

# TWO GENERATIONS OF MALTESE ARTISTIC FAMILIES



VOLUME ONE

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*Antoine & Antoine Paul Camilleri  
Aldo & Nadine Micallef-Grimaud*



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# CONTENTS

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- 04 Foreword  
*Chairman's message*
- 07 Introduction
- 09 Creative Transformations and  
Encounters of the Self
- 25 Antoine Camilleri (1922-2005)  
*Biography*
- 37 Learning in and through the life  
of the artist, father and mentor  
*Antoine Camilleri: Father*
- 51 Antoine Paul Camilleri  
*Biography*
- 63 Putting his heart into his art practice  
*Antoine Paul Camilleri: Son*
- 77 Aldo Micallef-Grimaud (1925-2010)  
*Biography*
- 95 Nadine Micallef-Grimaud  
*Biography*
- 113 The social construction of artistic expression  
a journey of two artists  
*Aldo & Nadine Micallef-Grimaud: Father and Daughter*

# FOREWORD

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*Two Generations of Maltese Artistic Families* is a new, three-year project which APS Bank is undertaking throughout 2014-2016. This initiative records and evaluates the contribution of six pairs of Maltese artists, related by family, who were active from the 1930's to date. In the process, it narrates the political, social and economic environment in which these artists grew up and highlights the inter-relationships between these milieus and the artists' sensitivity and response in their respective artistic works. Several contributors will be sharing their views in the three publications that are planned to complement the three annual exhibitions portraying the works of four artists at a time.

The project is an extension of the three-year cycle that brought together twelve Maltese artists, of whom one had a long track record of works and exhibitions in one or more media, and the others represented the upcoming generations. It proved to be a successful initiative which combined both an effective way of presentation of the works involved and a series of essays that addressed the relationships between the artists and their studio environment, native art and novel idioms introduced to express their moods and reactions to the events and the various types of phenomena occurring around us.

Both projects are based on two guiding principles that inspire the contribution of APS Bank to the cultural sector. First, we strive to complement the activities carried out by other entities. In this way, we expand the array of experiences which all those who visit the art exhibitions can go through. The Bank does support, in part, individual artists with their one-person exhibitions. We also give financial backing to collective projects. But, when it comes to undertake a new task we seek to widen the scope of the presentation and analysis. The project at hand seeks to identify the influence that parent-artists may have on their children or, put differently, how the upcoming members of a family react to the way in which a parent presents art as a mode of self-expression, a reaction to the outer world coming from a long search of the inner self. To start this meditative, artistic journey, we are presenting the experience and works of four artists: Antoine Camilleri and his son Antoine Paul, and Aldo Micallef-Grimaud and his daughter Nadine.

Secondly, we aim for a collective effort, not just in terms of the works exhibited, but also in terms of the ideas presented in the publication. We are once again collaborating with Dr Louis Laganà, who has been entrusted with the execution of this project and with the editing of the publication. He also prepared the biographies of the four artists and the introductory essay on *Creative transformations and encounters of the self*. In addition, there are the contributions of sociologist Dr Valerie Visanich, and art educator Ms Carmen Aquilina, who addressed the influence that society, at specific times, has on the artistic development of different individuals as these relate to both the home environment and the outside world. In turn, one discovers the development of art in the Maltese Islands, both pre- and post-war, as upcoming artists studied in different countries, apart from Malta, thereby bringing back with them the evolving patterns of artistic expressions.

It is planned to explore further these, and other themes, in the two volumes that follow. In this way, the trilogy of publications would have focused on several specific aspects that make up a vibrant Maltese artistic set-up, which is primarily emanating from the sensitiveness of artists and their capable skills in handling materials for artistic self-expression.



E. P. Delia  
Chairman, APS Bank  
August 2014





# INTRODUCTION

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As part of the APS Bank series of art exhibitions held at the Swatar Centre in Birkirkara, the latest initiative is to organise two-generation art exhibitions. The aim of the bank is that in this three-year project, we will feature twelve artists: six of the older generation, artists who were born early in the twentieth century and their progeny who are currently practising artists. Thus we will have a clear picture of the changes which happened in art in Maltese society during these last 70 years, and the transformation of the current art scene in Malta.

In the first exhibition, we are seeing the works of two distinguished veteran artists of the older generation, born in the second decade of the 20th century, Aldo Micallef-Grimaud and Antoine Camilleri. The other two artists are the children of the artists, Nadine Micallef-Grimaud and Antoine Paul Camilleri. This eclectic art exhibition showcases the works of the two generations which are being shown side by side, to celebrate the achievement of one generation, and the promise of the next.

For this occasion, APS Bank is publishing a book which includes the biographies of the four artists, a psychoanalytic analysis essay, and two other essays on the life and works of the artists. The essays are based on theoretical issues in art criticism as well as historical information about the works of a selection of Maltese artists of the past and the present. It will therefore be of great benefit to students at tertiary level to have at hand literature about the development of modernism in Maltese art.

In Malta, there were great changes in art since the beginning of the twentieth century. The Malta Government School of Art was established in 1925, in Casa Tessi, now called Casa Brunet, in Old Bakery Street in Valletta. The school's main function, at the time of its foundation, was to serve as an academy for Malta, replacing the small classes spread around the island.

In the first two biographies of the older generation of artists, that of Aldo Micallef-Grimaud and Antoine Camilleri, we will see how this school was influential in the formation of young artists in the beginning of the twentieth century. In the artists' biographies, we will come across the first influential masters at the Malta Government School of Art in the twenties, namely, Robert and Edward Caruana Dingli, and other early tutors like Ġorġ Borġ, Vincent Apap, Dwardu Zammit and Carmenu Mangion.

The beginning of modernism in art in Malta is attributed to the creation of the *Modern Art Group*, which was started in the early fifties and later evolved into the *Atelier'56*. We will find interesting developments of how local artists, after the post-World War II period, established a stylistic designation in their works to identify themselves with modernism, and with what was happening in the rest of Europe at that time. Artists became highly conscious of their art practice and had to make choices of style within the limitations of what was, or was not, accepted by society. A number of artists preferred gradual development over radical change but others risked their reputation and adopted a progressive and modernist position towards society and its established institutions.

Louis Laganà  
Editor

# CREATIVE TRANSFORMATIONS AND ENCOUNTERS OF THE SELF

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When we look at the works of artists Aldo Micallef-Grimaud, Nadine Micallef-Grimaud, Antoine Camilleri and Antoine Paul Camilleri, we find that there is one major trait which runs through all the works, that which reflects the conscience and the true self, which serves as a mirror of the soul.

## **The artist's unconscious mind**

*“The creative process, so far as we are able to follow it at all, consists in the unconscious activation of an archetypal image, and in elaborating and shaping this image into the finished work. By giving it shape, the artist translates it into the language of the present, and so makes it possible for us to find our way back to the deepest springs of life.”* (Jung, C. G., *The Spirit in Man, Art, and Literature*, 1967: 82-83).

The unconscious plays a very important part in the artist's creative process. We will meet, in the course of these artistic journeys, some of the technical devices of the unconscious that find expression in all art forms. It will be fruitful to see how a painting or a sculpture derive their character from the unconscious developed by the artist's dynamic tendencies. Thus we will employ the special devices of dream techniques, and by utilising the language of the unconscious, to construct a meaning and to analyse works of art. This will also help us to respect and appreciate the significance of a work of art and its creator. At this stage, an example of a work of art from each artist will suffice.

The symbolic images emanating from the unconscious of the artist also have a spiritual connection. The attraction to the sacred or the spiritual is another psychological explanation why Antoine Camilleri is so drawn towards that which is religious. There is no doubt that his work has a religious symbolic significance. The problem arises as to how to explain these symbolic references. I feel that his symbols have a dual meaning and interpretation. One is the certainty that symbols emerge from his personal experiences, from consciousness, including contents, which originated in real or imagined emotional experiences. The other type emerges from his unconscious psychic life. This unconscious psychic life is divided into two: the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious (Jung 1959: 42-48). According to Jung, art receives its major tributaries from

the collective unconscious. Contrary to the personal unconscious, the collective unconscious has never been in consciousness; its existence is exclusively hereditary. These are feelings, perceptions and behaviours. They are not dependent on the experiences of the individual, but are instead something that we inherit, and perhaps share, as a kind of genetic memory. So my argument is that, in some of Antoine's work, certain shapes, like the circle and the square or rectangle, emerge unconsciously in his creations. He used these universal forms in many different guises. For example, in his expressionist phase, the artist repeated these shapes with powerful results. We see this in *City lights*. In another work entitled *The Bugibba Breakwater*, Antoine used the circle, in this case, representing the sun inside a square. He repeated this image many times and suggested that his use of the square symbolised strength, and the circle represented beauty and totality (Laganà 1974). The circle is also considered as a symbol of the Self and the totality of the psyche in all aspects, including the relationship between man and the whole of nature (Jung 1964: 266).

In his work *Arbre Enchanté*, Aldo Micallef-Grimaud addresses the concept of transformation that transcends all aspects of human life. He uses the tree which is taking shape into a human body or vice-versa, like we find in Ovid's *Metamorphosis*. Aldo used the universal archetype of the tree symbolically as a transformational object. In Jungian parlance, the archetypal tree is also a significant aspect of the individuation process. According to Jung, this transformational process has a creative and aesthetic component which results in "individuation" (Mayo 1995: 72). Thus the artist produces symbols which emerge unconsciously throughout the course of creation. Jung continued to stress the importance of symbols emerging from the unconscious and said that, "whatever the unconscious may be, it is a natural phenomenon producing symbols that prove to be meaningful (Jung 1964: 102)."

The "primordial images" which Jung termed "archetypes", are "inherited representations" (Jung 1964: 67) which surface from the unconscious and on which the individual has little control. They are psychic structures containing biologically related patterns of behaviour. Archetypes create strong emotional effects. Danica Anderson, who is a certified clinical and criminal justice specialist and also a psychotherapist who practises archetypal psychology, supports the idea that archetypes emerge spontaneously and produce psychic forms. She states: "Archetypes trigger immediate knowing without man-made language or absolute subjectivity. Archetypes are universal symbols found in every culture and known to all immediately despite the language or customs barrier" (Anderson 2000). Archetypes are collective instinctual forms, which once becoming conscious, present themselves as 'ideas and images'. Therefore archetypal response from the unconscious invigorates symbolic imagery to appear at a conscious level. Hence the role of the artist is to activate archetypal symbols and to express them as works of art.

Archetypal imagery derived from dreams and visions is strongly expressed in Nadine Micallef-Grimaud's work. The artist expresses symbols of her own image in her paintings to strongly bring out the importance of the archetypal female



Antoine Camilleri, *City Lights*, oil on paper, 1961



Antoine Camilleri, *The Bugibba Breakwater*, oil on board, undated



Aldo Micallef-Grimaud, *Arbre Enchanté*, oil on canvas, 1995



Nadine Micallef-Grimaud, *The Dream*, acrylics on canvas, 1997

in contemporary life. She strives to unite her vision with the physical reality, to create a unity of conscious and unconscious reality and to have a positive effect on society. The transformative power of archetypes is found mainly in the artist's creative process of the universal mythic structures. Nadine has an archetypal quest of creative transformation. Recurring symbols of the white dove, water, mixed vegetation and flowers are found in many of her paintings.

The archetypal female can be seen in her work called *The Dream*. We find a face of a female emerging from the dark sky. There is no expression on the face, it is just a gaze in the void of the universe. It is a dreamlike vision, and this in turn makes it seem familiar to us. Since the colours in this painting are heavy, and not within the lines and the nuances of a facial expression, they are replaced by a single bluish colour, quasi monochromatic. It is just like our own dreams, we may not always know what they intrinsically mean, yet they somehow make sense to us in some capacity, more often than not. The white dove flying on the right of the painting is the symbol of love and devotion. It is the celestial messenger, a harbinger of peace.



Antoine Camilleri, *Dancers*, pen and ink, 1976

In a very interesting pen-drawing with washes of black ink, Antoine Paul created, in a spontaneous way, images of female figures emerging from the empty space. This work was done while the artist was still studying with Esprit Barthet, his mentor during his years at sixth form. Antoine Paul was already freeing himself from the conventions of the academic discipline. In this painting, the archetypal female is represented by spatial distortions of figures and space. The dance-like bodies interlaced in sacred acts of a cult are conveyed to the viewers in partly anatomic and partly abstract forms. In this work "the value to psychology resides in its parallelism to the dream artifices of simultaneity, superimposed transparencies, and over-determination of content, which the unconscious so frequently employs" (Goitein 1948: 39). For example, another projection of dream symbolism is found in a more recent figurative sculpture in ceramics by Antoine Paul made in 2011. In this work, the artist shows a young male lying down on a bed visibly in deep sleep and dreaming. The lad, is in fact, the artist himself sleeping. It is a clear reminder of childhood. Antoine Paul's father frequently used his son as a model and vice-versa. In this ceramic sculpture, the artist was inspired by the sketches that his father had produced of him when he was a young boy, sometimes while he was sleeping. This work is a personal response to memories of childhood, formulated with an 'unconscious fantasy' which become constructed images and ideas and given form by the artist. This is attributed to psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott and one of his great contributions to psychoanalysis, what he called the "formulation of the idea of an intermediate area of experiencing between inner and outer worlds where unconscious phantasy and reality meet and overlap" (Townsend 2013: 173). As we shall see later, it is identified as the inner and outer 'potential' or 'transitional' space in the process of art making (Ibid). Therefore, I take as an example Antoine Paul's process of creation as an important moment when his ideas and images emerge in the artist's consciousness. His art is fuelled by memories of childhood, experiences and daily life. Thus he presents to us a mirror of an illusion of a dynamic inner life, embodied by the external and essential 'shapes' of the artist's feelings.



Antoine Paul Camilleri, *Sleeping*, ceramics, 2011

## The Religious and the spiritual

*“Initiating man into the truths of nature is one of the functions of art and religion... The artist, always sensitively attuned to man’s archaic residues (in superstition and ritual), provides an ideal medium for catharsis.”* (Goitein, Lionel, *Art and the Unconscious*, 1948).

Before we start discussing some of the works of these four artists, we need to set a clear definition between what is religious, and what is spiritual in art.

The arts have always been an integral aspect of religion. Sacred symbols, iconography, chants and music were used in rituals in sacred places. Thus the arts were a natural aid to connect with the transcendent.

Although some people assume that the terms ‘Religion’ and ‘Spirituality’ are synonymous, in fact they are not. They are often misunderstood because of their mutual identification in respect of their meaning, and the thinking and practices concerned. Spirituality is more identifiable with mysticism. It is something personal; the basic belief of one’s physical self. Religion, on the other hand, is an externalisation of what one believes. There is a connection between ‘spirituality’ and ‘animism’. The term ‘animism’ was used primarily by Sir Edward Taylor in his publication *Primitive Culture* (1871). He used this term to describe the origin of religion and the belief of primitive people. Taylor wrote this great work to prove that religion began with animism (Eliade 1957: 230). It is a psychic condition in the evolution of humans. Animism is derived from the Latin word *anima*, meaning breath or soul. It is the attribution of a soul or spirit to living things and objects. According to Freud, the definition of ‘animism’ is “in its narrow sense, the doctrine of souls, and, in its wider sense, the doctrine of spiritual beings in general” (Freud 1913: 87-88). Another term, derived from ‘animism’, is ‘animatism’, which “has also been used to denote the theory of the living character of what appear to us to be inanimate objects” (Ibid.). Freud observed that the relation of the human condition to inanimate objects is a psychological one. The concept of totemism also emerges, where natural objects like trees, stones, animals and places were worshipped. This belief of spirits dwelling in stones was also applied to sacred places, like stone circles and prehistoric temples. Aniela Jaffé suggests:

We know that even unhewn stones had highly symbolic meaning for ancient and primitive societies. Rough, natural stones were often believed to be the dwelling places of spirits or gods, and were used in primitive cultures as tombstones, boundary stones, or objects of religious veneration. Their use may be regarded as a primeval form of sculpture – a first attempt to invest the stone with more expressive power than chance and nature could give it (Jaffé 1964: 232).

This great manifestation and primitivist’s appeal to the spirit is also attributed to art. Such attitude is found in “modernist art, which constitutes some sort of appeal to religious life, or one’s ‘spiritual’ well-being” (Rhodes 1993: 194). For some artists, it seems that art is religion, but for others it has no spiritual value. Making art, for many artists, is often a way to feel closer to nature and material



Antoine Camilleri, *Antoine Paul Asleep*, felt pen, 1963



Antoine Paul Camilleri, *Pietà*, bronze, 2009



LINO PRINT 8/15. 'ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI' Camilleri 2000.

Antoine Camilleri, *St Francis of Assisi*, lino-print, 2000

reality. Their art is a form of ideas of spiritual sustenance. I believe that material has inherent energy, whether this be atomic or magical in nature. For example the work of Antoine and his son Antoine Paul acknowledges these possibilities of materiality, and plays upon them. In their work, vital energy, or a sense of being alive, is a sense that is transmitted to the audience. Its sources and appearances become central to the investigative and working process. I argue that social myths and human stories also enforce, and in turn, destroy ideas of what is living or dead. Technology and economy are also involved, and they are so powerful at distancing and evaluating living experience. I believe that in certain instances in the work of these artists, there is a reaction to the distancing forces within society. This is perhaps why Antoine Camilleri and his son Antoine Paul had such a great appeal to work in clay. Clay is a potent metaphor. The process of digging up raw materials from the earth and form shapes and fire the artwork is not only art, but it is also a ritualistic re-enactment of the original formation of the earth. The process is mythic. For example, in recent years, Antoine Paul created a body of work in clay to express his thoughts and to address aspects of a social nature. These works are mostly figurative. A good example of Antoine Paul's work in clay, which he later cast in bronze, is a contemporary version of *Our Lady of Sorrows*. In this work, we see the mother on her knees holding her dead son on her laps. Unfortunately, it is a scene we see in everyday life in the news, especially where war and crime dominate this world. In this work by Antoine Paul Camilleri, the primitivistic appeal is found mostly in his approach of creating forms which have an affinity with 'primitive' works. The artist with great simplicity uses again a style of slender and elongated figures typical of the great modernist, primitivist sculptor, Alberto Giacometti. The enigmatic sculptures by Antoine Paul are charged with raw emotions, and expressed directly from the psyche of the artist.

It is well-accepted today that the art of so-called 'primitive'<sup>1</sup> people developed a close relationship between religious and moral truths. Therefore, would it not be correct to say that a certain amount of knowledge of primitive religion is helpful to fully appreciate 'primitive' art? Examples of 'primitive' art from the earliest phases of human existence on earth to the present day 'primitive' tribes in the sporadic, isolated areas around the world have shown that art had a religious function in the daily lives of people. "Primitive does not mean crudity but the primal strength of libido" (Goitein 1948: 49). It is a simple approach to life with a strong affinity to what is naive and original, and it is right in the field of art and visual representation. Since the monumental work *The Golden Bough* in the 1890's by Sir James Frazer, scholars of religion affirmed that 'primitive' people did have a religion. Therefore, art historians developed a more convincing approach to show that the making of art served for religious purposes. The making of images of animals and the depiction of the human body by the prehistoric artist surely had some kind of symbolic association.

The approach to a very simple life is found in the figure of one of the greatest saints of Christianity, St Francis of Assisi, who was always of great inspiration to artists who worked on religious themes. The Camilleris addressed this subject

and were inspired by the humble obedience of the Saint and his spiritual way of life. In one of Antoine Camilleri's collections, we find a remarkable lino-print showing St Francis kneeling in prayer, with uplifted face and arms. Originally the preliminary drawings for this lino-print show the Saint standing up. As Joseph Paul Cassar pointed out, this lino-print "is probably his masterpiece in this medium" (Cassar 2006: 70). The composition also includes the sea, fish and other tiny animals surrounding the saint. The sun is setting, and the moon in the sky is placed inside the typical square which the artist regularly incorporates in his drawings, paintings and clay reliefs. As usual, the figure of the Saint is tortuously elongated to give a sense of beauty and expression.

Antoine Paul Camilleri's *St Francis* is totally different from that by his father. Antoine Paul modelled the figure of the Saint in clay, and showed the Saint surrounded with birds rejoicing in a wonderful way, as if gazing and listening to the Saint's sermon. Behind the Saint, one can see the symbolical wolf calmly sitting down enjoying the tranquil atmosphere of that moment. Stylistically this work is emblematic of the artist's grotesque figurative expression, with a touch of romantic quality, which became synonymous with Antoine Paul's figurative sculpture.

Today, some artists seem to be more concerned with connecting the visual matter of art directly to the inner life of people. That is, employing pictorial means to effect a transforming connection with the emotional or spiritual urge within the self. The artist becomes the medium through which people might recognise their own spiritual worlds.

The symbolic images emanating from the unconscious of the artist have also this spiritual connection. For example, in Nadine's work entitled *Metamorphosis*, the artist wants to convey to us a sacred and spiritual message. Although the work is a semi-abstract painting, it is easy to grasp and understand the symbols which the artist used to give meaning to her work. In this painting, we find the symbols of the mother and her womb, the chalice, blood, the dove and a ray of light. Typical of Nadine is the use of simple, curved, bold lines executed with swift gestures of bright brushstrokes. The transformation is evident with the representation of the host in the centre of the mother's womb, with blood oozing out. It is a projection of the search for divinity. The dove in its religious significance is the symbol of the Holy Ghost. In its general sense, it is the symbol of innocence, gentleness, marital affection and fidelity.

We may quickly understand that artists like Nadine Micallef-Grimaud have a primitivistic quest for the 'spiritual'. This is because there is a kind of a desire to revive the forgotten feeling for the 'sacred.' In other words, these artists want to reclaim the archaic, pure state of 'mystical consciousness'. "Primitivism became a medium of soul-searching and self-transformation in which the idea of merging has been key, especially for people who feel ill at ease or constrained in the West" (Torgovnick 1996: 13).



Antoine Paul Camilleri, *St Francis*, ceramics, 2011



Nadine Micallef-Grimaud, *Metamorphosis*, acrylics and oils on canvas, 2010





Aldo Micallief-Grimaud, *The Praying Christ*,  
sepia soft pastels on paper, 1999



Aldo Micallief-Grimaud, *A Vision of Christ*, soft pastels, undated

When we look at the religious side of Aldo Micallief-Grimaud's work, we notice that in most of his paintings, there is the transcendent aspect and reverie, that is, the merging of object and subject. In fact, in some of Aldo's works there is the religious theme. Apart from his portraits and landscapes, the artist executed a number of works in churches and also other paintings of a 'sacred' nature. The face of Christ is represented in a portrait found in Aldo's collection of religious works. Two fine examples which are distinct from each other both in style and medium are *The Praying Christ* and *A Vision of Christ*.

In *The Praying Christ*, the artist captured the dual nature of Christ: a glimpse of Christ's suffering as a human being, and of the divine that gave him the strength to face and embrace approaching death. The typical pose of Christ with uplifted face, and with hands held together in prayer, is an example of the traditional composition which the artist used to express this religious image. The other portrait of the head of Christ is perhaps more familiar and verges on the conventional image of the crucified Christ. The image shows us the grim details of suffering, with the facial features of a person in agony gasping for air, with eyes uplifted to the sky awaiting for the soul to depart from the body. Both works are different but there is one thing in common, the preoccupation of the artist to make attempts to emphasise the spiritual significance. It is pertinent to question why the artist worked so painstakingly to produce an image of devotion. One of the most basic operations of the artist is to create relationships between viewers, and objects of devotion and desire.

In Nadine's painting, *L-Abħar Demgħa (The Last Teardrop)*, the artist revisited the theme of the mother. In this religious theme, the artist associates the mother with sorrow and pain. Although as a theme, the work is the same as Antoine Paul's, the approach is different. Nadine's work is based more on the traditional articulation of the features of the figures rather than on a contemporary stylistic expression. Yet the facial characteristics of the *Madonna* are more of a modernist trait than that of the dead Christ. In fact, Nadine was inspired by the *Madonna* of the Norwegian expressionist painter, Edvard Munch (1984). It is an unusual depiction of the *Madonna*, shown young and sensualised. Nadine used only the facial parts of the body, eliminating the twisted torso and expressive erotic pose. The look on the face embodies some of the key factors of canonical representations of the Virgin. Her gentleness and a tranquil look with closed eyes express modesty, but nevertheless, her lit face creates drama and an ecstatic feeling of pain and love. A lot has been written about the interpretation of Munch's *Madonna*. Not all comments justify the meaning of what the artist had actually in mind while executing such a controversial painting. Nadine's *Madonna* puts us into a different perspective and our gaze is more oriented towards what is spiritual and sacred.

### **The transitional object**

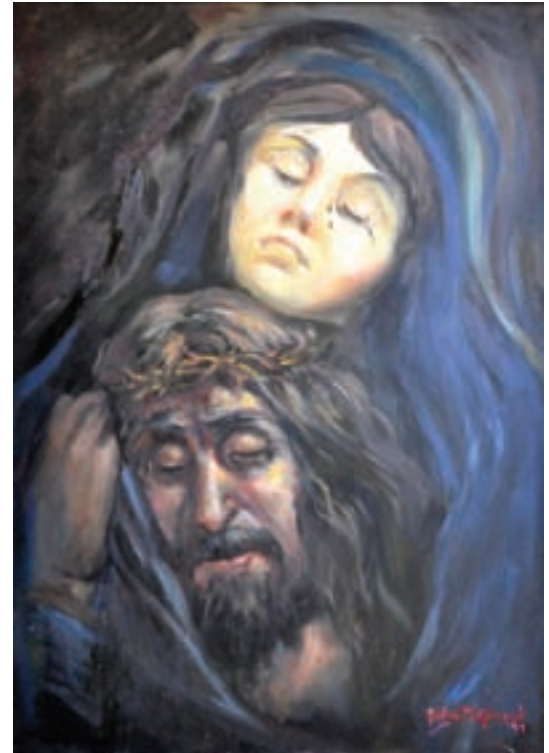
When reflecting about the work of our four artists, the concept of the transitional object comes to mind, that is, the reconciliation between the subject and an array of objects. Primarily in their art practice, our artists use different materials and processes to materialise their relationships to such imaginary objects. Before

I give some examples of the 'transitional object' in the work of each artist, I will explain the theories behind this subject.

Winnicott's *Theory of Transitional Objects and Transitional Phenomena* (1953) served as an important basis for a number of writers concerned with aesthetics and art theory. In his rather complicated concept, he denotes an internal object which is intermediate between the inner idealised world, and the external world. Winnicott first gives the examples of the child's earliest creative gestures which are recognised and responded to, by the mother. At first it is a realm of 'illusion', where there is no distinction between what is created from the inner need and what is found in external reality. This sustained experience provides capacity for play, that is, the combination of inner impulses with objects in the outer world. He claimed that this experience is a prerequisite for later cultural experience (Maclagan 2001: 42). Donald Winnicott continues to postulate that "the initial cultural experience in adult life is a 'transitional phenomenon' of infancy and to the space that emerges between the infant and the mother at play. He argues that this psychic significance of this space, in which subjectivity is constituted and reconstituted, remains throughout our lives" (Squire 2000: 135). Marion Milner, an artist and psychoanalyst, continued to further explore the quality of experience in adult aesthetic response. In her book *On Not Being Able to Paint*, she describes her exploration for a way of drawing and painting that could include in 'pictorial imagery' both her inner feelings and that which delighted her eye in the external world (Milner 1957: 3). "She made an independent discovery of potential or intermediate space to use Winnicott's term - the sense of being both separate and together" (Spitz 1985: 147). The artist slowly experienced the need to free herself from the conventions of art and learn to 'play'. Although she was dissatisfied with the results of her drawings and paintings, because she wanted to achieve better effects of spatial elements and a three-dimensional effect in her work, the artist developed an insight to free herself from such conventions. Milner speaks of the bravery an artist needs to face and have courage to change. Winnicott and other object-relation theorists argue that this courage comes from the fundamentally infant exposure to 'good mothering'. This allows the child to internalise, early in life, secure feelings of comfort and trust that allow the possibility later on of play, risk, and to participate in aesthetic and cultural experiences (149).

Art theorist Margaret Iverson writes about the use of found-object in art in relation to the transitional object. She proposes that childhood memories and their associated artefacts can have a determining effect on adult life and experience and memory. The inanimate domestic objects that accompany us through childhood increase the value of the emotional experience. They mark the passage of time and place, and contribute to the creation of a personal narrative (Iversen: 2004: 48-49). Found-objects become meaningful when we give attention to the relationship we give them, many times transforming them into something else. This is how found-objects are transformed into works of art which link with our past experiences and memories.

In what we today call 'mental art', we discover that spirituality gets a more significant place. We see the artist who tries to communicate with his own



Nadine Micallef-Grimaud, *L-Abhar Demgha*, oil on canvas, 1997



Antoine Camilleri, *The Artist's Meal*, various found objects concealed with resin, resin on wood, 1960