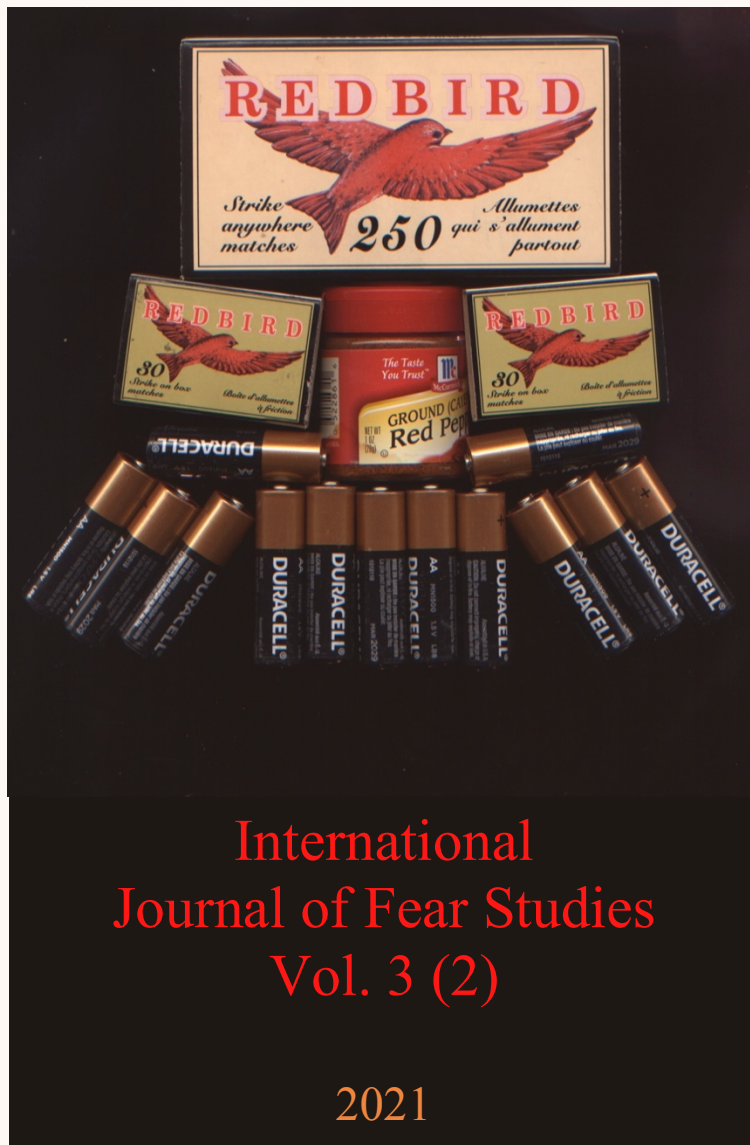


Interdisciplinary & Transdisciplinary Approaches



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Keep Moving: Artist (front cover) Backstory

There is no title for this art piece (digital mash-up collage) but it is an image I made a few months ago from a meshwork of diverse experiences going on in my life. I suppose fear is at the core and threads itself throughout the image. Upon reflection, I remember feeling quite destabilized psychologically and ontologically, and that my identity was shaken. It would be easy to pin this down to post-Covid 19 wear and tear of some fabric of what is ‘normal.’ Yet, that’s not the only thing that was going on.

To enter a ‘making’ is like to enter a studio space, even when you don’t know what you are going to do in the space but you trust that the space and yourself and time will all provide a nourishing intersection of possibilities of what may arise. Or, for some, entering a studio can be very intimidating and raise a lot of performative fears. Like, for one, ‘am I going to waste my time.’ To return to the front cover image, I’d say it was a choice. This was spurred by several somewhat compounding traumatic, if not existential, events when I was living in Calgary this spring. And, then there was my big move from Calgary, my home town, and going to the W. coast probably to live out the rest of my life in a place where I hardly know anyone and am quite unfamiliar and ‘see no particular future’ and ‘no particular job’ or livelihood or, or, or.... I was meeting a lot of unknowns, that’s for sure. The thematic issues of transition, home, and identity were really being brought up with these somewhat irruptive choices, but also with things that were major happenings not my choice but more as impositions from the environment, from the times of where the earth systems and cultural systems are heading, and sometimes exploding.

Lots of deep terror, somatic trembling, and often unconscious dream-based nightmares and visions and thoughts of death and disease and calamity—not all bad visions—would visit me. I was able to manage and transform a lot of this ontopsychosocial material, because I am an artist who has long worked with fear/terror and has learned to transform its energies, its disabilities, and I suppose you could say I have a lot of resilience because I practice healing regularly as part of my art, research and teaching. For various reasons, long ago I made a choice not to just cope in this world but to heal; and thus I had to learn to work this darkness consciously. The image on the front cover then, is a type of ‘art therapy’ for me and perhaps as I share it, I imagine it may be a transport station of possibilities for others. Images speak ten thousand words but in a different language than the fully rational. Barbara, my life-partner, also an artist, researcher, teacher, agrees with me this methodology and language of images and making, imagining—is itself, of the arational or some might call the non-rational. This modality of reality however, ought not be mistaken for the irrational, as is too often done.

I have always found the unconscious an amazing source of dread and terror and at the same time a rich source of creative elicitation. What findings come from this image-making-movement to ‘enter’ into the felt-experience, pleasant or not, good or bad, is what is the choice to experiment, and that’s mainly what art has become for me, much more than decoration and entertainment. The aesthetic register of phenomenon constantly intrigues me, and finding materials like the ones in this image, really is not just functional but is an encounter with a meshwork of co-emerging ‘activations’ of ‘living’ things, even if that thing is a battery or a match box, or an anything that has resonances of energies, histories and memories. I guess you could say, part of being an artist of sensitive social-engagement is being an artist-experimenter who ‘tracks’ and yes, I love to ‘track

fear’ and see where it goes. If an interesting, beautiful, or even sacred artifact is created in the making, that’s a bonus for me, it is not the purpose of art. Bringing this aesthetic-artistic-ecological sensibility to what I do in the world, I ultimately work with process-based philosophical snooping of “motional-relational” choreographies as a fear researcher. I’ll speak more about these notions in my Editorial in this issue.

As for content and meaning of the art on the cover, that’s also important but not as important as process. So, feeling somewhat ‘off center’ for days, and having a few experiences of attacks of ‘forces’ upon my being from the world and from inside, I decided to plant, contain, release and *ignite* some of that energy. And so I started searching for an identity (alter) that would be able to handle this explosivity and onslaught of what seem like ‘negative’ forces.

A big difference at the time was my meeting a new person of great mutual interests. I was having exchanges with [Howard Teich](#) and his depth mythico-psychological work with the Twin myth and Pollen Path archetypal images and stories from the Navajo Indigenous peoples in the American southwest territories. All of that spurred me to look closer at some of the sand paintings of the Navajo. In dwelling with one image especially, I noticed a Bluebird showed up at the end of the initiatory journey on the Pollen Path of individuation. And, then it struck me I wanted a unique identity in my working as a creative consultant with Howard and his Solar Lunar Sciences & Arts venture. That began the deconstruction and reconstruction of a ‘self’ and normal way I have presented myself as a consultant in the past. It, I, We—some combination thereof, was ready to change—and transform—so, I went with the flow.

I saw a package of box matches with “Redbird” and then the illustration of a bird on the box cover, and I thought it was similar (albeit, very secular) to the Bluebird image in the sand paintings. It was a transcendental moment—a combination of felt-things-in-movement, a co-potency of relational synchrony, and that made me name myself “Redbird.” Yes, that’s it, that’s what would be my designation for the creative team that Howard was putting together. I later was attracted to other things, beings, shapes, colors, etc., that would ‘fit’ with this red bird and my ecological explosivity that was shaking me ‘apart’ in some way. So, I saw the red pepper Barbara bought to keep racoons away from shitting in our yard, saw a drawer of batteries in our kitchen, scanned some, and digitally manipulated images, creating this “package” of elixir, energy, happenings. Does it represent myself? Does it represent the world? Well, that would be another article to explore. However, In a process philosophy there is no need to have to have any making be necessarily representative; and, it is best to move away from that need to represent, to symbolize, and experiment with things, materials, emotions, felt-thoughts, intuitions, etc. just because they are there, and just because I am aligning in some juxtapositioning with their being there. It, I, We all start to merge into a ‘one’ moment, upon another moment of ‘happenings’—even if so subtle not to be noticed by anyone. Yet, there’s always that possibility the artist can share, because it seems, as Bracha L. Ettinger argues in matrixial theory, that *the artist can’t not share*. I so agree. [for more of my art go to: <https://studiom.space/> also <http://www.loveandfearsolutions.com/art.php>]

-R. Michael Fisher,
Nanaimo, BC, Canada,
August 8-21, 2021