

“TIED TO THE COSMOS BY THE HEARTSTRINGS”

**AN EXPLORATORY CASE STUDY OF
ART THERAPY
WITH AN INDIVIDUAL DIAGNOSED WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA**

Submitted by
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of the requirements for the degree of
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In memory of my parents
Mordechai and Miriam Rivkah Hirschhorn obm

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STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

Except where reference is made in the text of the thesis, this thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis.

This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other institution.

All the research procedures reported in the thesis were approved by the Faculty Human Ethics Committee (FHEC) of the faculty of Health Sciences at La Trobe University. Ethics Approval reference number: FHECO1/OO3.

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Signed by

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this thesis is to investigate the use of art therapy in the treatment of an individual diagnosed with schizophrenia.

In this qualitative narrative single case study, eleven art therapy sessions are described using non-directive spontaneous art making with a 37-year-old man residing in a psychosocial rehabilitation program.

The research study describes this client's delusional world, and explores the struggle of making sense of his traumatic experiences in early childhood.

The themes that emerge in this exploratory study are many and grief and bereavement are the focus as the client uncovers the connections between the past and the present.

The process of the art therapy sessions and the progression in the imagery from chaos to serenity is described as the client moves from darkness into light, and as we witness his exploration of space in the images of the whirlwind that reappear throughout the sessions.