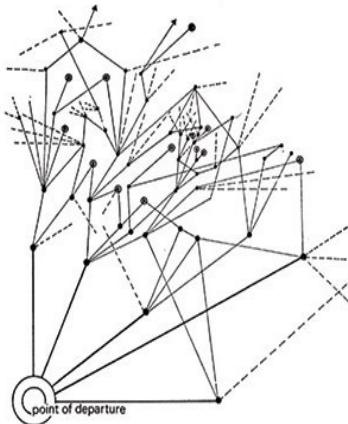


Joan Watson, Professor - Interdisciplinary Sculpture, Sculptural Studies – Art History
“Up from Down Under...Just a Hop, Skip, & a Jump — Artist as Museum — jw et al”

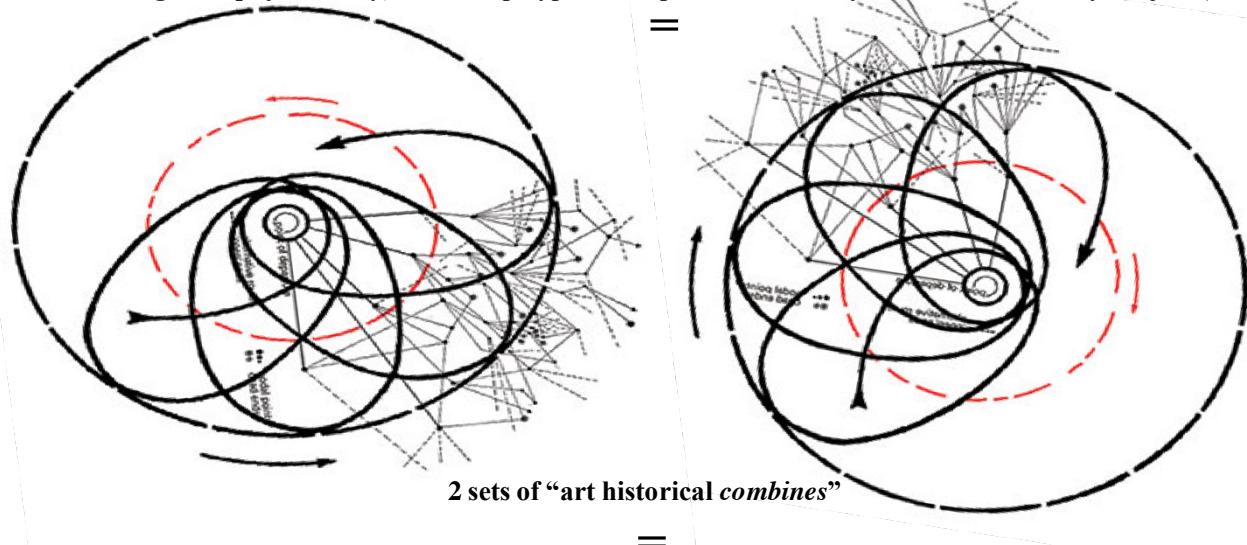
Up from Down Under ...Just a Hop, Skip and a Jump along with its highfalutin’ elaborative subtitle, *Artist as Museum* toned down by the addition of *jw et al*, is an ongoing and forever expanding *bio-project* in six parts representing the *dynamic and realistic interactivity* (creative collaborations) I’ve been committed to since 1977. Each part is the result of my investigation into the “smallest building block units” of the socio-political and aesthetical systems that most intimately affect the quality of our everyday lives and our involvement in the aesthetic phenomenon. This process has been a way for me to realize my ‘ecological,’ i.e., ‘aesthetical’ ideal. My ‘aesthetic’ pursuits (the teaching, the making of art, the community service) have combined to become a continuously unfolding saga of life on earth among others in the midst of all the rigmarole our social systems have to offer. There is much to overhaul and the impetus to do so aligns with ideational forces expressed in the following *resource* materials excerpted from the class content compiled as two sets of “art historical *combines*” stored at the AH412 and SS300” PmWiki student site in the Weekly Reading area.

- 1) “*The self as a puzzle: to be deciphered... the self as a project: to be built*” [source unknown].
- 2) “*The human condition is (located at) the point of intersection with other forces*” [Paz on Michaux’s “Miserable Miracle”] = “*It is the persons I finding itself submerged in precisely what is not itself, in the pure other which is the environment*” [Goethe via Ortega Y Gasset] = “*We are all Connected ...Here's How*” [Tom Chi] = *We refine humanity only by merging with infinity!*
- 3) “*...entering into a rapport with forces outside of ourselves (the multiple nonhuman sensibilities that animate the local landscape) in order to find ourselves ...sending one's awareness into other dimensions in search of insight ...a flow of energy or nourishment back and forth between the human and nonhuman.*” [David Abrams on Balinese shamanism].
- 4) “*dynamic and realistic interactivity*” [“Beyond Culture” by E. T. Hall] ...reference Hall's thoughts on “*body imaging*” ... “*Both Buckminster Fuller and Einstein's experiencing of the laws of nature contain significant elements of the physical. In fact, systems thinking seems to be related to the somatosensory motor cortex ...the recall of an image in physical terms.*” [E.T. Hall] + “*The contribution of subject matter is almost a side effect since what I see is not the thing itself, but myself in its form...the content is always the imagination*” [Oldenburg] = the “*development of an inclusive consciousness*” [Sadhguru (qualified)]
- 5) “*The essences are at once the thing to be translated and the translation itself, the sign and the meaning*” and according to Marcel Proust, “*sensations common to two places, to two moments*” [“Proust and Signs” by Gilles Deleuze] This describes the shared experience ...“*the dynamic and realistic interactivity*” (creative collaboration) between people and things [reference “art historical *combine*” #1 for an elaborate re-definition of “collective consciousness” using numerous – diverse resources].
- 6) “*That the text is titled Rhizome does not amount to a statement of topic, but rather a statement of identity.*” [Gilles Deleuze]. Also relevant are Deleuze’s thoughts on “*nonhuman expressivity*,” esp. as it relates to the *gestural potential* of materials suggested by D. Judd in “*Specific Objects*” and E.T. Hall in “*Beyond Culture*.” All collected *resource* materials describe the seminar course procedure devised as the means to cure the “*aesthetic malady*” described by Goethe in 1826 as the inability to re-cognize, interrelate with the *power of form*, i.e., the dynamic aspects of all things, esp as they relate to the human condition].
- 7) “*I'd really like to think that the artist could be just another kind of material in the picture, working in collaboration with all the other materials.*” + “*You begin with the possibilities of the material.*” [Robert Rauschenberg].
- 8) “*There are no passengers on spaceship earth. We are all crew.*” [M. McLuhan via B. Fuller] = C. Schneeman's relationship with her cat... “*as a being from which I have learned many lessons*” — <http://artjournal.collegeart.org/?p=6381#fnref-6381-13> = “*Art serves to establish community. It links us with others and with the things around us in a shared vision and effort*” [G. Richter] = “*the engine of life is linkage. ...nothing is self-sufficient*” [Home] = “*We're all Connected ...*” [Tom Chi] = Ed T. Hall's “*body imaging*” based on “*dynamic and realistic interactivity*” = “*an inclusive consciousness*” [Sadhguru]
- 9) “*relating to the environment as through we're a part of it, ...a constituent part of a larger whole that we have to understand dynamically and holistically as a complex system where things are interconnected in complex ways*” [G. Deleuze] = “*the culture of determined relations*” [Mondrian] = “*the micro- + astro-scopic realities as they relate to humanity*” [Jack Burnham]
- 10) “*In 1968, there was a kind of tabula rasa in the art world about the value of recent art history and culture ...so, “I looked to nature as a way to escape the culture of man ...to move from man {i.e., to move from the disconnected person}, ... “to start with the human, but relate the human to the realities surrounding the human.”*” [Giuseppe Penone (Arte Povera)]
- 11) “*Rhizomes, Why Artists and Activists Should Care about Crabgrass:*” https://youtu.be/Ou_yikwW15o
- 12) “*So then are we really thinking when the subject upon which we are thinking cannot be thought out*” [Goethe] along with additional thoughts from Goethe (1826) re humanity’s “*aesthetic malady*,” i.e., humanity's disconnect from the *power of form*
- 13) The “*map of creativity*” + “*art and dialectics*” = creativity’s polyphonic/inflective aspects [A. Ehrenzweig + R. Smithson in concert with the “*Hermes Trismegistus*” (old -time thinking) and *complexity theory* (new-time thinking)] = rhizomatic learning [G. Deleuze + W. Benjamin] = jw's “*art historical combines*” along with the complementary student “*visual verbal journeys*”].

**the following schematic bits of info visualize the site of the seminar/studio as the "place of the rhizome,"
i.e., it has been devised as a place where all are empowered and diverse equitable inclusion reigns ...**



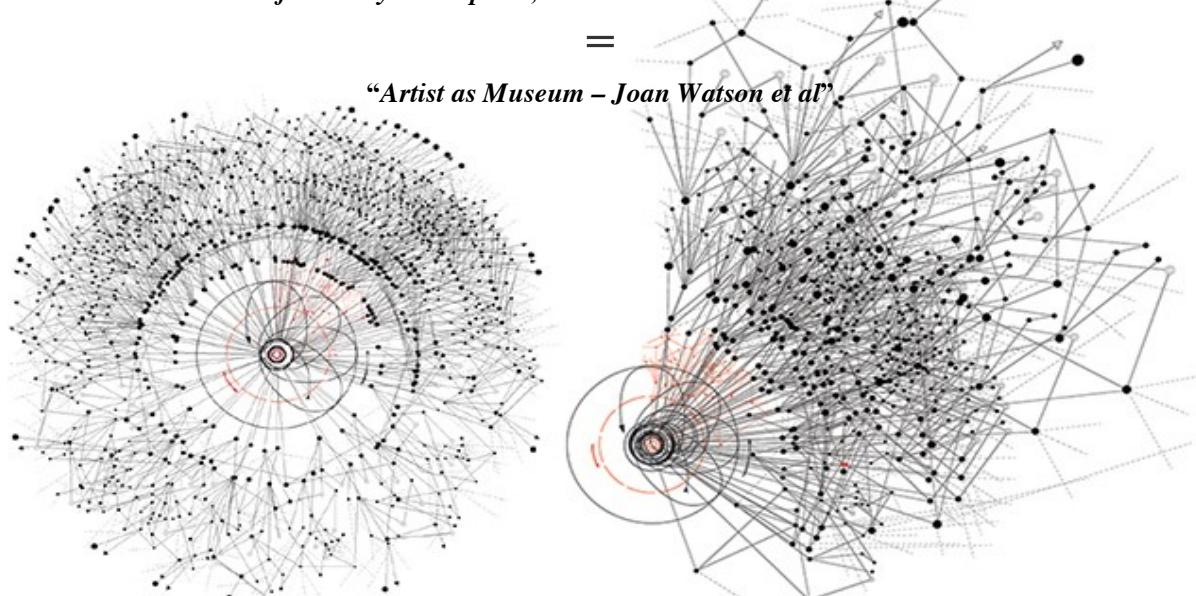
RE: Anton Ehrenzweig's "*map of creativity*," i.e., the polyphonic aspects of creativity and the truth of any subject (Bohm +)



=
1) AH412 and 2) SS300 seminar/studio class procedures

=
10,000 "maps of creativity" = the 10,000 voices comprising the "art historical combines" + "visual verbal journeys"

=
the "collective consciousness" described in "art historical combine" #1,
"The Erotics of Primary Conception," and the AH412 + SS300 PmWiki-student site



The site of the seminar/studio = the "place of the rhizome"

Up from Down Under...Just a Hop, Skip, and a Jump – Artist as Museum – Joan Watson et al was initiated to discover aspects of myself formerly unknown, unrealized, and/or lying dormant. It documents a series of developed relationships with all art and societal phenomena encountered. My initial “call to arms” arose in communion with Walter Benjamin on *metaphor as a transference process* and Goethe’s corresponding concern regarding humanity’s “aesthetic malady.” My natural inclination was to remedy our “malady” with a prescriptive course of action. I began by placing a strike-through the word metaphor (~~metaphor~~) to promote our involvement with the word as a process and demote it as a disconnected noun. I then developed a complex procedure of dynamic and realistic interactivity …a creative collaboration with all people, places, and things. I worked instinctively and later discovered all developed relations with my “resource” materials manifest the origins of the word *resource* (to rise again, to recover) and *curator* (to cure) as denoted/connote by the title of my *bio-project* (“*Up from Down Under...Just a Hop, Skip, and a Jump – Artist as Museum —jw et al*”) and the description of the following six parts.

Part 1a1, AH412 (link 1), **Part 1a2, SS300** (link 2) — parts of my *bio-project* unfold throughout the site of three classes (“Metaphorical Aspects of Contemporary Art,” “Junior Seminar”) for the duration of sixteen weeks. Each seminar/studio is defined and described by two sets of *multimedia multi-dimensional trans-generational* presentations aka “art historical *combines*” created to demonstrate the course procedures and objectives. There is a symbiotic relationship between my “art historical *combines*” and the students’ “visual verbal *journeys*” + studio practice and although generated individually both the “art historical *combines*” and the “visual verbal *journeys*” are collectively shared at two *PmWiki* websites where everyone involved participates in the “collective consciousness” by commenting on the posted “art historical *combines*” as well as constructing and uploading their individual “visual verbal *journeys*” and corresponding artworks to the AH412 and SS300 *PmWiki* websites; hence, the project’s title “*Artist as Museum – Joan Watson et al.*” I use the seminar forum as a creative platform – the goal is never merely informational; it is transformative! Not didactic, but dialectical! The “art historical *combines*” and “visual verbal *journeys*” are continuously growing and meant to culminate organically in the future as an immense network of trans-generational correlative states-of-being moving the project far beyond the confines of any one person and/or established archaic art system [reference André Malraux’s “Museum Without Walls” / “le musée imaginaire” from 1947. Especially relevant to the seminar/studio objectives are the following thoughts from Malraux. “*Artworks will acquire a kind of ubiquity. They will no longer exist only in themselves, but all of them will exist wherever there is someone.*” “*...Although the expression of archaic sentiments, even when indirect, grants to the masterpiece a particular resonance, recourse to shadows implies continued subservience to some kind of tyranny: in art no monster is an end in itself.*” For example, when reviewing Malraux’s images using the “google search,” beware of wolves in sheep’s clothing and/or shoes. The muddled situation at “google search” and the sentimental “tagging of shadows” have nothing to do with the radical and unconventional work of André Malraux. Reference “Malraux’s Shoes” by Dennis Adams. Also relevant is the 2018 exhibition at Fundacio Joan Miró entitled “A Monster who tells the truth” –<https://youtu.be/KK849sDF7Ic>]



Part 1b (link 3) — Part 1b is the on-going story-boarding of certain resource materials including images of art graphically intermixed with pertinent words and phrases, along with a disparate array of topical imagery in the form of headlines and advertisements with everything working together to demonstrate the “good, bad and high, low” conditions of art and humanity. It’s an epic story with a cast of thousands depicted in various states of misbehavior, but always with a glimmer as to how life and art could be. All actions depicted in this storyboard pictured below (pp 4 - 7) correlate with activities described in part 1c that follows on p.7, but also function as a pre-visualization of the aforementioned Parts 1a1 (AH412) and 1a2 (SS300). The plethora of *resource* materials used in the storyboard manifest the following quotes ... “*The human condition is (located at) the point of intersection with other forces*” [Octavio Paz] + “*It is the person's I finding itself submerged in precisely what is not itself, in the pure other which is its environment.*” [Goethe via Ortega y Gasset] + “*relating to the environment as though we're a part of it, a constituent part of a larger whole that we have to understand holistically and dynamically as a complex system where things are interconnected in complex ways.*” [Gilles Deleuze] + “*We're all connected — Here's How,*” especially regarding the “*palette of being*” [Tom Chi] + “*the culture of determined relations*” {Mondrian via R. Irwin}



The following thoughts from Edward W. Said on “Mythologies” by Roland Barthes
*“Mythologies” illustrates the beautiful generosity of Barthes’s progressive interest in the meaning ...
 (his word is ‘signification’) of practically everything around him,*

*not only the books and paintings of high art, but also the slogans, trivia, toys, food,
 and popular rituals (cruises, striptease, eating, wrestling matches) of contemporary life...
 for Roland Barthes, words and objects have in common the organized capacity to say something; ...
 for instance, consider these thoughts from Edward W. Said on Roland Barthes’s “Mythologies” in the context of ...*

“Up from Down Under...Just a Hop, Skip, and a Jump – Artist as Museum — jw et al”

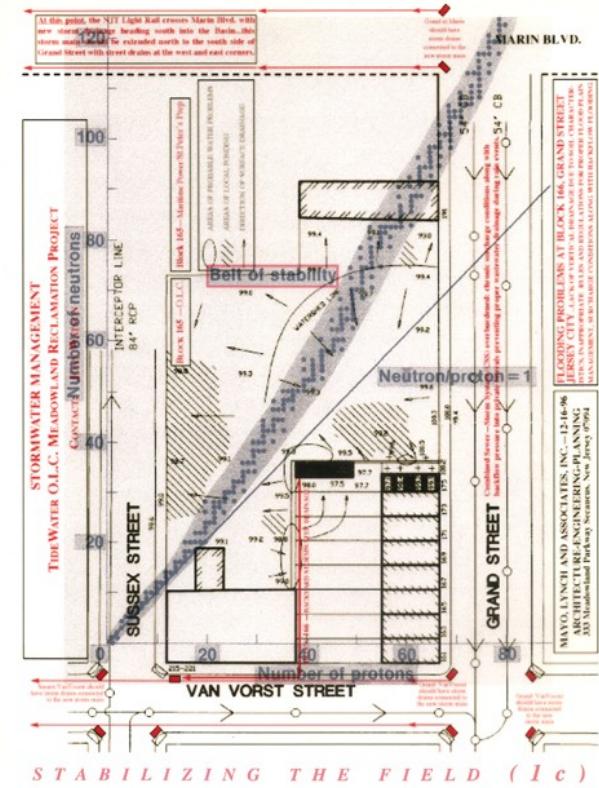
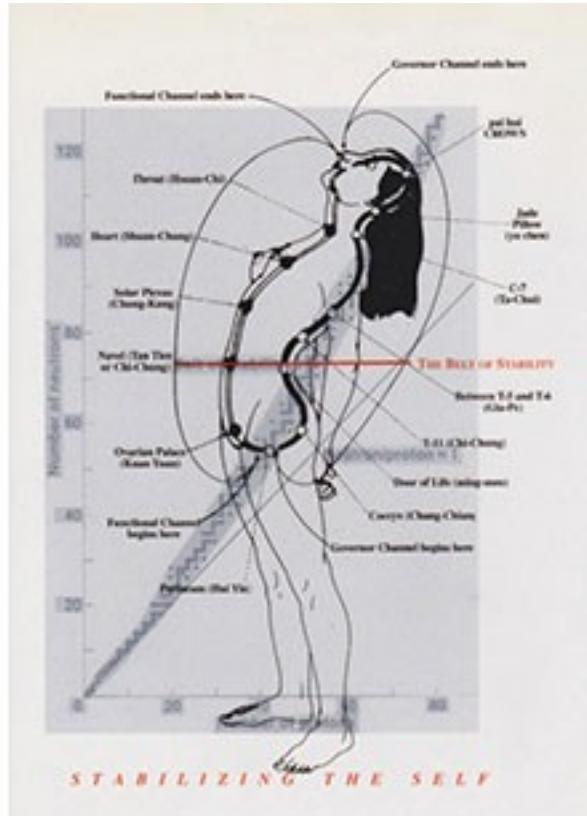
(parts 1a1, 1a2, 1b, etc)





Part 1c (link 4) is my attempt to personally actualize Walter Benjamin's notion of "metaphor as a transference process" through the practice of Chi Kung, Chi Kung Tai Chi, the Micro-Cosmic Orbit (Healing Tao) and the study of various energy flow systems (acupuncture and shiatsu) that promote more profound interactive co-operative collaborations and inform my choice of "resource" materials for parts 1a1, 1a2, and 1b. These practices refreshed my physiology, enabling me to identify with operative forces more readily and ecologically. Initially, my focus was limited to the inner workings of art and self, but later expanded to include the study of the environmental and socio-political dynamics that caused the flood waters to rise "*up from down under*" (ground) in the vicinity of my house in downtown Jersey City, NJ. The flooding phenomenon was a perplexing situation wreaking havoc on a neighborhood in desperate need for a remedy! [Reference part 1d (link 5) ...also relevant is the origin of the word *resource*, meaning '*rise again, ...to recover*' as it correlates with the title of this 6-part bio project "*Up from Down Under ...Just a Hop, Skip, and a Jump*".]

Part 1d (link 5) is the "*Combined Sewer System Overflow (CSSO) Chronicles*" documenting 10 years of rain events to expose the chronic mismanagement of Jersey City, New Jersey's sewer system along with corresponding unconscionable activities within the city's "Tidewater Redevelopment" area (1988 - 1998). Following this study, I then countered the city's redevelopment plan with the *Tide Water Meadowland Reclamation* project based on local environmental realities that necessitate specific regulations to control the flooding in downtown Jersey City's low-lying areas. [Reference Dutch settlement maps noting the local landscape as "*meadowlands with a tendency to flood at high tide*" and the corresponding report in 1998 from the engineering firm Mayo, Lynch and Associates Inc]. Problems pinpointed and remedies submitted to the city meant to "save the day" remain unrealized; hence, another case of the "sad but true" "do nothing policy" of those in power. [For a comic antidote, go to Andy Kaufman's rendition of "Here I Come to Save the Day" at <https://vimeo.com/50975724>]. —The following pictures on pp. 7–10 elaborate on Part 1d of this project.





A heap of *rock salt crystals* in a *mirrored corner* by Robert Smithson

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*It is a person's I finding itself
submerged in precisely what
is not itself,
in the pure other
which is its environment*

(Goethe via Ortega Y Gasset)

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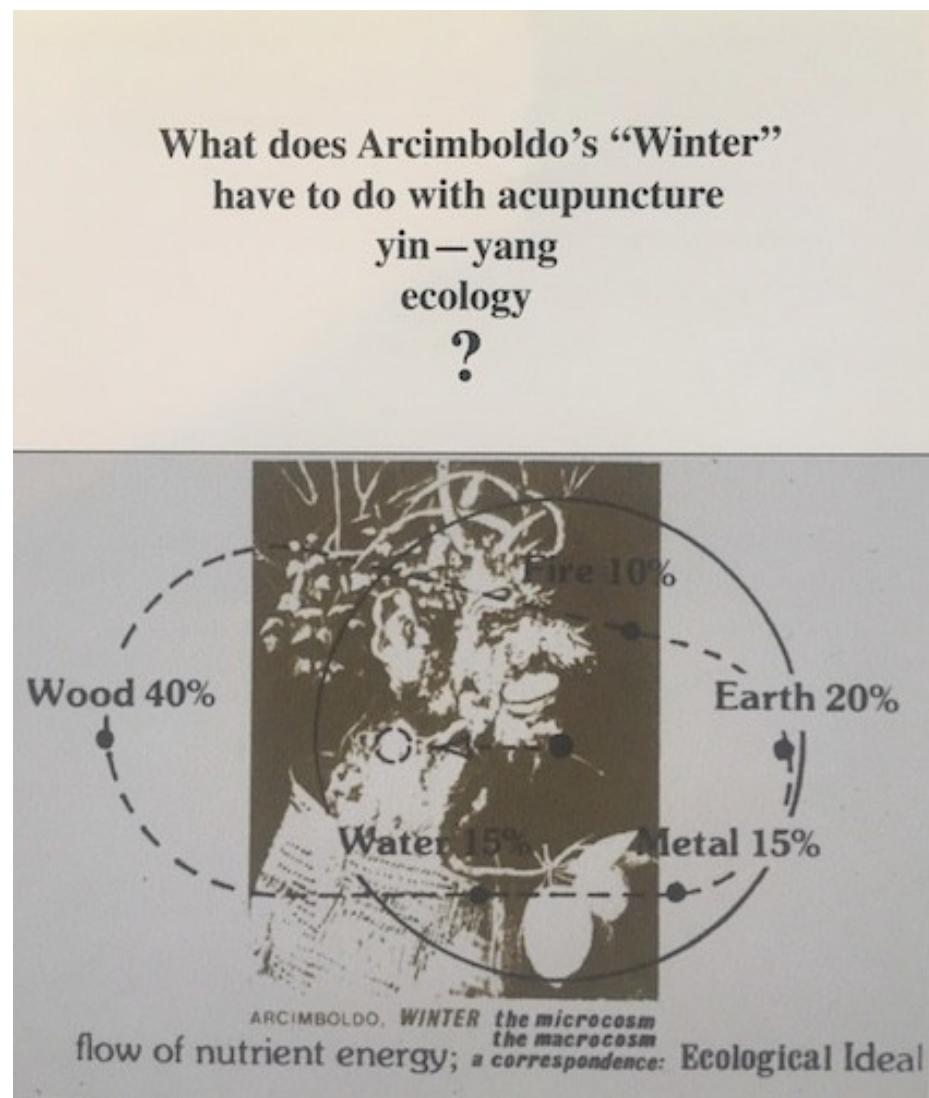
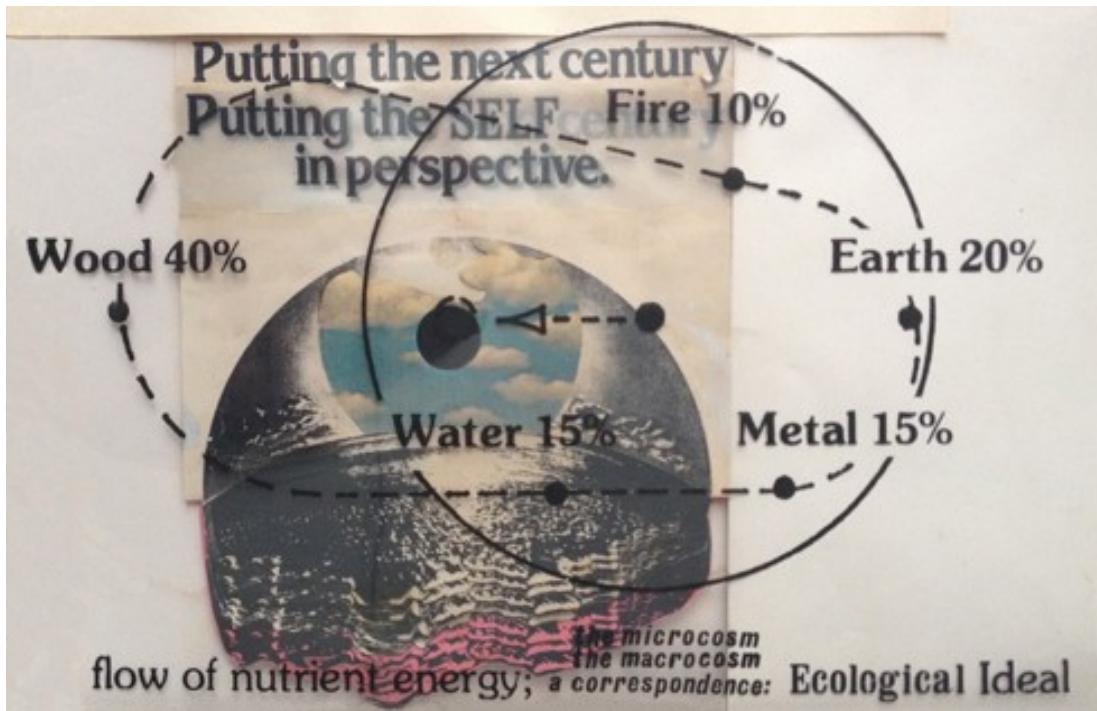
*the so-called human condition is
located at the point of intersection with other forces*

(Octavio Paz on Henri Michaux's "Miserable Miracle")

<http://www.nybooks.com/media/doc/2010/02/16/miserable-miracle-introduction.pdf>

jw correlation: Jack Burnham on the development of various *micro-, macro-, astro-scopic relations* ("ah combine" #6A, part 2)

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Part 1e (link 6) “Flamenco y musica sufi” (complementary musical forces juxtaposed) demonstrate the multitudinous emotional inflections spanning the polarities of flamenco's lamentations and musica sufi's exaltations. [Reference dialectical thinking involved with the “Hermes Trismegistus” (old-time thinking) and “complexity theory” (new-time thinking). Also, Diamanda Galas on “compassion” and David Bohm on active perception and truth, i.e., the “*multiple perspectives*” true of all themes/subjects: for instance, “*the more views we get that we can integrate and make coherent, the deeper our understanding of what reality is*”]. Below left: “Andaluz flamenco 2002 Sigurillas” (Director, Ethem Özgüven — Dancer, Asime Can Özöze. Below right: Whirling Dervishes (Sema). [Reference SS300 “art historical *combines*” #3, #6 (link 2) for supplementary info].



My initial idea that **parts 1a1 (AH412) and 1a2 (SS300)** function as communities comprised of “innumerable *Artists as Museums* (Joan Watson et al) going bumpity-bump — inflecting art history this way and that — throughout the semester in the seminar classroom” has now been expanded. My two sets of seminar-specific multimedia multidimensional presentations (“art historical *combines*”) are now disseminated not only in-, but also out-side the classroom in the form of a password protected ‘collaborative authoring’ website (faculty.mica.edu/jwatson and/or artistasmuseum.info). Through my website, I am attempting to create a convoluted and endless series of correlative art events seminal to the enhancement of our *interactive* experiences. Conceptually speaking, my intent is to collect as many events as possible within not only my lifetime, but beyond! The *PmWiki* software I use for my website allows others to participate as ‘collaborating authors’ throughout each set of my “art historical *combines*” comprising part 1a1 (AH412), and part 1a2 (SS300). This then extends the perceptual–conceptual situation beyond myself, in my limited space and time, to a larger community in an expansive space–time continuum. This opportunity is extended to the students enrolled in AH412 and SS300 as they too collect and collate their “resource” materials in the form of “visual verbal journeys” (“curatorial expositions”) and independent studio projects archived at the *PmWiki* student site (faculty.mica.edu/jwatson_student). Participants enrolled in the two seminar classes construct “visual verbal journey” (“curatorial expositions”) that re-present their distinct perceptual — conceptual relationship to the history of art and the aesthetic realms with and in which they choose to work; aesthetically pinpointing themselves and in the process discovering new navigational skills for generating the “body of work” each student needs to create.

The idea of art as a “living entity” — an organism forever expanding and contracting, fluctuating this way and that especially given its all-inclusive nature — is now a reality. “Fluxus” is the norm. The context of art fluctuates with each new *bit of info*. Each new collaborator using the ‘collaborative authoring’ function at our *PmWiki* sites adds another piece to the puzzle. The idea is to actualize the vast, immense, and fluid nature that is true of all concepts! Together we can demonstrate a complete range of ‘inflective’ possibilities as we each recognize (re-think) the revolutionary aspects of our radical history of art. ***The real question: is to whom does the meaning of the art of the past properly belong? To those who can apply it to their own lives, or to a cultural hierarchy of relic specialists?***” (W. Benjamin via J. Berger, especially as they align with G. Deleuze, Roland Barthes, André Malraux, Harold Bloom, Dave Hickey, Azar Nafisi, Paul Robeson, James Baldwin, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Adrian Piper, Martha Rosler and so many others included in this project).

The ‘collaborative authoring’ function of the “*Up from Down Under...Just a Hop, Skip, and a Jump – Artist as Museum – JW et al*” (parts 1a1 and 1a2) faculty and student *PmWiki* sites actualize the permissive, open, tolerant and energizing (consciousness-raising) environment that has been my life’s work. Once again, the simple functionality of all things serves to support an aesthetic r-evolution — a flip-flopping of the existing situation as we, together in the space of the *PmWiki* sites, demonstrate the *collective consciousness* (“*the palette of being*”) that is our art history (reference both the “art historical *combines*” and the “visual verbal journeys”); i. e., *innumerable “artists as museums” going bumpity-bump this way and that, inflecting the history of it all = us* ...

“And Away We Go...”

reference:

Jackie Gleason — “The Honeymooners” — <https://youtu.be/uHqq0WVXiEE?t=35>



Jackie Gleason in black & white x 2 + directionally flip-flopped; continuously expanding & contracting, back & forth in gif format

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numerous dynamic expressive forces fluctuating continuously and variously between the polarities, e.g., yin/yang

