

*I see a pattern, but my imagination cannot picture the maker of that pattern. I see a clock, but I cannot envision the clockmaker. The human mind is unable to conceive of the four dimensions, so how can it conceive of a God, before whom a thousand years and a thousand dimensions are as one?*

- **Albert Einstein**

## **Artist's Statement: James Mahu**

Having worked with Joseph Campbell and studied under Richard Pousette-Dart, I realized that my work would encompass myth-making, not only the mark-making of visual art. This realization led me to the inevitable conclusion that art, at least in my case, would become an interlocking component of something larger and more complex. Through my teachers, I became aware that artists could be philosophers, as much as they were painters, sculptors, poets, musicians or writers.

In 1982, through a series of accidents, I invented a creation process that employs four discrete layers of mixed media. This creation process enabled a more surrealist automatism, coupled with layered colors that formed a unique, jewel-toned color palette. From this inception I began developing the interior language of the collective unconscious in themes, subjects, pictographs, and words. Stylistically—from a visual perspective—my work generally falls within the category of abstract surrealism.

The medium I use is more related to drawing than painting, and I tend to prefer using large museum boards instead of canvas. The majority of my work shares stylistic similarities to Georgia O'Keeffe, Wassily Kandinsky and Hilma af Klint. From a content perspective, my work is harder to categorize, owing to its influence from three disciplines: quantum physics, consciousness, and mysticism.

Having studied these interrelated disciplines for most of my life, I've found that these three subjects are very complementary and yet, as a triad, woefully underdeveloped in the art world. From a pure aesthetic perspective, being able to bring these three subjects into a visual harmony, represents, to me, the greatest challenge of artistic aspiration.

### **Quantum Physics**

Quantum fields were first proposed by Paul Dirac in the 1920s. This was when subatomic matter was thought to explain the nature of reality. However, it was becoming clear that the notion of a *particulate* universe was being replaced by the reality of a *field* universe. The universe, as physicists explained it, was made of subatomic *fields* (not particles), and these fields were all interacting and were cosmic in their expansiveness.

### Consciousness

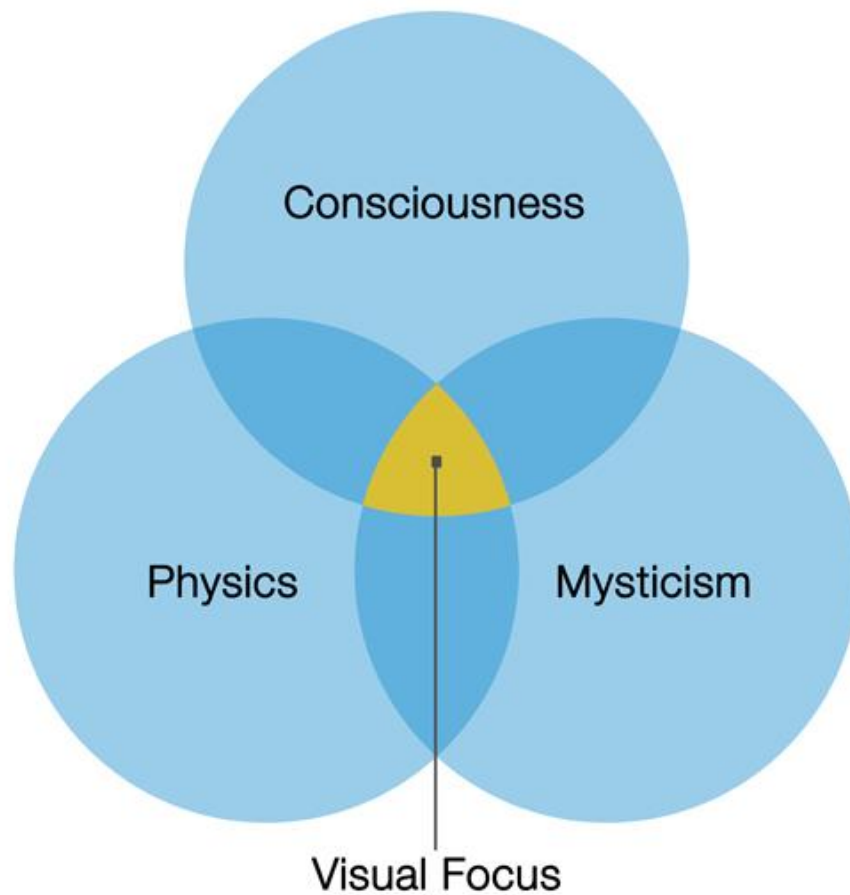
These subatomic fields correlated to our understanding of consciousness as being different from the brain. The brain was being repositioned as the *transmitter* of consciousness, not its source. Consciousness was not contained in the brain (or body for that matter), but was rather using the brain from some indeterminate location in spacetime. Where and how consciousness originated was left a mystery. However, this is where the mystical and shamanic traditions stepped in and provided some experiential answers.

### Mysticism

If we go back into prehistory (i.e., 50,000 BCE), human, nomadic tribes were guided by shamanic leaders. Humanity lived or died on its ability to find water and food resources. Spiritual leaders were tasked with the responsibility to contact “nature spirits” in order to help the tribe find water and food. These divinations and mystical abilities were curated through natural selection and the hand of time, becoming known as the “mystical experience” in a small, but vibrant subsection of humanity.

As religions sprouted, mysticism gradually receded out of view. Persecution from the religious quarters held that people weren’t unified, that nature wasn’t part of humanity, and that paranormal experience, outside of the purview of holy books, was patently evil. As a result, mysticism was placed on the dusty, too-high-to-reach library shelves of the human canon. This attitude prevailed well into the 19th century, but gradually lost momentum—birthing, as a result, the New Age or perennial philosophy.

Physics brought us quantum fields that assure us of human and Nature interconnectivity. Consciousness studies have shown us that the human brain is not the control center of the body. And mysticism, despite its persecution, has shown itself to be resilient and many of its primary realizations are supported by modern science. The connecting thread of my work is to link the three aforementioned themes and represent an innovative and thought-provoking approach to how art can illustrate the intangible and highly subjective worlds in the cross-section of quantum physics, consciousness, and mysticism.



Thematically, my art is rooted in the physics of consciousness and how we're connected through 24 subatomic fields that permeate and intersect the universe. These fields interweave physics, consciousness, and mysticism as an engaging redefinition of what it means to be human outside of, or transcended from, material science and fundamental religion.

The central purpose of my art is the dissolution of boundaries. The goal would be for anyone who is viewing the work to feel a little less "tribal" and related to hierarchical structures. Perhaps more obliquely, to glimpse a chimera that both science and spirituality are pointing the same arrow in the direction that we are one and equal, and unequivocally connected.

The prevailing beliefs that support a separation complex (i.e., religion, classical physics, identity politics, social normalization, etc.) can be suspended through this three-fold system

of knowledge, but artistic renderings of this knowledge are sparsely represented in the art field.

There is a surge in the public's appetite for the spiritual or mystical in art; witness the overwhelming success of Hilma af Klint's exhibit at the Guggenheim in NYC. Many people are seeking a more content-enriched and even intellectually challenging type of content that points to our interconnectedness rather than our superficial differences and tribal alliances deposited by generational persistence.

In addition, there is the fragmentation of society and its spiral into "bubble mindedness", which is simply a modern, technology enabled variant of the separation complex. The polar rift of nationalism vs. globalism is played out in a hundred different flavors in the media, and both of these sides seem to have lost their moorings and have no shared agenda. The yawning chasm only gets wider.

My work introduces an artistic synthesis of science and spirituality that is rooted in the arc of tensions implicit in the very ancient (mystical) and the very modern (quantum physics). This tension, by itself, is a very interesting "vein of gold" for artists to mine and share.

Roberto Matta is an example of an artist who attempted to express these other dimensions that unify, but fell short, in my opinion, of expressing the unification frequency because he was drawing from the 4th dimension of psychism. It became his exclusive focus. Kandinsky was another artist who explored some of these ideas, particularly color theory. He was one of the first artists to associate feeling with color, and even assigned meaning to various colors. Kandinsky's seminal book: *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, elaborated on the meaning of colors and how they could be applied to not only express certain emotional states or moods, but also affect them in an observer.

The use of symbols in my art is a significant component, and while I could be drawn into the colorist school of art, symbolism is more dominant than color within my art, as symbolism imbues the meaning of each particular piece. Let me cite one example: the mandorla. Mandorlas are one of the most ancient symbols for humanity. In geometry, they are known as a Venn diagram, specifically, that part that overlaps and shows the relationship between two finite sets (circles). In religious iconography, the mandorla is often used to represent ascension from the physical to the spiritual realms. It defines that rarified space between the physical and spiritual, and is often considered the vehicle of transportation between worlds (i.e., interdimensional portal).

The word mandorla stems from Italian, meaning almond. This is a reference to its shape. However, the symbol itself holds many different meanings, among the most popular are:

- Lens or the eye
- Sacred moments that transcend time/space (i.e., ascension)
- Cosmos

- Human aura

As you can see, they have a wide range of interpretations. Mandorlas have a very dominant role in the symbology of my art, and are used to express a portal-like interchange between dimensions. Chamber 2 of the Ancient Arrow series was the first mandorla I developed, but the theme remains present in nearly all of the art.



Often mandorlas are depicted in concentric color bands, signifying the higher dimensions of consciousness as one goes inward (also known as the seventh direction). Mandorlas are the point of transformation, but they are also a “lens” into the quantum state or stillpoint.

Another symbol is the halo or nimbus. While the mandorla may engulf the whole body, the halo is a featured symbol of holiness that encircles the head. The halo has been diminished, in my view, by its closed-off symbology that signifies that an individual is divine. It confers a sense of existential completeness and sanctity.

You may notice that I began to redefine the halo in Hakomi chamber paintings 3, 6, and 7. It was in chamber 9, however, that the halo was defined as more of a network of light above the head. This idea of a network was more consistent with connection and unity than the traditional, existential artistic representation of the halo. Over time this was further elaborated to show how this point of connection relates to the quantum fields and consciousness therein.



In the Aadhya series, you will notice a horned figure. The horn, as used in my art, is not a reference to demons or Satan, but rather a symbol of groundedness. That is to say, the animal instincts are intact. It is not a judgment related to religious interpretation, but rather a psychological assessment that the figure with horns is grounded in a state of animal consciousness. In psychology, it might be stated in the Freudian term of “Id” or in the Jungian term of “shadow”.

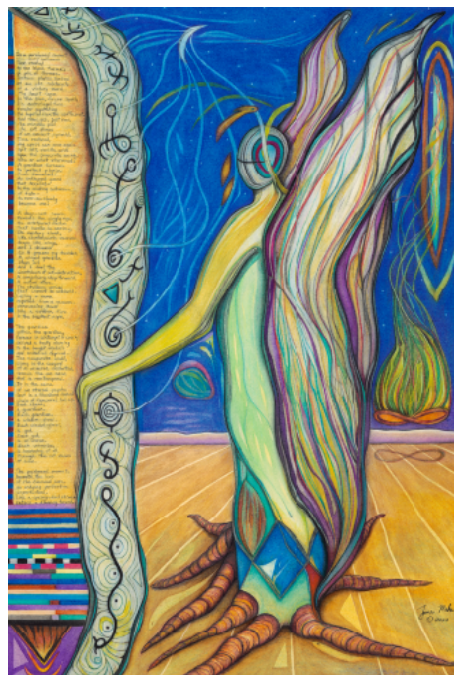


In some instances, this figure is seen with wings (i.e., Zyanya series chambers 11 and 16) and this symbolizes the polar continuum of the human state from the animal to the divine nature.



Another symbol that perhaps seems one thing, but is actually another, is the use of the crescent moon. It is one of the more consistent symbols in my work. The moon symbol actually represents the cardiac crescent, as it is called in medical terms. When the symbol of the moon is seen within my art, you are seeing the luminance of the heart, not a cosmological body.

The heart forms within 22 days of conception. It initially forms as a “heart field” and then begins to morph into a crescent-shaped tube. This is true for mammals in general. Eventually the crescent becomes the right and left ventricles and the source of neuronal activity in the heart itself.



The single eye has been appropriated by various cults and secret societies over the past 400 years, however, it goes back much further as a symbol of out-of-the-body consciousness. Shamans used this symbol extensively to designate that an individual was out of their body, that they were experiencing life as a floating, disembodied eye. It was associated with a state of consciousness that an individual could achieve, but not sustain, at least while in the body.

The eye of Horus and Ra were bound to mythologies that suggested that the single eye was a form of protection against one's enemies. The single eye was later used to symbolize the all-seeing eye of God. It was known as the Eye of Providence; a not so subtle reminder that God was observing our human actions and judgment was not far behind. As a visual representation, it's suggested to be an artistic invention of Freemasonry, and its most notable expression is on the one-dollar bill.

The single eye, as it pertains to my art, is a symbol of the sovereign integral state of consciousness. It is not phenomenalist, as in the case of the shaman; protectionists, as in the case of Egyptian mythology; or omniscient, as in the case of the Eye of Providence. It is an interconnection. A lens into the Grand Portal that connects all consciousness in a meaningful and purposeful experience, despite the turmoil and relative chaos that operates in the individual domain.



The final symbol that I will make note of is the pictograph of the snake-like image, often depicted with circles at each curve. I refer to this image as the “tempter”, as in the serpent of the Garden of Eden. To the serpent has fallen the unenviable task of illuminating humanity to the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil. It is an interesting thing how the snake became the personification of tempter, but it has been indelibly linked to temptation ever since the creation of the book of Genesis.

As with all creation stories and their introduction of the human species upon earth, there are many interpretations. The tempter symbol is my way of signifying that good and evil or polarity is ever-present. Of my visual works, about half of them include this symbol somewhere in the composition. It is a bedrock theme that the knowledge of good and evil tempts people to judgment and blame (religiously speaking, to sin).

The symbol is less prominent in the Ancient Arrow series, but makes its initial showing in Chambers 1, 2, 3, and 4. The symbol takes on variations over time, but it remains the good and evil serpent or tempter. The tempter is an initiator or activator of knowledge. It is not a devil or evil spirit. It is offering an experience of good and evil for transcendent purposes. In effect, and like all things divided into polarity, the good and evil serpent is providing access



to knowledge concerning how good and evil operate in a seamless union. It is the purveyor of transcendence. A wayshower to the Sovereign Integral state of consciousness.



Finally, back to the subject of color. Color is a frequency or vibratory field in itself. It interacts with the eye-brain system in ways that activate the neural network of the brain to feel, sense, or otherwise realize an emotional state that only color can produce. Who among us has not been in awe of a crystalline, blue sky or the fresh spring greens of an aspen or elm tree? Color expresses a frequency, and this frequency activates regions of the brain and more generally the central nervous system, which in turn, activate the emotional state. There is quite literally a cascade effect from color frequency to heart openness or closure.

How this is orchestrated is a very complex process, and it is very similar to music and how it activates the ear-brain system. Color frequencies are like the notes of a musical composition. Color, shape, and context can all flow in coherence and harmony to orchestrate eye-brain and heart resonance within an individual. These components can open new neural pathways. This is precisely why visual art and music are important activational sources, because they bypass the conscious, programmed mind, and require no translation.

Art, as a functional purpose within my overall work, is a means to activate the observer from a passive viewer of colors, symbols, rhythms, subjects, and composition; into a state of receptivity to explore abstract concepts where words falter. These concepts can be realized at the speed of light. They don't require years and years of peeling layers of obtuse and arcane knowledge.

They can be realized in an instant. Ideally, the cerebral interpretation takes a backseat to the more visceral experience of how one moves inward to that point of connection and unity, as one explores the artwork. Underlying all of this, is how the individual can use this experience to further their expression of the one and equal perspective, which I have termed the Sovereign Integral.

