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Lifeworld, the arts and mental health nursing

F. C. BILEY[1] RN PhD & K. T. GALVIN[2] RN PhD

[1]*Senior Lecturer,* [2]*Professor, Health Research, Centre for Qualitative Research, School of Health and Social Care, Bournemouth University, Bournemouth, UK*

Correspondence:
F. C. Biley
Centre for Qualitative Research
School of Health and Social Care
Bournemouth University
1st Floor
Royal London House
Christchurch Road
Bournemouth
UK
E-mail: fbiley@bournemouth.ac.uk

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Various manifestations of the arts have been employed in mental health care as successful diversional and therapeutic interventions, and as an adjunct to mental healthcare professional education. There is now a current groundswell of the use of the arts and humanities in both the practice of research and the representation and dissemination of findings. Here, we first point to the potential ability of the arts that can be used to re-humanize the world of health and social care and its underpinning sciences. Second, we highlight the nature and relevance of this more aesthetic movement and its potential to enable meaningful engagement with people in order to facilitate shared understandings of concretely lived experiences. Finally, we use a long-standing philosophical framework, the 'lifeworld', as an exemplar to demonstrate how the wholeness and essence of human *being* can be revealed or shown through art. In doing so, we make the tentative suggestion that phenomenology and the lifeworld approach may be a useful philosophical framework for underpinning the use of arts in mental health nursing.

Keywords: art, humanizing, lifeworld, mental health, phenomenology

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Background

In an important and hard-hitting paper, written almost 10 years ago from now, Darbyshire (1999) identified the tensions that exist for nurses who tend to distance themselves from using traditional scientific and technological dominated approaches to care and understanding care, but at the same time, they were 'simultaneously showing a deeply felt need to keep hold of "science" as an intellectual security blanket' (Darbyshire 1999, p. 124). While these tensions, differing viewpoints and commitment to two epistemological domains (Leight 2002) related to qualitative/quantitative, art/science, understanding/explanation and aethetic/empirical debates probably still exist (Burnard & Hannigan 2000; Parsons 2000; Rolfe 2000; Leight 2002), more contemporary perspectives are also beginning to emerge, which may suggest that nursing is feeling increasingly comfortable without its security blanket.

Examine almost any of the more recent editions of nursing journals and there will be evidence of a response to the call for a rediscovery of the 'person' in health care, the need for a more humanistic approach, an exploration of more diverse ways of knowing in nursing (Fawcett *et al.* 2001), and there is a clear reconsideration of what might be seen to constitute rigour and truth in research (Rolfe 2006). There are many who continue to operate with the somewhat polemical view that the only place for qualitative research is when it linked to quantitative methods (Gournay & Ritter 1997), or that the 'randomised clinical trial is the only source of legitimate evidence' (Ingersoll 2000, p. 151). However, there are others who have been experimenting with creatively solving the problem that seems to be central to many of the discussions. That is, how do you rediscover the person, how do you construct a research project and use appropriate methods that place an understanding of the person at the centre of the process of

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inquiry? How can we 'know the wholeness, uniqueness, and essence of human life as a context for understanding phenomena and conditions of concern to nursing and guiding action in practice' (Cowling 2001, p. 33)?

Although there is a clear place, in some instances, for nurses to carry out 'traditional' empirical work (Parsons 2000), Fawcett *et al.* (2001) points out that there is an increasing interest in and a clear need to develop and engage with new research methods and with alternative forms of aesthetic, ethical and personal inquiry. With this perspective in mind perhaps, Darbyshire (1999) warned of the dangers of 'a rampant and unchecked rationality [that] poses a threat . . . because it can quickly become a totalizing and enframing orthodoxy, a template to be squeezed down on top of all thought and practice until uniformity is achieved' (p. 131). He goes on to say that the incorporation of aspects of the arts and literature into nursing opens up the possibility of achieving a greater understanding of nursing and the process of nursing. Wainwright & Williams (2005) have even gone so far as to say that the 'interconnections between the arts and nursing can bring about a revolution in the practice, teaching and research of nursing' (p. 523).

The arts and literature have been used in a variety of situations in nursing, and in particular, in mental health nursing and care, for many years. Therapeutically, expressive writing, storytelling, bibliotherapy and writing poetry are considered to have a positive effect on a range of physical and mental health concerns (McCardle & Byrt 2001), and there is 'clear and reliable evidence' (Staricoff 2004, p. 6) for these and a range of other interventions that this is indeed the case. The nature and validity of that evidence or required evidence is of course a matter for debate (it seems slightly more than incongruent to call for randomized clinical trials to be performed in order to measure the clinical effectiveness of an arts-based intervention). It may be the subject of another paper in its own right; however, in this instance, we will offer the evidence from one mental health nurse who has been involved in an arts-based mental health promotion programme for many years, who has said that 'Engagement with some form of creative expression is good for me. When I express myself, I feel an emotional release, I feel good about myself . . .' (Stickley 2007).

As part of the educational process, using the arts has the potential to promote 'a more holistic, collaborative and person-centred approach to healthcare practice; enhancing self-awareness . . . and increasing understanding of the experience of service users' (Gallagher 2007, p. 427). The arts can give 'us a deeper insight into the more existential elements of patients', families', clients' and even nurses' experiences' (Darbyshire 1999, p. 129). For example, educational visits to the art gallery can help with the understanding of interpersonal relations and gives students the opportunity to witness a range of human experiences (Wikström 2000), and using stories can help reveal health–illness experiences and unfolding possibilities (Leight 2002).

Finally, the arts would appear to have the potential to contribute much more to 'research' and the development of nursing knowledge. Solving the problem of the limitations of formal scientific prose and the potential limitations of the written word, the arts can be used as an expressive component of research data, or even be the data itself. This is something that artists, writers, musicians and performers would claim they have been doing for years. Recent examples of such approaches might include Kip Jones' brief autoethnographic account of his emotional responses to encounters with two works of art (Jones 2007a), and his creatively expressed audio–visual ethnographic account of an encounter with a minor Royal (Jones 2007b), Tessa Muncey and Rob Robinson's life experience narratives that use text, poetry and visual imagery (Muncey & Robinson 2007), Philip Burnard's narrative account of his experiences of depression (Burnard 2002), Gail Mitchell *et al.*'s account of the development of a evidence-based drama that explored the experience of living with dementia (Mitchell *et al.* 2006) and Christine Jonas-Simpson's exploration of the experience of being listened to that was expressed through the medium of co-created flute music (Jonas-Simpson 2003). Further evidence that the arts are being integrated into research is offered by Simons & McCormack (2007) in an excellent and comprehensive examination of the use of the arts in evaluation methodology. They state that when it was found that more traditional methodologies 'proved inadequate to portray a complex understanding of programs . . .', there was an 'increased focus on the person in evaluation [which] opened the way for narrative, story, photographs and dialogue to be added to the repertoire of qualitative evaluation methods' (p. 293). However, none of these ideas are particularly new, and as already been stated, it is perhaps what artists, writers, musicians and performers have been trying to achieve ever since they picked up their brushes, pens and instruments, or donned their thespian robes. For many years, Norman Denzin has perhaps been at the forefront of exploring alternative ways of managing the 'research' process, suggesting, e.g. that the 'performative turn' is at least one way forward for the human disciplines (Denzin 2003). He has stated that his motivation to achieve this comes from a need to 're-read the interview, not as a method of gathering information, but as a vehicle for producing performance texts and performance ethnographies about self and society

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. . . defined by a performative sensibility, by a willingness to experiment with different ways of presenting an interview text . . . [that] turns interviews into performance texts, into poetic monologues . . .' (Denzin 2001, pp. 24–25). Elsewhere, there is a 'not so quiet revolution' taking place with the application and use of 'tools from the arts and humanities, in both investigation of concerns and dissemination of data' which is 'gaining critical mass' (Jones 2007b) and is becoming commonplace (Morse 2004). For example, photographic essays have been used to explore the experiences of women receiving prenatal care (Quinn *et al*. 2006), issues related to men's health (Oliffe & Bottorff 2007) and parenting children with disabilities (Lassetter *et al*. 2007). Poetry has been used as data and the expression of data following experiences of the emergency room (Furman 2006), and as the 'poetic condensation' of phenomenological transcripts that explore suffering (Öhlen 2003).

Art in mental health nursing research

One of the main goals of successful nursing, successful mental health nursing and successful health care in general must be to be able to understand and try to 'know' the world of the other: the person, client or patient in need of health care. Despite what sometimes appears to be an overwhelming technological imperative in health care, individuals can only engage in successful interventions when this 'humanizing force' (Todres *et al*. 2006), this 'knowing', is achieved. If human sciences hold the potential to illuminate 'meanings, values, and relationships for the purposes of understanding human experiences' (Malinski 2002, p. 14), then the human sciences, when used in combination with the arts and literature as data itself or as modes of expression and/or representation of data, would seem to suggest great promise of an effective and powerful potential. As Reeder (1993) suggested, '. . . diverse forms of expression . . . are needed to synthesize knowledge expressing both immanent and transcendent realities' (p. 22).

Supplementing formal research texts with artistic representations of data, or the presentation of works of art or literature as research texts in their own right could be achieved from the standpoint of a variety of different research methods and epistemological positions. Here, we want to show that the concept of the 'lifeworld' can usefully clarify the seamlessness and inter-relatedness of human phenomena that mental health nurses need to pay attention to. We would also like to argue that art, with its power of revelation, has the potential to reach and express the depths of human experience when used as an approach for inquiry.

The lifeworld

'Lifeworld' refers to our everyday experience as humans, how our experience is manifested, how our world as concretely lived. The lifeworld has been articulated from several perspectives within the phenomenological tradition. It was first described in the 1920s and 1930s by Husserl (Husserl 1970, 1989) as the foundation for all human science research, and later developed as a practical philosophy for understanding human existence by Heidegger, Merleau Ponty and Gadamer among others (Heidegger 1927/1962, Merleau Ponty 1961/1968, Gadamer 1989). The tradition points to and places emphasis upon our shared human existence – what it means to be human, 'being-in-the-world', and is characterized by the qualitative nature and seamlessness of everyday life. Briefly, the lifeworld has been conceptualized by these philosophers as consisting of the following *intertwined* existential dimensions.

Temporality

The temporality dimension of the lifeworld considers how we experience time as it flows, the continuities and discontinuities of time as humanly experienced, how we feel time passing slowly or quickly, how our conception of ourselves changes over time, as a child, teenager, adult and older person. We are 'storied beings' with a past, present and future. In living fully, we 'project' ourselves to future possibilities. For example, as he/she wakes in the morning, a person may think about what possibilities the day will bring, what plans may have been made for the day. The day may be more inviting than others depending on how the person anticipates the day unfolding. If a person can see no reason to get up in the morning, or sees the day as being shaped by potential events that are considered unpleasant, then they may simply turn over in bed and go back to sleep. If a person is deeply depressed, they may no longer have any sense of future possibility, to such an extent that they may feel that their future is so closed down with no possibility of living forward at all. Time may move very slowly, they may experience no desire to live. Everything, including moving one's body, may be experienced as laborious. A person who is overactive may feel that time is moving fast and easily, they may experience liberating freedom to move with any possibility, at a fast and furious pace. A person who is severely underactive may be 'fixed' in a motionless world, their own *other* world, disconnected from other people, a world where time is still, has stopped flowing, with no shared meanings, no purpose, direction or use.

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Spatiality

The concept of spatiality explores how we experience places and things that give meaning to living. This includes how things seem as close or distant in terms of meaning within such 'space'. We see things in terms of the significance they hold for us, our connection to place and things, how the meaning of our 'environing' world looks or changes as circumstances change. For example, a much cherished picture of a place near a childhood home may be more important and significant to a person following a stressful event, and the person may feel the need to have the picture 'close at hand' more often if they are experiencing a stressful time. A person experiencing psychosis may see significant threats in particular aspects of their environment. For instance, a series of streets in a town may appear abandoned and neglected, and they may find the open spaces empty, uninviting and even threatening. To another person the same streets may be a fondly important and warm connection to their past. A person with a memory impairment may be taken for a walk down these streets to enable them to reconnect with past memories and regain a sense of continuity.

Embodiment

Embodiment describes how we bodily live meaningfully with others in the world: we *are* this body, we move and live *as* this body (body-subject). Life as it is lived in our day-to-day existence is not concerned with our physiology (body-object), we enjoy our meals together, we don't collectively sustain our blood sugar and electrolyte balance. As bodies, we don't just take up space, we inhabit space, we relate to space as part of the world, but not as simply objects in a spatial world. We discover ourselves as part of the world, and the world is revealed to us through our bodies. As carnate beings, we experience both vulnerabilities and freedoms as part of our embodied existence in the world. Illness impacts on our body, and on our embodied existence with others. For example, a person with multiple sclerosis may become depressed as they struggle with increasingly limited horizons, the loss of their former life projects that are no longer possible and the ever restricted life and different, more immobile body that they live with. A person experiencing major impact on their body may be more aware of their body as body-object (Finlay 2003). In an embodied existence, we have freedoms to act in the world, and freedom comes from how we make our worlds meaningful. A person with multiple sclerosis may find that a new artistic project opens up new possibilities and a way to reconnect to other people that had become distant. In another example, a person who self-harms may experience cutting of their own flesh as a sense of release, a certain kind of freedom, but which also brings with it a vulnerability, not to make the cut too deep or too visible.

Mood

Mood is our pre-reflective way of experiencing the world, it is the emotional attunement that colours life. Fear and anguish are heightened if there is disruption to our everyday way of living, by, e.g. experiencing bereavement, when having to make difficult life decisions, changing our path or ending a significant relationship. However, in our everyday mood we are caught up in activities and our cares.

Intersubjectivity

Intersubjectivity explores how we are in the world with others, the interpersonal world. This dimension refers to how all experience is in relation to others, this 'being-in-the-world-with-others' 'means that our experience is in the context of other people. We shake hands, we look at each other, we embrace. In all that we do, even in solitude, others are there in relation to us. If we listen to music, look at a painting or read poetry we are still in relation with others who composed the music, painting or poetry' (Langdridge 2007). We are social beings and we have language which enables us to share understanding and relate meaning to our individual and unique contexts. In the context of mental illness, interpersonal relationships may be changed, dislocated, 'cut off' or lost altogether. A person who is vulnerable may experience other people as annoying, infuriating, distant, judgemental, overbearing or threatening, and other people may make the person feel isolated, restless or anxious.

In relation to mental health, Van Den Berg (1972) coined the term 'the science of loneliness' in his phenomenological illustration of psychopathology. He argued that loneliness is at the core of mental illness and illustrated, in the following extract, how all the above dimensions, embodiment, spatiality, intersubjectivity and mood are all intertwined, writing '. . . the psychiatric patient is alone. He has few relationships or perhaps no relationships at all. He lives in isolation. He feels lonely. He may dread an interview with another person. At times, a conversation with him is impossible. He is somewhat strange; sometimes he is enigmatic and he may, on rare occasions, be even unfathomable. The variations are endless, but the essence is always the same. The psychiatric patient stands apart from the rest of the world. This is why he has a world of his own: in his world, houses can sway forward, flowers can look dull and colourless. This is why he always has a special sort of body, his heart aches, his legs are weak and powerless,

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his past, too, is different. His rearing has failed and this in turn causes his difficulties with other people – difficulties that summarise as it were, all his other complaints. He is alone. He is a lonely man. Loneliness is the central core of his illness, no matter what his illness may be' (p. 105).

Van Den Berg described how, in mental ill health, the person is disconnected from their ground. Their experience, as concretely lived, is characterized as a loneliness, a disconnection to the meaningful-world-with-others. It can be argued that art has a role in reconnecting people to their ground, to themselves, serving to orientate people to their lives, their lifeworld and to reorientate them to their meaningful-world-with-others with its historical and cultural context. But further than this, Heidegger, Gadamer and Merleau Ponty pointed, in various ways, to the promise of art in revealing understanding as it emerges from the experience of the lifeworld. It is in this 'revealing understanding' as directly experienced that art and the lifeworld share a common thread, that the unique truths that are not accessible through traditional science are in art and in concretely lived experiences.

Art revealing lifeworld understanding

It could be argued that phenomenological method is concerned with describing the concrete. Dahlberg *et al*. (2007) assert that even in 'bridled' lifeworld research, there is a place for art. Van Den Berg (1972) pointed out that poets and painters have something in common with phenomenologists, in that they can all convey what things say to us, the way the world reveals itself. 'Like art, phenomenology seeks to restore the richness of the world as immediately experienced' (Dengerink Chaplin 2002, p. 160). This general theme is apparent in writings by Heidegger (1971/2001), Gadamer (1977) and Merleau Ponty (1964a,b,c). Their essays concern art's role in understanding and the parallels between art and phenomenological method in disclosing truth.

Heidegger

Heidegger (1971/2001) argued that the arts were important because they were able to express the truth about existence in a way that could be understood by humans. His writing on art was influenced both by readings of Holderlin, a 19th-century German poet, and Nietzsche. In poetic language, he saw a 'truth of Being that was distorted by the metaphysical tradition of the West' (Moran 2000, p. 209). Heidegger (1971/2001) posits that the role of poetry is to describe the malaise of modernity in order to pave the way for a return of western culture which re-engages with an *authentic* way of Being. That is, not taking the world for granted, recognizing the finitude of life, being actively engaged with people and things – our *cares*. This is in contrast to not living to the full possibilities of existence and loss of care for existence itself. These ideas are related to Heidegger's concern about the spirit technology and a forgetting of our ground, our *Being*. He was arguing that poetry and philosophy can guard against this kind of totalization, stating that 'language is the house of Being. In its home human beings dwell. Those that think and those that create with words are the guardians of this home' (Heidegger 1947/1978 cited in Moran).

So for him, poetic language had powerful potential for disclosing the world, for revealing understanding about 'being-in-the-world'. Heidegger was making a distinction between the usefulness of scientific language in effectively communicating facts and poetic language that is metaphoric and novel and can reveal greater understanding by naming the essential *revealing-concealing* nature of Being (Langdridge 2007). In other words, this 'essential saying' of German romantic poetry was more capable of expressing the true nature of Being than traditional philosophy.

In his most important essay about art, 'The Origin of the Work of Art', he characterizes art as 'the-setting-itself-to-work of truth' (reprinted Kearney & Rasmussen 2001). Heidegger argued that the social practice of art is to create an artefact or to *set up* a work that *reveals* a truth about human life.

Wartenberg (2002) unfolds these complex ideas by unpacking Heidegger's interpretation of Van Gogh's *A Pair of Shoes 1887* (the painting depicts a pair of well-worn boots on a plain background). Heidegger was interested in what the painting reveals or is 'unconcealing' about human life: that is, the world of a peasant woman. She has cares and concerns, her 'projects', she relies on the shoes to walk the fields, and to undertake work to feed her family. The shoes enable her to do what she needs, they are reliable tools to enable her to realize her purpose. Here Heidegger is referring to the things that we use in everyday life, the character that entities have in that world, and we take the world to mean things that are 'ready to hand' in order to realize our projects. His interpretation also refers to the *earth,* which is the peasant's lifeworld emerging from the earth, the soil, the weather, the leather to make the shoes and so on. In his analysis of the painting, Heidegger points to what he termed '*strife*': the world shapes the earth and takes up what it needs but the earth resists this incorporation, so earth and world exist in a constant striving. The truth that is revealed in the painting, is the *world-in-strife-with-earth,* which constitutes a historical era (through history, 'Being' is manifested in different worlds that are specific to particular historical periods). Different historical eras have fundamentally different worlds that succeed one

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another, and our lives are unconsciously structured by our era, our times. So for Heidegger, it is through art that we become aware of this basic feature of our lives: 'Being' is revealed in a particular social and historical context.

The truth that is revealed is not predicated upon a correspondence theory of truth, to see a being or an entity as corresponding to the idea we have of that entity in our minds but rather, to see a being in its truth is to reveal its Being. So truth allows beings to reveal themselves to us and using art is one special way of this enabling this disclosure. Heidegger states:

> Truth happens in Van Gogh's painting. This does not mean that something is correctly portrayed, but rather in the revelation of the equipmental being of the shoes, that which is a whole-world and earth in their counterplay – attains to unconcealedness. Thus is the work it is truth, not something only true that is at work. (1971/2001, p. 198)

Zuidervaart (2004) portrays such artistic truth as a process of imaginative disclosure with several characteristics that truth must have in order to 'set-itself to-work', saying:

> First, truth must be dynamic, not static and temporal, not transcendent or transcendental. Second, truth must be original not derivative, autonomous, not heteronomous. Third, truth must be situated, not abstract, and available for articulation, not remote or inaccessible. Summarizing Heidegger in my own terms, then, to set, to set itself, and to set itself to work, truth must be processual, originary and historical. (p. 103)

Gadamer

Gadamer was heavily influenced by Heidegger's philosophy, and for him, picking up on this theme about how art is an original showing for understanding through 'unconcealing'. For Gadamer, understanding is situated both historically and culturally, and manifested through language. Language is the means through which we gain understanding of the world, in Gadamer's terms, shared language reveals some shared understandings that were previously concealed. Like Heidegger, he sees truth as revealing-concealing, an *unconcealment*. That is, we speak from a position dependent on our history or '*pre-judgement*', which is limited by our *horizons*, but we gain mutual understanding through a merging of horizons with understanding revealed intersubjectively in the *play* of language. His notion of play refers to us *coming into being* through this play of language; we do not get lost in it (subject), nor do we understand it as another does (object); rather, the *in between* unconceals something. So engaging with a poem, the experience that one understands is neither another's understanding alone, nor our own individual understanding alone. Rather, the understanding is something of the shared intersubjective horizons (a meaningful-world-with-others), as well as something of this unique individual. What Gadamer is emphasizing is the need to be attentive to the distances that open up between us and the text (the 'in between').

Following Heidegger, Gadamer (1977, p. 228) believed that art can connect us with a particular community, and reveal something as true. He wrote that 'art is the project by which something comes forth as true', which is not accessible by the methods of the human sciences; in other words, 'genuine cultural understanding is always the experience of art' (Moran 2000, p. 250). His most influential work, *Truth and Method*, posits a theory about how fundamental sources of human existence, e.g. historical understanding and art, bring forth truth in a way that is different from the methods of human sciences. He is not rejecting science, but is claiming that scientific truth is not the whole truth and he aims to revitalize the concepts of judgement and taste as guides for understanding cultural formation. Gadamer sees art as:

> essentially connected to the truth, as opposed to the refinement of sensibility or the production of aesthetic pleasure. [He] claims that in our experience of art our consciousness of truth is prior to any focusing on the aesthetic experience. When we have a genuine confrontation with art, we are in the realm of truth, and if we have only an aesthetic experience, it is because we have become alienated in some way from the art work. (Moran 2000, p. 281)

In his summary of major contributions to philosophy, Moran (2000) also highlights Merleau Ponty's important contribution as an example of the interaction between phenomenology, the arts and the sciences, to provide a description of the nature of bodily being-in-the-world.

Merleau Ponty

Merleau Ponty (1964c, p. 166), like Gadamer, drew a parallel between the 'phenomenological attitude' and a desire to seize the meaning of the world shown by the attentiveness often demonstrated by painters. 'Painting allows us to possess the volumisity of the world'. Drawing on this understanding, Dengerink Chaplin (2002) gave an account of Merleau Ponty's discussions about how art, like phenomenology, re-examines the world in a fresh way, where they draw 'on the fabric of brute meaning' (Merleau Ponty 1961/1998, p. 123). He was referring to the way objects manifest themselves to us, as they are, and prior to us integrating them into our own world view. His outlook was influenced by Husserl's

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'returning to the things themselves' and has at its core his theme of embodied understanding: our bodily contact with the world as we perceive, speak and think from the body, which is our corporeal existence and our historic situatedness. He pointed out that Cezanne was working phenomenologically with paint rather than words (*Cezanne's Doubt*, Merleau Ponty 1964a). For instance, Cezanne, in trying to remain faithful to the phenomena, painted objects as we perceive them in our 'lived seeing'; his cubist still-life paintings show objects as seen from different angles, as if we were walking around them; they make visible how we actually do see things, something that is often taken for granted.

In his essay 'Eye and Mind' (Merleau Ponty 1964c), Merleau Ponty contrasts the kind of truth that emerges in painting with the manipulative nature of science which he says knows 'neither truth nor falsity'. Moran (2000, p. 401) describes how Merleau Ponty (1964c) discusses Klee, Cezanne and Matisse as:

> abandoning stylised formal representation to rediscover the lived immediacy of vision and truly capture the vibrant reflective surfaces of things. Only art has the capacity of innocent looking without trying to form an opinion. The painter is involved in a giving birth to the visible rather than attempting to produce a representation of the world.

Merleau Ponty (1964b) also drew attention to the realm of 'felt' nuances of experience through art, the *silent* expression of experience. Here he is arguing that style is the body's capacity to find its way in the world; it has its foundation in the artists' or writers' embodied perception of the world; art expresses tacitly and language shades off into silence (Moran 2000, p. 405).

A relevant philosophical framework?

What all these philosophical ideas from Heidegger, Merleau Ponty and Gadamer indicate is that art offers 'a showing' of human experience in unique ways. In caring, mental health nurses need to be attentive to the interrelatedness of human phenomena, the uniqueness of experience and the seamlessness of everyday life. Art can be used as a way of expressing and showing such lifeworlds in order to facilitate a shared understanding of people's experiences, and in doing so, inform humanly sensitive care. We suggest that phenomenology and lifeworld approaches may provide a philosophical framework to underpin the use of the arts in mental health nursing. This framework can guide the purpose and rationale of the use of arts in practice and also underpin a variety of aesthetic approaches to inquiry.

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