



NEWSLETTER #31

Fall 1999

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The Creative Edge: The Way Of The Arts is a nonprofit public benefit corporation formed in January, 1989. It operates under IRS Code 501(c)(3) for the educational purpose of sponsoring programs that introduce and develop for individuals the inner creative process used by experienced artists of all fine arts disciplines. In particular, these programs have as a foundation the belief that expression consciously based on intuitive material from the psyche and expressed in one or more channels of artistic endeavor supports healthy development of both the individual and the society. Furthermore, the underlying creative principles are the basis for a healthy way of life.

Issued: 9/15/99

Board of Directors:

Marlie Avant
Donald W. Mathews
Kyla McCollam
Barbara Rose Shuler
Patricia Waldin



THE NEWS

Fall 1999

No. 31

Programs Scheduled: (See pages 2-4)

• Marlie Avant & Donald Mathews	Coming Alive! Creative Arts Retreat Weekend Year 2000	Sep 25-26, 9 a.m.
• Donald Mathews	Dream Work Seminar Creative Arts Fellowship Creative Development & Dreams	Jan 15, 9 a.m. Monthly, 1st Sat-9 a.m. E-mail or as scheduled
• Brugh Joy	Weekend Study Group	Jan 21-23, 7 p.m.
• Donald Mathews	Expressing Dreams: The Soul's Song Creative Arts Retreat Weekend	Mar 25-26, 9 a.m.
• Jay O'Callahan	Finding & Telling Stories	May ???, 7 p.m.

The Creative Arts Retreat Weekends continue with a different kind of program brought by one of our Directors, Marlie Avant. There is a special correlation between images and movements. Accessing them gives another useful creative resource we will examine. There will also be time for dreams, exploring and just plain relaxing! Come join the other Creative Edge Artist-Directors for a special weekend of sharing together. Note the next Retreat Weekend in March will focus on dreams and their creative expression using art materials.

Brugh Joy's Study Group has been changed to January due to travel constraints., Make your

reservation now! (Early price checks will be held until December 15 before deposit.)

This issue is much smaller than usual because of fewer submissions to Letter Box! Is it a trend shifting emphasis to electronic Newsletters on the web? Let me know your thoughts about this!

Notice the change in E-Mail address! I may be reached at Donald@creative-edge.org! Internet users, don't forget to check out the new look at the Creative Edge Web Site. You will find an entirely different collection of poems, images and comments in Letter Box On Line!
DWM

New & renewed Members of the Creative Edge:

Patrons: Sandra Peters, CA.

Associate Members: Adriana Farkouh & Cynthia Pinkston, CA.

Friends: Catherine Baird & Carolyn Berry, CA.

We invite newcomers to our free mailing list— membership with your fully tax deductible donation is totally voluntary.
Newsletter Distribution: 1477 — Current Membership: 6 Patrons, 17 Associates, 6 Friends.



“If you look for the truth outside yourself, it gets farther and farther away.”
—Tung-Shan

Background:

Our thoughts and imaginings are fed continuously by our emotionally guided six senses. Mystically, we receive dreams and intuitions to evoke our imagination. Therefore, along life’s way, we perceive and store a whole range of personal experiences and visions triggered by these processes.

Like creative artists of all kinds, we all have within our psyche this rich flowing wealth of personal and collective history and unexamined mysteries of creation. As a resource, it is a full treasure chest waiting to serve our glorious response to life. When we chose to manifest our unique expressions and bring them into the world in support of life, we fulfill our soul’s gift to community, Spirit or to Divine Creation.

Our urge to express from the heart through our natural ability to sing, dance, draw, tell stories, write poetry,

and make other highly creative expressions of all kinds from this personal wealth, provides a way to find, and meaningfully travel, the inner and outer roads of a rich life experience.

Instead of critical judgment, when we have appreciation and curiosity about our own and each other’s personal process, a door opens to imagination, inspiration and our soul’s deeper longing. An open supportive group with deep respect for each person’s journey gives sacred witness, provides safety and trust for intimate sharing.

It facilitates spiritual and mystical aspects of life where meaningful collective themes spontaneously emerge. Thus we gain strength to share the universal joy and pain of being human and courage to creatively participate in service to life.

Community Projects:

The Creative Edge supports various programs and collaborative efforts in the community where the creative process of individuals and groups is enhanced. Donald Mathews, the Executive Director, is available to advise or facilitate various interdisciplinary groups for special projects. He provides information, inspiration and emotional support from his wide variety of experiences.

Creative Arts Fellowship:

The monthly Creative Arts Fellowship is a public gathering seeking self awareness and presence through a practice of contemplation, mutual support and intimate sharing. Our shared stories, dreams and artistic expressions of all kinds then become a deep source of wisdom.

This free living room group is for those interested in sharing their creative work and process from a personal point of view. Facilitated by Donald Mathews, it is for all skill levels. Bring an image, poem, song, story, dance or other creative expression that intrigues you. Meetings: the first Saturday each month except July & August. 9 a.m. till noon. No fee.

Creative Arts Retreat Weekends:

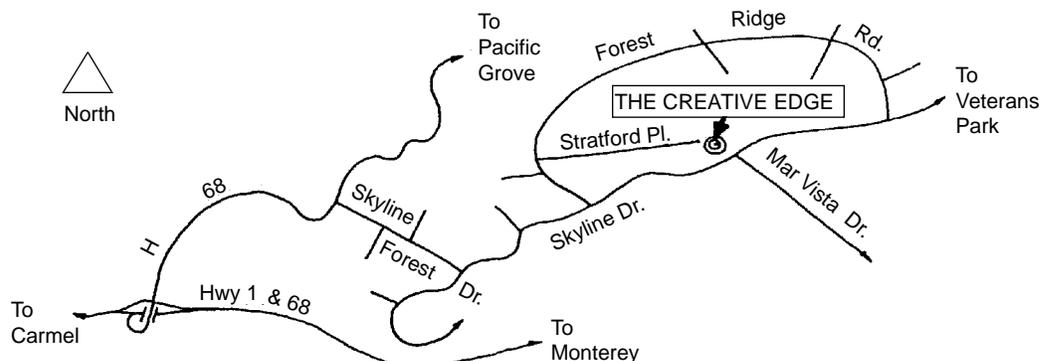
Explore with the core fellowship of Creative Edge Artist-Directors. Away from busy lives for either one or two days in a small intimate group, we leisurely seek the authenticity of our soul’s call. Although primarily a weekend of self discovery, we open to the power of collective energies and guest facilitators to bring and share their special talents with us.

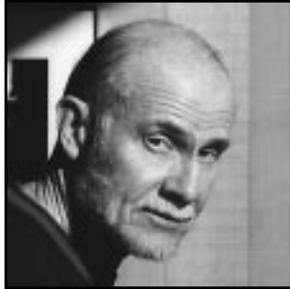
Forming a safe circle of support for dreams, sharing and contemplation, we use lots of free time to follow our personal muse with reading, writing and other creative work. Mask-making, paints and clay are available in the studio. Lunch is provided. Typically offered each year in the spring & fall, 9 a.m.—5 p.m.

Special Workshops & Seminars:

Special workshops and seminars are scheduled throughout the year with different facilitators. Call for information or addition to the mailing list.

Reservations are made by sending your check payable to The Creative Edge. There is a \$20 handling fee for refunds.





Donald William Mathews is an artist, educator and Founding Director of The Creative Edge where he teaches and edits the newsletter. He has diverse degrees and professional experience with teaching credentials in education, management, fine arts, engineering and mathematics. He has studied and gained wide experience in various psychologies and other disciplines searching for a deep understanding of the human experience, creativity and spirituality.

“Come with me into the great hall of my heart. I will light the candle of my thoughts and I invite you to light yours.”

—Donald Mathews

In particular, he has been involved over the years with the Association of Transpersonal Psychology and Process Oriented Psychology. He facilitates trust and intimacy in order to find wisdom from individuals and groups based on his continuing journey learning from life. Married over forty years to his musician wife Lou, they have three daughters and seven Grandchildren.

Monthly Dream Work Seminars:

By experiencing the vital images and wisdom of each other’s dreams shared as our own, we gain an in-depth understanding of our selves and our common human experience. Limited to eight venturesome people seeking spiritual depth.

January—May & August—November:
9 a.m.- noon on the 3rd Saturday of each month,

Creative Development & Dreams:

Donald Mathews responds to personal questions involving development of one’s creative process through artistic expression and the use of dreams as an intuitive resource (E-Mail, Telephone or other exchanges). This usually involves an intimate exchange seeking hidden talents, thus activating the individual’s deeper resources. Sliding scale fee: \$25-35 each hour's work.

A Creative Arts Retreat Weekend

Expressing Dreams: The Soul’s Song

with Donald Mathews

March 25-26, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

In this one or two day creative arts retreat, we will explore the nature of dreams, ours, each others and their collective impact as a divine spiritual expression. Then, using art materials we will express what we find most profound.

Dreams are evoked mysteriously from our psyche in image and story without the normal boundaries of reason and the tight rules of social conformity. Dreams have historical roots and provide future possibilities. They reflect both personal and collective patterns, stories and myths.

We will use an inspirational video record of conductor David Blum’s voyage of discovery with his dreams. During his cancer illness, he

expressed his dreams in painting and found an extraordinary thing taking place. “Rather than mirroring the acute anxiety that often filled my waking hours, the dreams were largely ignoring the outer situation... one (aspect) was their insistent way of cluing me in to values that the conscious mind had neglected.”

Forming a safe circle of support with the core fellowship of Creative Edge Artist-Directors for sharing and encouragement, we will learn from each other by sharing personal discoveries. Lunch & simple art materials are provided.

Fee: \$95, Saturday only: \$50. (\$80/\$45 prior to March 10.)

Computer Users:

Adobe Systems Inc. provides an ideal cross-computer program for distribution with their PDF file format. PDF files are read by Adobe’s free Acrobat Reader (AR) software available for download at <<http://www.adobe.com>>. (There are links to Adobe from the CE Web site.) This system works on all types of computers and gives an easily read presentation adjustable in

format with a menu click for different size screens. Buttons allow viewers to conveniently jump around to different pages. Images are in color! Desired hard copies may be printed on your own printer. PDF files with all past newsletters and other materials are already available at the CE Web site! Downloading is quick and easy because of compression technology.

Mail to:
The Creative Edge
8 Stratford Place
Monterey, CA
93940

or call:
Donald Mathews
(831) 373-7809

Registration Form:

Name: _____ Telephone: () _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Amount enclosed: \$ _____ E-mail: _____
 Please register me for the _____ Seminar/program. Date(s): _____
Please send: Map Motel information Back copies of Thoughts on Creativity (\$5)
 Information flyer for the _____ Seminar/program(s)
 Please accept my donation. Friend (\$5 plus), Associate Member (\$25 plus) or Patron (\$100 plus)
 Please change my mailing address. Please remove my name from your mailing list.



“We get up, we walk,
we fall down, and it’s
all a part of the dance!”
—Marlie Avant

Marlie Avant is an artist, actress and Founding Director of The Creative Edge. She is also certified as a trainer in the Halprin Life/Art Process, a movement-based expressive arts therapy program. Marlie learned to bring form & dimension to spirit by honoring her body, rejoicing in its earthiness and thus healing ancient wounds.

As Mary Oliver says in her poem: “You do not have to be good. You do not have to walk on your knees for a hundred miles through the desert repenting. You only have to let the soft animal of your body love what it loves.”

Forming a safe circle with the core fellowship of Creative Edge Artist-Directors, we will learn from each other by sharing personal discoveries.

**Coming Alive: Opening to our Body Wisdom!
A Creative Arts Retreat Weekend
September 25-26, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.**

In this one or two day creative arts retreat, we will explore our individual rhythms and mythologies using subtle movement, drawing, writing and dreams. In so doing, what most often is revealed is the richness and depth of our creative potential and our innate personal power to heal, grow and transform our lives.

Fee: \$95, Saturday only: \$50.
(\$80/\$45 prior to September 10.)
Lunch & simple art materials provided.



“Dreams are our greatest
and truest teachers, as
they reflect our basic
aspects in constantly
creative variations.”
—Brugh Joy

W. Brugh Joy, M.D. is an extraordinary guide! In the dream realm, he follows personal images and stories to their mythical roots like a fine artist follows the mysterious trail of the muse.

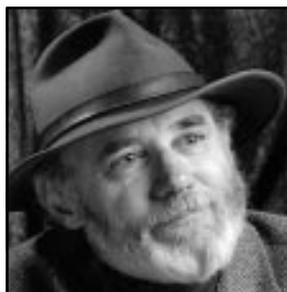
By exploring the divine images, characters, and stories of our dreams and building personal relationships with them, a new profound resource is born in us for both creative expression and life's continuing adventure. This study group is for exploring the mysteries reflected in dreams & daily life.

His book *Avalanche: Heretical Reflections on the Dark and Light* tells of the dark and disowned portions of the human psyche.

**Accessing Inner Resources
Through the Heart Center:
A Weekend Study Group
January 21-23, 2000.**

Friday Evening: 7-10 P.M.
Saturday: 9 A.M. to 9 P.M.
Sunday: 9 A.M. to noon

Fee: \$385 (\$360 prior to December 15.)
Limited to 27.
Saturday lunch furnished.



“Each human being is
a galaxy... Yet we live
most of life superficially,
unaware of our vast
inner world.”
—Jay O'Callahan

Jay O'Callahan has been creating and performing stories now for over 20 years. Time magazine called him “a genius among storytellers....” “A virtuoso,” echoed the Boston Globe.

Jay O'Callahan crafts the details of ordinary life into extraordinary stories containing deep spiritual wisdom. There are no gimmicks or clever tricks opting for the quick response so often found in today's entertainment. Rather, with artist's imagination and attention to authentic detail, he brings to life his personal perception of experience in telling the unfolding story. Then, combining his intimacy with the audience's deeper experience, participants discover their own stories.

**Finding & Telling Stories
A Weekend Workshop in May
(Weekend to be determined.)**

In the warmth and trust of a special Monterey home, Jay will give a small supportive group the opportunity to experience this highly unique creative process. We will playfully examine rich stories hidden in our memories. “We are beings in a universe that is alive with creativity, with wonder.” says Jay... Wanna dance?”

Fri.: 7—9 p.m., Sat.: 9 a.m.— 4 p.m. (with lunch),
Sunday: 9 a.m. — noon.

Fee: \$240 Limit 12.



I recently attended a panel on abstract art where several artists talked about their work and received questions from the audience. I found there was not a clear reference available to what art or abstract art really was. Most artists described their personal process and motivations for doing the work while others sought to understand perceived differences in the resulting work, particularly how to distinguish art or good art from non-art or bad art! I believe the emphasis to judge art and the artist at superficial levels before responding to the often hidden underlying spiritual process is vastly misleading. (Spirit: The vital principal or animating force within living beings, from the Latin word spiritus, meaning to breathe, implying the breath of God, inspiration.) This is true for both artists and audience. The creative process is an emotionally guided intuitive one that deepens through the personal and intellectual levels to that serving “the mind and heart of (human)kind.”

By general definition, art is the work produced for beauty or pleasure of the senses rather than utility. Typically, we humans are lifted up to pleasurable feelings or meaningful ideas by something we consider beautiful—in nature, the arts or each other. We may also be touched by painful experiences of others, wonderfully sharing a deep relationship bond in our humanness transcending the pain. To be lifted out of our ordinary state and “inspired” emotionally is a divine gift we humans can all enjoy. (Divine: Having the nature of a deity and to know through inspiration, intuition or reflection—particularly to foretell.) This innate mystery of our existence is the ultimate gift!

To abstract is to “pull out,” implying a reference to something else—normal awareness or concrete existence for example. At the meeting, this important point was made: *All art is basically abstract!*

This is because a work of art is an abstract communication about something arising from an impulse in the human spirit! (Although it is true only a few artists try to eliminate all concrete references to reality in their work in order to reach the illusive spiritual or sublime.) This motivating impulse in the artist, and/or viewer/participant of the work, is a mystery

important in itself with often hidden content, regardless of the subject matter or the expertise of the artist. The subtle emotions of attraction and repulsion are the only guide with the valued content often hidden even from the artist as the work progresses!

I believe that life as we perceive it is also abstract in a wonderful way. What we perceive is not what is happening. We are always creating our own reality—to some degree. This is not a problem! The powers of projection and inspiration are the artist’s gift! This is what is most interesting! For the process highlights our creative powers and potential of knowing the wondrous reality of our selves and the world around us through sharing of our perceptions in both an appreciative and critical way.

Interpretation of inspiration and artistic expression from the artist’s experience is always filtered through both the artist’s and audience’s personal process. Expertise in the particular craft used to illustrate the experience does make a difference. But it is not the prime element in the creative process although it is often greatly admired. All of us have many filters of intellect and emotion from family, culture, religion, education, personal needs, etc. Most often these filters are unconscious so operate undetected in our evaluation of the experience. The assumption is that we are fully aware! This assumption needs to be examined in order to open new vistas of profound experience and develop new relationship with life becoming artists of a creative life with spiritual depth!

Words are our most commonly used tool of expression and when well crafted, become poetry and story. They are so familiar, we often forget they are our abstracted invention for sharing experience. Music and dance seem much more abstract in form and often powerful in stirring our emotions, perhaps because their expression is more physical than intellectual in performance.

I believe the capacity to experience and express this creative impulse or spirit I call divine is what makes a person an artist, regardless of the mode or ability of expression. We may or may not respond to a particular work, but I believe we must all have deep respect for the underlying process and participate!

“Art is a kind of innate drive that seizes a human being and makes him its instrument.”

“Every creative person is a duality or a syntheses of contradictory qualities. On the one side he is a human being with a personal life, while on the other he is an impersonal creative process.”

“The essence of a work of art is not to be found in the personal idiosyncrasies that creep into it—indeed, the more there are of them, the less it is a work of art—but in its rising above the personal and speaking from the mind and heart of the artist to the mind and heart of mankind.”

C. G. Jung

“As in love, all depends on what the artist unconsciously projects on everything he sees. It is the quality of that projection, rather than the presence of the living person, that gives an artist’s vision its life.”

Henri Matisse



San Antonio, TX

MY COUSIN, MY FRIEND

A blond, tousled headed boy dashing around and through the yard
Was my special friend, chum, and when playing games, the avant-garde.
We climbed huge fig trees at Grandmother's house, and it was so neat
Playing you Tarzan, me Jane made our playtime and life complete.

The early teenage years flew by and we went our separate ways.
We both moved to the same neighborhood, spending more pleasant days.
You went by bus to one school, and I went to a different one
With chores and milking a cow each day didn't leave much time for fun.

Your sweet Mother was my special aunt, a treasure to behold.
She was loving and kind and her heart was made of purest gold.
She would go rabbit hunting out in the sand dunes with her gun,
She loved to camp out in Lytle Creek with her dog and her son.

Yes, this little blond boy, so mischievous was you, my dear Don.
Your artistic creativity was a phenomenon
That rivaled my mind, boggled my brain and left me in sheer awe
For you not only could paint, but used logs, rocks and words to draw.

Always there when I needed a shoulder upon which to cry,
You gave me help with my problems, and you never asked me why.
What a kind and loving cousin you were to me way back then
And now with your Creative Edge, you're like a breath of oxygen.

May I once again tell you how proud I am of what you are?
You help so many people to find a footing and a star,
With your caring articles, poems, and comments along the way
And here you are again being there for others, come what may.

Shirley Smalley Price

Colorado Springs, CO

"Remembering" is one of my new poems.
It is my gift to the new millennium.

REMEMBERING

Travel—
back in time where nothing is new,

But Ancient.

Where—the
messages are so clear
that there is no room

For interpretation.

Experience—
thought in its
purest form—Speak!

In the tongue
you have forgotten.

Then—as
before—do not
travel to the future

Forget—
the training of
linear time—Expand
between these two points.

Within you—
is a wheel forever
spinning—constantly

Answering
the question—Who Am I?

Patricia Ann Doneson

Seaside, CA

We were lying in bed and my Granddaughter couldn't get to sleep
and suggested we write poems. Then she told me this one she had
written before. (She is 6 years old and will be in the first grade in
September, 1999.)

A NIGHT SONG

Go to sleep
Close your eyes
Shut your mouth
And dream away!

Chayo Fuentes

Carolyn Berry



Carmel, CA

A COLD SPRING

I cannot wife you nor can you husband me:
I do not wish to bolster you with flattery
or argue with you about the household budget,
And you must roam, however much you would profess fidelity,
no matter whom & what you inevitably destroy.

We were meant for flight together—not earth-bound domesticity.
We camp like gypsies wherever the brightest fire beckons,
wherever “reasonable work or unreasonable love is offered,”
Quickly putting down roots in impossible terrain:
the sky-blue air, a crashing waterfall or cliff side crevice,
a tangled floating green bed of seaweed.

Forever lovers, ever eager for transcendence in ecstasy’s trance-dance,
When we sigh and reach for one another in the night,
it is as divers poised to plunge into liquid bliss,
as undertow heaving to birth twenty-foot waves,
as the inbreath of a Vesuvius preparing to spill its fiery guts.

But an ugly Nordic, nay, Arctic wind named Goori,
Feigning weak damsel in distress, has diverted & cooled your fire for me.
GoAcial sadness surrounds me—but my release is soon in sight:
My stifled joy will again burst into soaring flight.
When the cold spring storm torrents rush anew,
Someone else will catch my flooding river’s spill
And feed upon the abundance I have cast upon its waters.

Anya Kucharev

Pacific Grove, CA

WHILE WE WERE AGING

Days and months and years speed by
We don't even notice
We love each other still but less often
While we were aging
Our children grew up and out
We keep on keeping on
Hardly aware we are slowing down
Until one day suddenly we are old
He with his cane and hear-inq aids
Me with my glasses and grey hair
We're still the same two lovers
Who raced up a hill laughed our joy
Found castles in the cloudy sky
Clung together fiercely
Our dreams didn't die
They just grew old.

Julie Houy

San Jose, CA

ARTIST

Lead me into your studio
and set up the easel.
Show me the path that transforms
the empty canvas.
Place the brush in my palm
and teach my awkward flesh
the rhythms of colors.
Pour rivers through my fingertips,
a violet sky, the foam of the sea.
Show my hands how to speak
the language without words:
the flutter of an angel’s wings,
the song of bells in the air.

Cynthia Pinkston

Carmel, CA

CAT PAWS AND CAT CLAWS
(Haiku)

Aware of Slightest Sound,
Pivoting Ears Search, Seeking Truth.
They Dread the Unknown.

Staring Eyes Cut Through,
Seeking Out Motion Or Change,
What’s Next, Claw Or Paw?

Cats See With Their Paws,
Sensing What’s Right and What’s Wrong,
Claws Slash to the Truth.

Ray Cyr

Carmel Valley, CA

UNTITLED

Far flung
From the reaches
Of the universe
The crimson leaves
Are falling
In search of
The unuttered
Word.

Marilyn Sanders

Thank you for your letters and offerings.
Keep them coming. Look for emerging
themes that resonate with your own
intuitions and creative works.

I also invite you to comment on how these
sharings facilitate your own life journey.

The Editor.