

## **Schizophrenia: Realms of the Unreal**

*"I am beginning to hate the life of a painter. One begins by sparring with his insides with one leg still in the normal world. Then you are caught up in a frenzy that brings you to the edge of madness, as far as you can go without ever coming back. The return is a series of dazed weeks during which you are only half alive."*  
(Mark Rothko, letter to friend Clay Spohn).

Like much of the brilliance created by humankind, it is often the result of a unique chemical imbalance, so complex that we are far from completing the map of pathways active in the brain. Over the centuries there have been many artists, writers and mathematicians with schizophrenia. High intelligence and creativity often accompany mental disorders, and schizophrenia is no exception. John Forbes Nash once said, "I would not dare to say that there is a direct relation between mathematics and madness, but there is no doubt that great mathematicians suffer from maniacal characteristics, delirium and symptoms of schizophrenia." As our knowledge of the disease expands so does the gap between functionality and creativity.

Studies and interest have followed these brilliant artists to better understand the full potential and problem of such brain activity. Recently, studies have also shown the correlation between schizophrenia, art and a robust creativity. (Clifford) It has been found that artists are more likely to share key behavioral traits with schizophrenics. There are struggling artists (who need to work to live and create work secondarily) between the ages of 18-25 in NYC who have been diagnosed with schizophrenia lose their ability to create great art because their antipsychotic drug treatment thwarts their creativity and inspiration. What about artists who indeed do have the chemical imbalance of schizophrenia? How is their art

affected, and how do they engage in their highly responsive creative drives and the devastating isolation imbalance in their minds?

Diagnosing Schizophrenia generally begins between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five. Although men and women are affected equally, symptoms may appear later in women than in men. Very rarely, symptoms appear before the age of twelve. Late-onset schizophrenia, diagnosed after the age of forty is also quite uncommon. (Beers)

A patient sits cross-legged on a cot smoking a cigarette; he is 24 years old and goes by the name Lars. For a moment I cannot tell he is suffering until he begins speaking about the vulgar voices he hears, the demons he sees—

“Do you see them now?”

“Yes, they’re behind you.”

All the while he is managing his uncontrollable fits of laughter that seize his face in anguish as he explains how he is tortured by these visions. He speaks succinctly and with an air of firm defiance, perhaps as a result of the extreme isolation he experiences as he combats daily hallucinations. He is in a reality stranded from the rest of humanity and shunned from the nurturing of society.

“We tell ourselves that pestilence is a mere bogey of the mind, a bad dream that will pass away. But it doesn't always pass away and, from one bad dream to another, it is men who pass away.” (Camus, *The Plague*).

Lars is a painter in a New York City facility medicated with the atypical antipsychotic drug, olanzapine, which helps him to discern when he’s perceiving reality as it is. Lars is an artist now unable to paint after taking his prescribed dosage. Zyprexa, the brand of olanzapine, has severe side effects that hinder the creative process such as: sleepiness, lack of energy, increased appetite, strokes, neuroleptic malignant syndrome, hyperglycemia, among others. (Tollefson). Lars states he feels numb like a zombie which creates stories in his head that he is becoming like the demons he sees all around him. Although, with the medication the hallucinations are subsiding somewhat.

Vision is our primary sense, so it is not surprising that a large part of the human brain is devoted to processing the image of our visual world to generate visual perception. However, it is wrong to consider that our visual brain always provides us with a percept that is true to the external visual world. Rather, it actively participates in constructing what we see. Our visual percept, obtained from the information it receives from the two eyes, may sometimes be distorted as a result of physiological interactions among neurons in the visual brain due to the pattern of their connections. (Phyllida). In schizophrenia patients this sequence is disrupted all the more due to unreal visions, making their lives agony to live through. In many cases this opens them to the artistic representation of this unique and often abandoned state of being.

“Thus, too, they came to know the incorrigible sorrow of all prisoners and exiles, which is to live in company with a memory that serves no purpose... Hostile to the past, impatient of the present, and cheated of the future, we were much like those whom men's justice, or hatred, forces to live behind prison bars.” (Camus, *The Plague*).

The act of inspiring or breathing in; breath; the drawing of air into the lungs, accomplished in mammals by elevation of the chest walls and flattening of the diaphragm; the opposite of expiration. Or.

Inspiration is the act or power of exercising an elevating or stimulating influence upon the intellect or emotions; the result of such influence which quickens or stimulates; as, the inspiration of occasion, of art, etc. Or.

A supernatural divine influence on the prophets, apostles, or sacred writers, by which they were qualified to communicate moral or religious truth with authority; a supernatural influence which qualifies men to receive and communicate divine truth; also, the truth communicated.

Before proceeding further, it seems necessary to remove here a misconception regarding inspiration. This word does not mean that an idea is infused into the mind of a person who sets himself to think about a thing. A poet is

not inspired in the theological sense when brilliant ideas flash upon him as he sits down to write poetry. In such a case, there is no distinction between good and bad. When the mental powers are applied to a subject, new ideas do flash upon the mind according to the genius of the thinker without any regard to the good or bad nature of the subject.

There is ample evidence of a very general feeling among creative artists that in the act of creation they are the recipients of some message or revelation from outside themselves or under some form of external compulsion or guidance. The feeling varies in intensity and convincingness. Neither the fact of the nature of this feeling can be rejected. But of course the existence of the feeling that one is subject to external influences does not guarantee that the influences are external. Similar feelings are often experienced in a religious context, where they are commonly attributed to external and supernatural forces. But they also occur in other contexts, where they explained by the surfacing of material from the unconscious mind into consciousness.

It is a fact that works of fine art cannot be produced by obedience to a system of rules and are not the products solely of skills which can be taught. There is an element of uniqueness in any work of fine art which goes beyond the skills which can be taught.

The features of an artifact in virtue of which is classified as a work of fine art and an object of aesthetic value cannot be verbally articulated even by the artist himself. In so far as criticism is concerned with these features, it is agreed that the most the critic can do is to induce his readers by indirect ostensive methods to perceive these features directly.

Plato believed it was common to the forms of madness with which he attributed to divine possession by a strong emotional excitement and guided by a power outside himself. Plato denied that madness is invariably a bad thing, declaring that 'in reality the greatest blessing come by way of madness, that is of madness which is heaven-sent. It is, of course, not the case that supernatural possession, if it occurs, necessarily involves abnormal emotionalism or is



necessarily incompatible with a normal degree of rational control. There could be supernatural possession without emotional frenzy as there can be emotional frenzy without supernatural possession.

What about the factor of intuition? The intuition which goes into the creation of work of fine art is unconscious in the sense that it does not involve the conscious and deliberate exercise of logical reasoning. It does not necessarily, although it may, involve the extrusion of materials from the deep unconscious layers of the mind which form the subject matter of depth psychology. The intuition is not necessarily about the contents of the artist's unconscious mind.

When diagnosed with Schizophrenia the patient has been experiencing any combination of the following symptoms: profound disruption in cognition and emotion, affecting the most fundamental human attributes: language, thought, perception, affect, and sense of self. The array of symptoms, while wide ranging, frequently includes psychotic manifestations, such as hearing internal voices or experiencing other sensations not connected to an obvious source as in hallucinations and assigning unusual significance or meaning to normal events or holding fixed false personal beliefs such as delusions. No single symptom is definitive for diagnosis- instead the diagnosis encompasses a pattern of signs and symptoms, in conjunction with impaired occupational or social functioning. This series of symptoms are seemingly vague without the concrete analysis of neuroscience, which has made great strides in recent years. Louis Sass, a clinical psychologist who teaches at Rutgers and author of *Madness And Modernism: Insanity in the Light of Modern Art, Literature, and Thought*, confirms the innate mystery in schizophrenia. Sass describes schizophrenia as, "a condition of obscure origins and no established etiology, pathogenesis and pathology," without "even any clear disease marker or laboratory test by which it can readily be identified."

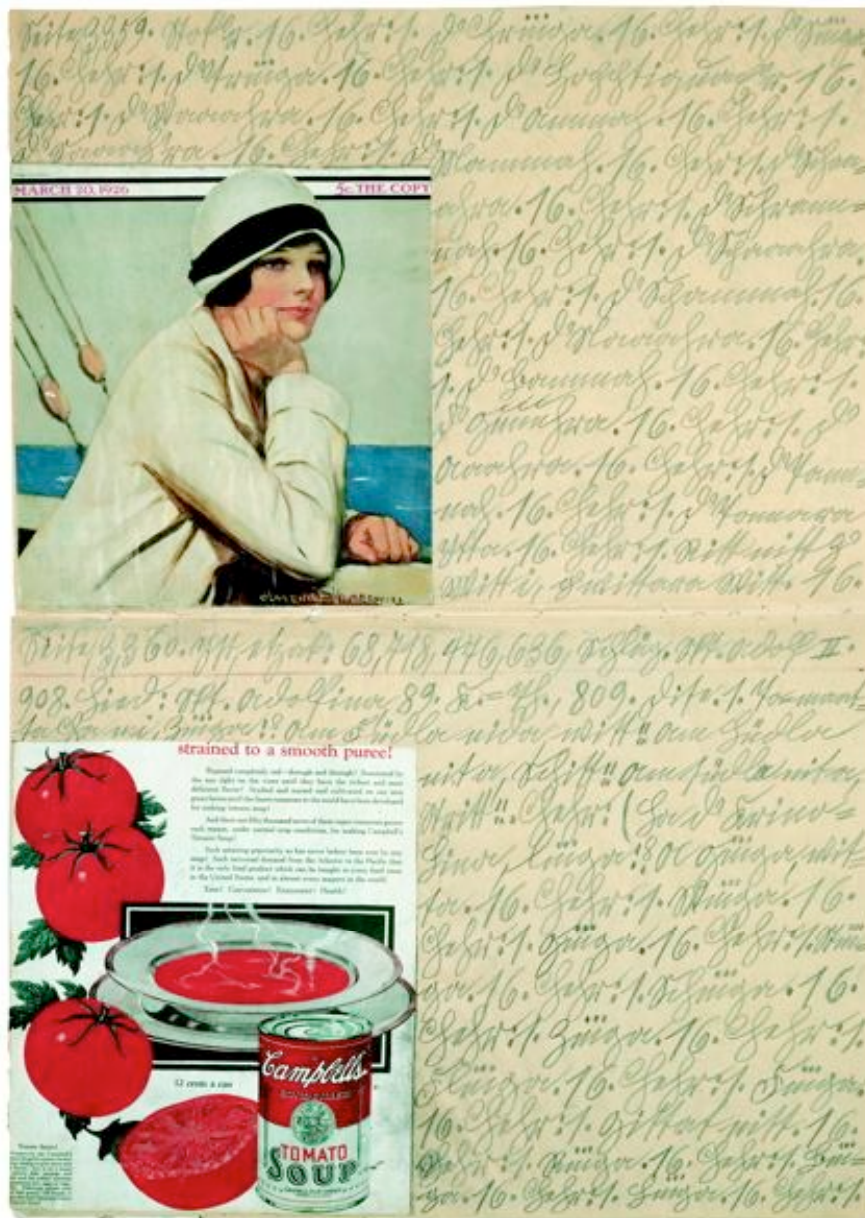
The subject raises questions about the nature of the creative mind and its relationship to the world out of which it comes. How does the atypical brain experience the world we share? In what respects does art made by these individuals reflect the different realities they experience? To what extent, and in

what aesthetic terms, do their works embody the fear and bewilderment they may endure? If schizophrenia opens individuals to access creative power and focus, a genius, then how can we better understand the creative process and the nature of inspiration?

In 1945 French artist Jean Dubuffet created the term "Art Brut," or Raw Art. Art Brut refers to art produced without connections or influences from culture or established art styles. Dubuffet was greatly influenced by artists with schizophrenia, especially Adolf Wölfli and Heinrich Anton Müller. Both artists were schizophrenic, and spent most of their lives in mental health institutions. While schizophrenia often prevents people from reaching their full potential, artists with schizophrenia have produced groundbreaking work.

For nearly 100 years, a few psychiatrists and art historians have surveyed the art of the so-called insane and come up with mostly anecdotal readings of it. It is valuable to examine the case histories of a few influential artists who have suffered and created such symptoms of schizophrenia. Between 1918 and 1921, the German psychiatrist Hans Prinzhorn gathered a huge collection of such work, now housed in a museum in Heidelberg, and wrote about it. The subject lost its appeal during the psycho-political upheavals of the last century, but in recent years, the European and New York art markets have named and promoted what they call Outsider Art, including primitive, ethnic, folk, street and other marginal idioms. The embrace has pushed up prices while shaping a few celebrity profiles. But the issue of how really to interpret this private, burdened mode of expression by the mentally afflicted is no frivolous art-world matter. (Spoerri, Baumann).

Further, what insights about the normal brain's involvement with that world we call 'real' might be gained if the art of the abnormal, in all its strangeness, could be decoded? Can the so-called normal mind hope to penetrate the symbolism and arcane graphic modes of brains whose very structure, it now appears, is anomalous? Even this: does the genetically unusual mind preserve information



**Figure 1: Adolf Wölfl. *Campbell's Tomato Soup*. 1929.**

about the evolution of thought long lost to the mainstream? Are we destroying the potential genius by thwarting all creative impulses through a long list of antipsychotic medications?

Despite being institutionalized for schizophrenia at age thirty-one, Adolf Wölfl (1864-1930) achieved artistic greatness in his cell at Waldau Mental Asylum near his native Bern, Switzerland. (Spoerri, Baumann). He has had a profound influence on modern art ever since; André Breton described his work as "one of the three or four most important oeuvres of the twentieth century." The Art of Adolf



Wölfli offers a fresh vantage point on the mediums through his remarkably intricate drawings, offset by rhythmic repeating handwriting. This example, in Wölfli's *Campbell's* intimate portrayal of the artist's hand is juxtaposed by the commercial advertisement of this famous household product. Remember this was long before Warhol again used this iconography to reintroduce commentary on the American lifestyle.

Psychological variables are to be considered when reviewing the conditions under which an artist produced creative works. Wölfli's youth was one of deprivation. His alcoholic father ran off when Wölfli was five, and his mother died soon after. Despite these travails, he managed to complete his education, acquiring the sophisticated literacy so evident in his later work. However, beginning at age twenty-six, his repeated attempts to molest young girls landed him first in jail and, in 1894, in the asylum. (Smith). Though violent at first, by 1899 he calmed down--and began to draw. Working primarily in pencil on newsprint, Wölfli created a dense stunningly detailed medley of wildly imaginative prose texts interwoven with poems, musical compositions, color illustrations, and collages.



**Figure 3: Adolf Wölfli, *Saint-Mary-Castle-Giant-Grape*. 1915.**

Most aesthetes encountering him today will compare him to now more-famous outsider artist Henry Darger (1892–1973) in mind. Like Darger, Wölfli sought to tame his pedophilic madness by organizing it into an incredibly elaborate art exploring what Darger called ‘the realms of the unreal’ where a mind incapable of coping with the real world could construct and rigidly control a world of infinite beauty and sights denied all ordinary mortals.



**Figure 3: Henry Darger, *At Wickey Sansinia they fight their pursuers still nude*.**

Wölfli was technically superior to Darger, though his collages clipped from magazines, he often the Illustrated London News were not so central to his imagination as the clip-and-trace fantasy battles of little girls that obsessed Darger. In fact, Wölfli was strikingly diverse in his imagery, echoing by turns San Francisco psychedelia, Northwest Coast native-American art, folk art from all over the planet, Bauhaus or Constructivist typographical experiments, and William Blake visions. What windstorms were to Darger, waterfalls were to Wölfli: symbols of the uncontrollable passions that drove through him.

Darger left several hundred watercolor paintings Darger left in his room, many of them illustrations. They transform Darger’s apocalyptic text into a body of images that are among the most original and beautiful in outsider art. (Smith).



These works suggest that picturing the reality of the event (hallucinations) by every means available was a pressing need for the artist. Darger painting in large format, making it clear that he conceived the epic format as appropriate to the dimensions of his vision. The logistics of how Darger was able to work on these large pictures in the cramped quarters of his small studio is remarkable.

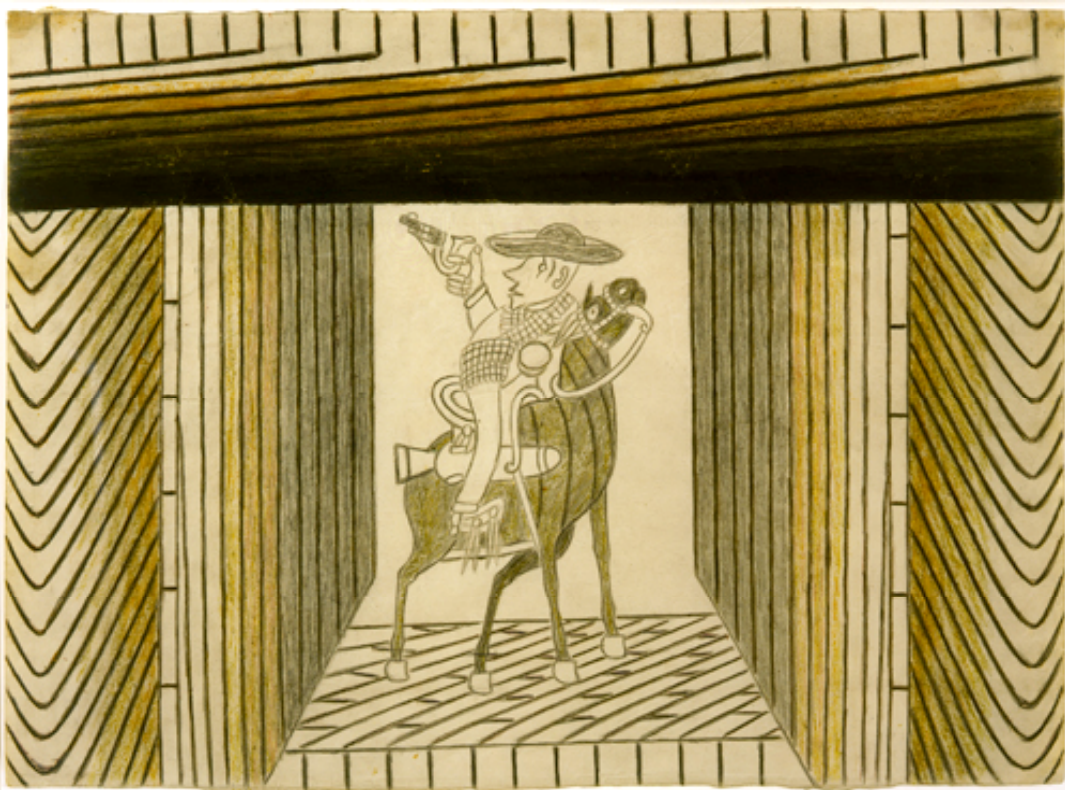
Wölfli may have been more adept at the schooled technique of painting but it is Darger who has influenced generations of artist to capture within themselves the ability to express the untouched, the unspoiled mind. The art then produced has an altered state of being, and thus shape shifts everything around it. The influence of Darger's mental state was the cause of his fantasy life which fueled him to depict the world he saw so fervently and obsessively in his mind.



**Figure 4: Henry Darger, *Untitled*.**

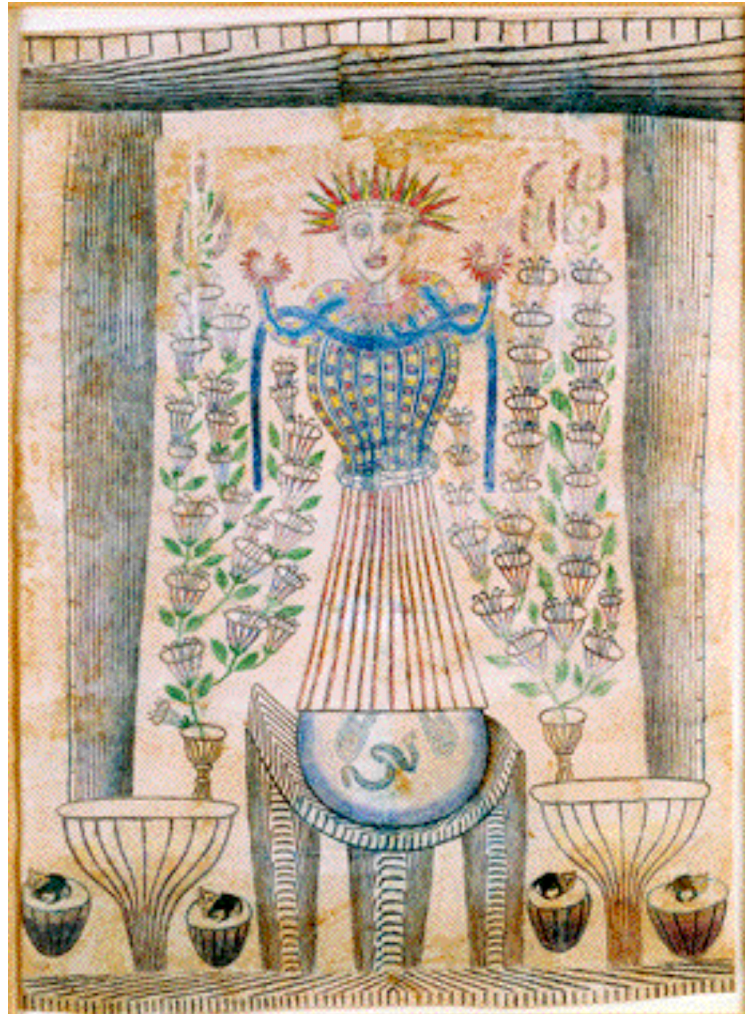
To review another biography, we look to Martín Ramírez, a Mexican laborer who spent the last thirty-two of his sixty-eight years, until his death, in 1963, as an inmate of California mental hospitals, is a fascinating outsider artist. His

retrospective at the American Folk Art Museum was a marvel and a joy. The power of his often large drawings of trains, horsemen, and madonnas almost renders moot the old, crabbed issue of outsidership, the wildwood creativity of asocial and eccentric—perhaps mad—loners, which is sentimentalized by some art people and shunned by most. (Anderson). Ramírez remains obscure, though his work has been widely shown since it was discovered by art-world insiders (the Chicago artist Jim Nutt and the dealer Phyllis Kind), in the late nineteen-sixties.



**Figure 5: Martín Ramírez. *Untitled (Horse and Rider)*.**





**Figure 6: Martín Ramírez. *Untitled (Madonna)*. 1950-53.**

Remarkably little is known of him. From a family of sharecroppers in the conservative, largely Spanish-Creole state of Jalisco, Ramírez became a small rancher, with a wife and four children. Local legend remembers him as a superb horseman. In 1925, deeply in debt, he joined a mighty flow of Mexican workers to the United States for temporary railroad and mining jobs. Starting in 1926, the three-year Cristero Rebellion—in which pious Catholics battled the Draconian anticlerical measures of President Plutarco Elias Calles—ragged in Jalisco. Tens of thousands died, on both sides. The Ramírez ranch was devastated. Recent research has uncovered a strange tale: Ramírez misunderstood a letter from home to say that his wife had joined the hated Federal forces, and he vowed never to return. In any



case, the family lost track of him for years and, but for a nephew's visit in 1952, had no further contact with him. This further lead Ramírez to find solace in his work. In 1931, he was picked up by police, apparently deracinated, in San Joaquin County, California, and committed to Stockton State Hospital. In 1948, he was moved to DeWitt State Hospital, near Sacramento. It seems that he made drawings from at least the late twenties on. A sheaf of them sent from Stockton to his family, in 1948, was hung outdoors and later destroyed. What survives is only his mature work, from fifteen years at DeWitt, in a style that must have undergone considerable evolution. Ramírez attracted the enthusiastic attention of Tarmo Pasto, a psychologist and artist who collected and showed his drawings—one exhibition was called "The Art of a Schizophrenic"—and provided him with materials and privileges. In a corner of a ward of some seventy inmates, Ramírez alone had a worktable. He rarely spoke but had, by all accounts, a pleasant disposition. He was given a diagnosis of incurable schizophrenia, tending toward catatonia. Could he have handled normal life among his own people in rural Mexico? There's no telling now.

"To be beautiful a living creature, and every whole made up of parts, must not only present a certain order in its arrangements of parts, but also be of a certain definite magnitude. Beauty is a matter of size and order and therefore impossible in a very minute creature, since our perception becomes indistinct as it approaches instantaneity; or, secondly, in a creature of vast size, —as in that case, the object cannot be seen all at once and the unity and wholeness of it are lost on the beholder." (Aristotle, *Poetics*)

Rhythmic, expertly managed compositions carve out pictorial space in either, or both, of two ways: with straight hatchings that establish stepped, stagelike recesses; or with curved hatchings that describe receding mounds and valleys. A horseman (at times, a woman), festooned with banderillas and aiming a cocked pistol, or the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception, a snake at her feet, commonly inhabits the proscenium. Trains or lines of cars slither amid the mounds, entering or

exiting dark tunnels. Incidental figures and decorative motifs are deftly integrated in extended formats as much as eight feet high or ten feet long. Except for many reworkings of the horseman—which I surmise was popular with Ramírez’s audience at DeWitt—variation of design and image is constant, full of surprises. The imagery—which includes stags and other animals, cityscapes with churches, and mysterious arcades—looks childlike but is far from crude. (Smith). Figures that are jiggered together from odd shapes and objects that are reduced to simple geometries bespeak choice; they aren’t failed attempts at representation but refined emblems. Paul Klee and Saul Steinberg, among other modern artists, come to mind, but Ramírez’s command of pictorial construction, a kind of strictly paced visual music, is all his own.

Technically, most of Ramírez’s drawings aren’t drawings at all but encaustic-like paintings, done in a fluid paste of melted wax crayons, at times augmented with charcoal, fruit juices, shoe polish, and saliva. He applied it with matchsticks over penciled designs. The bizarre medium yields a subtly potent density of colors, including black, which is lost in reproduction. Seen in the flesh, the lines and shadings stamp themselves on the eye. (It’s as if your sight had suddenly improved.) Material textures give some works painting-like presence. Even with good paper at hand, Ramírez liked to quilt his surfaces from scraps, gluing them with a mixture of bread or oatmeal, saliva, and phlegm. He might attach strips of paper between his hatch lines, with a tactile appeal like that of chine collé (printmaking on layered sheets). Occasionally, he collaged images from magazines. The results, such as a glamour girl’s head and shoulders on a drawn rider, are charming and even witty, but formally ragged. Beyond such japes, the only weak pictures in the show are what are quite likely large worksheets, on which Ramírez rehearsed miscellaneous ideas with little thought to their over-all unity.

What is it like to be an outsider? Outside what? Ramírez worked cogently from within his memory, imagination, and talent. He also belonged to an actual culture, that of a mid-century American mental hospital. His wombish mounds and

tunnels lend themselves to psychoanalytic interpretation with suspect alacrity. I'll bet they excited the doctors. (We all develop our personal styles by noticing what people like about us, and exaggerating it.) A weekly movie night at DeWitt in the fifties probably featured Westerns, which might have reinvigorated Ramírez's memories of his equestrian days. Trains came and went near both Stockton and DeWitt. Bold drawings of a man seated at a table and, framed above him by converging walls, a passing locomotive—shades of "Folsom Prison Blues"—economically summarize the artist's situation. (Maizels). But Ramírez's work does exude distinct and poignant psychological content: a self-consoling, voluptuous escape into states alternately, or at once, maternal and virile—raptures of a loved boy. He surely suffered, but his subject was an accessible happiness.

"To some the sermon simply brought home the fact that they had been sentenced, for an unknown crime, to an indeterminate period of punishment. And while a good many people adapted themselves to confinement and carried on their humdrum lives as before, there were others who rebelled and whose one idea now was to break loose from the prison-house." (Camus, *The Plague*)

Ramírez, along with the institutionalized Swiss Adolf Wölfli and the reclusive Chicago janitor Henry Darger, both subjects of memorable retrospectives at the Folk Art Museum. Ramírez differs in key respects from the two others. Unlike them, he seems not to have suffered a traumatic childhood. Nor did he evince pedophilia (acted on by Wölfli, projected in an epic narrative of girl warriors by Darger). Ramírez's art is less rich in formal invention than Wölfli's and in poetic resonance than Darger's, but it is more stylistically resolved and emotionally concentrated. He has in common with them an extravagant giftedness. All would have been stars in any art school, had they attended one. That they eluded contact with institutions of fine art owes something to personal disarray and something to chance, in a ratio impossible to gauge. It's a small thing, which makes them hard cases, exceptions proving the existence of a rule—that art, to be recognized as

such, requires grounding in both individual biography and common culture. What can we do with and about the rush of pleasure and enchantment that the unlicensed genius of a Ramírez affords? I recommend taking it as a lesson in the limits of how we know what we think we know.

When looking at another extraordinary artist, whose work falls more in the category of naïve painters there is Séraphine Louis- often called Séraphine de Senlis. One is immediately captivated by the other-worldly flowers—flaming bouquets embroidered with the colors of ecstasy, that glaring yellow, alarming serpent green, reassuring autumnal wine red, and naively confident, radiant turquoise. Séraphine was absolutely adamant about making her own paint—mixing her magical colors from elements found on her daily walks through the French countryside. Her secretive spirit provoked the few around her to inquire about her recipes but alas she never disclosed her confidential and divine inspired methods. She allowed no one to watch her mix her paints nor any of the process of painting. She often painted in candlelight long into the night. What provoked Séraphine to paint? She was a self-taught painter who began later in life who's nature and disease possessed her to paint fleshy plants with heavy-lidded fruits, ornamental foliage made of feathers who shimmering eyes seem to open and close in communication with the viewer which reflects her deep and spiritual relationship with nature.



**Figure 7: Séraphine Louis. *Untitled*.**

Until the immanent art collector Wilhelm Uhde discovered her works, Séraphine subsisted on working odd jobs, cleaning houses and providing laundry services. Because she lived alone, was in the peasant class and kept a fairly recluse lifestyle many did not know her troubling schizophrenic tendencies. Séraphine did not truly advance as an artist until she was supported by Uhde thus allowing her to paint day and night as she wished. The art-world monopolizes expression of beauty and goodness of psychical reality, the craving for which no riches of external nature can gratify. In nature we can find reflected the beauty we already contain. But art assists us to regain what we have lost.



**Figure 8: Séraphine Louis. *Untitled*.**

"You must picture the consternation of our little town, hitherto so tranquil, and now, out of the blue, shaken to its core, like a quite healthy man who all of a sudden feels his temperature shoot up and the blood seething like wildfire in his veins." (Camus, *The Plague*)

Schizophrenia in many respects can be attributed to the creative avalanche of these artists. In order to cope with their disease, art became their treatment to maintain a healthy sexuality, and protected them from the onset of pedophilia.



Reviewing the studies dissecting the role of sexual function in schizophrenia can lead to harnessing the power. Patients with schizotypic symptoms, which can be broken down into four distinct categories such as:

A. Unusual experiences: The disposition to have unusual perceptual and other cognitive experiences, such as hallucinations, magical or superstitious belief and interpretation of events.

B. Cognitive disorganization: A tendency for thoughts to become derailed, disorganized or tangential.

C. Introverted anhedonia: A tendency to introverted, emotionally flat and asocial behavior, associated with a deficiency in the ability to feel pleasure from social and physical stimulation.

D. Impulsive nonconformity: The disposition to unstable mood and behavior particularly with regard to rules and social conventions.

These factors can contribute to accessing and maintaining the creative drive more successfully than individuals who do not possess them. If an artist follows or actively formulates these symptoms into habitual form, then she will trigger the synapses necessary for an abundance of inspiration to be utilized appropriately. Can an increased level of libido create a chemical balance in the brain, decreasing the disease and offering an environment compatible with creativity? Could this creativity be then transformed into artistic expression leading to the treatment of the patient? Since traditional medication tend to numb the patient's creativity leading to diminished inspiration and artistic focus.

Schizophrenia may blur the boundary between internal and external realities by over activating a brain system that is involved in self-reflection, and thus causing an exaggerated focus on self. Schizophrenia also involves an excess of connectivity between the so-called default brain regions, which are involved in self-reflection and become active when we are thinking about nothing in particular, or thinking about ourselves. "People normally suppress this default system when they perform challenging tasks, but we found that patients with schizophrenia don't do this," said John D. Gabrieli, a professor in the McGovern Institute for brain

Research at MIT. "We think this could help to explain the cognitive and psychological symptoms of schizophrenia." Gabrieli added that he hopes the research might lead to ways of predicting or monitoring individual patients' response to treatments for this mental illness, which occurs in about one percent of the population.

The way in which we each individually perceive the world offers new insight and great beauty into the vast universe that is our brain, especially if it is abnormal in function. Creativity is more prevalent in patients who have schizotypic symptoms because they have the ability to see the world from a unique perspective, therefore adding to the understanding of the creative spirit. Individuals with schizotypic symptoms should be more integrated into art based programs society becoming contributors to society instead of being isolating, therefore exacerbating their symptoms. Brilliant artists have historically possessed schizotypic symptoms which elevate their ability to express artistic. Schizotypic symptoms can be treated through the development of exercises targeting creative excellence. It can be deduced that the symptoms of schizophrenia are the same attributes that artists strive for in order to maintain high levels of creativity and inspiration. An artist absolutely must have unique experiences that inform their work, embrace non-conformity, have a level of disorganization in order to think outside the linear norm, and finally it is imperative to have some distance from the normalized society in order to create 'new' work. It is one thing for a 'healthy' artist to use these as exercises to produce work but it is another thing entirely for a schizophrenic patient who can't control the voices they hear, the irrational behavior, and eventually they will drift out into the end of nothingness, alone.

Lars will remain on medication, but desires to unleash his creativity once again. He is not only talented and self-taught, but is fearless in riding the wave between control and uncontrol, fantasy and reality, functionality and comatose. There have been recent talk with the Dustin Yellin Gallery to create a residency program which I have spearheaded to bring supplies and donors to the artists who have valuable and fleeting contributions to society.



At the same time, researchers are working hard to prevent patients from the inevitable of traveling over the edge of insanity and never again returning. What if before they stopped functioning schizophrenic artists were given all the support needed to capture the madness, the inspiration for the betterment of society. Perhaps it is more important to sacrifice the quality of the later years of an artist's life to harness that brilliance.

Upon reviewing the biographies of these influential schizophrenic artists, it is clear that struggling artists between the ages of 18-25 living in urban areas who have been diagnosed with schizophrenia will improve and increase the quality and production of great art by ending their antipsychotic treatment, getting first choice for artist residencies where they are allowed to create work any time of day/night, have ample supplies, allow them to create their working environment.

*"No longer were there individual destinies; only a collective destiny, made of plague and emotions shared by all." (Camus, The Plague).*

*"The burning question of today is the proposal put by the conspirators which is about removing all things living and dead between Heaven and Earth. In this way they think that they will be able to make room for something new and better, which is supposed to come out of the rays of the sun. However, I shall apply for permission to form an exception." ~writing of schizophrenic patient taken from the Institute of Psychiatric Demography, 1977.*

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**Creativity**

A mental and/or social process involving the generation of new ideas or concepts, or new associations of the creative mind between existing ideas or concepts. Creativity is fueled by the process of either conscious or unconscious insight which in turn.

**Madness**

The state of being mad; insanity; mental disease.  
Unrestrained excitement or enthusiasm.

**Treatment**

Care provided to improve a situation.  
A manner of dealing with something artistically.

**Exile**

A person who is voluntarily absent from home or country.

**Sexuality**

That which is characterized or distinguished by sex; sexual activity; the concern with, or interest in sexual activity; sexual potency; sexual

**Delusion**

The act of deluding; deception by creating illusory ideas.

**Cognition**

The process of knowing; a result of a cognitive process.

**Fear**

Be afraid or feel anxious or apprehensive about a possible or probable situation or event.

**Apathy**

An absence of emotion or enthusiasm.

