

## **NWRPA Newsletter November 2020**

### **The Artist and Model**

**13 November 2020**

#### **An online study group on transference with Dr Mark Fisher**

##### **Summary by Frank Kelley**

After all the uncertainties created by coronavirus it was a wish come true to see you all again for our third meeting on Zoom.

**Thank you to my colleague Paul Melia** for organising our Zoom meetings.

**Thanks again to the psychoanalyst Dr. Mark Fisher** for the richness and challenge of his seminars.

Over the two previous seminars in this study group Mark spoke of a classic view of transference as an unconscious reliving in the present and in analysis of a significant early relationship. A transference can be rendered into consciousness as analysis progresses. This classic view of transference is complemented by a wider picture of transference. Mark spoke of transferences in the plural and noted this classic type of transference emerges in therapy less often than we would think.

Mark has a wide interest in the arts. In this seminar he talked about the painter Lucien Freud and his picture *The Painter Surprised by a Naked Admirer* (2005). You can see a photo of this painting by clicking on this link.

<https://www.nwrpa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Lucien-Freud-the-painter-surprised-by-a-naked-admirer-2005.jpgLarge.jpeg>

Lucien was the grandson of Sigmund Freud. He had little interest in psychoanalysis, although his painting life was funded by sales of his grandfather's books.

Lucien was a great painter of flesh and had a very diverse range of models. Many became lovers and close friends even though the painting sessions were quite taxing and would go well into the night. A painting of David Hockney took Freud around one hundred and twenty hours of work over six to nine months. He could be kind. He would make his models meals and Nicola Bowery thought modelling for Freud helped her with her grief over the death of her partner Leigh Bowery. Leigh was a frequent model and like others thought his modelling for Freud was like having psychoanalysis. Of course this was psychoanalysis without abstinence.

Modelling for Freud was like love and transference.

Mark has often talked of creativity in analysis and the importance of the whole and parts of the body. There are clear parallels with the art of Lucien Freud. In this painting the model, the naked admirer, is wooden and unemotional. Freud's face is quite realistic and detailed while the rest of him has become more like the background. While he was working Freud flicked paint on his wall. There is a

reversal. In the painting the painter is the background and the background wall becomes the art.

Freud used a full length mirror to view himself and his model. While painting he would continually move from his easel to his mirror. We have a painting of a mirror image of a painting being painted. Curiously the mirror does not appear in the painting. This painted scene is reminiscent of the mirror stage described by Lacan. A child looks in a mirror and starts to develop an image of my body and me. Before this creation and activity the child's self is chaotic.

Lacan's Object O is very real but almost absent and comes from the creator. In the transference one remains in one's own O object. Like the hall of mirrors in a horror film psychoanalysis is also scary. What is seen in analysis is what is repressed, what we are trying to hide.

Lucien Freud kept his relationships and attachments with models going long after the work was finished. Mark compared this unprepared ending of these paintings with an unending analysis. This is the kind of analysis where ending can trigger a psychosis.

In Mark's version of psychoanalysis you should not leave analysis until you have worked out what you desire; until you can say what attracts you to other people including the analyst. In ending analysts have to see themselves as a support, and as a person, rather than as a bearer of the O object

Mark left us with two intriguing questions which relate to two different conceptions of transference. There is the classic conception of transference as a reliving of a whole relationship and the alternative of seeing plural transferences.

- Who is the whole person?
- Who may, or may not, want to be integrated?

**Thank you to Dr. Mark Fisher.** It is always a challenging and intriguing pleasure to follow the course of his complex conversation. A rich feast which leaves me wanting more.

Each study group discussion is followed by a networking event. This was ably and capably chaired by **Kieran Nolan.**