

Belle and the Beast

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dualities in creativity



by

Jaroslava Votrubová

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translation Jiřina Šálková 2009

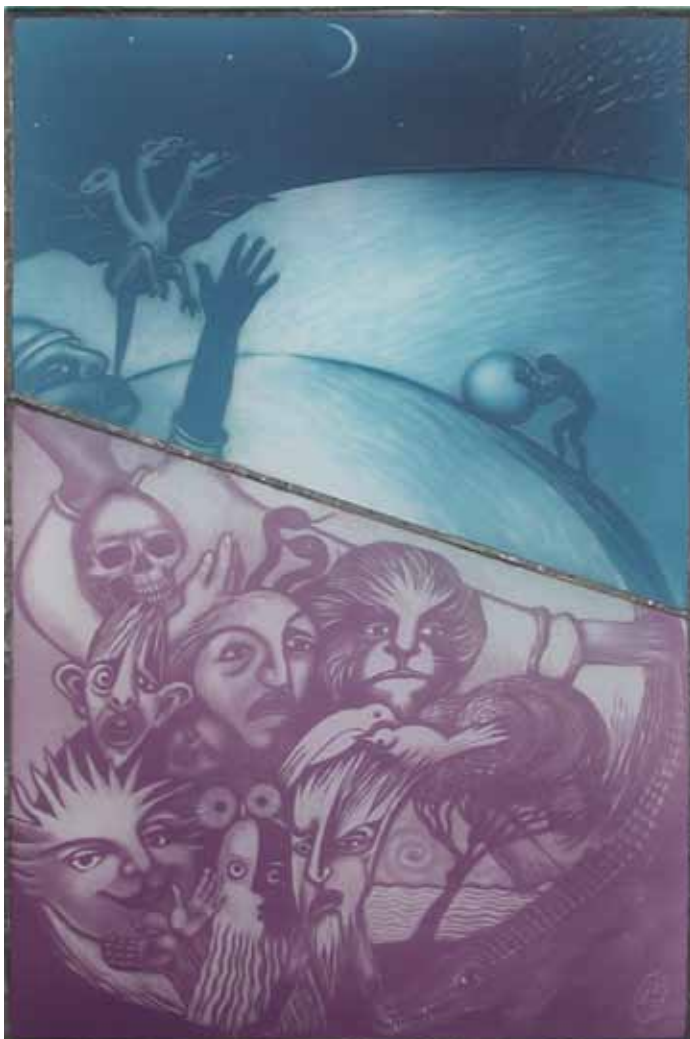
Belle and the Beast

The story Belle and the Beast is well known. One possible explanation of this story is that the two main characters represent dual parts of ourselves. The bright and dark side of our personalities. The bright side can be identified with reason and our dark side with instinct. In current civilisation practise and in art that represents it, the dark is usually shown as a used animal. Admired for its savageness or an animal tamed by reason. Sometimes the Beast cannot even be seen or heard, and trampled under the earth it covertly harms us. This is a great shame. When in the two characters fall in love, the beast becomes more human. When you use the instinctive combined with reason, the raw instinct becomes more human.

In art we use both sides of our personality, consciousness and instinct. A work of art does not have to be banal truth. It can be an overstatement, absurd play and yet we can sense the laws of humanity. If these patterns and laws are missing, or almost missing, the art work is then plain and cannot vibrate anything in ourselves or convey a message to others.



*Pic. 1 My Animal Self - engraved glass
- You never have your animal self totally under control. Sometimes it may surprise you.*



Art is playing with the imagination. In a simplified form it records outer and inner patterns of material and program structures. Program structures are behavioural paradigms, physical laws, body rhythms, proportions, the language of dreams and the grammar of languages. They represent our inner and outer realities. Much can be read from these program structures about their constructions. It is like looking at a reflection in a mirror, though the image reflected is still dim. Initially it may look terribly complicated, but in fact we are very well equipped to read these messages. The messages are a complex woven structure, but their basic patterns are visible when using the short-cuts offered to us by Art. That is because Art can emphasize what is important and highlight the essential elements. Art is in fact, a modelling programme, modelling possibilities of chaotic structures. A similar, but much simpler example is the computer programs used for modelling images of weather forecasting.

*Pic. 2 Reason and Dream - engraved glass
Here you can see Reason grow up his theories alike Sysifos his stone up the hill. Dream lies on the ground standing on his positions. Shad up with the absurdities, I will close the mouth, I am Reason.*

They can model anything playing with all possible relationships in pattern and structure.

Imaginary light can be combined with the darkness of intuition. Conscious perception can be widened by getting more and more experience with Life. This work required different qualities to develop within us. Qualities that do not follow a black and white or polarised way of seeing, but that allow for a colourful perception of the world to be truly seen. The only thing I did in my creative development was that I have paid more attention when looking into the mirror. I compared the essential similarities of its dim reflections, and to understand these messages I used the light gained in other parts of my life. In this essay I will introduce my ideas about art making by describing the basis of what I have seen in the mirror. I will use the useful metaphor of the world as a game we are all playing much like characters in a theatre. Let's look at the world as if it was a theatre. The basic elements are the story, characters in different roles and the stage.

Life as a game we all are players in

Since the beginning of this journey I have been interested in the creative process. I started by making a mind map of the process to try and describe it. We have all tried to understand it and still not many people are able to describe it. Let's say you want to paint a picture, design a vase, or build a shop. The process you go through to create anything is a process of change. Change will let you change the world or yourself a little bit.

A board game plan is a good way to explain and map the creative process. The playing field of the board game is a square, which is divided into four triangles of different colours. Each triangle symbolise four different parts of the creative process: DREAMING, FEAR AND WORRY, ASPIRATION AND STRUGGLE and finally HAPPINESS.

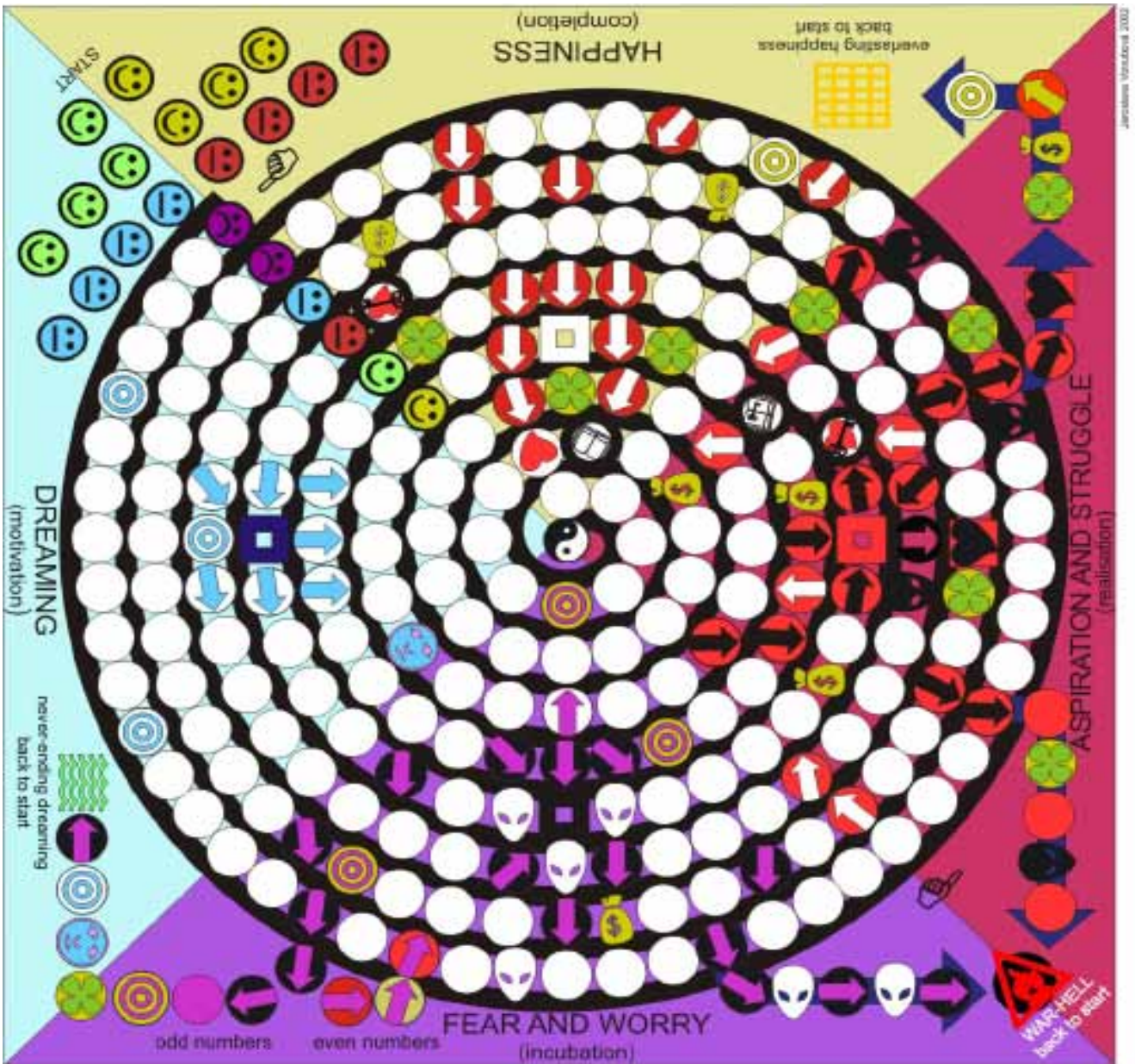
I will now explain each of these four parts in more detail.

1/DREAMING: Dreaming and inspiration, the inner need to create is the first phase. Forming various concepts, gathering of information, having the vague anticipation of something maybe an Idea. There are many possibilities, but which one is the one? Therefore, the first part of the process is motivation. Creation of the concept, making the plan. Those who can dream, know, that this process is impossible without relaxation.

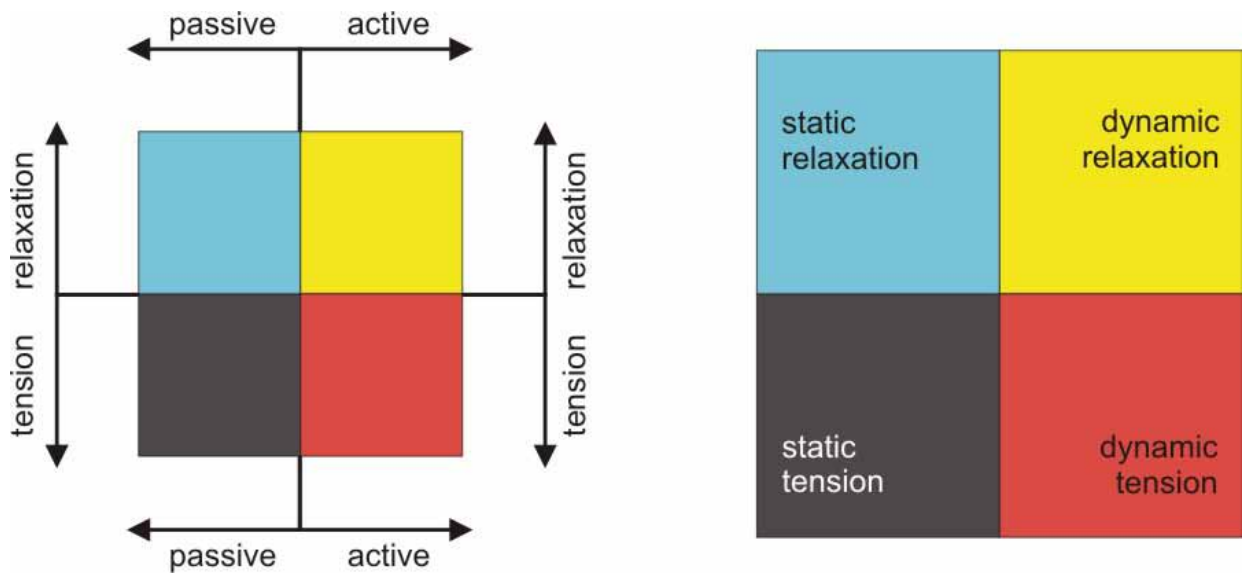
2/FEAR AND WORRY: You do not know how to start, how to make it work out the best way, which of the possibilities is the best one to choose. The second phase is crisis. Pressure inside is to resolve this situation increases, the thing is not decided yet. It still isn't the right thing. Ideas need to ripen; skill needs to be practised, to find the right grip on things and the pathway forward. The ripening phase is also called incubation; and it is an obscure – actually secret - part of the process. You cannot think that once you have the idea you are finished, it is just the beginning.

3/ ASPIRATION AND STRUGGLE: Ideas show the way to activity, begins the invocation. If the whole is divided into more layers, they can be solved one by one, in many steps. Invocation – struggle and effort, working on the implementation of the plan is the third part of the process.

4/ HAPPINESS: By implementing the plan we enter phase four. The change has become true, we are finished. Now we need to evaluate the thing we have made and analyze the outcome. Even after years of experience this is the most difficult part. Not everyone is able to finish this phase. Sometimes ensuring the right distance to be able to analyze the work takes years. To be able to look at the thing you have created, and critically say whether it really is what we wanted, whether it is good enough! Easy to say, but...



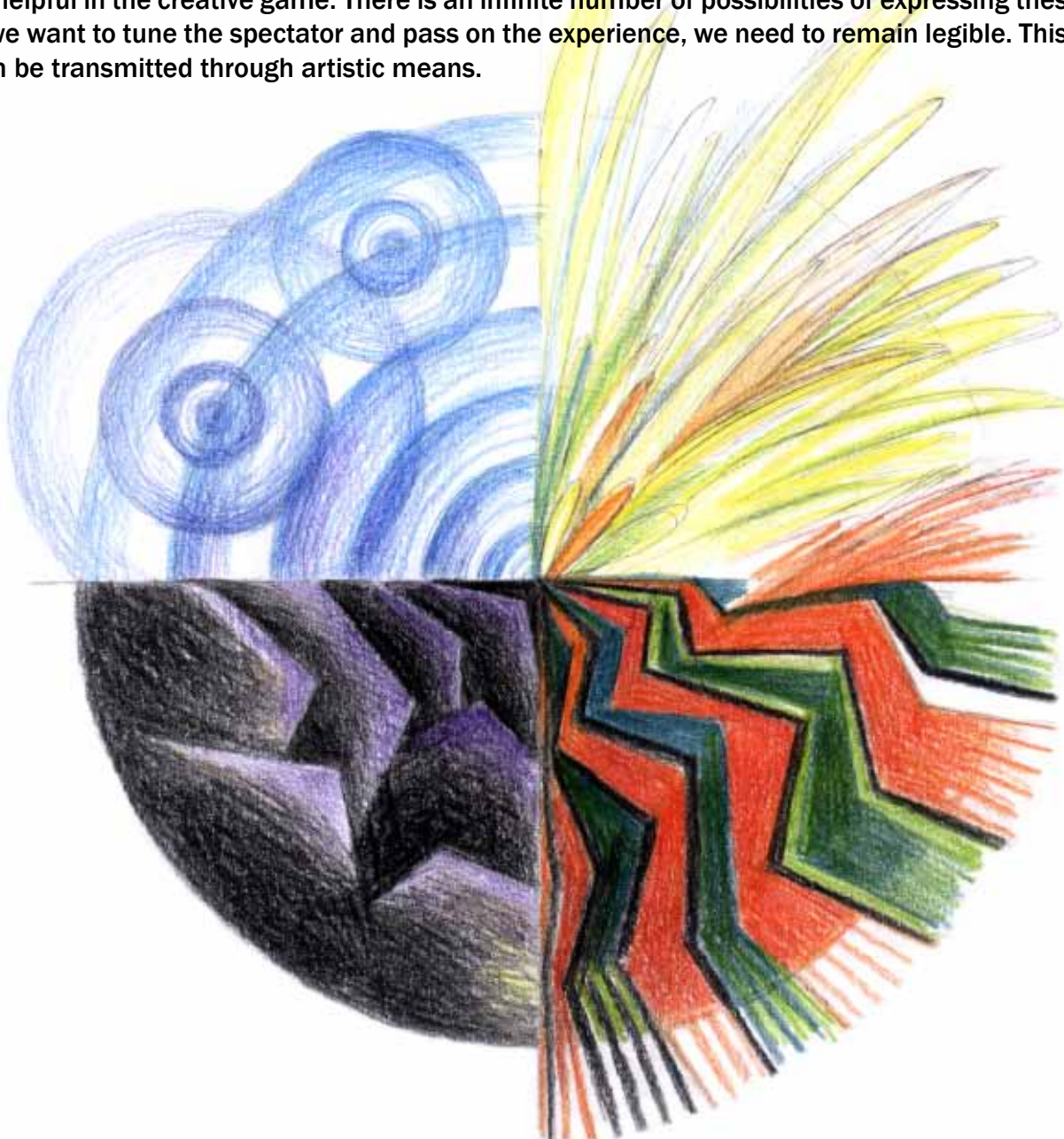
Pic. 3 Board-game plan



Pic. 4 Dynamic changes in creative process - diagram from explaining creativity

Now that we understand the four phases of the creative process let us go back and think about the game. In the game each player has 4 counters; these are the characters in the game. The counters solve difficult tasks, which we divide into more steps. The playing area starts on the edge of the blue triangle (refer to the diagrams). According to the throw and luck of the dice, the counter finds its place nearer or farther from the end of the game. The way to the end of the game is a spiral shape which repeatedly goes through all the phases of the creative process. The phases become shorter and shorter with more experience, each time we learn something more. But there are many obstacles and shortcuts, even traps.

The four phases allow different experience and it will be seen in the formal side of artistic interpretation. The four phases are they are static tension, dynamic tension, static relief and dynamic relief. To capture the experience we use many different means such as syntax, rhythm, composition, colours, gestures and stances. Each of the four qualities corresponds with a different state of body. These four basic experiences symbolically connect with the four elements: static relief with Water, static tense with Earth, dynamic tense with Fire and dynamic relief with Air. Here we have two of these qualities described as Fire and Water. Both elements can be either harmful or helpful in the creative game. There is an infinite number of possibilities of expressing these, but if we want to tune the spectator and pass on the experience, we need to remain legible. This state can be transmitted through artistic means.



Pic. 5 In picture five we can see an example of the four ornaments formally representing the four states.



Pic. 6 and 7 Watercolour Fire and Watercolour Water - two of body state expressed alike two elements. Every phase of the creative process is at the same time an area of experience, that has a logic of its own. The fact that we appeared in there tunes us in specifically.

Let's imagine dreaming of something new, something beautiful that we long to do, learn or experience... Perhaps find the love of your life and create a wonderful relationship together, have a beautiful baby. The idea first comes in a calm, slow way. Music and dance are very good means for expressing this. Dreamy adagio creates the right atmosphere. A view of still water, images of



Pic. 8 Utopia - engraved glass

dreamlike landscapes, harmoniously merging with nature. The colour blue drags you into relaxation, into a dream. However, a dream can be absolutely impossible to make true. There are eternal dreams, dreams that are against the laws of nature, which can never be realised, like dreaming of creating a perpetuum mobile or dreaming of an ideal land where wolf and sheep are friends. We can call these Utopian dreams. In the playing area there are also three traps we can fall into, which hinder our progress. The first trap are never-ending dreams, or impracticable dreams. If people retreat to unfeasible dreams

which can never be realised, deep inside the influences of these dreams play their role. In the game, if the counter ends up in a trap, which can happen to anyone, they must return to start and begins to solve a different issue. Life can be different.

If we pass the first phase of DREAMING successfully, we enter the second FEAR AND WORRY. Tension gradually increases and we do not know what to do and how to do it. And, in the meantime, somewhere deep inside, the possibilities start to form, we're looking for a way to realise our ideas. Our will to put the idea into effect increases, tension also increases, remains static. Music illustrating this state of mind is slow, ponderous and melancholic. Deep in thought, a kind of standpoint. The idea or composition focused on its centre, full of tension, almost without movement. Pressure before a great storm of activity.



Pic. 11 War - engraved glass



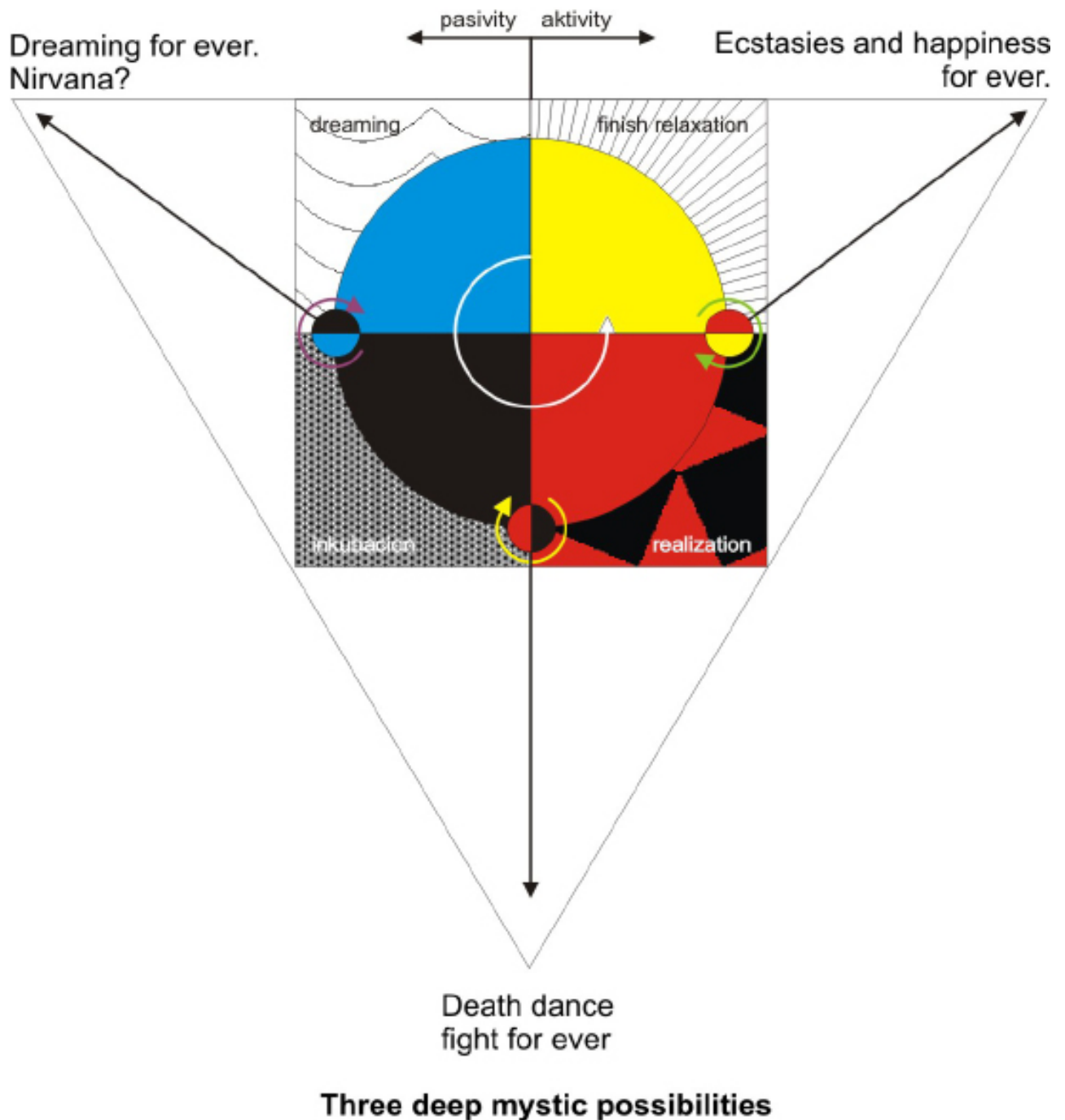
Pic. 9 Depression - engraved glass



Pic. 10 Dance - engraved glass

Once the Idea starts, we move into the creative phase of **ASPIRATION AND STRUGGLE**. At the beginning we try hard and maybe many times with many different ideas. Ideas are like an open channel, the energy is released, where it can deliver its job. It can be many things, a new shape, new technology, thousands of new acts. Here we can even find our place in society, how

Special possibility, when exist some deep reason to stop the circulation



Pic. 12 Motor - this is different depiction of the creative process, here you can see it from different side. Here are the three traps putted into triangle. My inspiration came from images of alchemy.

we dreamt of finding and creating the right partnerships and much more. It almost seems that we are solving many different layers, education, profession, family relations. Some times the success is effortless, and in other things we never succeed. That is why everyone has four counters in the game – four areas for development. Third phase is implementation of the idea, the battle for its completion. This phase is full of conflicts. The music expressing this mood will be dynamic, full of tension and reversions, and so will be the composition of pictures – huge contrasts, big movements and tension.

Sometimes it happens that the idea never comes and there is no solution. The counter ends up in the second trap. Second trap can be passive, like standing in depression.

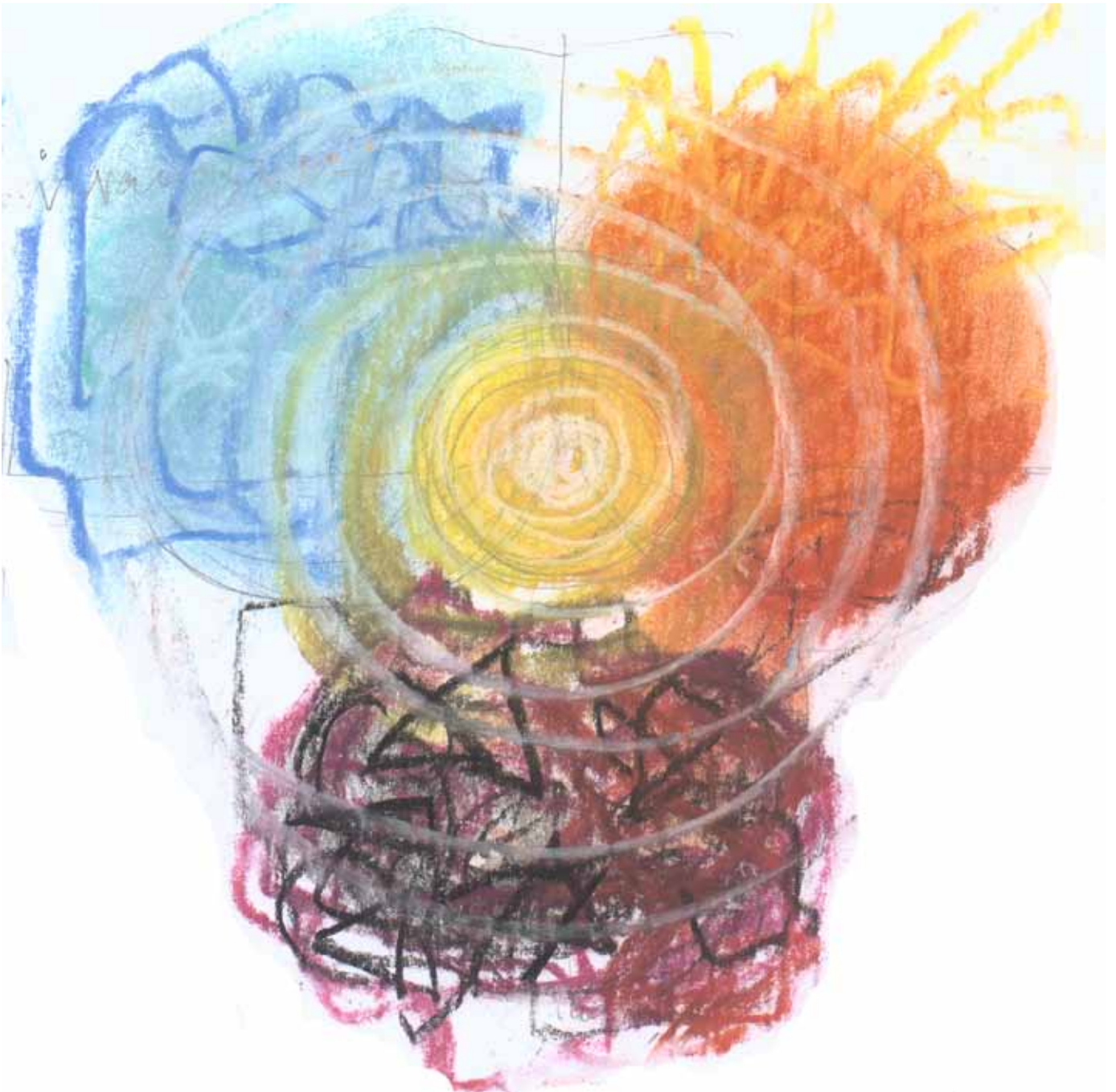
Even when an idea has emerged, but the problem has no feasible solution, we end up in the second trap. We have fought, but failed, victory we seek is unreachable. War, hopelessness, and hell. It seems that some people are continually trapped here. Either they fight and show great effort, or fall into depression. As if they know no other state of mind and cannot relax. Others refuse any kind of fight, because they feel that all is in vain and there is no meaning to anything. They feel like a fish out of water or they play possum, pretending they are not there. These people have a motto „He who does nothing makes no harm“.

By implementing the plan or idea successfully we enter phase four, HAPPINESS. The change we sort has become true, we are finished. Music can express everything, even a big victory, when all is finished successfully. Great dynamic relief, like ecstasy. Joy at the emerging sunshine after a storm. Music can also express amazement at the new view of the world.

The third trap we can fall into now, is desire to celebrate endlessly, to remain in everlasting happiness. Stop searching for things, never try new things again, only enjoy. Partly it is the desire of the current world, influenced by all the advertisements showing happy go lucky life, where all our problems are solved by an insurance company or a new car or mobile phone. It is like in Brueghel's painting *The Land of Cockaigne*. But the life goes on and to do nothing more means to stop developing, to stop the process of change.



Obr. 13 Pieter Brueghel - *The Land of Cockaigne*



Pic. 14 We can see the four possibilities of artistic inspiration. How the view of the world and oneself changes with different angles and from different places on this imaginary map.

The game is a simplified model of a complex system where everything influences everything else. This process of visualisation is descriptive. It allows you to show to anyone, even to small children, what effort is needed for creation and learning. The game clearly depicts simplicity and complexity. Simplicity lies in logical patterns within the process, complexity lies in the great interconnectivity, mutual influencing and in the endless quantity of possibilities between each phase.

When we create we are creating a new face of the world. The learning process is like receiving a relay baton. Learn what someone before us created or implemented. Reasonable pedagogical methods respect the basic scheme of creative process, aim to motivate, not scare; help to accomplish the task and evaluate the outcome. In our lives we position many of the arrows either accelerate or slow down the passage through the playing area, by our attitude, beliefs, stances and views on things and events. Here we see clearly, person with positive attitude contributes to

their own success. They are aiming in the right direction with their attitude its things flow well for them. On the contrary a person, whose energy is impeded because it is needed for combating the obstacles they place on themselves, is slowed down by inner antagonism and an inability to loosen this energy.

Change is the basis of all stories. Art can express moods of all its phases, draws not only from the inner experiencing, but can also find equivalent moods in nature and transform them into culture. Given the message takes place in the same time as music, theatre and film, it can gradually guide you through all stages or depict only one. The story can have a happy-ending or can be a tragedy. It is possible to join together more story lines. Every phase of the creative process is at the same time an area of experience, that has a logic of its own. The piece of art means a stopping in time, accenting a certain momentary state, a single point. At the same time many other circumstances come into account, such as the beauty of shapes, playing with space, material, senses. All that, can be different according to the mood of the person. Just like a dream, even the art can be a deadly embrace, horror or action like in an action film. We chasing and struggle for survival. It can see the world from the point of view of a man trapped in one of the traps. However it can also chose to see from the point of view of amazement and understanding of coherence of nature.

In the picture 14 we can see the four possibilities of artistic inspiration – i.e. how the view of the world and oneself changes with different angles and from different places on this imaginary map.

It is like being able to see the world from many different points of view, like in different moods during creation. Tuning in at a particular note helps us emotionally resonate and put ourselves in the desired place. This tuning in can be connected with other activities as well – we will talk about some of them a little later.

In order for the game to unwind well and to able to finish the game, it is essential that good chances prevail. You can play around with it and add obstacles, or put in more good chances and then watch how it influences the game. Different cultures have different obstacles set in different ways – wholly and partially in various areas. It is impossible that a culture that bans depicting of humans would develop figural painting, etc.

A person who has good experience with creating creates more easily, and someone who has learnt a lot, learns more easily. This is not only about creating in areas traditionally seen as creative work. We talk about changes and stories of all kinds. It is not a human privilege! Hunting is also one of the stories, hunger being the motivation, crisis and searching for where to attack, opportunity, struggle and effort, evaluation of outcome in the form of consummation.

Stories and plots are mingling, the following two pictures are a capturing of a rich story structure. The phases of the process are expressed through colour. In the practical life there are usually more people working one task. Here we can see what a scheme of a big and successful structure can look like – let's say fulfilment of the dream of flying. The next picture is a state of war, a situation when nothing works out and we are under the threat of breaking down into an imaginary black hole. These of my paintings are similar to paintings by fractalists who also draw from the chaos theory.



Pic. 15 and 16 Rich story structure

On this two pictures we can see scheme of global creative structure. On the first one there is big and successful structure. It can look like - let's say fulfilment of the dream of flying. The next picture is a state of war, a situation when nothing works out and we are under the threat of breaking down into an imaginary black hole. These paintings of mine are similar to paintings by fractalists who also draw from the chaos theory.



Back to the Theatre - Characters in the game

In current psychology I was particularly interested in the psychoanalytical method of Voice Dialogue. It is a transparent modern system that represents the artists' world view. It follows functional units, creates inner architecture and does not fall into details. In the book I quote "Intelligenz der Psyche" (Soul Intelligence) by Artho S. Witteman, he states...

„Inner voices are individuals of their kind, responsible for a part of our behaviour, a little part of our personality. Voices have their location in the space around the person – in front of them, on either side, down, up... these voices can be called separately and we can talk to them, compare their relationships and smoothen the mutual tensions, the errors in these little programmes. Voices can be divided into 5 continents, i.e. Woman, Man, Child, Animal and God. Every continent then has a few basic sub-types, e.g. Woman has the sub-types Woman-Mother, Woman-Lover, Woman-Manager etc., and – which is more important – every person has their inner voices created by their own history. Another subdivision of the voices specifies them according to functions, type of usage... It is an inner society, complexity, counterpart of the outside society, with which it communicates through its delegate voices.“

And I would like to add here that we can meet the Beauty and the Beast here as well. We have many voices inside ourselves, various archetypal programmes. We use them when we communicate with other people. Voice – mother talks to another mother, where it concerns motherhood. Even the father has the mother voice somewhere inside, and vice versa.

Stories and plots are always intermingling. In life there is usually more than one person working on a single task. Characters in the game stem from the division of tasks in real life. The scale of characters in life and the game can be explained with the help of an archetypal system. The foundations of these divisions of labour can be seen in the hierarchies of ancient mythologies such as the Greek gods. Another similar system is used in tarot cards systems of hierarchies. The

structure of inner voices corresponds with the structure of tasks of individual people and hierarchies in the family and society. Whole groups of people also join similar structures, according to profession and interests. Just like fashionistas who gather around the catwalks of New York or Paris or football fans meeting at the stadiums, doctors, architects, and others create other interest groups. We have multiple levels of similar structures. As one old alchemist point of view puts it: The same on the top and at the bottom!



Pic. 17 In thorny shrubs I was able to connect the inner self with the outer world, just like the dreams sometimes do. There are scars, thorns inside the man that attack him from inside and the poor man fights in pain. He reacts to everything and the thorns resonate and become more painful. The man thinks that the whole world is plotting against him; he needs and uses weapons and power to conquer his enemies. But he does not solve his problem; he merely lapses into the problem more and more. His inner wounds drag the man into the trap of "War".



Pic. 18, 19, 20, 21 The jester and clown are usually the portrayal of the inner child. A rare part of the personality, which should not be lost even in adulthood. Here you can see a few of my pictures of clowns. Clown variants, Clown Child, Clown Dreamer, Clown Pretending Cubism, Mischievous Guffaw.

My work and how I interpret the systems

We do not have enough time to talk about the system in detail, and so I will describe only a few characters which play in the game of Life.

Typical characters in the human tragicomedy end up in characteristic situations. They can be recorded as cartoons or even parables. Here you can see a man - a workaholic, who fights in a war, he fights for better position in life, power, fame and money. He tries to eliminate threats. He does not see that he plods in the devilish wheel of workaholism. It is a situation similar to the one with inner thorns, only hidden a little better.

This is images of the workaholic is also a collective vision for many people. Imagine an animated film titled "The Great Economic War". The first scene, a workaholic plodding in his little wheel somewhere in Hell, the wheel breaks loose and runs through the country. Around him many such wheels and balls, form a race for life, they all storm through the country, leaving behind an exploited land. Their motto He who doesn't come with us, goes against us! We won't give anyone a chance! Then in the next scene, there are many wheels, somewhere with more individuals inside, they throw out the exhausted and fallen people, and supplement the manpower with new, fresh bodies. The wheels collaborate, bind together, they get rid of their slower allies to lose dead-weight, be more efficient. The groups of wheels openly compete with each other. Those who stay behind will become short in resources, energy and will die. The pace grows faster all the time, they have stormed the planet, leaving a wasted desert land behind, they approach the starting point... and all this begins again or does it?



Pic. 22 „Workaholic“- engraved glass

The Hans Christian Andersen's story „Emperor's New Dress“ has inspired me since childhood. It is one of the most beautiful stories ever written. During the 1989 Velvet Revolution in the Czech Republic I realised that the situation resembles exactly the situation in this story. All of a sudden everyone knew they could say aloud what they think, because the small child has said it (there were more children, and a little older, but otherwise just like in the story!) The frauds were identified and denounced and there was nothing that could prevent banishing them from the society.

I have been rethinking and interpreting this story for a long time; how to put the subject of the Emperor into an engraving. I had this fixed idea that there must be pink in the picture and I



Pic. 23 Emperors New Dress - engraved glass

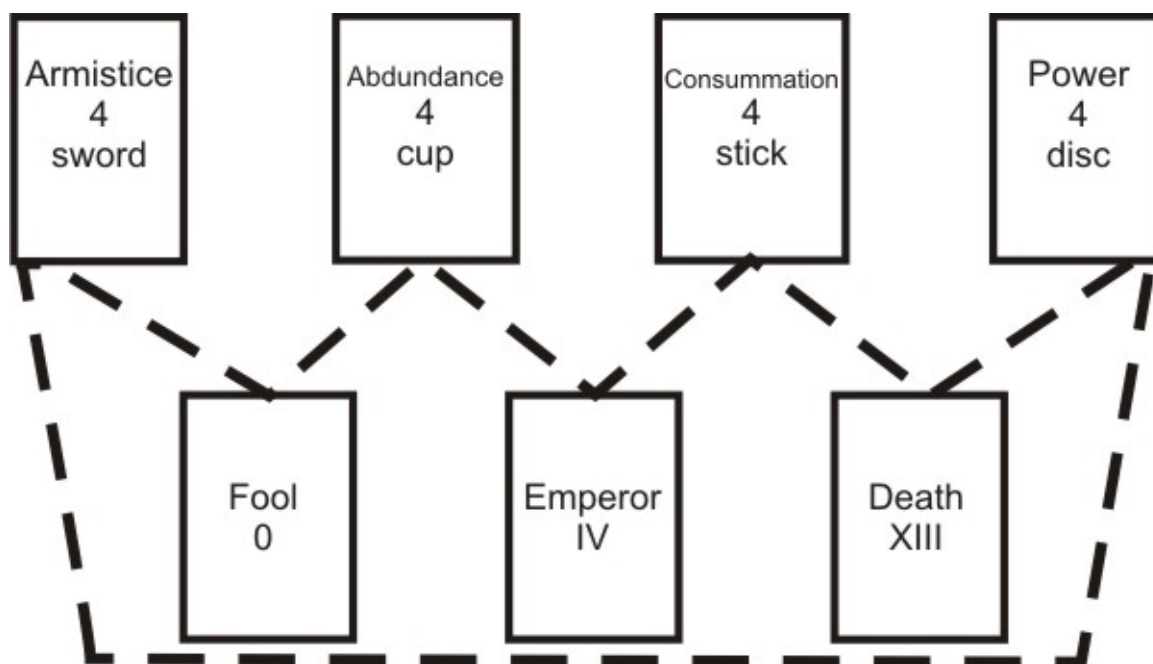
didn't know why. And then I realised it is narcissism, that is what caught the Emperor in the trap! I am preparing the picture, thinking about the characters. Colours are set. The Emperor will be in pink. Golden ruby of heart related issues is fit for depicting a disease of heart. The Frauds will be purple and the people blue.

This time I will use tarot cards to interpret this same subject. Tarot card that illustrates the Emperor is called Constellation "Emperor", a formation bearing the shape of a crown. Constellation Emperor represents personal power and leadership, both inside such as inner voices within all of us, as well as in the society. It tries to force us to master the qualities of leadership and show them so that they would elevate us as the leader but also the others. Linked to this is the ability to negotiate, the card Armistice, experience of emotional fill. This card is called Abundance; the ability to demonstrate the inner integrity and carry out one's Consummation and have the Power to Elevate the Soul. The Emperor archetype shows him as leadership without fear. He holds power firmly in hands and yet does not depend on a result.

Two more cards belong to the constellation of the Emperor. One is Death, which is at the same time rebirth meaning metamorphosis. To cope with death means that death cannot blackmail us, we can cast away our bonds and step out freely. To be able to start something new, being full of courage and not fear, we have the card Fool. Fool is the inner child, one who arrives. Never

ceases to marvel at the miracle of life that has no fear. Fools in an ambivalent card, always interpreted according to the position of other cards. It can be wise or foolish.

In the blue area we can see the subjects. The Emperor does not see them; they know about him and therefore do not have to hide anything. Above are two ladies. One of them is shocked; the other enchanted by Emperor's nakedness, a handsome male body is not often seen on display like here. She is moved in her heart and a little lower. The Old Man is silent and keeps his thoughts to himself, after all there are always some frauds fooling the powerful, and through them then manoeuvre the crowds. The Jester-Fool in his foolish form applauds, is delighted at this crazy game.



Pic. 24 Constellation „Emperor“ in Tarot cards

The Mother stands on the ground, the older child, itself naked, points at the naked Emperor. The child knows what it means to be naked! The Mother is angry, but not at the child, at the Emperor. Bringing up children is not easy, it takes a lot of effort, they need to learn to understand the world. How can we help them see what is false and what is real? Should we educate them to be idiots? This is a great parable, an excellent message about the laws and patterns of human behaviour. This is how the language of dreams talks to use. It is valid at the same moment on many levels. It is valid for the outer and inner world, and even for their agreement. If you read the fable word for word, just like a concrete story, it is not very plausible, but as an allegory?

The Emperor is vindictive against the children's world view, because he is not mature enough to know their value. That is why a small child (not fooled yet) caught him unprepared. And it could have been only a small child or a fool, because they cannot be held accountable. They have no fear, do not understand what they are doing and they know they are right.

The Stage

When talking about theatre and playing, we must not forget about the scene. Here is the picture of the Eden Garden, my experiment in physics and emotions (the scene is in colours that touch the heart. The space of the world contributes to formation of our personalities. All the artistic pictures of scenes absorb the standpoint of the teller. They must subsume it, at least because the reality is so broad, that everyone's view is a personal choice of their reality. The standpoint is the choice, both in its positive and negative meaning. What the author chose, and what he thought unimportant.



Obr. 25 Eden Garden - engraved glass

With this essay, I am not after a scientific approach, I am trying to show you the potentialities of art! Presented as a method to understand oneself and everything around us. In art, just like in a mirror you can spot the structure of functional relationships of the inner and outer worlds. You can watch how what everyone dislikes about the other people, those things that he himself considers inferior, weak, foolish and so on. You can understand more easily that those who do not know relaxation cannot appreciate it. And, when they eventually decide to relax, they think that they can achieve it through endeavour! There are more such hidden mechanisms. They derive from the logic of arrangements. They can appear in dreams and artistic inspiration. Easier than direct reading is to play with them during an artistic game. Understand the principle through a situation that is a generalisation, underlining of the substantial, highlighting of the characteristic. Use intuition. Use short-cuts.



Pic. 26 Acrylic painting „New crystallisation“.

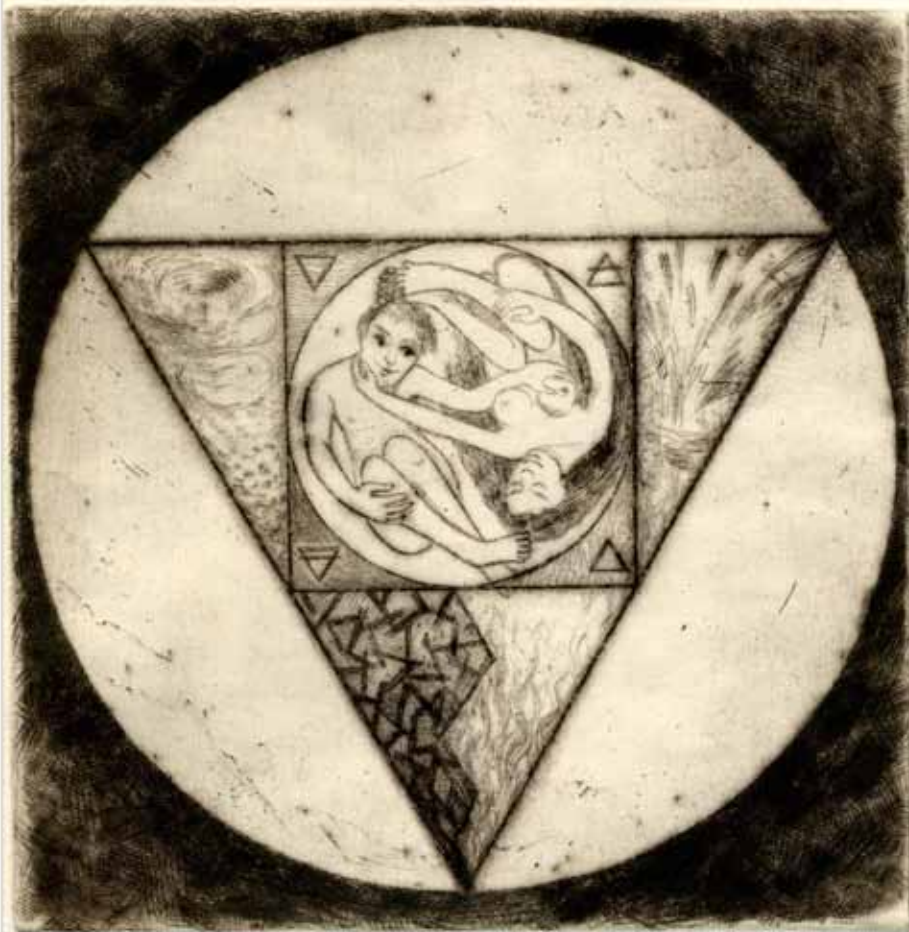
Litophany

Apart from watercolour or acrylic paintings this text is illustrated by litophany. Litophany are engravings on a pane of glass that has a colour overlay on to clear glass.

These two layers are produced in the glass by using an ancient technology. Similar to that used for very old window glass. A thin layer of coloured glass has been added on the surface of the blown glass cylinder, during the process of blowing. Once the glass cylinder is cooled it is scored, from top to bottom on one side, then reheated to that it may unrolled on flat surface and smoothed. The engraving has been done by grinding the thin layer of coloured using small diamond wheels. These wheels are riveted to exchangeable shafts which are inserted in the engraving machine. The wheels turn at different speed and with care the glass colour is removed in the desired areas. The finished work is framed in a patinated brass stand.

Special thank to Itzell Tazzyman for her editing work.

J.V. in Prague 30. 11. 2009



Pic. 27 My inspiration for Motor - I decided to turn the point of triangle down! I will explain it in next text.