

DREAMS

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ARISE

This sculptural installation explores the feelings one gets after a dream. Depending on the content of a dream, one might feel scared, shocked, confused, happy, or content. We experience unique dreams that can cause a range of emotions. After each dream, we might be filled with curiosity as to why we had the dream or what the meaning of it was. Throughout history, dreaming has influenced leaders of religion and culture. They have done so in overt and subtle ways. Dreams can provide creative inspiration in all fields of human thought. They can capture one's inner views of the world, preserve memories of trauma, and express deep feelings about social as well as personal and spiritual issues. In many cases, dreams allow the brain to discover a clear path, showing how to proceed with one's life.

My intent for creating a fuzzy tree is to evoke that same feeling of wonder and shock one feels after waking from a dream, a feeling of disorientation. When you wake up in the morning after a dream you feel a sense of strange confusion, and that feeling tends to linger with you until the dream slowly fades with time. I invite viewers to study what they are looking at. The tree is something familiar and recognizable, but its fuzzy quality and being draped with blue goo is meant to be unsettling. Depending on the viewer's attitude, this can be beautiful or haunting.

I drew inspiration from Dan Lam and Motohiko Odani for their whimsical dream-like sculptures. Dan Lam makes silicone sculptures that are holographic creatures that intrigue me. Motohiko Odani's pieces in white plastic have a flowing quality to them that is appealingly mysterious. This sculpture is meant to capture a fluid and transformative feeling—a space where reality shifts, and what looks ordinary is not. There is an otherworldliness quality which sets the viewer thinking about what is real. My purpose for creating this art is to encourage viewers to explore the meaning behind their dreams and discover how life can be profoundly affected by them.

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Friday night, May 10, 2010. Cold air flooded into my sleeping bag as my body shifted a slight inch within the fluffy bed. From the outside point of view my body appeared to be at rest. My eyelids were shut tight with my tangled blonde hair wrapped around my forehead and face. However, I was not at rest. My mind was endlessly bombarded with slashes of red-hot light, swirling lava and wolves. I found myself standing on the edge of a large cliff. The sky was red and hot with anger and fury. My body blazed with heat and my hair whipped my skin, burning every time I blinked an eye. I soon found a net in my hand and, turning to the cliff below me, I saw a raging river of lava and fire. Loud screams of help came from my younger brother and sister, trapped in the tent with a large pack of wolves surrounding them, slowly pushing the tent closer and closer to the lava river. The wolves' eyes swirled with red and black and each seemed to have a deeper snarl. With the net, I caught the tent before it fell into the river and saved my brother and sister. I slid and tumbled down the cliff.

On Saturday night March 24, 2018, I had a dream; however, this was not just any dream. As my eyelids began to shut, big shiny bubbles danced around my brain. Each bubble effortlessly bounced off the gushy pink insides of my head. Huge clouds dripping trails of blue goo oozed out of the sky. The grass molded around my body. Each individual strand of grass stretched up my legs and arms, my chest and neck. My body was slowly engulfed in a deep sleep. The weight of the sea rested on my eyelids. As the setting of my dream intensified, I realized I was in a painting. The harsh edges of the wooden frame created a boundary for my existence. The painting was hanging on the wall in a studio covered with flowers. There was a great light, and yellow and gold colors flashed before my eyes. I slowly found myself outside the painting before a large group of people. As I talked, I found that I was giving a presentation on dreams. From this point on, I knew my Final Project was based on dream. I struggled to come up with a narrower topic branched off from dreams. I thought about the way I viewed dreams and the meaning behind them. This led me to contemplate how my dreams truly affect me and my thoughts, and eventually I came up with this question: Do dreams come from a place of science or spirituality, and how do they affect major aspects of society, such as culture, religion and science?

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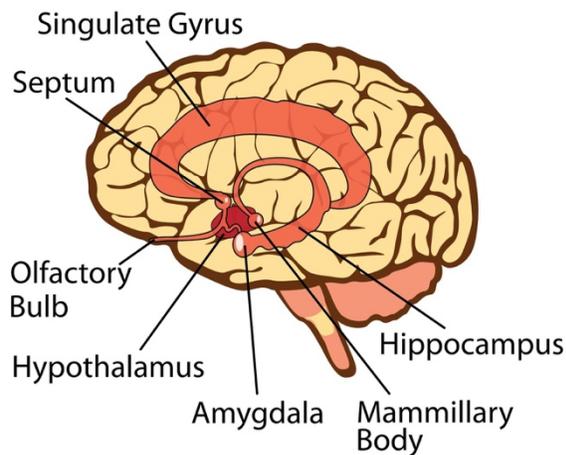
Throughout history, dreaming has influenced leaders of religion and culture. They have done so in both overt and subtle ways. Dreams can provide creative inspiration in all fields of human thought. They can capture one's inner views of the world, preserve memories of trauma, and express deep feelings about social as well as personal and spiritual issues. In many cases, dreams allow the brain to produce a clear path showing how to proceed with one's life.

There are many varying opinions about why we dream and the significance of dreams. According to Doctor Wilton, a professional in the field of oneirology: "Some experts say dreams have no connection to our real emotions or thoughts. They are just strange stories that don't relate to normal life. Many say our dreams may reflect our own underlying thoughts and feelings -- our deepest desires, fears, and concerns, especially recurring dreams" (Robert Quillvitch). Through history, there have been highly contrasting views on dreams. In many cases, there are two sides of thought surrounding the reasoning of dreams. Sigmund Freud's hold the psychoanalytic perspective; his theory of dreams suggested that dreams represent unconscious desires, thoughts, and motivations. According to Freud's psychoanalytic view of personality, people are driven by aggressive and sexual instincts that are repressed from conscious awareness, and often reflected

in dreams. Freud says that dreams are the fulfilment of wishes. He says that dreams are like a 'real experience', and dreams are like a private movie, where we know that it is only a dream. "What is common in all these dreams is obvious. They completely satisfy wishes excited during the day which remain unrealized. They are simply an undisguised realization of wishes (Sigmund Freud). Freud believed dreams express desire and things we want. He argued dreams are a way of the brain giving our mind what we wish for.

The activation-synthesis model of dreaming was first proposed by J. Allan Hobson and Robert McClarley in 1977. They believe that circuits in the brain become activated during REM sleep. This causes areas of the limbic system involved in emotions, sensations, and memories, including the amygdala and hippocampus, to become active. The limbic system in the mid-brain deals with emotions in both waking and dreaming and includes the amygdala, which is mostly associated with fear and is especially active during dreams. The cortex is responsible for the content of dreams, which includes information we gained from our waking hours. "The brain synthesizes and interprets this internal activity and attempts to find meaning in these signals, which results in dreaming" (Robert McClarley 1).

LIMBIC SYSTEM STRUCTURES



This model suggests that dreams are a subjective interpretation of signals generated by the brain during sleep.

Carl Jung, a psychoanalyst based in Zurich, Switzerland, has been one of the most influential thinkers of modern-day dream studies. The basic idea behind Jung's dream theory is that dreams reveal more than they conceal. He believes dreams "are a natural expression of our imagination and use the most straightforward language at our disposal: mythic narratives" (Hurd 1). However, Jung did not believe that dreams need to be interpreted for them to have an impact in one's life. He suggested that dreams are doing the work of "integrating our conscious and unconscious lives" (Hurd 1). We only *consciously* control 5-

10% of our mind which translates into our thoughts. The other 90-95% is subconscious or unconscious which can be thought of as automated processes both trained and instinctual. The unconscious is where all memories are held from birth until now, as well as all habits, behaviors, and beliefs. The unconscious communicates with, and is formed by the subconscious, meaning you can't consciously remember every paper you wrote in 4th grade but the impact of writing them, the feeling you got from the experience, lingers forever in the unconscious (Denise Skull 1). Jung believed our brain has two different settings. One while you are awake and one while you are asleep. He argues that the brain can "think" in different ways when conscious and unconscious. He called this "the process of individuation." Individuation is the mind's quest for wholeness. Like many modern-day thinkers, Jung believed that dreams have purpose and there is a reason behind or minds creating them.

Many people have argued over the meaning and importance of dreams. Some say they are pointless and should be ignored, while others argue dreams are necessary for mental, emotional, and physical health. Whether you believe dreams are a way into our deeper thoughts

or are just stories that play in our heads, every human can be deeply affected by a dream. Many people say they have come up with their best ideas while dreaming, so dreams may be a conduit of creativity. Many people find meaning in their dreams. There is a lot of science about dreams and why they occur.

Dreams may occur during any stage of sleep. But most vivid dreams occur during deep, REM (rapid eye movement) sleep when the brain is most active (Dreams 1). Often the dreams we remember are those which occur during this time period. Many people have argued over the meaning of dreams. Studies have shown that when the brain reaches a state of deep sleep it begins to process. According to a study done by Doctor Matt Wilson, associate professor of brain and cognitive sciences in MIT's Picower Center for Learning and Memory, people who are unable to dream have symptoms which include: increased tension, anxiety, depression, difficulty concentrating, lack of coordination, weight gain, and a tendency to hallucinate. Along with many others, Wilston came to the conclusion that it is a necessity for humans to dream (Robert McClarley1). But why?

Along with a team of researchers, Matt Wilston began to explore the correlation between good health and dreams. He surgically placed a set of four microscopic microphones into a mouse brain. These microphones were then hooked up to wires that led to many larger monitors and processing machines. Through the microphone, Wilston and his team were able to track the individual cells that were firing in the mouse's brain in real time. When each cell fired, it produced a sound which the microphone picked up and played out loud within the lab; from these sounds, the researchers were able to know what the mouse was doing without physically watching him. For example, they were able to tell when the mouse was lying down or running through a maze to get cheese (Robert McClarley 1). "This work provides direct insight into the way in which memory is processed during different stages of sleep and therefore provides a model for the study of the complex relationship between sleep and awake cognition and memory" (Wilson 1). After spending many hours listening to these sounds, Wilston was able to tell if the mouse was asleep or not. As the mouse fell asleep, the sounds decreased to almost nothing and would continue to stay in this state for a few minutes. Wilston reported that once the mouse had been asleep for some time the same sounds that occurred when the mouse was running through the maze began to play. The mouse was dreaming. This led Wilston to the conclusion that the mouse was dreaming about the traumatic and frustrating experience of running through the maze (Robert McClarley 1).

Alongside mice, humans dream of traumatic experiences. As we go through our day our brain flags each experience with a lot of emotion associated with it. Then, after we have fallen asleep, our dreams allow our brain to flip through these experiences and work with them. "We're only beginning to understand the impact that sleep has on normal memory and cognitive function and how it might interact with other neurological and psychological conditions" (Wilson 1). By understanding how dreams work and how they impact our mental health people with neurological and physiological issues may be provided with more help. If dreams are a way of processing human interactions and happenings, they are a direct way into one's thoughts. Dreams allow the brain to "rethink" emotions that were caused during the day. Through dreams, humans are able to essentially conduct a personal therapy session in their minds. Dreams are the rawest form of thought that can ever be presented by one's mind. Because of this rawness dreams present, they provide highly influential and motivational properties. Dreams can present themselves to everybody; however, some people have the motivation to take them to the next level. In many religions and cultures, dreams are told to not only predict the future but to provide

great insight and meaning into one's life. In many cases, dreams provide a foundation for a religion and can have great influence over its practice.

Native Americans believe that a dream is the translation of the conversation that happens between them and the world. They don't see a difference between dreaming and waking reality, but rather an overlapping experience which allows them to create the concept of two worlds. They believe that through dreams one is able to open up one's spiritual eye to the visible and invisible, the audible and inaudible. In many native American cultures such as the Abenaki tribe, dreams play a major role in their creation story. As seen from a section of their creation story: "His sleep was filled with dreams of his creation. He saw strange things in his dream. He saw animals crawling on four legs, some on two. Some creatures flew with wings, some swam with fins. There were plants of all colors, covering the ground everywhere. Insects buzzed around, dogs barked, birds sang, and human beings called to each other. Everything seemed out of place. The Great Spirit thought he was having a bad dream. He thought, nothing could be this imperfect" (Abenaki Tribe). In Native American culture, dreams are highly honored because they create a strong connection between themselves and the spiritual world.

Somewhat similar to Native American beliefs, in Islamic culture it is believed that different forms of dreaming can help people come into contact with past martyrs of their faith. They believe that the purpose of their dreams is to allow them a greater understanding of the martyr's existence, with implications for their own future. The Muslim society believes that dreams can show them a prosperous future, motivate them into moral or spiritual development, and warn them of impending dangers: "The ultimate purpose of these dreams is to give the devout Muslim a deeper insight into the truth that is not available in waking reality" (Iain Edgar 2). The Islamic tradition distinguishes between two types of dreams. The first is *al-ru'ya*, true dreams, which are more likely to be experienced or received by pious Muslims, but potentially all Muslims can receive them. The second is a false dream, which may come from the devil, and the last is the meaningless everyday dream (*hulm*). There is extensive literature on the art and science of dream interpretation in the religion going back over a thousand years (Iain Edgar 2).

While the war in Syria and tensions between Middle Eastern countries intensify, people are searching for reasons behind the fighting. Over the last decade several studies have shown that militant Islamists such as al-Qaida and the Taliban make extensive use of their dreams. They use these reported night dreams to inspire, announce, and validate violent jihad. According to historian Edgar Iain, "Just as in other jihadi groups, dream accounts and discussions proliferate, and activists express belief in the predictive potential of night dreams. Dreams may also feature in decision-making processes at different levels in the organization." An example of these dreams being applied is found in Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's decision to withdraw forces from Mosul in late 2014 in response to a vivid dream the media director had about the Islamic State withdrawing forces. This illustrates how people holding large amounts of power can be influenced by large amounts of emotion as it appears in their dreams.

Along with the Muslim religion, Buddhist psychology recognizes several types of dreams. According to the Milinda Panha (an ancient Buddhist text), there are five types of dreams that can be had. They believe that dreams can come from physical stress, psychological irritability, the spirits, mental clarity or they can be prophetic. The Milinda Panha also says that dreams mainly occur in the interval between falling asleep or waking up (*okkante* middle) and deep sleep (*asampatte bhavaige*). Before the Buddha was enlightened, he had seven dreams. These dreams were full of symbolism which provided evidence that he might become enlightened. He said that a person who does loving-kindness meditation will not be disturbed by

nightmares. The Buddha also believed that a monk who fell asleep mindfully would not have a nightmare. In Buddhism, dreaming of doing something, i.e. killing someone or stealing something, is not ethically significant and, therefore, has no karmic effect believing that dreams are beyond the power of the will (Bhante Shrivasti Dhammika 1).

Dreams have had a large impact on modern day society. Today DNA is well known. DNA is a long thin molecule made up of something called nucleotides. There are four different types of nucleotides: adenine, thymine, cytosine, and guanine. DNA holds all the information for a human life and is the building block of life. The shape and structure of DNA were not discovered until 1953 when Dr. James Watson had a dream that made him consider the double helix. According to Dr. Watson, the dream was of two intertwined serpents with heads at opposite ends, though other accounts say the dream was of a double-sided staircase (Watson 14:32). Later, Watson and Crick were awarded the 1962 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine "for their discoveries concerning the molecular structure of nucleic acids and its significance for information transfer in living material" (Watson 18:48). Dr. Watson's dream not only changed modern day science, it led to the description of the building block of life.

Along with the large impact dreams have had on the scientific world, they have also affected the modern day entertainment industry. The Beatles were a legendary rock group that formed in Liverpool, England, in 1960. They went on over the next decade to transform popular music into a creative, highly commercial art form. The Beatles were one of the most popular bands of all time. Around 1969, however, they began to fight amongst themselves. They were on the verge of breaking up when Paul McCartney had a dream "between deep sleep and insomnia" about his mother, who reassuringly told him to "let it be." The next day he started writing the song on his piano. The song speaks of freedom and peace around the world and may also refer to the breakup of the group. (Carolyn Gregoire 1). After the Beatles broke up in 1969, John Lennon began to produce music of his own. Lennon took a very active role in trying to persuade people to protest against the Vietnam War. He asked for world peace and sang many songs of peace. In a dream he heard the words, "*Ah! böwakawa poussé, poussé*", and turned the gibberish into the chorus for this solo tune, "#9 DREAM," which peaked on the Billboard Hot 100 Chart (Carolyn Gregoire 1).

Dreams not only influenced music but writers as well. In 1816 Mary Shelley wrote the world's first science fiction novel, *Frankenstein*. Days prior to the idea of *Frankenstein*, she had a terribly vivid nightmare of a re-animated monster and knew she wanted to write somewhat of a ghost story. Shelly describes her dream: "I saw the pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling beside the thing he had put together. I saw the hideous phantasm of a man stretched out, and then, on the working of some powerful engine, show signs of life, and stir with an uneasy, half vital motion. Frightful must it be; for supremely frightful would be the effect of any human endeavor to mock the stupendous mechanism of the Creator of the world" (Bulkeley 1). Shelley's dream led to writing a book that essentially changed the way science fiction books are written and read today. she used her dream to combine scientific reality with the imagined world.

Many people have been influenced by dreams whether their field lies in science, entertainment, or religion. There are many schools of thought on dreams and why they occur, as I have said. Dreams are still one of the biggest mysteries to this day and my relationship with dreams has been complicated. I have been dreaming ever since I can remember. Some of my dreams are vivid and clear, while others fade out and the dream goes on. I have found that I dream about issues or conflicts I am concerned about. I find myself replaying the hard situations

that happened during the day back in my mind before I fall asleep. These thoughts eventually fade into a dream that is blown up into a larger, more complicated, story that amplifies my fears. I believe there is a strong correlation between how our brain works and why we dream. I think we dream in order to allow our brains to process and unpack emotions without the distraction of waking thought.

However, I also believe there is a strong element of spiritual intervention within dreams. I have heard many stories from my mum about her dreams, and how she dreams about situations before they happen. One weekend we were camping in the woods with no cell service or internet. The night before we left to go home, she had a dream about her best friend's father passing away. The next day she turned her phone on when we got to service and there was a message from her friend saying her father had died in the night. My mum had no way of knowing this information, yet she knew what had happened before she was told. This has never happened to me, but I strongly believe that there is something or someone out there watching over us and providing us with these dreams in order to better us as humans. When I dream and recall it the next morning, it makes me think about the meaning and its impact on me.

For example, I had been fighting with my siblings one night and that night I dreamt they both got injured in a fire. The next morning I was so thankful for both of them I totally forgot about the fight from the night before. I do not want to necessarily name spirits, but whatever is out there in another world sent that dream to me in order to show me that I must love my siblings. I think that the dreams I have are important and allow my body and spirit to process things, as well as bring perspective and awareness to my mind, and things to think about in new ways.

Dreams are one of the biggest everyday mysteries we experience every night. They can affect people in different ways and can have an overall impact on one's life. While there are many different views and opinions on where dreams come from, no one will ever know. Whether dreams come from a higher more spiritual power or from the brain itself, we will never know. Sweet dreams.

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