

UNDERSTANDING CREATIVE INTUITION

ABSTRACT:

The creative process (whether it is in the arts, business or the sciences) involves both intellectual, conscious processes of thinking, as well as less conscious intuitive processes of knowing and discovering. Although Jungian psychology provides insight into the nature of intuition as a psychological function, intuition is not well understood by creative individuals and creative arts educators, even though they may be familiar with the intuitive experience itself. This article aims to demystify the role that intuition plays during the creative process. Drawing from the fields of psychology as well as Eastern and Western philosophy, four inter-related principles underlying creative intuition are examined and explained, in order to contribute to a more coherent understanding of creative intuition.

For the purposes of this article, each principle is discussed separately, although they occur simultaneously and non-hierarchically during the experience of creative intuition. What emerges from this discussion is an understanding that intuition that cannot co-exist temporally with rational, intellectual functioning. Therefore other (more unusual) ways of being in the world, which involve solitude and a surrender of the ego, are required for intuition to flourish. These will be the subject of a future article.

KEYWORDS:

Creative; intuition; consciousness; emotion; particularity; non-duality

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INTRODUCTION:

This article is an overview of research findings from a PhD by the author in which the nature of creative intuition and how it functions during the creative process is explored. The experience of creative intuition is fragile and fleeting, characterised by moments of mysterious potentiality and open-ended suggestiveness which generate new and original thoughts, sounds, images and actions. It is to these original and highly personal points of potential that the creative person constantly returns for inspiration, as they attempt to express in their own medium (words, paint, music) their original contribution to the world.

Research drew primarily from Jungian psychology and the Eastern philosophies of Taoism and Zen, as well as the writing of Western philosophers Deleuze, Bergson, Maritain, William James and Henry James, who have all referred to intuition as a vital component of any form of creativity. Through careful analysis of these sources the phenomenon was examined from various points of view and four aspects or principles underlying it have been identified, which recur throughout artists' and scientists' descriptions, as well as throughout the literature on the subject. It must, however, be pointed out at the outset that this is a false separation, as the experience of intuition (in everyday life or in the creative process) is a holistic and fleeting one. Each principle identified occurs simultaneously with the other principles and affects the other principles, so they are discussed in no particular order.

This paper will summarise the four principles underlying creative intuition, which are:

- it involves a state of expanded consciousness
- it is an open, fluid way of being
- it focuses on the particular rather than the general

- it is an act of fusion or identification which occurs through emotion or empathy

WHAT IS CREATIVE INTUITION?

The word ‘intuition’ has its roots in the Latin *intueri* which means ‘to look at or toward’ or ‘to contemplate’. A typical dictionary definition of the word reads “the act or faculty of knowing without the use of rational processes: immediate cognition” (American Heritage Dictionary online, 2021) or “the ability to understand something instinctively, without the need for conscious reasoning” (OED online, 2021). Hague defined it as “a spontaneous, immediate perception of truth that does not rely on the intermediary of rational thought processes or overt, external physical evidence” (Hague, 2003).

Intuition has been explored from a psychological perspective by Jung, Ornstein and Bastick, amongst others (Bastick, 1982; Jung, 1921; Stein, 1974). In the context of creativity, Stein defined intuition as “a method of formulating or solving a problem in which the person has no conscious awareness or knowledge of how he arrived at the answer or what stimuli led him to it” (Stein, 1974, p 203). Jung defined intuition as a function of being human, like thinking, feeling and sensation; “Intuition, as I conceive it, is one of the basic functions of the psyche; namely perception of the possibilities inherent in a situation” (Jung, 1960/2014, par 292). To Jung, it is an unconscious process which has as its primary function the transmission of images “or perceptions or relations between things, which could not be transmitted by other functions, or only in a very roundabout way” (Ibid). Intuition therefore allows for the perception of the relationship between things.

One of the most extensive surveys of the process of scientific discovery was made during the 1950s by Polanyi, who studied scientists' own descriptions of how they arrived at intuitive ‘breakthroughs’ to a new view of reality. “We know more than we can tell” he wrote (Polanyi, 1967, p 4). He found that reason, logic and data-collection came relatively late in

the process of scientific discovery – the scientists first used other ways of knowing. Polanyi offered possibly the most thorough description of creative intuition, which he described as:

an act deeply committed to the conviction that there is something there to be discovered. It is personal, in the sense of involving the personality of him who holds it, and also in the sense of being, as a rule, solitary; but there is no trace in it of self-indulgence. The discoverer is filled with a compelling sense of responsibility for the pursuit of a hidden truth, which demands his services for revealing it. His act of knowing exercises a personal judgement in relating evidence to an external reality, an aspect of which he is seeking to apprehend (Ibid, p 25).

Intuition can therefore be described from a psychological perspective as the emotionally charged, anticipatory ability to understand or know something without knowing how you know or understand. It is an unconscious (or supra-conscious), non-verbal process which results from empathy with a particular aspect of reality.

Bergson considered intuition to be a very simple act, but one which involves itself with a plurality of meanings and multiplicities in any given experience. During the intuitive experience the lived experience is broadened to encompass more than the rational and the obvious and which is at the heart of the truly creative act. Bergson's theory of reality as 'flux' or 'duration' underpinned his theory of intuition which is a way of knowing that fluid reality (Bergson, 1907 / 1998).

Bergson's philosophy was expanded upon by Deleuze, who emphasised that intuition is a method of "precision" that follows a set of "strict rules" (Deleuze, 1988, p 13). This is not how intuition is normally understood, namely as something mystical, vague and indeterminate, but research has revealed that the intuitive experience during the creative

process involves very specific and unusual ways of knowing and differentiating lived experiences and reality itself.

The Taoist understanding of intuition (called *chih*) is that it is “a private awareness of one's innermost being”. It is “pure” consciousness through “immediate, direct, primitive penetration instead of by methods that are derivative, inferential, or rational. In the sphere of intuitive knowledge there is no separation between the knower and the known” (Chang, 1975, p 68). The Taoist way of embracing intuition as a means of knowing and exploring, requires a quietening of the rational thinking mind, so that it can function in an integrated and spontaneous way that is natural to it. This gives access to creative potential, which the Taoists call *te*, an unaffected and unselfconscious way of being in the world.

The Zen view of creative intuition is that of an experience of enlightenment, a heightened sense of direct knowing which comes about by paying attention to the particular through a way of being called ‘mindfulness’. Zen also aims to quieten the thinking mind in order to go beyond words and concepts, so that the true nature of reality is revealed for direct experience. It can therefore be seen that the various philosophical understandings of intuition (both Eastern and Western), particularly in the context of creativity, support the psychological view (Watts, 1957).

From the discussion above, creative intuition can be described as a fleeting, holistic and direct way of human knowing that gives rise to creative potential. It is the source of authentic creativity in that it arises from inner personal experience thereby giving rise to highly personal responses to the world. It involves various states of consciousness and, even though it is the most immediate and primal way of knowing the world, it is something which is greatly undervalued in contemporary society. It occurs under specific conditions and can be nurtured but, to do so, we need to understand exactly what it is. The following sections will

summarise the four principles underlying creative intuition separately, although it must be remembered that they are interconnected and occur simultaneously.

IT INVOLVES AN EXPANDED STATE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Intuition involves states of consciousness that are not clearly defined, because these exist in the realm between the so-called 'conscious' and the so-called 'unconscious'. The intuitive experience creates a connection between the conscious and the unconscious, giving rise to an 'expanded' state of consciousness, because it involves a deepening and a broadening of awareness. States of consciousness associated with intuition specifically have been explored by relatively few, among these Bergson, Maritain, William James, Jung and Ornstein.

To understand intuitive or expanded consciousness, it is first necessary to understand the nature of consciousness. Research has revealed that there is no single generally accepted definition of consciousness and there are numerous theories of consciousness in each of these fields, each elaborating on a specific aspect of consciousness. For the purposes of this discussion, however, consciousness is broadly defined as a state of awareness or a state of experience of both an external and an inner world. The conscious state is one which most are familiar with, whether it is in a focused or an unfocused way, but it is the unconscious which remains a mystery. Through research it has become evident that there is a close connection (or perhaps even a co-existence) between the unconscious, 'hybrid' forms of consciousness and creative intuition. So, if the nature of creative intuition is to be understood, it is this relationship which must be explored.

Jung's theories of consciousness provide the most insight into the nature of intuition and here it is important to understand exactly what Jung meant by the term 'consciousness'. He wrote:

By consciousness I understand the relation of psychic contents to the ego, in so far as this relation is perceived by the ego. Relations to the ego that are not perceived as

such are unconscious. Consciousness is the function or activity that maintains the relation of psychic contents to the ego. (Jung, 1921, p 388)

Jung defined 'ego' as that part of ourselves which gives us a sense of a distinctly personal identity. So, in Jung's view, the ego or the 'I' is the central subject of consciousness to whom perceptions, feelings and sensations refer. Ego and consciousness are therefore mutually related, and the development of consciousness has to do with appropriation, apperception and reflection (Brooke, 1991). By appropriating and reflecting on our experiences, we create an 'inner world' of responses to these experiences. Consciousness can therefore be regarded as a dialogue between the inner world of an individual and the outer world of external reality in that inner streams of consciousness affect the way meaning is made from the external world. This internal universe is not easy to express in words, yet it contains the deepest feelings, the oldest memories and the most private ponderings of an individual; everything that is unheard and unfiltered by society.

Jung's theory of the unconscious gives insight into the nature of intuition. According to Jung, the unconscious is the quality of a life that is lived but not reflectively known; an area of unexplored and unappropriated lived experience which is beyond understanding until it moves into consciousness. In Jung's view, the unconscious does not obey the laws of time, space and causality that govern conscious thinking. Elaborating on the collective unconscious as a deep aspect of the unconscious, Jung says it involves an experience of non-duality which is expansive and open to the world. In this state of consciousness there is no distinction between subject and object, in contrast with ordinary consciousness, in which the individual sees themselves as a subject that 'has' an object. The unconscious is the realm in which logical, categorical and binary thinking disappears and intuition functions. It is a place of

unprecedented uncertainty, with apparently no inside and no outside, no above and no below, no here and no there, no mine and no thine, no good and no bad. It is the world of water, where all life floats in suspension; where the realm of the sympathetic system, the soul of everything living, begins; where I am indivisibly this and that; where I experience the other in myself and the other-than-myself experiences me.

(Jung, 1968, pp 21-22)

Jung's description of the unconscious is remarkably similar to current 'field theories' of consciousness proposed by quantum physicists such as Bohm (2021) and Hagelin (2011). Bohm has described consciousness as a "cosmic sea of energy", a unified field connecting everything which exists in an "implicate order", concurring with the ancient Buddhist concept of 'Indra's Net' (Bohm, 2021).

Merleau-Ponty proposed that consciousness is more than a state of mind, challenging Freud's view that the unconscious is an intrapsychic locality, situated vertically within a person. Rather it is, according to Merleau-Ponty, an ambiguous, lived relationship of the entire body with the world (Merleau-Ponty, 1945). Consciousness is embodied in that the body itself is conscious of its relationship with the world; it is not merely an unconscious brute container for the psyche. Brooke elaborated on this view of consciousness and referred to it as "world-relatedness", with the unconscious not being a substantive 'thing', but rather a quality of the person's relationship to the world (Brooke, 1986, pp 126 -130). As a creative receptor, Jung described the body itself as an "intelligence" which connects with the rest of life and which is conscious in many different and complex ways:

What you think with your head does not necessarily coincide with what you feel in your heart, and what your belly thinks is not what your mind thinks. The extension in space, therefore, creates a pluralistic quality in the mind. (Jung, 1934 / 1989, p 360)

Ways of knowing reality – the intellect and intuition

If consciousness is to be understood as the relationship of the individual with reality, it is important to understand what is meant by this 'reality', whether it is external, internal or a dream. Bergson described the fundamental nature of reality as being in a state of perpetual change, which he called 'flux' or 'duration', described by him as being a continuous, non-discrete, interpenetrating flow of experience which constantly expands outward with no preordained goal or conclusion in view (Bergson, 1907 / 1998). The future, always in a state of becoming, is therefore open-ended and unpredictable. Because reality cannot be reduced to fixed concepts, it is regarded by both Bergson and Zen philosophy as a kind of 'emptiness' through which impermanent states and processes flow in time. This does not mean that there is a literal 'nothingness'; rather, emptiness or sunyata refers to the fact that nothing-in-itself can exist. Things or people can only exist as a result of interfusion, or 'dependent arising' (Loori, 2005).

The way in which a person can interact with this fluid empty reality in the form of meaning-experiences or consciousness is twofold - either using the intellect, or through intuition. The intellect is ego-conscious and tries to 'freeze' or fix pieces of reality or experience into concepts or abstract ideas which can be rationally analysed. One of the ways in which the intellect 'casts things in stone' is through the use of language (Shlain, 1998). Like the intellect, language (as a tool) deals with objects and distinctions between objects. It therefore functions to constrict reality, by defining a thing in terms of what it is not, resulting in generalised, abstract thought which does not reflect the true nature of reality at all. It defines, labels, categorises, hypothesises and draws conclusions. It seeks to capture reality in a prison of distinct, fixed conclusive concepts. In this respect James asserted that "reality, life, experience, concreteness, immediacy" always "exceeds", "overflows" and "surrounds" logic,

because reality is “if not irrational, then at least non-rational in its constitution” (James, 1909, p 76) .

Intuition is therefore an experience of direct apprehension of both internal and external realities, drawing on all forms of consciousness, including the embodied unconscious.

Through intuition new ways of seeing and thinking are made possible, but this is not the normal everyday way of being in the world, so Bergson emphasised that it is important to learn to intuit reality (Bergson, 1907 / 1998).

In order to engage with the creative process through intuition, that is, in an unpredictable, open way with a fluid reality, an ‘expanded’ state of consciousness is necessary, as described previously. This type of consciousness includes the fields of memory, bodily sensation, thought, emotion and intuition. Expanding our consciousness implies a deepening as well as a broadening of our awareness of all that an experience (object, person, event or thought) could possibly be. It is a highly personal experience, described by Naum Gabo as “a turbulent sea full of all kinds of impressions, responses and experiences as well as feelings and emotions” (Gabo cited in Collier, 1972, p 26). It is a kind of intelligence which harnesses body, mind and heart. The painter Mondrian described intuition as an intelligence which is “not simply of the brain, which does not calculate, but which feels and thinks; which is creative in both art and life” (Mondrian, 1917 / 1986, p 161).

From the depths of an expanded state of consciousness, hunches, “intelligible germs” or images are communicated to the conscious mind whole and without an understanding of how they came into existence (Maritain, 1955, p 369). The images reveal avenues of hidden potential and, according to Jung, they “represent possible views of the world which may give life a new potential” (Jung, 1921, p 400). Through the “illuminating intellect” an awareness of the images or “intelligible germs” generated in the preconscious is gained, and these are

then translated into concepts or ideas which makes them communicable to others (Maritain, 1955, p 369).

This almost mystical state of expanded consciousness involves the totality of being human, with the conscious and the embodied unconscious acting in unity. It is therefore not irrational, but rather super-rational; more than the rational mind can achieve by itself, with the bodily experience, the intellect, intuition and the emotions all working together to access fleeting glimpses of a fluid reality. Access to these glimpses requires an attitude of receptivity, described by James as a “passive and receptive listening”, by Maritain as an “alert receptivity” and by Hague as an “attentive passivity”, a state of mind which waits for meanings and patterns to emerge from the world, rather than imposing meanings and patterns on the world (Maritain, 1955; Hague, 2003).

Findings suggest that the key to interaction between the unconscious and the conscious mind lies in relaxing the boundaries of ego-consciousness in order to be open and available to whatever may present itself. It evidently requires a way of being in the world that is receptive and fluid, with focus on the concrete and the particular rather than the conceptual. It seeks fusion with reality by allowing emotion to be a way of knowing and these qualities form the basis of discussion in the future articles on the subject.

IT REQUIRES AN OPEN, FLUID WAY OF BEING

We have seen that, according to Jung, the relationship of psychic contents to the ego determines the type of consciousness, with an expanded state of consciousness being free of ego so that all aspects of the Self can engage with reality in a reciprocal, unpredictable and open-ended manner. As intuition becomes a way of knowing, ambiguity and uncertainty must be tolerated, so that the unpredictable becomes possible, as there is no mental ‘clinging’ to safe, preconceived or predictable ways of thinking and doing.

An intuitive approach to reality perceives the world as being in a constant state of becoming, a fluid and dynamic, constantly merging and diverging reality, which Bergson called “flux”. Intuition accesses meaning from moment to moment as the individual elements of reality morph, merge and dissolve. Intuitive consciousness has no goal in mind and is therefore a way of being in the world which is comfortable with an ever-changing fluidity and uncertainty, which is very different from every-day ways of being in the world. It requires an attitude of openness and surrender to all possibilities, which writer Henry Miller described as “throwing himself in a current, knowing that he would probably sink”. This sense of abandon and surrender implies that Miller was prepared to give up control over the writing process in order to learn to think, see and feel in a totally new way, in what he calls an “uneducated” way (Miller cited in Ghiselin, 1954, p 187). He described the act of writing a novel as a “voyage of discovery” and claimed that “you write in order to find out what you're writing about, who you are and why and what for...The object of writing is to not know where you're going” (Ibid).

In contrast to this, ego-consciousness is a very limited and false sense of self and is therefore an obstacle to the experience of creative intuition, as it inhibits and restricts consciousness. Ego-consciousness is narrow and exclusive, while the state of consciousness necessary for the intuitive experience is broad and inclusive. When ego boundaries are relaxed and consciousness is expanded, it is possible to connect with the world and others in unpredictable and highly personal ways. Experiencing the world as *person* and not identity, the person becomes open to engaging with the richness and fullness of life in a spontaneous manner. The Eastern philosophies of Taoism and Zen Buddhism have much to teach in this regard, as they regard the ego as a mental construct and instead see the world as a mutual and interpenetrating system of organic and spontaneous processes, rather than independent and fixed identities. This worldview leads us to an understanding of other ways of being in the

world which are different from the ego-conscious way. These ways of being are open and fluid, with no concern for outcome or ‘correctness’.

A fluid and open approach to reality enables more anarchic ways of thinking including ‘non-directed thinking’, ‘fantasy’ thinking, ‘peripheral’ thinking, ‘nomadic’ thinking and daydreaming, all of which involve a ‘soft’ focus on the matter at hand, resulting in new and unexpected connections and ideas arising in consciousness as the ego relaxes. Together with this, the ability to embrace uncertainty and hold conflicting ideas simultaneously in the mind has proven to be essential for creative breakthroughs. As a certain amount of mental anarchy is tolerated while engaging with the materials at hand, improvisation is made possible, which is a forward motion (of “attaching”, connecting, disengaging, reconnecting, “venturing”) into the unknown. Through this dynamic process, a personal, vivid and energetic response to the world is revealed (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004; Ghiselin, 1954; Ingold, 2010).

IT REQUIRES A FOCUS ON THE PARTICULAR

Cultivating an attitude of openness to uncertainty and relinquishing control of outcomes, as well as thinking in different ways, leads to the revelation of new possibilities and new ways of being. But this openness does not refer to a free-flowing stream of consciousness unrelated to anything in particular. Instead, for intuition to function, attention needs to be directed at something specific and real.

The creative individual who engages intuitively with reality experiences a ‘fuller’ view of reality than that of most people. Through an expanded state of consciousness, the artist and creative explorer not only engages more fully with a so-called ‘external’ reality, but also with their inner world of feelings, thoughts and responses to that reality. They explore the depth and breadth of their responses which come about as the result of an intense observation of the particularities of the world. As a result of this open-ended engagement with the real and the

particular, a ‘sea of potential’ is revealed to them. The result of such an encounter with the particular is that it is then possible to discover in things more qualities and more associations and, according to Bergson, the person’s perception of reality is altered as it then becomes possible to ‘extend’ the ways in which reality is normally perceived by noticing the hidden and the unrealised dimensions which are not ordinarily perceived (Bergson, 1914 / 2013, p145).

When a person engages with the particularity of what is in front of them, around them or inside them, they allow themselves to ‘dwell’ on the thing or experience, instead of superficially passing it by. Rather than understanding or knowing reality by means of an ‘interpretive matrix’ created by memory and the rational mind, it is possible to connect directly with it by using all the senses and all aspects of our consciousness and, in this way, reality can be known more ‘fully’. In this way the extraordinary can be imagined and unusual connections can be made, opening pathways to new ideas and new ways of doing things. The result of this kind of creative engagement (through improvisation in music, painting, drawing or dance) is that it reveals more about the world and connects more deeply with others than ‘art’ which is derivative and superficial, having been drawn from concepts and stereotypes which have not been personally felt or fully experienced. To quote Bergson, the creative act (whether it is painting, music, poetry or science) has no other objective than “to brush aside the utilitarian symbols, the conventional and socially accepted generalities, in short, everything that veils reality from us, in order to bring us face to face with reality itself” (Bergson, 1914 / 2013, p 157).

Instead of repeating habitual ways of writing, drawing or thinking, which ultimately result in clichés and generalisations (the enemies of authentic creativity), by engaging with the particularity of a ‘thing’ and all its ‘threads of life’ a world of infinite possibility is revealed. In this way “a particular flash of reality bursting forth in its unforgettable individuality, but

infinite in its meanings and echoing capacity” can be experienced (Maritain, 1955, p 115).

This fleeting moment of intuitive potential heightens sensitivity and perception, making the individual aware of all the particularities of the thing that they are faced with, including the unpleasant, the incomprehensible and the seemingly irrelevant. It opens up a world of potential meaning and personal response.

The way of observing the particular rather than conceiving the general, knowing the real rather than understanding the conceptual, requires that the creating individual should become completely at one with whatever it is they are engaging. It requires an emotional connection which surrenders itself to becoming part of an interconnected system of things, and this is the fourth principle underlying creative intuition.

IT IS AN EXPERIENCE OF FUSION THROUGH EMOTION

By engaging with the particularity of the real, a relationship with things is created which is multi-dimensional and reciprocal. Martin Buber describes this kind of relationship as an “I-Thou” relationship in which a person truly sees and listens to what is around them, and this includes animate as well as inanimate things (Buber, 1923 / 2004, p 7). Entering into such a relationship requires a special kind of attention, which has already been described and which, when combined with an emotional investment, results in a connection or fusion with reality. Through this emotional connection there arises the feeling that there is no separation between individual and the world around him; instead the feeling is one of dynamic integration. The individual therefore feels what it is like to be that thing and consequently understands or ‘knows’ it more fully.

Such a reciprocal relationship with reality concurs with Bergson's theory of duration, in which the nature of reality as accessed by intuition (in contrast with the intellect) is such that there are no real boundaries between objects and states; rather there is a fluid

interpenetration. Because in reality there are no distinct boundaries between things (as discussed with reference to particularity) there is no difference between perception, the perceiver and the thing perceived. And it is only through the intuitive experience that there can be the merging of so-called 'subject' with 'object' (Bergson, 1907 / 1998).

Through emotional engagement with the particular the conceptual moulds of intellectual activity are dissolved and disintegrated, and a deeper and more direct relationship with the world is experienced, giving rise to a state of 'interconnectedness', 'non-duality' or 'fusion'. Being reciprocal, 'non-dual' experience is a two-way process, in which the individual opens themselves to receive a fluid and interpenetrating reality, while simultaneously extending their consciousness in an ever-expanding outward direction. What both 'Eastern' and 'Western' worldviews have in common with regard to accessing or enabling a state of non-duality is the importance of personal subjectivity, specifically feeling, as a catalyst for achieving the non-dual state of intuitive consciousness.

While intellectual knowing is linear, successive and categorical, intuitive knowing is holistic, atemporal and acontextual. An intuitive communion with the world results in true 'inspiration' or fusion with the environment, which may then be expressed in various forms. Through this temporary fusion, the artist or creative explorer can regain the essence of the lived experience by placing him- or herself within reality through empathy and openness. The intuitive experience which results from this openness breaks down mental barriers between the person and his perceived reality, whether external or internal. As with all the other principles underlying creative intuition, this 'sympathy' or fusion is a fleeting and fragmentary experience which needs to be recorded or captured as soon as possible in order to retain the emotional impetus which may ultimately give rise to numerous forms of expression. An emotional and non-dual engagement with reality requires undivided attention as well as attitudes of alert receptivity, openness and honesty. Sometimes this requires

‘getting out of your own way’ by imagining, through sympathetic identification, what it must be like to be someone or something.

CONCLUSION

Intuition has long been regarded as an important element of the creative process, but it has also been regarded as mysterious and possibly unknowable. It is referred to in the literature on creativity research, but has not been examined in detail with reference to its qualities and characteristics, particularly from a philosophical perspective. In addition to this, there is very little literature which relates Eastern philosophies of intuition with Western philosophies of intuition, resulting in a fragmented and incomplete understanding of the subject. This research addresses this unsatisfactory situation, so that a clearer understanding of the characteristics and nature of intuition may inform ways of enabling or nurturing it in creative arts studios, science laboratories and business boardrooms around the world.

As has been discussed, intuition functions in ‘hybrid’ states of consciousness, those moments of reverie between clear, focused perception and dreamlike, unfocused fantasy. The exact nature of this expanded state of consciousness is such that it gives insight into normally unnoticed or forgotten aspects of reality. It also gives insight into an internal world of personal emotional responses to that reality, which are unrepeatable and unknown to anyone but the creative individual until they are expressed in one form or another. In this way intuition is regarded as the source of creative potential. The truly creative act involves synthesis through spontaneity and honesty, as opposed to construction through deliberation and analysis. It expresses an internal experience and reveals what is ordinarily hidden in the world (both internally and externally).

Intuition flourishes when it engages with the particular and the real and, through an intimate and emotional involvement with the specific nature of human experience, a person can come

to experience more and more of what it is to be human and what it is to be alive in this world. Whereas the intellect fixes and contracts thought, intuition frees the mind up, creating endless opportunity for individual interpretation and expression. It involves a very broad, expansive way of perceiving or knowing the world, in which very vague feelings or hunches about very specific things are experienced. The two ways of knowing reality cannot co-exist in the same time-frame, so for creativity to flourish, the usual way of understanding the world (through the intellect) has to be replaced with other, more fluid and open ways of being in the world which enable the intuitive experience.

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