



THE TENTH INTERNATIONAL ILLUSTRATION RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

University of Worcester, November 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> 2019

# Illustrating Mental Health

**“To the extent that I managed to translate the emotions into images – that is to say, to find the images which were concealed in the emotions – I was inwardly calmed and reassured. Had I left those images hidden in the emotions, I might have been torn to pieces by them.”**  
**CARL JUNG**

Carl Jung kept visual diaries documenting his personal struggles with mental illness, and Jungian analysis to this day encourages patients to document their dreams using imagery. This year’s IR symposium takes Jung’s ‘Red Book’ as a key text and asks how illustration can be used to depict, explain and help understand mental illness and related issues such as wellbeing, happiness, cognition, confusion, dreams and dementia.

A key question is how can illustration represent the inner workings of the mind, through creating visual narratives that draw upon personal and collective experience of the world. A related question is how does illustration articulate complex emotional and perceptual experience, alongside and beyond spoken and written language? How can illustration – as an activity as well as its place in popular visual culture – address these issues?

We are living at a time where image culture has saturated every aspect of our lives. There has been an equivalent explosion in mental health issues for young people. What part does illustration play in exacerbating or alleviating mental health problems by contributing to popular image culture?

GPs now prescribe creative activities as part of a government drive towards 'arts for health', and this has resulted in a boom in artist led services to a diverse demographic. What ethical issues should creative practitioners be aware of when working in this field? How can illustrators lead the agenda for mental health policy making?

We invite 300 word proposals for 20 minute presentations that address (but are not confined to) the following themes:

- The use of illustration to depict mental health issues, for instance the use of visual metaphors and clichés
- Graphic memoirs, autobiographical graphic novels on the subject of mental health
- historical depictions of mental health, for example folkloric demons and medieval psychomachia
- Medical illustrations of mental health conditions
- Trauma illustrated / unlocking trauma
- The use of illustration in art therapy
- The pitfalls and ethics of illustrating other people's stories
- Co-produced illustration with those with lived experience of mental health issues
- Illustration as self-help, colouring books, visualisation exercises
- Craft, illustration and making for wellbeing
- Illustration that enables children to understand mental health issues
- Illustrators working with adults with dementia
- How can images help when language has left the body?
- Narratives of the unconscious; psychoanalytic approaches to illustration
- Archetypes in storytelling and myth as metaphor for psychological dynamics
- Does contemporary image culture contribute to mental distress?
- The pathologised imagination – art produced in medical or institutional contexts

We also welcome proposals for panels or round table discussions and practical workshops.

An exhibition of artwork relating to the theme of the conference will be announced shortly.

Please send 300 word proposals including name and accreditation to

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**DEADLINE: 5pm Friday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2019**