

Paper Tolerates Everything Seminar

The seminar "Paper Tolerates Everything" was held on March 15th ' 2019. It is fifth in a series of seminars on the subject of materials as mental materials, at the Department of Art Therapy at the Faculty of Arts – HaMidrasha at Beit Berl College.

The department's seminars are part of a research process initiated in 2014 by the department's research team in collaboration with students, with the aim of connecting art materials, psychological theories, culture, empathy, understanding the other, art and the language of visual art therapy, and will be a chapter in a book that will be produced by the department.

At the beginning of the day, seminar attendees participated in a display created from their origami projects and placed around the gallery.



During the day, participants were able to echo the lectures by working with pieces of paper handed out to them at the beginning of the day. During the break an impressive exhibition was created, expressing unspoken experiences that arose from listening to lecturers and observing images that were presented and researched.



Ms. Shlomit Rinat, a lecturer in the Department of Art Therapy at the Faculty of Arts – HaMidrasha at the Beit Berl Academic College, opened the seminar with a poem by the Israeli poet Meir Wieseltier, "Take poems and do not read / Make violence in this book," (published in Hebrew, 1973)¹ through which Ms. Rinat laid the foundation for a seminar that observes and explores paper as a bearer of delicate sensitivities.

Like Wieseltier's poem, which refers to the poetry book as loaded with the mental materials represented in the word and the possibility of its being used as a representation and target for frustrations, aggressions, loves and elation of its holder. The reader- ripper can use the

¹ Free translation without permission by the translator - DR

book itself as a representation of the environment. And so, the "paper" that "tolerates all" was spread throughout the day! The content and the aggression, the delicacy of the symbols and bluntness of the messages that convey the desire to protect it and the wish to design it.

Dr. Ofira Honig, head of the Department of Art Therapy at Beit Berl Academic College, in her lecture "Fragments of Images" referred to collage as an artistic technique that represents processes of disassembly and reassembly in the space between meaninglessness and the creation of meaning especially in adolescents seeking connection to a unique self and in adults who enjoy disassembling "successful" imagery; and thus, use the parts and create a new image without anxiety. Dr. Honig chose the collage as a metaphor for the element that underlies art therapy theory.

Ms. Aya Feldman, a lecturer the Department of Art Therapy at Beit Berl Academic College, took the theorist Anzieu's "skin ego" concept and used it to compare ancient parchment undergoing a transformation from an animal to a sacred thing and the bark of the tree as a maternal shield that breathes, regulates and grows into a substrate for engraving and imprinting the self. Ms. Feldman laid out the concept of paper as a product of "tree cells" - in order to create upon it, it must be produced. Ms. Feldman referred to paper metaphorically as a victim in an evolutionary chain used to search for new meaning.

Ms. Nurit Volk, an art therapist and graduate of the Department of Art Therapy at Beit Berl, and a lecturer at the Academic College of Society and the Arts, Netanya, referred to the role of the sketchbook as a representation for preserving the internal contents of adolescents who regularly participate in a post-hospitalization facility sketching group. Ms. Volk described how working within the book with a scale of drawing pencils and papers ranging from white to brown and greys allows for gentle and thoughtful movement between nuances and allows these adolescents to develop subtle flexibility and search, as opposed to the dramatic conduct typical of these boys and girls.

Ms. Iris Apter, an art therapist and instructor, a graduate of Department of Art Therapy at Beit Berl, presented a case study in which she examined the question: what is the moment when a child stops treating paper as a pictorial substrate and turns it into three dimensions as a container and up to the place where he cuts the image that was drawn on paper and shortens the distance between the paper and the image? Ms. Apter traced the ability of the paper to change in the hands of the person dealing with it and to represent the state of the "ego" of the creator at any given moment.

Ms. Anat Gatenio, curator of the "Extreme Situations" exhibition at the Eretz Israel Museum, spoke about the curator as holding a selected narrative. Ms. Gatenio described the curatorial process and the curator's experiences as someone who accompanies and follows artists from locating the nucleus from which a work of art can be born through listening and accompanying the artist in the process. Ms. Gatenio described how curation is the process of creating locations and connections between different elements in the museum space which she treats as a womb for artists and viewers.

Ms. Gatenio described the process of creating the "Extreme Situations" exhibition, from the emotional holding of contents, intentions, sparks, technical and chemical challenges and up to consolidation and hanging of the works as a representation of personal visibility through the manipulations made on the paper materials.

Dr. Micha Katan, a lecturer in the Department of Art Therapy at Beit Berl, explored through a dialogue with Ms. Anat Gatenio the possibility that Dr. Honig offers to view the curatorial process as a collection in therapy. Ms. Gatenio and Dr. Katan examined the relationship between therapy and curation, the possibility of treating an exhibition, studio or treatment

room as a physical-mental site where actual and mental creation take place. How curation is a kind of interpretation and the analytical interpretation itself as a kind of creation and how in fact these processes constitute an opportunity to observe the creation of a new reality from the born representations. In the discussion we saw how a work of art, like a patient, needs to be exposed, how much it needs a curator, an art therapist and / or an exhibition in order to be seen. We saw a parallel in the process in which the curator and the art therapist "redeem" the image and offer it a container and a place to be seen.

At the end, the "Curatortherapy" project at the Department of Art Therapy at the Faculty of Arts - HaMidrasha, at the Beit Berl Academic College was highlighted. The term and the project are unique to the department in the process of students - future art therapists, curating themselves, accompanied by art therapist lecturers in the department, where at the end of the process there is a public display and / or exhibition in which the process' work materials are displayed in the chosen representation.

This is a complex process that is also connected theoretically to the work of Ms. Feldman and Dr. Honig "Entrance at Exit" presented at the Helena Rubinstein Pavilion. In it we make present the processes of visibility, presentation and processes that the observers undergo.

Dr. Katan suggested listening to a play by Luigi Pirandello written in 1921 that he believes is an inspiration for the work of the curator and art therapist. Luigi Pirandello calls the play " Six characters in search of an author." Dr. Katan suggests that as art therapists we should see the work of the therapist and the curator as supporting the creation of the narrative, in the case of the curatorial work - of the artist and in the case of the therapist - of the patient in the clinic.

A question arose in the discussion regarding the creation of a narrative that relates to one work or series of works in the work of therapist and the curator as part of the reference to the internal and external to what relates to the internal museum and the external museum as part of the work of the curator and therapist.

Finally, Ms. Gatenio referred to the relationship between the aesthetic and the non-aesthetic, similar to the relationship between the homely and the unhomely² in the therapist's work in choosing the works and displaying them in the museum.

Thank you to the participants, lecturers, arts therapists, instructors, psychologists, psychiatrists, curators and artists who participated in the seminar.

² "Unheimliche" in the original 1919 German text by Sigmund Freud, which has been translated as "uncanny"