves greater love and compassion than the self. In the narrative to myself at age 15 as mentioned above, it seems I was aware that I might end up in a relationship with either a 'wife' or a 'best buddy', ambiguously describing that while I was unfettered and not constrained as a 15 year old youth, I certainly would realise difficulties in later years. Society is changing in terms of GLBTI acceptance and human rights in many countries, and I hope that in the near future a marriage in Australia has the possibility of being just a marriage instead of a gay marriage. When I park my car I park it, I don't 'gay park' it. Marriage equality is an important issue for me and many like me regardless of sexuality.

And the third is from a Christian ideology : the Lord's prayer, 'Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference'. I know I can write and make

art. And I know I live a mostly happy life and happy with the contributions I have made thus far. This will not be a narrative of flag waving and political banter. Although I wish equality to be true, as I see it just and fair, this narrative is a way of accepting the status quo, not trying to change the world although it may contribute. It is also simply reflecting in the moment and also in terms of supporting literature and writing which may make people opposed to marriage equality question their beliefs. In a way I concur with His Holiness the Dalai Lama when he presented in Melbourne 2013 with his talk actually renouncing his own religion and saying the way forward is with societal secular ethics that are beyond religion. I wish this were true. He is the only spiritual leader in the main religions that denounced his own and also the only mainstream spiritual leader that has commented being gay is a matter for the individual, a view of accepting the diversity of people that resonates with me.

So this narrative on Society will not be a politicised rant about the rights of gay people. It will just be me reflecting on my life as myself, and in doing so, this will be enough to contribute to the greater good, in self love, and further self actualisation, for me, for the reader to understand, and importantly, on a world wide scale on the internet for people to access anywhere there is possibility to.

David Bohm, in his text 'On Creativity' describes our creative capacities in regards to 'assimilat(ing) (with) experiences of a vast and awesome universe - a need to make sense of and relate to this universe rather than simply react to it'. (Bohm, 1998, p xi). Carly Stasko, who's (RE)volutionary healing I concur with in this dialogue also resonates with this model of relating to the universe and mentions resonance in terms of relational pedagogy (Beattie, 2009, p. pp 109). Resonance, was a founding intuitive factor in making and describing The Universal Embrace in multidimensional ways.

I like to think that in some way that 'The Universal Embrace', is teasing out the philosophies in regard to human nature and experiences, not only unique to a same sex embrace but an expression of love and triumph. It is the relationship with the self, the relationship with another, and a relationship to not only spirituality but greater society and the universe. This is the essence of this study whilst contrasting and comparing science and the soul. Far from

changing the world, yet still making a contribution, I arrive that the best intentions of myself to contribute to the greater good is enough. (<http://blog.teachersource.com/2010/05/21/chladni-plates/>)



On a life coaching session of late I said to my coach, (who is also my yoga teacher), ‘I think I’m slowly putting my love for Steve and the love for myself further and further out into the world’. We agreed it was a beautiful statement. So the key of The Universal Embrace is locating an individual story within and relating to a broader context. Just off the cuff I remember the statement on the back of my year ten biology book, along the lines of Man is in a web of life, whatever he does to the web, he does to himself; sound advice not only in terms of relationships emotion and meaning, but ecologically sound as well. As Atkinson says, in his book ‘The gift of stories, Practical and Spiritual Applications of Autobiography’: ‘Telling our stories is an act of bringing order to our universe by making it clearer to us how we see the world, the universe around us, and our role and place within it’ (Atkinson, 1995, p. pp 13).

This narrative more or less fits into and is epitomised by the qualities of Stasko’s RE-volutionary healing, and also fits into the methodology of A/r/tography, by ‘writing an artpiece’, and also in this case, designing one, is co-creating

enhanced meanings. It relates to (A)rt, (R)esearch, and being the educator. (The (T)eacher). It really has been a challenging creative journey as I tie up this final narrative. The other aspect of this study is that along with writing an artwork and making the artwork in a cumulative manner, there has been an enormous effort to also design the presentation of all these ideas in an online multimedia web based presentation. This aspect of the work has been extraordinary and time consuming. The final presentation includes an electronic interface with film, interactivity, sound, and design under the auspice of a project published on the web. The anonymous quote 'all things are designed, few are designed well', was one I wanted to conquer within my work, and hopefully have done so.

Patricia Leavy has stated that research need not be confined to impenetrable scholarly studies that are easily forgettable and that the process of arts based research can instil more of an impact and reach a greater audience than more rigid forms of scholarly research (Leavy, 2014b). As an independent researcher and scholar, and also a friend of mine on Facebook, she has expressed her joy that researchers are beginning to reference online material as well as scholarly texts.

12.3 Motivations (Society and Self), & Courageous Playing.

I have been doing a fortnightly life coaching session with my yoga teacher. The meetings are on the phone and she has a lovely phone manner and is quite esoteric which I like. When I chat to her, I find the distance behind the phone is an encouraging thing because I can be honest with my expression probably more so than if we were in a meeting together. She has helped to engage me with my work and the passion for my study.

I told her about my new children's book that accompanies this study in the manner of honouring the inner child, Grogan the Monster. Grogan the monster is a book I have created in congruity with reflecting on the inner child and adolescent and it is important to accompany this Masters study. I shared the iPad link and she downloaded it and praised me for it over the phone. All I heard though was criticism and the fear of being judged. I told her I was a middle child and my psychotherapist puts a lot of emphasis on that. We cleared it up though-she had praised me, and

although I heard otherwise, and I realised I was still afraid of judgement or what people might think of creativity-that is-making myself vulnerable for judgement. That is a reoccurring script that I am aware of in regards to 'The Universal Embrace', that is, the fear of opening up one's vulnerability and experiences for scrutiny. I think this process of celebrating sexuality has been a courageous one for me, in terms of honouring the inner child and adolescent, and celebrating the present. It is in line with Carly Stasko's (R)Evolutionary Healing, that it starts with a challenge, then to be courageous, then to play, and finally the stage of love. In doing this study I hope to encourage the greater awareness of other people, as a teaching method based in arts education, celebrating the diversity of all peoples, and I am glad I have taken on the challenge.

12.4 Divine purpose: Documenting Love

I have always felt that I have a divine purpose. In fact I believe we are all walking miracles and should be treated as such. My creative processes from the past have proven to sometimes have great effect, and sometimes not much at all. One must remember though that beyond the physical dimensions of having an effect, there is also the effect on other people's awareness, and even more importantly although invisible, it is the currency of intent that often underlines the successes of physical projects and the manifestation of ideas. This manifestation of ideas, when people follow it, fits within the (T)eachers role in A/r/t/ography. Relating narrative experience although making myself vulnerable, about my life, creations and inventions, is a method of informing, sharing and teaching. Importantly, in his book 'The Courage to Teach', Parker Palmer says that 'we teach who we are' (Palmer, 1998, p. pp 2). To support my studies financially I have been teaching drawing to a group of people who are marginalised by mental illness, and offer a safe and gentle way of expressing one's self peacefully and with much spiritual significance, saying prayers and playing resonant bowls with mediations. It is very much is a reflection of my personality.

12.5 The computer

There is a conflict point though, about how the love and the esoteric nature of this Masters work appears within society. Basically, it exists on a computer screen, on servers that can be reduced to nothing but binary code! I have been challenged to utilise the digital format to create something that is interactive, interesting, and offers that wealth of feeling throughout its design. In the beginning I did not want to have a creative project assembled then de-assembled for an exhibition then stored somewhere or discarded. In a way of wanting to digitally record my creativity, and my mistakes and achievements in a brave way, I wanted it to be all researchable, recordable and readable, much like an ink drawing, with all the mistakes included. This is notable in the online blog I have been keeping discussing my study and supports the main narrative(s). To have something digitised immortally into binary code on a world wide network is to reach for immortality as long as the functions of hardware software and network are still alive. There is a saying that says if you date a writer, you will be immortal! I guess the same goes for my partnership with Steve, that, from my perspective he has also become digitally immortal in this project. There has even been some research and questioning about what happens to your digital life once you pass over, and it is interesting that your legacy is regarded now as an estate (Evan Carroll, 2010). I am happy to have left such a legacy for as long as the technology survives, as I believe technology is presently an excellent vehicle to share ideas and relate to the world. I also believe my intentions are recorded and expressed in the between places of the cosmos.

12.6 Expressing Love energy through Technology & Design

This brings me to discuss the vehicle of technology that allows this study to exist online, and the history of technology building up over time to bloom in a state of the art, online interactive way. There is also the point of exactly how does one express oneself in this complex way by learning about tools and techniques that make it occur.

There was a huge learning curve in accessing the technology and learning to understand the process of creating digitally to make www.theuniversalembrace.com. I can almost say that the time spent researching the images, writing the narrative and making the art has taken less time than to present the work in a digital online way that not only is a useable interface, but is relevant in stating the intentions and creative processes that has been involved in this project.

In this way the study has been at least two fold in that the time it has taken to actually design and present the content has been an enormously time consuming factor in the presentation in this work so I thought I would mention it not in an underestimated way. The way educational learning and research around the world is vastly expanding with digitised media and learning techniques is commented on by international conference papers (Yuksel, 2011) by exploring the impact and diversity of different interactive exercises, both online and in other mediums, that can assist information sharing within educational pedagogies.

The other aspect of this digital expression lies in the paradoxical nature of having your art exist in binary code but have the appearance of art and research that is both accessible and has some element of the esoteric or the feeling of love energy coming through it. How might I express the feeling of love and interconnectedness through such a banal collection of website addresses and the binary code of zeros and ones? It has been a challenge to make The Universal Embrace into a format that can express a feeling of interconnectedness and also multi dimensions such as emotional physical, spiritual political and now dare we say, technological. One of the essences of this study has been that computers and modern technology act as a vehicle in which to express love energy. It is quite a contrast because of

the nature of a mathematical technological vehicle. It reminds me of a digital image I did a few years ago of the image of a burger that is made up of binary code to express the lifeless and malnourished nature of its contents.



12.7 To be technical and interactive

In the beginning of the project, I had some broad aims and goals that were hinged on both digital possibility and also intuition. The contributing artworks had not yet been realised and came about through the process of playing as part of the project. This coming together of the two qualities of cold digitisation and emotive expression has manifested through the project in various forms. It is a reflection on the relationships between what is art and what is science, and on appreciation that science can be as beautiful as the stroke of an artist's pen. It created rhizomatic relations between what was possible to express emotionally and digitally and was also entirely underpinned by the currency of intent. It is interesting to address the very idea of 'where do ideas come from?'

If it were not for art and the creative process would ideas be lost? If it were not for note-taking, illustration, animation and web design where might have all this data and creativity ended up? In this project, the playful development of the free energy machine is my playful response to questions like these.

I consider the 'free energy machine' to be a mixture of art and science, all the while using the same template of the golden section for 'The Universal Embrace'. The relationship? The machine is called the love machine, and it is born of concepts of endlessness and resonance, much like love is such a vital part of human nature, much like my relationship; with the self and with another. The only contrast is The Kinetic Love Machine - if it works - is endlessly mechanical in a kinetic way and love is esoteric and hard to define, although necessary in life.

12.8 Playing with the Internet

The internet was not new to me and I had had some experience making websites in the past. The practical aspects of digitally creating this whole project lie in understanding many forms of software. This includes Keynote, internet design under the wix.com auspice, publishing online, photoshop, illustrator, sound recording, learning animation, macromedia director, iMovie and animated GIF's.

The process of making the work has been on my iMac computer, not without its hiccups. I had already animated the Free energy machine that accompanies this project on a previous operating system in macromedia director, and exported a file I could have used in this work. However, as I updated my operating system to the new Mavericks software, I had lost the ability to play the file! (Much to my disgust!). So in effect I had to re-create the whole animation from scratch, yet in doing so, streamlined a better communication of how the machine works both in design, animation and also sound. I had made a better conceptual prototype by being so determined.

12.9 Static traditional embraces vs an interactivity.

In my work I have collected data about embraces that have been presented over time and in different media including sculpture, painting, drawing and also in photographs. The earliest recorded embrace I could find was an archaeological one dating to the Neolithic period (5000-4000 B.C.) that was found in Italy. In its photography, it has become art that arose from a ceremonial burial (Urbanus, 2008).



This exhibition of embraces in the gallery on www.theuniversalembrace.com spans the early 14th century Flemish art to modern day embraces such as 'The embrace (1945) that celebrated the end of WW2 with a preposterously aggressive embrace, have had all had one thing in common: That is that they are static. They are non movable or manipulatable. All of the embraces, apart from a digital interactive design of a singular person by Alex Grey, were static, and I believe I have created something unique in terms of examining the inter dimensional qualities of an embrace in interactive new media and accompanying writing.

12.10 The computer and technology acts as a vehicle for my expression.

Interestingly, the digital environment has literally acted as a vehicle for me to express my lived narrative and my creativity. This is a very important quality of this study. There is no other point in history whereby the qualities and the amount of information through a single man made project is potentially accessible to more people than in the state of the art technology today.

There are billions of people accessing the internet daily, and this study has a potential audience of people from all around the world instantly. People have had the potential to watch it unfold as well, and although this was possible, I had hoped for more participation and feedback from people along the way. Sometimes I did feel quite isolated behind a screen, with no traction with people or an audience, but I hope the study will have some longevity when it is completed. Indeed one recent book actually questions your digital legacy after you die (Evan Carroll, 2010). It goes into all the social media platforms and the terms and conditions of use about how long your data stays online in the particular forum. These differ from platform to platform. Some just delete data after a certain time, while other platforms need a death certificate to cancel. Indeed, I have had friends pass over from my Facebook list, and those pages often become a memorial wall for people to post their grieving.

It is important to recognise that this type of creative research can reach other peers, scholars and general audiences across the globe, not only in populations of people who have an interest in what you are doing, but also in populations that might just be interested in any one aspect of the study from a scientific, social, sociological, psychological, general research, or qualitative research perspective. Of course there might be many other people who may be interested in the content for it is very broad, encapsulating scientific machines, children's books and gay rights and discussions of opening that dialogue on a world stage. I feel the entire project has an accessibility to all peoples, and that is the manner in which I wanted to write this narrative as well.

As such, this study exemplifies the breadth of references we have become familiar with in internet use. In this way, just as the embrace is interactive rather than static, this written document presented as it is on a web site is closer in form to internet rather than standard document presentation, by a person and for people.

Referring to a resonance not unlike Paul Davies reflections on creation in 'The Mind of God' (Davies, 1992), Nikola Tesla stated "Our entire biological system, the brain and the Earth itself, work on the same frequencies" (Miracle, 1998). It's time to tune our biology and our consciousness to resonate with the fundamental harmonics of the universe. I have attempted to live harmoniously while creating this Masters study in terms of a living arts based inquiry. I have placed my intentions on harmony and resolution. Via utilising the computer, even in its artificial nature, I have tried to create visually and thematically in a visual and written terms, the love energy that we are naturally inclined to feel over a digital interface.



13. Conclusions

The conclusion for this exegetical written component will be in two parts: the first section will detail the major themes of this study and reflect on the initial goals, contribution to knowledge and themes, whereas the second part will draw the whole project together in terms of a more personal intuitive narrative that relates to Stasko's steps of Revolutionary Healing in regards to having a challenge, being courageous, playing and the final stage of love.

13.1 Part 1.

In the document 'Aesthetics of Research' (Greene, 2007) Greene states of creative journeying: 'But the point of such inquiry is not to explain what occurs in the artist's study or studio; it is to discover the meaning of those occurrences, as it is to discover the meanings of aesthetic experiences-or the transactions that take place between a human consciousness and what is presented as a work of art'. In this way I have shared some of the journeys and philosophies of my life that exist between expressions of artwork and writing, presenting it in order to be reflected on by the viewers own personal ontologies. The images within this study are from across time and a lifetime and contain their own visual language complimenting the text. The word aesthetic is transformed not only to relate to a visual aesthetic but one that explores the narrative meaning of experience that take form in the art, and defined in a way that gives importance to the non-obvious aesthetic within creative works.

At its genesis, this study had its birth in the intuitive theme of resonance. This is in terms of rational mathematical construction of the project, the resonance of good will and love with the self, another and the universe, and also really seeking a form of satisfaction or peace in which resonance with the mind and spirit would be achievable. This challenge was met with some success in terms of reconciliation with myself and the world, but also had to negate some tough territory in terms of the struggle for identity and the struggles within a relationship and broader society over a lifetime. The aim of further self actualisation was achieved, yet it is apparent that this process is a constant reinvention of the self over a lifetime.

In terms of the mathematical component of the study, resonance is well ingrained in the utilisation of phi and the golden mean within the creative component of The Universal Embrace, and it also transposed itself with the schematic invention of the kinetic gyroscope within the template of the golden mean and its rhizomatic relations to resonance and energy. Interestingly, the gyroscope represents a method by which a kinetic sculpture can more or less run near perpetually. In this there is a metaphor of endlessness which is again reflected in the love element of The Universal Embrace in that love is endless and enduring. The Dalai Lama says compassion is not a need, but is necessary for human life and that we cannot survive without it. The meaning here is the genesis of self love and love of a partnership was in a process of self actualisation throughout this study which is a journey and ongoing. One of my statements of significance was that : It celebrates the necessity of human touch as an archetypal emotional need. Indeed this celebration has rung true we within the project, as an embrace arrived at the point of touch.

There is a trifold approach to resonance within this study. The first and earliest example is the surprise inclusion of the Grogan the Monster children's book. This is representative of a very different visual method of expression than my prior art and my other more serious appearing nature of the Masters study creative component. The book is light and expressive, was fun to make and a labor of love. It allowed me to get back in touch with that inner playfulness that I had as a child and it shows in the work. The second example of resonance is a further self actualisation, and a 're-creation of the self', comes in the form of my narrative to my inner adolescent as my fifteen year old self. The letter miraculously appeared to me at the right time for me to include it in this study, almost on cue like a poetic cosmic ballet. I did not ever expect this random finding could be so important to my studies. It was a real gem of a finding in terms of recreating the self and an opportunity for further spiritual growth.

Also honouring the inner adolescent, I created the kinetic gyroscope schematic animation. This stemmed from an idea I had when I was young, but was abandoned due to me not really believing in myself or the resources, electronic or otherwise, to create it. When I finally decided to pursue it, again not an intended part of this study but ending up a major part, it came to fruition quite quickly. I was resonating with my adolescent dreams of invention. I really had to listen to my inner intuition, to lose the fear of failure and really ruin with the idea, for which I am grateful in retrospect. It was the process of writing the dialogue to my inner adolescent that recreated and consoled that young person into a

recreation of the self and creating meaning that resulted in the promising invention. The invention was met with an amazing opportunity from the Clean Energy Finance Corporation in which I could be funded a great amount if I could prove its energy output to make the idea a commercially viable success. It is not secured but gave great validation to my early ideas growing up and is an exciting possibility for the near future.

An interesting component of this invention in terms of resonance is my fascination with energy. Not only energy as love or energy as electricity, but in a way of lending from eastern philosophies, it has been a way of exploring the interchangeable flow of energy from ideas across time, also the ideas of technology acting as a vehicle to express the creativity in a contemporary way through the energies of computers and electronic media.

The final piece of art that I created with this study of course is the interactive display of The Universal Embrace and accompanying website. This is the third way I have recreated the self in terms of revolutionary healing and has visually and thematically by design relied on a certain amount of aesthetic resonance. In it, mathematics and resonance features profoundly, and stems from an expression of good will and respectability in art. In my past I had created works that were a result of un-wellness, frustration and desperation, appearing discordant. I always wanted to create something that surpasses that and would command respect and work on my own issues in defiance of schizophrenia that could serve as a shining example of art that could be celebrated instead of me coming across disturbed or cross, like I did in the book 'Strange Currencies of Ego and Soul' (McLean, 2007). I believe I have created a thorough creative and written component that is worthy and has been satisfying to me. Across the entire work, I resonate in a more celebratory sense of self and my reflections of life and love. The love energy as a mode of resonance has been extremely important in the work. In terms of all the creative components I have approached them with much courage, and willing to go out on a limb and take risks for them to manifest. It has been immensely satisfying in retrospect and in present tense; something I am proud of.

In my goals and outcomes of this project in my candidature proposal, I stated that , 'The narrative and creative component will explore the constant re-invention of the self via living inquiry in terms of reconciliation in the first person and to the broader universe.' In this regard I think I have reached my goals. The living of a narrative and the living creativity of the project is well expressed and very thorough in terms of the amount of creative content across

different ideas and reconciliation with the inner child, adolescent, and present self. These are expressed across both writing and creation of artworks that further line up my own identity within the context of a society.

The first statement of significance in my proposal was that: ‘The complementary written words and final digital piece will go beyond being novel in their reworking of traditional artistic embraces, and focussing on the seen and also the unseen dimensions within the moment of an embrace’, and that ‘The project pushes the boundaries of A/r/tography through the use of current interactive web based technologies.’ In both these ways I think the project has been fully realised because even though this gay embrace is novel in its queerness, it goes beyond because anyone can relate to the notion of an embrace I feel that the entire project under an a/r/tographical auspice has pushed the boundaries of what is technically possible.

Another statement of significance from my candidature proposal was that ‘The project focusses on epistemological narrative in terms of the journey of writing and creation in which the process has unforeseen outcomes, re-creating the self.’ In this way the project has really surprised me. Parts of my creativity I considered separate from this main artistic statement of ‘The Universal Embrace’, have become an integral part to it and link in rhizomatically in a way which was never expected. In this fashion I think the ‘lived inquiry’ has been fully realised in ways which were entirely unplanned.

I would like to refer now in point form to my intuitive goals of what this study was to mean and how it would contribute to knowledge from my initial candidature proposal and briefly comment on each and how that came to successful fruition.

13.2 Contribution to knowledge

- 1) It will push the creative and conceptual boundaries of past historical expressions of an embrace.

Out of all the embraces I have studied they all had one thing in common, that they were static and representative of either a painting drawing or sculpture, and amongst some still digital work. The embrace I constructed was not only unique because it was an embrace between two men, but it is an interactive embrace with sound, words and interactivity

in which you can add or subtract elements to both simplify and complicate the experience of viewing the work. This is indeed pushing the boundaries of an event which is complicated and simplified by its interactivity and pushes the artistic boundaries of what a subjective expression of an embrace can be.

2) The project contributes to knowledge in its rhizomatic relations across the visual expression of the emotional physical and spiritual aspects of ontological perception, via a location that frames a contemporary and political antipodean context.

The embrace indeed happens within a society and a place which is local to my environment but also places the embrace through a macroscopic and microscopic lens that considers the self, relationship to others and relationship to society and to the broader universe. The physical, spiritual, and emotional lenses of the embrace were rigorously explored within the artwork and the writing of the artwork, finding its genesis in constant self reflection and creativity.

3) The combined creative component and exegesis will compare and contrast the philosophy of divinity and resonance in terms of aesthetic design and love energy, and contrast it with the beauty of an resolution in a chaotic world of flux and change.

This point was really driven home through the lived narrative in that there were many periods of doubt, insecurity and negative emotions throughout the study. It occurred to me that in a semblance of divinity and the golden mean I was yearning for some relief from being an acutely sensitive person in the world in terms of being symptomatic with mental illness and also my reactions to a harsh world, even dating back to the time as a child and adolescent. The surprise outcome of this notion was that under an all encompassing auspice of the golden mean and phi, that even though I arrived at a more self actualised position and had greater self worth, that life experience always includes both the chord-ant and the discordant and this was apparent throughout the study in terms of lived experience. In this way the ideal and the ideal, the banal and the divine, were explored by nature of found objects and also from new creativity whilst reflecting on the self over a lifetime.

4) It will visually frame how transient chaos operates and relates under universal laws of resonance symbolized as phi, its relationship to God as macroscopic and the 'God-Self' as microscopic,

This was quite a profound statement. The 'God Self' was described by Alex Grey, of whom my work ended up in one of his journals throughout the course of this study. It refers I think to the concept of not reacting to the universe, but to be a part of it, and this directly relates to the concepts of a lived narrative and an arts based pedagogy in terms of A/r/ tography. I really think a greater spiritual awareness has been reached in self actualisation throughout this study for myself reflexively.

5) The narrative and creative component will explore the constant re-invention of the self via living inquiry in terms of reconciliation in the first person and to the broader universe.

This follows on from my last statement in that self reflexively I am more aware and have reached a greater sense of self actualisation through this wonderful journey of my Masters study, although I think the process is ongoing throughout life. I am satisfied that I have created a digital imprint that will last for as long as the technology does, that I am proud of and surpasses my younger, more troubled days in positive artistic achievements that contribute to potential global culture.

13.3, Part II.

What has the engagement of writing, creating art, and reflection brought to my awareness over the time I have engaged in this study? The answer might be addressed in terms of the way The Universal Embrace was visualised and written: the reflexive self as relates to the physical, spiritual, emotional and political lenses of the study. The outcomes are also a reflection of the process engaged with the themes of this exegesis, that is, pi, spirit, and society. Physically I have placed my sexuality and relationship under a lens with an emphasis on the self. In terms of Stasko's 'Re-creating the self', I have managed to address my inner child and adolescent through complex issues such as what spirituality means, self awareness and importantly reconciliation with the past and present self over a lifetime and in terms of those lost loved

ones mentioned in the narrative. In this way I believe I have had greater awareness of the self and a greater degree of self actualisation than ever before.

In the research I have expressed in narrative terms my sense of being a part of the spiritual world instead of just reacting to it or its varied ideologies. It is interesting that I feel this study has been the right path for me, that I did actually have a need to express and stand by my experiences and emotions of the past and the present in real time. In terms of the overarching theme of resonance, it relates to not only the physical and spiritual, but the emotional as well. At the start of the process, the feelings of yearning for resonance reflected a desire for normalcy or peace which had been missing in the trauma of ongoing discordancy in my life. It has however broadened its scope into addressing not only the positive ways of existing in resonance, but under the auspices of phi or the universe, discordancy as well. In this way accepting that there is both light and dark, victory and struggles throughout life has led me to greater contentment within myself. I'm reminded of a Buddha quote - approximating the self to be like a large tree and let the sadness and happiness, achievements and disappointments come and go.

In terms of the creative components that manifested within this study: The Universal Embrace, the narrative, the children's book, and the kinetic gyroscope machine; they seem so far away from each other visually and thematically but are also extricably linked rhizomatically. The narrative addresses my inner child and adolescent, and this was pivotal in creating the children's book and the kinetic gyroscope machine because I learned to sit with my past and not only forgive but nurture that person emotionally. In this I had created a book that I would have liked to have as a child and it also gave me relief from serious study to be childlike and joyous along Stasko's description of playing in terms of revolutionary healing. It is also an expression that celebrates the diversity of people, much when I was when I was a child and teenager, and this is the message of secular ethics that I would ideally want to portray to children, and greater society, like the words in 'Grogan the Monster...'.

Amazingly, even though I did struggle through this study, I set aside some time to actually engage in designing my passionate idea of free energy from kinetic inertia, magnets and solar energy. It made me question where these ideas

come from, and what happens when we ignore our ideas and motivations. I think that if we are not creative, physically recording and working on ideas, they get lost to the universe. I also believe that the expression of those ideas we keep from disappearing is the essence of art. In a way I had forgotten what society and people have or perceivably had on my ideas and launched into designing the concept, essentially making a scientific and also artistic statement. Now, as time has gone on, the person that was so discordant, the person that was so lost and confused as an adolescent has embraced himself in present time to design a schematic prototype of the idea. The results have been very exciting - I was contacted by the Clean Energy Finance Corporation and told if I can verify the energy output I could be financed for a large sum of money to make the idea commercially available. Who would have thought a pre morbid psychotic teenager could come up with an idea that just might fly? It has increased my confidence in myself a thousand fold, and although I am wary of being grandiose as my personality sometimes leans towards, I am planning to give it a shot and ultimately make a prototype. TS Eliot once wrote 'Only those that risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go', and often those that are crazy enough to believe they can change the world are the ones that can... I feel comfortable and even a little but proud that my ideas are of validity, that in fact, my relationship with 'madness' or relationship to the word 'schizophrenia' is questionable - that I can, have, and will offer good things from my person to others and society in general. This Masters study has taught me not to doubt myself in the face of adversity, that resonant perfection is a facade, nonetheless you can still achieve amazing things if you set your mind to it.

Not doubting myself has also been expressed within the expression digitally online of the work. When I record or write a narrative, when I talk about the reflexive self, when I store and publish my thoughts digitally and invite discourse and engagement, I am saying to the world in a most permanent way, 'This is me!' In a manner of speaking, that for the participant I am engaging them in the work to react and relate whom they identify as, what they resonate with, and what they do not. I am also saying 'Who are you?', much like the dialogue from 'Grogan the Monster...'.

Not doubting myself also goes for the relationship to self, the relationship to another, and the relationship to the wider world, antipodean society and the broader universe. Like no time before I feel valid, I feel worthy and I feel confident in who I am. I feel more ethically aware of the rights and responsibilities of a society, especially in terms of being gay. The

focus on my relationship has been under the lens of this study too, and although I struggled in how much or how little to include my partner, I don't think I could have expressed and created all this without his support. I feel more than ever that I am a confident gay spiritual creative man whom has struggled with adversity and survived, hopeful for my future creativity and greater self actualised in my place in the world. In terms of Stasko's formulae of revolutionary healing that I was intuitively attracted to, the healing of the self is evident through the process of a challenge of confronting the self in society, the courage to make sense of the reflexive self in an honest and open way, - and by playing! Who could debate the creative playing in this Masters study considering all the rhizomatically relatable creative projects that have arisen? The final stage is one I deliberate with - because really the genesis of this study was already love in all its conflicts and complications. I feel like I have been divinely guided, yet now more fully able to say that I have indeed, further healed the self through this process into the final more fulfilling and self respecting and resonant state of love.

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